



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 21 May 2024

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TUESDAY, 21 MAY 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 letters in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letters will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letters 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: 3 May 2024

A bill for an Act to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Disaster Management Regulation 2014, the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003, the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to establish the State Emergency Service and for related purposes

A bill for an Act to establish Marine Rescue Queensland and for related 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

3 May 2024

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 May 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 3 May 2024 [\[813\]](#).

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: 9 May 2024

A bill for an Act to establish the Victims' Commissioner and the Sexual Violence Review Board, to declare and implement a charter of rights for affected victims, and to amend this Act, the Evidence Act 1977, the Integrity Act 2009, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Public Sector Act 2022 and the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Disaster Management Regulation 2014, the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, the Fire and Emergency Services Regulation 2011, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Criminal Code, the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024, the District Court of Queensland Act 1967, the Liquor Act 1992, the Local Government Act 2009, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Planning Act 2016, the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, to repeal the Prostitution Act 1999 and to amend 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

9 May 2024


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 9 May 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 9 May 2024 [\[814\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Parliamentary Annexe, Refurbishment


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, welcome back to the refurbished Parliamentary Annexe tower! Ageing infrastructure, including pieces of the facade falling to the ground, increased the risks to members, staff and other occupiers of the precinct. The refurbishment has been a massive undertaking. It has taken almost two years. Over 400 windows were replaced, the concrete facade repaired and all interiors were literally taken back to concrete. All electrical, plumbing and interiors are new. A considerable amount of asbestos was also removed. I hope members like the modern but modest accommodation. For those five inner-city MPs who do not have rooms, I am sorry, but we hope you do like your offices. I am sure that all members will join me in thanking the contractor, Hutchinson Builders, and its numerous subcontractors. I congratulate the Parliamentary Service for its work, ultimately led by Clerk Neil Laurie, along with the Parliamentary Service's external project managers, Ridgemill, and all of the Parliamentary Service more broadly involved in the project management, ancillary procurement and works involved in members moving back into the building.

Absence of Member

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received advice that the member for Keppel, Ms Brittany Lauga MP, was absent from 28 April to 5 May 2024. I have received further advice that the member for Keppel will also be absent from 17 to 24 May 2024. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.


PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 3 May 2024 I tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Kawana alleging that the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women deliberately misled the House on 5 March 2024 in statements made while answering a question without notice. I ruled that this matter did not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee. I now refer to the matter so that if any member wishes to exercise their rights in respect of the matter under the standing orders they should do so immediately.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

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 Iona College in Lindum in the electorate of Lytton and St Joseph's Primary School in Alstonville, New South Wales. They come from everywhere to come to Queensland!

PETITIONS

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

Great Artesian Basin

Mr Katter, from 36 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 [\[803\]](#).

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

Fraser Coast Regional Council, Gender-Specific Public Amenities

Mr Andrew, from 4,985 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that council public amenities, especially the Fraser Coast Regional Council, build gender specific 'Male & Female' amenities blocks [\[804\]](#) [\[805\]](#).

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

Scarborough Boat Harbour

2,165 petitioners, requesting the House to cease any current Scarborough Boat Harbour planning and restart the planning process in a more open, transparent and collaborative manner, involving all key stakeholders, to develop an environmentally, sustainable and community supported plan [\[806\]](#) [\[807\]](#).

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

Government Offices, Cash, Legal Tender

Mr Katter from 6,443 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately enforce that all state government offices must accept cash as a legal form of payment and condemn any move to cease the distribution or acceptance of cash [\[808\]](#).

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

Public Housing, Air Conditioning

1,062 petitioners, requesting the House to install reverse cycle air conditioners in all public housing properties [\[809\]](#).

COVID-19, Vaccination Mandate

3,561 petitioners, requesting the House to provide the medical advice used to enforce the COVID 19 mandates [\[810\]](#).

Petitions received.

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—

3 May 2024—

[753](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women and Member for Waterford

[754](#) Notice of appointment—Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, Mr Michael Woodford, extension of appointment which commenced on 22 August 2021

[755](#) Notice of appointment—Acting Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, Mr Mitchell Kunde, commencing 2 May 2024

[756](#) Oath for appointment as Acting Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner of Mr Mitchell Kunde, dated 2 May 2024

[757](#) Queensland Local Government Grants Commission—Annual Report 2023

7 May 2024—

[758](#) Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 10, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 February 2024 and 5 March 2024

9 May 2024—

[759](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 66, 57th Parliament—Oversight of the Queensland Family and Child Commission, interim government response

10 May 2024—

[760](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 43, 57th Parliament—Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

[761](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 6, 57th Parliament—Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill 2024

[762](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

[763](#) Cost of Living and Economics Committee: Report No. 4, 57th Parliament—Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

[764](#) Education and Care Services Ombudsman and National Education and Care Services Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioners—Annual Report 2022-2023

[765](#) Childrens Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2022-23: Erratum

15 May 2024—

[766](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 8, 57th Parliament—Planning and Other Legislation (Make Developers Pay) Amendment Bill 2023

16 May 2024—

[767](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice (Hon. Farmer), to an ePetition (4036-24) sponsored by the member for Barron River, Hon. Crawford, from 1,263 petitioners, requesting the House to build Stage Two of the multi-purpose hall at the Redlynch State College

[768](#) Response from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works (Hon. Scanlon), to an ePetition (4034-24) sponsored by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Stevens, from 858 petitioners, requesting the House to exclude the Broadbeach Cultural Precinct from consideration as the site for the 10,000 seat entertainment stadium

[769](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal—Remuneration Determination: Pro-rata payment of pre-paid allowances in an election year—Determination 31/2024, 16 May 2024

[770](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4014-24) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 555 petitioners, requesting the House to degazette the preserved North West Transport Corridor as soon as possible and utilise this land for the benefit of the local community by providing schools, a public library, a community centre and parkland

17 May 2024—

[771](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (Hon. Furner), to an ePetition (4006-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 399 petitioners, requesting the House to call for the total ban of the sale, keeping, growing or removing from our rainforests *Cunjevoi* or *Alocasia brisbanensis*, *Alocasia macrorrhizos* plants across the state

[772](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 9, 57th Parliament—Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Amendment Bill 2024

[773](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 10, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 February and 5 March 2024

[774](#) Cost of Living and Economics Committee: Report No. 5, 57th Parliament—Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024

[775](#) National Energy Retail Law (South Australia) Act 2011: National Energy Retail Amendment (Other Gases) Rule 2024—Making of National Energy Retail Rules

20 May 2024—

[776](#) Response from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works (Hon. Scanlon), to an ePetition (4027-24) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 788 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate to limit rent to 25% of the renter's income

[777](#) Response from the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women (Hon. Fentiman), to a paper petition (4065-24) presented by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(3), and an ePetition (3977-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 544 and 567 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to ensure construction of a new public hospital facility in the southern region of Cairns

[778](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice (Hon. Farmer), to an ePetition (4048-24) sponsored by the member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Dametto, from 21,977 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the proposed amendments to home education contained in the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and to conduct further consultation with the home school community

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

[779](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Variation of Resilient Homes Assistance Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 46

[780](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Variation of Resilient Homes Assistance Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 46, explanatory notes

[781](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Variation of Resilient Homes Assistance Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 46, human rights certificate

Water Act 2000:

- [782](#) Water Plan (Mary Basin) 2024, No. 47
[783](#) Water Plan (Mary Basin) 2024, No. 47, explanatory notes
[784](#) Water Plan (Mary Basin) 2024, No. 47, human rights certificate

Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024:

- [785](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 48
[786](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 48, explanatory notes
[787](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 48, human rights certificate

Penalties and Sentences Act 1992:

- [788](#) Penalties and Sentences (Penalty Unit Value) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 49
[789](#) Penalties and Sentences (Penalty Unit Value) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 49, explanatory notes
[790](#) Penalties and Sentences (Penalty Unit Value) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 49, human rights certificate

Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024:

- [791](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 50
[792](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 50, explanatory notes
[793](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 50, human rights certificate

Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024:

- [794](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 51
[795](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 51, explanatory notes
[796](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 51, human rights certificate

Fisheries Act 1994, Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [797](#) Fisheries (Structural Reform Stage 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 52
[798](#) Fisheries (Structural Reform Stage 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 52, explanatory notes
[799](#) Fisheries (Structural Reform Stage 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 52, human rights certificate

Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023:

- [800](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 53
[801](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 53, explanatory notes
[802](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 53, human rights certificate

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

- [811](#) 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—

Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2024'

Clause 24 (Amendment of s 4.8 (Commissioner's responsibility))—

At page 15, line 26—

Omit—

'*Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024*'

Clause 24 (Amendment of s 4.8 (Commissioner's responsibility))—

At page 16, line 2—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Clause 33 (Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary))—

At page 19, lines 30 and 31, page 19, line 32 and page 20, line 1—

Omit—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023'

Insert—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024'

Clause 33 (Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary))—

At page 20, lines 6 and 7, lines 12 and 13, lines 14 and 15, lines 17 and 18—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Act 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Clause 36 (Insertion of new ss 13A and 13B)—

At page 21, lines 26 and 27, page 21, line 29, page 22, line 6—

Omit—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023'

Insert—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024'

Clause 36 (Insertion of new ss 13A and 13B)—

At page 22, lines 12 and 13, line 15 and line 24—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Act 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Clause 38 (Amendment of sch 1, s 26 (Person engaged in employment for the police service))—

At page 23, line 10 and lines 21 and 22—

Omit—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023'

Insert—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024'

Clause 38 (Amendment of sch 1, s 26 (Person engaged in employment for the police service))—

At page 23, lines 15 and 16, lines 24 and 25 and line 31—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Act 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Schedule 1)—

At page 25, lines 6 and 7—

Omit—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023'

Insert—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (2 Schedule 1, entry for The State Emergency Service under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*)—

At page 25, lines 11 and 12—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Act 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (3 Schedule 2)—

At page 25, lines 15 and 16—

Omit—

'*Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (4 Schedule 2, entry for The State Emergency Service under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990*)—

At page 25, lines 20 and 21—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 132A(4), definition *State Emergency Service*)—

At page 26, lines 5 and 6—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 297(1)(b)(i))—

At page 26, line 11—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 30(2), definition *emergency service*, before paragraph (a))—

At page 26, line 20—

Omit—

'*Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 14(2)(k)(ii))—

At page 27, lines 4 and 5—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 333(1)(d))—

At page 28, lines 6 and 7—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Schedule 5, definition *emergency response vehicle*, paragraph (a)(vi))—

At page 29, lines 12 and 13—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2024*'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 579A(2), definition *prescribed entity*, example, third dot point)—

At page 29, lines 18 and 19—

Omit—

'*State Emergency Service Act 2023*'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Schedule 6A, item 5)—

At page 30, line 6—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Act 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (2 Schedule 6A)—

At page 30, lines 10 and 11—

Omit—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2023'

Insert—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024'

Schedule 1 Other amendments (1 Section 279A(4), definition *State Emergency Service*)—

At page 30, lines 16 and 17—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Act 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Act 2024'

State Emergency Service Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'State Emergency Service Bill 2023'

Insert—

'State Emergency Service Bill 2024'

Part 6 (Transitional provisions for Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2023)—

At page 30, lines 13 and 14—

Omit—

'Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2023'

Insert—

'Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2024'

Clause 56 (Continuation of WorkCover insurance for SES volunteer)—

At page 33, lines 28 and 29—

Omit—

'Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2023'

Insert—

'Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2024'

Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2024'

MEMBER'S PAPER


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

Member for Toohey (Mr Russo)—


[812](#) Information Commissioner Report 3: 2023-24—Follow-up of Report No. 2 for 2022-23 Publishing information about waste management

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


NRL, Magic Round

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.35 am): Brisbane brought the magic this weekend, and that means big returns for Brisbane businesses. More than 174,000 Rugby League fans went through the gates of Suncorp for the Women's State of Origin and Magic Round. Some 27,200 cheered on the Lions against Richmond at the Gabba; there were a record 50,000 people enjoying the best of Greek culture at Paniyiri; and thousands more at concerts like Macklemore, the Brisbane Comedy Festival and revelling in the energy at Caxton Street. I briefly thought I would need to convene the disaster management committee when I heard the Caxton Hotel almost ran out of beer—twice. I want to thank the XXXX brewery workers who came to the rescue of our great state. In total, our Magic Weekend is expected to have generated upwards of \$40 million in economic activity, and the best news is that we will do it again and again and again. However you cheer, you can do it here in Brisbane until at least 2027.

Federal Budget


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.37 am): Labor governments will always do what matters for Queensland. Last week's federal budget is proof of that. Building on our announcement to give money back to Queensland households, the Albanese government has tipped in an extra \$300. There will also be tax cuts for every taxpayer, averaging \$36 back in people's pockets each week; more medicines made cheaper, including those for breast cancer treatment; and paid prac placements for teaching, nursing, midwifery and social work students. These are just a few things, but I know they will make a big difference for Queenslanders.

Renewable Energy and Jobs Plan

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.37 am): Our renewable Energy and Jobs Plan is working to deliver more good blue-collar jobs in our regions. In April, 10,600 new jobs were created in Queensland, making up one in three jobs created across the nation. Our plan is now supported by the federal government's \$23.7 billion Future Made in Australia plan, including supporting jobs in critical minerals, hydrogen and green metals. I welcome this investment because a future made in Australia is a future made in Queensland.

This week the federal Treasurer announced the first major project that had been unlocked by this investment—a partnership between Quinbrook and Central Queensland Metals to develop a green iron project in Gladstone. This project involves mining magnetite 70 kilometres west of Gladstone to produce green iron at the Gladstone State Development Area. The Gladstone green iron project will use hydrogen produced from the Central Queensland hydrogen project that our government is supporting. The project represents \$3.5 billion of capital investment from the mine to processing to port. It is big news for blue-collar jobs in Queensland—moving beyond a dig-and-ship operation to make the first green iron in Queensland, with the potential to support a green steel industry into the future. Our government backs these projects because they mean more good jobs in our regions powered by our plan for 24/7 renewable energy.

Child Protection, Social Media


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.39 am): I have been outspoken in my belief that social media companies need to do better. They are failing on so many measures designed to protect our kids and parents need help in monitoring and restricting access to dangerous content. Today the Chief Health Officer has released findings that demonstrate a real link between unrestricted social media use and increased distress in children and teens.

In Australia the rate of young females aged 14 and under hospitalised for self-harm injury tripled between 2008-09 and 2020-21. The rate almost doubled in the same period for boys up to the age of 14. As a parent this worries me, as I am sure it does every person in this House. To combat this growing health concern an expert group convened by the Chief Health Officer has recommended that access to social media be limited for those under the age of 14 and that they be closely monitored and supported as they join social media and their time be restricted until healthy habits are established. I support these recommendations and call for stronger regulation around social media access.


I have spoken with South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas, who has recently appointed former chief justice of the High Court Robert French AC to conduct a legal examination into banning children under the age of 14 from having social media accounts. Their government will share the outcomes of that examination with ours to better understand how we could implement such a ban in Queensland.

We are fostering a generation of young people who have grown up on social media. It is all they can remember. With the opportunities for connectivity, there must be balance and we must act now to prevent irreversible damage to the mental health of young Queenslanders.

Comments by Premier, Correction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.41 am): While I am on my feet I wish to update the record. During question time on 6 March I incorrectly referred to the Information Commissioner in response to the member for Kawana. I should have said the State Archivist.

Child Protection, Social Media


 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.41 am): Every single day children and teenagers across Queensland battle the relentless pressure of social media. They are bombarded with carefully curated snapshots of so-called perfect lives, a constant stream of unrealistic beauty standards that create an impossible ideal. In recent weeks we have seen community conversations on this issue reach critical mass, spearheaded by campaigns in the media as the social media giants have continually shirked their responsibility. It is a conversation that is desperately needed because the data is terrifying.

As the Premier has outlined today, self-harm hospitalisation rates for young girls tripled for those under 14 years of age and doubled for teenagers aged 15 to 19 between 2008 and 2021. The Chief Health Officer has today described the rise in these rates as an epidemic and that every young person admitted to hospital for self-harm represents just a fraction of those suffering in silence. Clearly it is time the social media giants step up, act like adults and take responsibility for the harm that social media is causing. Across the world it is fuelling a mental health crisis with relentless pressure leading to body dissatisfaction, eating disorders and suicidal thoughts. We cannot stay silent any longer.

The Miles Labor government has a range of initiatives in place to help. Initiatives like Away for the Day, the eSafety Commissioner's resources and the Dear Mind campaign are a good start and, thanks to our mental health levy, we have invested \$330 million in youth mental health. That is the largest investment in our state's history, but we know there is more to do. Today the Chief Health Officer has published a position statement outlining recommendations to parents about how their children should engage with social media. The recommendations, which are the result of an expert group of psychiatrists and health staff assembled by the Chief Health Officer, include limiting access to social media for children under 14 and being closely involved as older teens begin to be introduced to social media. Importantly, a range of resources and information is available for parents on the Queensland Health website.

Parents need to have open and honest conversations with their children about social media, and we all need to do more to equip young people with the tools they need to navigate this complex world because we know Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg will not. These recommendations for parents are part of a broader, vitally important conversation, one on which the future of our children's health depends. Together we can create a future where social media empowers, not endangers, our children.

Budget


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.44 am): As a result of our government's decision to make multinational coal companies pay their fair share, in the 2022-23 financial year we delivered the biggest surplus ever recorded by a state or territory government. More importantly, our government's greatest priority is to deliver cost-of-living relief to hardworking Queensland families while keeping inflation as low as possible. If that means we have to go into deficit, our government will always choose to back Queensland families. I say that again: if that means we have to go into deficit, our government will always choose to back Queensland families.

Today I can inform the House that our measures to support Queensland families and our measures to address record demand for housing and health care mean that in this year's budget we will no longer be forecasting surpluses in the next two financial years. In the financial year commencing

1 July this year we anticipate forecasting a deficit of around \$3 billion, although this figure is subject to change. Similarly, in the 2025-26 financial year, we anticipate that that year's deficit will be less than \$1 billion. Our message to Queensland families is clear: if our budget has to go into deficit to keep your household budget in surplus, then that is what we will do. It was true during the COVID years and it remains true today.

Last month I told the House that what we use debt to deliver is important. Today I say to the House that what we run deficits to deliver is just as important. These are deliberate choices that all political parties must make: whether to prioritise people or numbers on a balance sheet; to decide who comes first, ratings agencies or Queensland families. The topic of debt is important and the topic of deficits is important. Today I renew my call and once again invite the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer to ask me any questions they might have on these important topics.

Infrastructure; Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.47 am): The Miles and Albanese Labor governments are providing exceptional cost-of-living support to Queenslanders and through our record-breaking Big Build we are committed to providing the most important cost-of-living support there is: secure, well-paid jobs. The Big Build includes our investment in new and upgraded community sporting venues right across the state for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Last week we fired the starter's gun for the first \$560 million worth of contracts which will support more than 1,000 local jobs. On Friday at the Sunshine Coast Stadium I was joined by Senator Anthony Chisholm, Sunshine Coast Mayor Rosanna Natoli, Brisbane 2032 Olympic Organising Committee President Andrew Liveris and, of course, the strongest advocate for his community, the member for Caloundra, Jason Hunt. It was also great to meet some of the clubs and athletes that are going to benefit from these upgrades.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, cease your crossfire across the chamber or you will leave.

Ms GRACE: There is over \$300 million worth of investment and they are still whingeing. Those who will benefit include: Kawana Waters State College Football Excellence Program; Dr Bridie Kean, a former Paralympic athlete, Chair of the Sunshine Coast Legacy Plan Community Reference Group and Deputy Chef de Mission at Paris 2024; and reps from Sunshine Coast Falcons, Melbourne Storm, Sunshine Coast Lightning and the Sunshine Coast Phoenix. It is not every press conference where the announcement is met by thunderous applause, but that shows how much this investment means to the community.

As Mayor Natoli said, these venues are first and foremost community venues for the people of the Sunshine Coast, which is why we are starting now so they will be ready to use in 2027, long before the games are even here. The first two tenders for the Sunshine Coast Stadium upgrade and the Chandler Indoor Sports Centre and precinct works are now out, with others to follow later this year and in 2025 in a phased approach that is supported by industry. In good news for Queensland SMEs, at least 30 per cent of this procurement opportunity is reserved for them. By the end of 2024 we are hoping to have around half of the \$1.87 billion minor venues program contracts in the market, with others due in 2025. Remember, we are eight years out from our games and Sydney 2000 did not even have a master plan until five years out.

Yesterday we announced our \$370 million Skills Strategy. We are ensuring 10 to 15 per cent of the hours worked on these projects are done by apprentices and trainees. These venues will be a great legacy for the Sunshine Coast and for Queensland. It was a pleasure to meet with the legacy committee earlier this month to talk about how these games are going to transform our state long after the final medals are given out. As Andrew Liveris said, everybody knows Paris, everybody knows Los Angeles and everyone is going to know Brisbane and Queensland. It is Queensland's time to shine.

TAFE


 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.51 am): Under Queensland's Big Build the state is booming, with low unemployment, record investment and a strong economic outlook. Our industries need more workers with higher skills and the Miles Labor government is committed to putting Queenslanders at the front of the line for those good local jobs. I am proud to say that this week is a

great week for Queensland and an even better week for Queensland workers because the new Miles Labor government is making the most of this golden decade of opportunity by funding training places for one million Queenslanders through our new Queensland Skills Strategy.

This is what Labor is all about: getting more Queenslanders into good jobs with better pay quicker. From health and social services to construction, clean energy, tourism and so much more, it will ease the cost-of-living pressures for those who want to train, upskill, reskill and pursue careers in our state's priority industries. We know that training and free TAFE has the power to change lives. That is why we are boosting funding for up to 70,000 free TAFE places. People who were facing homelessness, mothers returning to work and young people who had not finished high school have all completed free TAFE courses and come out with good jobs—Queenslanders like 17-year-old joinery apprentice Tully Kendall who the Premier, Deputy Premier and I had the pleasure of meeting yesterday. Tully said a big contributing factor for starting her apprenticeship was desperately wanting to get out of school. Under free TAFE she said that to earn while she learns is awesome too. She is getting paid to train and learn her trade and will be a qualified tradesperson when she is still young. Tully is being trained at the biggest trade training facility in the Southern Hemisphere at Acacia Ridge. Because they are doing such great work, our strategy has our proudly publicly owned TAFE Queensland right at its heart.

There is no clearer difference between Labor and the LNP than jobs and TAFE. We are backing up our strategy with real funding: \$370 million for more and better training, including TAFE, only possible because we are making multinational mining companies pay their fair share through progressive coal royalties—the very same coal royalties that the LNP would rip away from TAFE. Whether it is blue collar, white collar or in the service industry, only Labor will ensure that a good job is within reach for every Queenslanders.

Cost of Living

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs) (9.54 am): How good is it when the Labor federal Treasurer, who just happens to be a resident of the great electorate of Springwood, backs in this Queensland Treasurer so that every Queensland household gets an additional \$300 off their power bill. This supercharged energy rebate means Queenslanders are the recipients of the biggest cost-of-living relief move ever. In fact, many Queensland households are already reporting that they will not need to pay another power bill this year. Only Labor has a plan to bring down prices permanently: nation-leading cost-of-living relief in the short term delivering the lowest cost form of energy—renewables—in the medium term and keeping power assets in public ownership permanently.

Not only did the federal Treasurer deliver energy rebates and a big tax cut for every single taxpayer, he also boosted local manufacturing and jobs thanks to the Future Made in Australia plan. This is the biggest green light for tens of thousands of regional Queensland jobs in industries like hydrogen, refining and in green iron. Federal Labor's budget means real job security for hundreds of thousands of workers in Queensland's trade exposed industries by supporting those industries to cut their emissions. Mr Speaker, I am sure both you and the Deputy Premier would agree a budget this good could only have been delivered by a Queenslanders. This Labor budget is another major watershed moment for real action on climate change too. It shows the real advantages of state and federal Labor governments working together.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: In another big relief for Queenslanders, I can inform the House that the latest Australian Energy Market Operator report released today says that Queensland's energy system is the most reliable and secure—

Mr Hart interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide and member for Burleigh, you are both warned under the standing orders.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you have been consistently interjecting. Do you question my ruling? Thank you.

Mr de BRENNI: I reiterate, the Australian Energy Market Operator's report released today says that Queensland's energy system is the most reliable and secure of any mainland state in Australia. The report says that our reliability rating is due to the 'on-time delivery of all included generation and storage projects'. Cleaner, cheaper and more secure—that is Labor's power plan for Queensland.

Cost of Living

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (9.57 am): We are committed to taking pressure off household budgets, something we are able to do because we are making multinational mining companies pay their fair share and by keeping our assets in public hands. Because of that, families and individuals across this state will now receive \$1,000 off their energy bill and another \$300 from the federal budget, building on our nation-leading cost-of-living relief package.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, you will cease your interjections.

Ms SCANLON: It is the biggest ever rebate offered by any government and just one of the many ways that we are working to take pressure off household budgets. We have made kindy free. We have made TAFE free and now through our Homes for Queenslanders plan we have a dedicated rent relief package—direct financial support to help people keep a roof over their head; people like Patricia whom I met recently on the Gold Coast. She lost her job and was not able to keep up with the rent so we stepped in to help her and her four-year-old daughter. She is one of 78,000 people who have received rental support from this government.


Recently I announced an expansion of that program to help even more Queenslanders. As a homelessness organisation asked me last week in Bundaberg, 'What happens to all of this support after October?' The truth is that all of that is at risk under those opposite. The LNP has suggested that our Homes for Queenslanders plan is too much. They want to take back the billions of dollars in coal royalties from Queenslanders that is delivering direct cost-of-living support and instead give it to their mates in big business.

Our cost-of-living relief measures are only possible because we have kept assets in public hands and because we have taken on multinational mining companies. At a time when Queenslanders can least afford cuts, those opposite will sell our power assets and make cuts to rebates, health, education and housing. Only a Miles Labor government can be trusted with Queensland's future.

Mr Smith interjected.

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

TAFE


 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (9.59 am): We know young Queenslanders are continuing to benefit from our government's investment in skills and training. Yesterday, the new Miles Labor government announced a further investment in skills and training with the announcement of the Queensland Skills Strategy. As we have heard this morning, our new Miles government will provide one million Queenslanders with free and subsidised training, helping Queenslanders secure good jobs, especially young people.

Fee-free TAFE changes the trajectory of young peoples' lives. With an additional 30,000 new TAFE places, young Queenslanders will have more opportunities to learn new skills or gain an apprenticeship, building the foundation of their future. A new career ready VET in Schools program will include funded training and more trade tasters for school students delivered by TAFE. This is to particularly encourage students with an interest in undertaking plumbing, construction or hair salon assistant trade tasters as we know these are translating into apprenticeships and traineeships and employment for our young people. Additional funding for Indigenous workforce and skills development grants means meaningful work towards Closing the Gap targets.

This new investment builds on our existing record of supporting young people with fee-free TAFE. In 2023 alone, 65,000 Queenslanders, including young people, benefited from fee-free TAFE places. I am advised that 88,467 students and apprentices have commenced fee-free TAFE since 2023. These places are supporting young people into careers as nurses, electricians, care workers, bookkeepers, carpenters, healthcare workers, and the list goes on.

In the 2021 census there were approximately 911,158 young people aged 12 to 25 years old. This means that nearly one in five Queenslanders are aged 12 to 25 years old. Our investment in TAFE is giving young people the very tools they need to build their lives in this state and is a very real recognition that vocational training helps empower young people with the skills and training they need to build strong foundations for their futures.

Vocational Education and Training

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.02 am): Yesterday's announcement by the Premier, Treasurer and the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Training of the Good Jobs, Great Training: Queensland Skills Strategy 2024-28 is a welcome one for all Queenslanders. It is the Miles government's plan to make sure Queensland has the skilled workers we need now and into the future. We know—and every employer knows—that those pathways often start in school. Already in Queensland we have a strong history of embracing and offering quality vocational education and training which supports school students to develop life skills and work ready skills to stay on track to attainment and to transition to meaningful post-school pathways. In fact, the most recent figures available show that Queensland leads the nation in the delivery of VET for school students, with more than 39.8 per cent of the national total and 48.7 per cent of all school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.


Students in our state schools have many pathways towards success with VET being a key one for many students. Last year 81.9 per cent of all Queensland state school year 12 completers were awarded a VET qualification or participated in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship and 86.8 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state school year 12 completers achieved a VET qualification or participated in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship. VET is a learning option for students in the senior phase of learning, which may involve the attainment of a nationally recognised VET qualification, and supports positive transitions from school into their next steps into further education and employment. Most importantly, no matter who they are or where they are in Queensland, VET assists students to prepare for their future.

Aisha's story is such a great example. She was managing at school and getting Bs in most subjects without trying too hard until year 10. In that year, she became estranged from her mother who has significant substance abuse problems. Since that time, Aisha has not had somewhere permanent to live, so she stays with friends. She supports herself financially and also has to balance her work and school commitments. Due to her stressful living arrangements, Aisha was unable to keep up with the demands of her study pathway in year 11—a pathway which she had hoped would help her gain entry to university. She failed all her subjects and did not attain any credits towards her QCE that year. Her results put her at risk of not attaining a QCE at the end of year 12.

Her school helped her to transition to a vocational education and training pathway so she could increase her credits while continuing to study some general subjects. Her study load now comprises three subjects—general maths, marine science and dance—and she is also doing a Certificate I and III in Business, a Certificate I in Financial Services and a Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways. If she can complete her VET courses and pass her school subjects, Aisha will receive 20 credits and gain her QCE, which will enable her to go on to further study or employment after she finishes school.

Every student to reach their full potential—that is what we all want for our young people. The Queensland Skills Strategy cements that path for the future.

Beef Australia 2024


 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.05 am): Beef 2024 was a huge, successful demonstration of the Queensland beef industry in the beef capital of the world, Rockhampton. I know that the member for Rockhampton was overwhelmed by the number of members from this side of the House who attended. I am advised that there were 119,324 gate movements over the course of the week, up from 115,866 three years ago. While the stakes were high, this event was a credit to the Beef Australia board chaired by Bryce Camm and CEO Simon Irwin. It was clear that a lot of effort was invested in ensuring that this was the place to be, whether you were a local, from industry or an international delegate.

Even for those not in attendance, Beef 2024 was international with more than 79,000 unique website views. Approximately 60 per cent of viewers tuned in from overseas. They may or may not have seen politicians of all stripes quizzed on the industry. The highlight reel is still online for those interested and it has some interesting viewing. The Queensland cabinet had onsite cabinet meetings as well as a visit from the Prime Minister. This was the first cabinet meeting at Beef Week, something for which we should be congratulated. This event takes pride of place on the Queensland schedule. It also highlights why we as a government have committed \$4.5 million to Beef 2027, doubling our effort from this year.

Beef 2024 also saw the announcement that, for the first time in 11 years, Queensland no longer has any shires drought declared. AACo celebrated its 200 years. There were informative guest speakers, celebrity chefs and the DAF stand there. All DAF staff who were there should be acknowledged as they fielded a range of questions. I know that the inquisitive kids who were there will look for jobs in that industry in the future.

Bryce, Simon, Mayor Tony Williams, the Rockhampton Regional Council, Cattle Australia, the beef industry and all those who assisted should be congratulated on such a successful event. I would also like to acknowledge Kirsten for her assistance in the logistics of the event.

Brisbane, Events

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (10.08 am): We need look no further than last weekend to recognise that Queensland is the undisputed major events capital of Australia. Brisbane was bursting at the seams—literally heaving with visitors from interstate and overseas, all drawn to the river city for a host of outstanding major events. Let me run through some of those events: superstar rapper Macklemore was rocking the stage at Riverstage; there was the running of the time honoured Doomben 10,000 as part of the Winter Racing Carnival—I saw a lot of bookies who were happy; a record crowd of 50,000 across two days at the Paniyiri Greek Festival, which, I thought, was fantastic and very well hosted, minister; and more than 27,000 fans saw the Lions maul the Tigers at the Gabba.

At the centre of all of this, as the Premier has touched on, was the Magic Round at Suncorp, the jewel in the crown—a four-day festival of footy, the envy of the nation. This year we kicked it off with game 1 of the Women’s State of Origin at Suncorp Stadium on Thursday night. Once again Queensland has set the record for the nation by hosting a record crowd of more than 25,000 for this fantastic women’s event.


Over the next three days we had 16 NRL clubs go head to head in front of a record combined crowd of over 149,000, meaning the event was completely sold out. If there is any other example needed for how important events are, this is one of them. The economic impact of Magic Round is undeniable. Nearly half of all tickets sold came from interstate or from our friends across the ditch in New Zealand. That is terrific news for our visitor economy and good for Queensland jobs. As buzzing Caxton Street was closed to all traffic to create a true festival atmosphere, even those who did not hold a ticket had a fantastic night and day there.

There are predictions that occupancy rates over the weekend reached 100 per cent—which is terrific after the challenging start to the year we have had in some areas—and the economic benefit could be up to \$50 million. This is excellent news for local hospitality and hotel businesses across our city and, most importantly, across our state.

The great news is that Magic Round is here for the next three years, as the Premier touched on. The Miles government has secured the event for Queensland at its spiritual home, Suncorp, for the next three years. This is fantastic for everybody who has been involved: not just for the businesses, not just for the tourism sector, but also for those people who are employed and those people who are in close proximity to that particular event.

I was very pleased to join with the Deputy Premier, the Lord Mayor and the ARLC Chairman, Peter V’landys, on Friday as part of an important partnership that could deliver up to \$150 million for the Queensland economy. Bring on the next three years of magic!

Gold Coast University Hospital; Hospitals, Performance Data

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (10.11 am): I would like to update the House on the passing of a 78-year-old man at the Gold Coast University Hospital last week. I want to convey my heartfelt condolences to the family for their loss. I am advised that the family has expressed distress at the thought of media coverage and has requested that patient information is not disclosed, and of course I will respect their wishes and treat this matter with sensitivity.

I am advised that the patient was triaged appropriately and assessed immediately on arrival at the emergency department. Dr David Green, the Director of Emergency Medicine at the Gold Coast University Hospital, has said that the department was under immense pressure that afternoon. They had many more patients than anticipated, including three trauma patients requiring complex and urgent care.

Initially, the patient was under the care of experienced paramedics inside the hospital. I want to be clear that no patients are ever left in the back of an ambulance. I understand he was in an ED bed receiving treatment at the time that he suffered a medical episode and received immediate emergency care. For more than 10 hours this gentleman was under the care of our hardworking ED and ICU teams before sadly passing away.

The hospital is undertaking a clinical review and it will help inform details about the appropriateness of the care that he received and whether timeframes could have been improved. I give my commitment to releasing the outcomes of that review once it is finalised. I again want to offer my sincere condolences to the family. I want to thank the frontline paramedics and hospital staff for their incredible work.

Finally, we have released the latest round of hospital performance data for the March quarter. The March quarter was the busiest ever, with over 600,000 people presenting at EDs. That is an extra 370 patients every day in our hospitals compared to this time last year. We have seen figures for the most critical and the most sick patients jump 11 per cent.

In February, the Queensland Ambulance Service experienced the most triple-O calls ever in a single day. This demand was driven by a perfect storm of floods, heatwaves, cyclones and a surge in RSV, flu and COVID. What this data also shows is that our investments are working. Despite the unprecedented demand on almost every metric, we have seen an improvement. Our hardworking health staff delivered a record 37,000 elective surgeries and eight in 10 were seen in the recommended timeframes—both improvements. The long waitlist for surgeries has fallen a massive 38 per cent and some hospitals, like Bundaberg, have now cleared their entire surgery long waitlist. They are now at zero.

There were 23,000 more emergency department patients seen in recommended timeframes which is an improvement on last year. Despite this extra pressure, the median ED wait time remains 16 minutes. There are more than 4,000 people who have been transferred off an ambulance stretcher within 30 minutes compared to this time last year. While a perfect storm of external factors in January and February did result in a slight decline in our patient off-stretcher time, as an overall percentage—

Mr Crisafulli: Worst ever!

Ms FENTIMAN: What the Leader of the Opposition will not tell you, Mr Speaker, is that that bounced right back in March. I want to thank the hardworking staff for all of their incredible work, to take a surge in patients. Finally, for the benefit of the House, I would like to table new data comparing Queensland's patient off-stretcher performance with comparable statistics using the state's own methodologies to measure performance.


Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'National POST Comparison' [\[815\]](#).

Contrary to the opposition's claims about Queensland's national performance, I thought it was really important to put in context how Queensland was performing compared to every other state. We know Queensland has the busiest and best-performing ambulance service in the nation. It is the only one that is free in mainland Australia—something that will never change under a Labor government. The results show that Queensland is outperforming South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria by as much as 16 per cent. That is testament to the incredible work of our paramedics and our emergency department clinicians.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.16 am.

Ambulance Ramping

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.16 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. In June the minister said she could get ambulance ramping to 28 per cent in 12 months. After one year in the role, ramping has risen from 43 per cent to a record high 45.5 per cent. How can Queenslanders trust the Labor government to reduce ramping when everything it has done has simply made the problem worse?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. There are a few things: I said when I became the health minister that ambulance ramping was one of my top priorities. Since then—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, cease your interjections. Member, I am listening to the minister's response. It is relevant to the question asked. I would like to hear the answer.

Ms FENTIMAN: Compared to this time last year, an extra 4,000 patients got off the stretcher within 30 minutes. I also said that I wanted to see our health system return to pre-pandemic levels. On every measure—on every measure—we are there because of our investments.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my left!

Ms FENTIMAN: When it comes to patient off-stretcher time, as those opposite will well know, when you have such demand and so many more sick patients arriving by ambulance, I think the fact that the POST was able to remain relatively steady, that we have seen an improvement in ED seen in time and in elective surgery waitlist seen in time and that the median ED wait time has remained stable is actually something we should be celebrating our hardworking frontline staff for!

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Buderim!

Ms FENTIMAN: We should be celebrating our staff because they do a tremendous job.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: Unlike those opposite, we do not call our staff 'duds'. We celebrate the work of our staff. They are doing a tremendous job. We also know that we have a record number of patients who are stuck in our hospitals who need an aged-care bed—over 900 of them. It is this Labor government that has put millions of dollars on the table. We have 159 patients now being cared for in private facilities, but we do need the federal government to make sure that they do their bit in helping us move these patients through the hospital.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my left!

Ms FENTIMAN: Those long-stay patients would fill some of our hospitals three times over, but we are investing in the resources we need to move those patients on.

The other thing that we are doing of course is investing in primary care through our satellite hospitals—something that those opposite still continue to criticise. It was wonderful to be at the opening of the Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital with my colleagues because the people who turned up for the open day were so excited to have world-class facilities on their doorstep. Those satellite hospitals are doing what we said they would do. There has been a 12 per cent reduction in non-urgent cases at our hospitals. We are getting our hospital system back to where it was pre COVID. Of course there is more to do, but we celebrate our staff—unlike those who call them duds.

Ambulance Ramping

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have a further question to the Minister for Health. In the week it was revealed ambulance ramping reached historic highs of 45.5 per cent, another Queenslanders lost his life after reportedly being stuck on an ambulance ramp. This time the QAS's top doctor said that the patient should never have remained ramped. Has another Queenslanders lost their life because the Labor government has never properly resourced the health system as it promised to?

Ms FENTIMAN: Of course, as I have said, my thoughts are with the family of this gentleman who are very distressed about the ongoing media coverage of this case. As I have already told the House, this patient was under the care of paramedics for about an hour and three-quarters before being transferred to an ED space. He was in the ED and the ICU for about 11 hours receiving treatment before he passed away. There will be a clinical review and I have already said that I will make any of those recommendations public.

When it comes to resourcing the health system, on this side of the House this government has a record investment, and that investment is possible because of our progressive coal royalties—something those opposite have not supported and of course will cut once they are in government. We have a \$14 billion Big Build in health. That is how you free up beds and improve ambulance ramping:

you build more hospitals, you build more beds and you expand the hospitals we have. We have heard a lot from the Leader of the Opposition about how health and ambulance ramping is a priority for him, but we have not heard one idea, one plan, one dot point or one dollar about what they would do to help ease the extraordinary pressure we are facing in our hospital system. We have heard not one idea, not one statement about what they would do differently.

When those opposite were in government their approach was not to build any hospital infrastructure; it was to sack staff and close wonderful facilities like the Barrett Adolescent Centre. That is their record on health. I am so proud of our record investment in health and our record investment in the staff we need. We are almost at 1,000 staff whom we have attracted through our Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme, which is again something those opposite did not welcome. They said it would not work, and again they have been proven wrong. We have 1,000 clinicians from interstate and overseas who have joined our wonderful Queensland Health workforce. That is how you ease pressure on our hospitals: more beds, more staff. I say to those opposite the fact that we have seen this extraordinary demand yet they were able to bounce back and see an improvement in March is again a testament to the staff. We absolutely back them; we know they will sack them. We celebrate the staff; they call them 'duds'.

Economic Development

Mr SMITH: My question is of the Premier. Can the Premier please outline how the Miles Labor government's economic plan is working hand in hand with the federal government's Made in Australia policy to create long-lasting economic development and job creation across Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any risky alternatives?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Bundaberg for his question. He knows full well that our renewable Energy and Jobs Plan is protecting and creating blue-collar jobs right across Queensland, mostly in regional Queensland in places like Bundaberg. The trading partners we send our manufactured goods to are increasingly demanding that those goods have a lower carbon footprint and by delivering to them 24/7 stored renewable energy we can ensure that our existing industries remain and grow and we can attract the industries of the future, for example in green steel making.

That is why I was particularly pleased to support the announcement yesterday from Quinbrook Infrastructure Partners and Central Queensland Metals. It is a massive deal for Queensland. It will see them take our 24/7 stored renewable energy and put it together with our critical minerals and the hydrogen that we will produce in Gladstone to make iron in Gladstone, and in the process we will be creating good Queensland jobs. That multibillion dollar project could only happen thanks to the Australian government's Future Made in Australia policy—because if you are making it in Australia, you are making it in Queensland. That is why we are pleased to support that plan. It works hand in hand with our economic plan to protect and create jobs across Queensland. We know that plan would not exist, and therefore this project would not exist, if the LNP had their way. The LNP is actively opposing the Future Made in Australia plan and the Leader of the Opposition has not said a word about it. It does not have to be like that, because the WA Liberal Leader of the Opposition has the guts to stand up to Peter Dutton. She said of the Future Made in Australia policy—

It's something that I will raise with my federal colleagues. We are committed to jobs and industry and new industries in Western Australia and that is my position.

It does not have to be like that: leaders of the opposition can show leadership. They can stand up to Peter Dutton and David Littleproud and say they want what is best for their state. That is what we are doing here in Queensland—working with the Albanese government to make steel in Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, before you resume your seat you did use a word which is considered to be unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr MILES: I withdraw.

Ambulance Ramping

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Was the minister aware that another Queenslanders died after waiting on a ramp on the Gold Coast only days before she claimed to the media that ambulance ramping was going down?

Ms FENTIMAN: I have already spoken today about these two issues. Again I want to offer my sympathies and condolences to the family of the gentleman who passed away. He was in the care of the ED and the ICU for about 10 hours and received very good care. There is a clinical review underway

and I will make public any of the recommendations that will look at the appropriateness of the care and the timeliness of the care. What I want to say when it comes to ambulance ramping is that we know there are many things that will help drive our patient off-stretcher performance. There are, as I said, thousands more people compared to this time—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition and member for Mudgeeraba, the minister is being responsive to the question.

Ms FENTIMAN: There are over 4,000 more patients getting off the stretcher within 30 minutes compared to this time last year. Despite the volume and despite the increase in category 1 and 2 patients, the staff are doing an amazing job, and I want to again acknowledge them. I particularly want to acknowledge the staff at the Gold Coast University Hospital emergency department. It is one of the biggest in the nation and those staff do a tremendous job. Dr David Green has today made some comments, explaining how busy the hospital was on that afternoon—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba.

Ms FENTIMAN:—including dealing with three trauma cases, which is very unusual. Despite that, they cared for this gentleman. Of course there will be a review. What I said on the weekend—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was very specific: was the minister aware of this incident when she made claims that ambulance ramping was going down?

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. The question had other elements to it as well. As I heard the response, I believe the minister has addressed all of the elements that were contained in the question.

Mr POWELL: There were no other elements.

Mr SPEAKER: There were other elements, member.

Ms FENTIMAN: What I said on the weekend when releasing the latest round of hospital data is that, despite the unprecedented demand—despite all of that—and the fact that the ED median wait time has remained steady at 16 minutes—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: That does not assist, Leader of the Opposition.

Ms FENTIMAN:—Queensland being one of the leaders in the country for ED seen on time is a testament to the resources we have put in to improve patient flow but also a testament—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Mudgeeraba!

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders. I was trying to give you some guidance and you continued to interject.

Ms FENTIMAN: Again, I want to know—as does everyone on this side of the House and as does Queensland—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left.

Ms FENTIMAN: Queenslanders want to know what the Leader of the Opposition's plan is.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order, again on relevance under standing order 118(b). I can read the entire question, if that helps.

Mr SPEAKER: You can resume your seat, member. I have ruled on this and I have heard the minister's response. I know sometimes you do not get the answer you would like, but I am hearing the response from the minister.

Mr King interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kurwongbah, you are warned under the standing orders. Minister for Health, do you have anything further to add?

Ms FENTIMAN: Recently, the Leader of the Opposition was asked on the *Today Show* what his plans were. Do you know what he said? Hope! He said, 'I'm just going to hope it gets better. I just want to give Queenslanders hope.' He is hoping it gets better. He does not have a plan to make it better and he has not committed one dollar to make it better.

Future Made in Australia Plan

Mr WALKER: My question is of the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the federal government's Future Made in Australia policy helps Queenslanders and is the Deputy Premier aware of any risky alternatives?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Mundingburra for his question. Everybody in this House knows that the member for Mundingburra is a great champion for his part of Queensland. He is a champion by name as the northern champion for hydrogen and he is a champion by nature. He is a champion for Townsville and for Mundingburra, and he is not the sort of bloke to cut and run from his community. He will stand up and fight for them.

Queensland is home to so much of Australia's critical mineral wealth and, of course, so much renewable energy. That is why our state is set to be the big winner out of the Albanese government's Future Made in Australia plan. The Hydrogen Production Tax Incentive and the Critical Minerals Production Tax Incentive will be a huge boost to regional powerhouses like Townsville and Gladstone, and to companies like vanadium producer the Vecco Group in Townsville and the sapphire glass producer Alpha HPA in Gladstone.

Peter Dutton hates this plan and he has promised to scrap it. Peter Dutton would scrap a pathway to tens of thousands of highly skilled jobs for Queenslanders and for Western Australians. The Western Australian Liberal Party might be small but they have the courage to stand up to Peter Dutton. They back this plan because it is good for resources states.

It is a different story when it comes to this leader of the LNP. This leader of the LNP has never seen a small target he did not like. Once again, he has run a mile rather than stand up to beat Peter Dutton. To be fair, he has had bigger issues on his plate. He has concerns like requiring all members of the LNP staff to call him 'The Leader'—with a capital T and a capital L. Don't you forget it.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection—just because you are called it does not make you a leader. The Leader of the Opposition does not have a single plan. Sorry, I am misleading the House—he has one plan to rename the Cross River Rail the Elizabeth Line. Doesn't that speak to his arrogance? Doesn't that speak to the man who calls himself the premier-elect? Doesn't that speak to the man who thinks he has it in the bag? That is the sort of arrogant and out-of-touch nature we see from the Leader of the Opposition. Maybe they will call it the Santoro Line if the member for Clayfield gets his way. Who would know? That is what is occupying this Leader of the Opposition: his obsession with renaming rail lines, rather than supporting the critical minerals and hydrogen future. A real leader would be less worried about titles and a real leader would stand up for a future made in Australia.

Ambulance Ramping

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Health. After the death of Wayne Irving on an ambulance ramp, the health minister told the media, 'I am throwing everything at this. Over the last few months, we've seen improvements when it comes to ramping.' Given ambulance ramping has not improved and reports of another death following more ramping at the Gold Coast University Hospital, does this show the health minister is not up to the job of fixing the health crisis?

Ms FENTIMAN: I am sorry, could I ask that the member repeat the question?

Mr SPEAKER: Member, are you okay to repeat the question?

Mr BLEIJIE: Absolutely, Mr Speaker.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Where is the member for Ipswich?

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, I have asked for silence when questions are asked.

Mr BLEIJIE: Abandoning your government.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Health. After the death of Wayne Irving on an ambulance ramp, the health minister told the media, 'I am throwing everything at this. Over the last few months, we have seen improvements when it comes to ramping.' Given ambulance ramping has not improved and reports of another death following more ramping at the Gold Coast University Hospital, does this show the health minister is not up to the job of fixing the Queensland Health crisis?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. We have continued to put more and more resources into initiatives for frontline clinicians—like the emergency department clinicians at Ipswich Hospital and Dr David Green, with whom I meet fortnightly—to help ease the pressure on our very busy emergency departments. We also work very closely with the Queensland Ambulance Service and we have put more ambos on the road and more ambulance trucks on the road as well to make sure that we keep up with the demand.

Not only are we doing everything and throwing everything at making sure that patients get access to primary care—and isn't it wonderful to finally have a federal Labor government that has tripled the bulk-billing incentive and is working with us to introduce urgent care clinics—we also have our satellite hospitals that are helping keep less urgent patients away from our busy emergency departments. We are throwing more resources at moving out long-stay patients and we are working with the federal government to find places in aged care for those patients.

When it comes to the interface between the Queensland Ambulance Service and our hardworking paramedics in our hospitals, we have more nurses in our emergency department wait rooms than we ever have. We have more initiatives to make sure that those patients who are recovering from surgery get access to rapid access clinics, as opposed to going through the front door. We continue to expand our hospitals and emergency departments as well as build new hospitals. Again, I say we are delivering more staff, more infrastructure and more beds. We are making sure that we continue to give our hardworking frontline staff the resources that they need.

Despite our hospitals being absolutely inundated with demand in January and February, I was very pleased to see an improvement in patient off-stretcher time in March. Those opposite know there was an improvement because, for the first time, we now release patient off-stretcher data monthly. We are releasing more hospital and health data than ever before. Despite an incredibly busy January and February, I was very pleased to see that the times were already improving in March. I have no doubt that with the work we are doing around providing free vaccines for flu and RSV and the work that we are doing to put more beds into the system and to bring more clinicians here we will continue to see improvements right across the board. Again, I am so very thankful and want to acknowledge the work—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN:—of our frontline health clinicians who, despite that demand, have seen improvements in ED wait times and huge improvements in elective surgery data.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In the contribution from the member for Kawana just moments ago, he made a reference to the absence of a member of this House for which—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will hear the point of order, member for Kawana. You are on a warning. Tread very carefully.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will be as brief as I can. The member for Kawana made reference to the absence of a member from this House, which we all know is against the agreed conventions of this place. Further to that, the member for Ipswich has been paired as a result of discussions informing the opposition that she is supporting her father in palliative care. He is in his final days. Given the convention, Mr Speaker, I would seek your guidance in relation to the member withdrawing that statement.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. When it comes to matters that are not part of standing orders or sessional orders, such as pairing, I believe those things should be best kept as a conversation between you and the Manager of Opposition Business. As for the other: member for Kawana, you know very well the convention about referring to a member's absence from this House. I would ask that you withdraw your comment.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Mr Power: Shame.

Mr SPEAKER: Who was that? Member for Logan, you are warned under the standing orders also.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure

Ms McMILLAN: My question is of the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the procurement process for Olympic venues, including how they will support trainees and apprentices, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question. I know how excited she is with what is going to be happening at Chandler, which is just down the road from her electorate, with around \$260 million in new and upgraded facilities, including for the aquatic centre, which will provide long-lasting community benefits. Wasn't it exciting at the announcement on Friday? As I said before, I have been to a lot of press conferences, but I have never had thunderous, spontaneous applause like that day when we announced a procurement process for the stadium and a procurement process for Chandler and the precinct. It is going to be incredible. These venues will not just be ready for the games; they will be completed way before 2032, giving athletes, schoolkids and champions in their sporting communities the opportunity to use them well and truly before the Olympic Games come to town.

I was not the only one excited. I know the member for Caloundra was as excited as I was, as was Mayor Natoli, who said—

Today's funding announcement follows years of research and planning and will deliver lasting economic and social benefits before, during and after hosting the Games.

The most exciting part is that it is all part of our \$370 million skills enhancements we are going to do here in this state. We will have 10 to 15 per cent of apprenticeship hours on those sites. We will have trainees doing their job and obviously getting the skills that we need to deliver our Big Build.

The question was whether I know of any alternative risky plans. I do not know of any alternative plans for health, I do not know of any plans about free TAFE, I do not know of any plans from those opposite on the Big Build, but I do know a plan and my constituents cannot wait! The Elizabeth Line! Those opposite turned their backs on Cross River Rail. I remember when the Prime Minister was the transport minister and they turned their backs on around \$750 million of investment in Cross River Rail. It took a Labor government to build Cross River Rail. My electors are saying, 'William Street, George Street, Albert Street, Edward Street, Charlotte Street, Margaret Street, Alice Street, Elizabeth Street, Queen Street, Adelaide Street—there's not enough royals in my electorate. We've got to have more. We need the Elizabeth Line.' In case they think they are in London; I have to remind them they are actually not in London, they are in Brisbane. It is great to see them concentrating on the big issues—not one plan, not one dollar. Lord help us.

Health System, Investment

Mr MICKELBERG: My question is to the Premier. In October 2021 the former health minister said, 'Our investment is starting to see improvements.' In November 2023 the current health minister said, 'Over the last few months we have seen improvements when it comes to ramping.' Ramping is now at a record high 45.5 per cent. Why should Queenslanders believe anything that this third-term Labor government says on health?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Buderim for his question. What we have seen today is the health minister consistently outline just what a great job our health staff are doing dealing with what is a record demand driven by natural events in January as well as surges in flu, RSV and COVID. Instead of coming in here and bagging them, like those opposite have consistently done, on this side of the House we will support them. Instead of cutting nurses, doctors and paramedics, as those opposite do, we will keep employing more doctors, more nurses, more paramedics, more allied health professionals and more support staff.

We are consistently building bigger and better health facilities right across this great state: new hospitals in Toowoomba, Bundaberg and the northern Gold Coast; hospital upgrades in just about every one of our major hospitals, including massive upgrades to Logan, Caboolture and soon Redcliffe; a big upgrade underway in Mackay that we brought forward some two decades; as well as those satellite hospitals that have proven to be just so effective. We have officially opened the sixth of those satellite

hospitals. They have resulted in 50,000 Queenslanders getting care closer to home and a 12 per cent reduction in non-critical presentations to our biggest hospitals, making sure those patients get better care as well as taking pressure off our hardworking ED staff at those big hospitals.

I note that those opposite have never supported our health Big Build. They did not go to the election committing to a Gold Coast Hospital. They have never supported any of our health build. We know they oppose our satellite hospitals and they say they will rename them; I assume they are going to make them 'Satellite Elizabeths' or something. On this side of the House, we are absolutely committed to supporting our health staff and giving them new, bigger and better facilities with cutting-edge equipment because we know that they are doing a fantastic job of supporting Queenslanders and we want to support them. We will never, ever call them 'duds'.

Queensland Skills Strategy

Mr KELLY: My question is to the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Can the minister outline how the Miles government's new Queensland Skills Strategy will support Queenslanders get more free and subsidised training, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

Mr McCALLUM: I thank the member for the question. The member for Greenslopes is a strong advocate for skills and training and for TAFE, and he is a proud member of the Miles Labor government. Our government is absolutely committed to getting more Queenslanders into the training that will give them the skills they need to access the good jobs that are on offer from our record Big Build—our Big Build of houses, of hospitals, of clean energy, of the infrastructure that our growing state needs. We are committed to training Queenslanders and giving them skills through our new Skills Strategy that will get them into high paid, high-vis careers.

It is a Skills Strategy that is going to deliver real cost-of-living relief right now. We want to train up Queenslanders who want to have a crack at getting qualified for the good jobs that are on offer. We want to give them a chance at a better life, through having better pay and a better job. We are doing that through a strategy that is funding one million Queenslanders to get trained up. It is a strategy that is backed by \$370 million in new funding which will deliver an extra 30,000 free TAFE places, bringing it to a total of 70,000 free TAFE places. That is providing immediate cost-of-living relief for young Queenslanders and families. It is part of our long-term vision to get Queenslanders the skills they need for the jobs that they want quicker.

We are just over 150 days from the next election, an election where Queenslanders have a very important choice in October. When it comes to the Miles Labor government, we have a clear plan to get them into the skills and training they need. We have seen nothing from the LNP—no plan and no policies for skills and training, no plan for TAFE and certainly no plan for free TAFE. It is hard in a political contest to have a debate around ideas when there are no ideas or policies coming from the other side. Yesterday we were at Acacia Ridge TAFE, the Southern Hemisphere's biggest trade centre, and there was a carpentry apprentice called James who used a drop saw for cutting timber for houses. They are the only cuts we will see at TAFE under Labor.

Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Premier. Ambulance ramping is worse under Minister Fentiman than it was under Minister D'Ath. When will the Premier hold Minister Fentiman to the same standards as Minister D'Ath and remove the current health minister?

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question clearly has imputations in relation to the Premier's role or otherwise in who sits around the cabinet table, and I ask you to consider ruling it out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. I have not considered that as being imputations. I will allow the Premier to answer the question.

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Nanango for her question. I say—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Everton!

Mr MILES: I say to the House that the health minister has my complete support, just as everyone in our health system has my support. Those opposite might always think the answer is sacking people. On this side of the House we think the answer is more nurses, more doctors, more paramedics, more

ambulances and more hospitals, including satellite hospitals. I am advised that Dr David Green from the Gold Coast University Hospital has confirmed what the health minister has told the House. He has said patient flow initiatives are working and we will continue to see improvement. However, we know that the Gold Coast needs another tertiary hospital. That is why we on this side of the House are planning for one and we are building one. Those opposite never—

Mrs Frecklington: What have you been doing for the last decade?

Mr MILES: I take the interjection from the member for Nanango because at no single election in the last decade have those opposite committed to a Gold Coast hospital, including the election when she was the leader. When she was the leader, those opposite did not commit to a new Gold Coast hospital. We on this side of the House will build one, just as we will build one in Bundaberg, just as we will build a new one in Toowoomba and just as we have built seven new satellite hospitals—six of them completed and one still to come.

We on this side of the House back our health staff. We do not cut them, like those opposite did. We do not sack them, like those opposite did. We employ more and more of them because they deliver those critical services that Queenslanders rely on. We are building more and more hospital beds to improve flow and to deal with the population increases that we have been experiencing as a result of the post-COVID migration surge. We are making sure every community right across this state has the health services they need, including the only free ambulance service on mainland Australia and also the best performing one.

Cost of Living

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is helping people in Rockhampton and all of Queensland with reducing cost-of-living pressures, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Rockhampton. Certainly locals in Rockhampton know who is on their side. They know the member for Rocky is on their side and they also know that Labor's candidate for Rockhampton, Craig Marshall, is on their side, too. I will tell the member, through you, Mr Speaker, how we are helping his constituents: it is because we are standing up to multinational coal companies and making them pay their fair share. I will tell members how: we are keeping Queensland's assets, like the Stanwell Power Station, in public ownership. I will tell members how: we are using coal company taxes to build the biggest battery in Queensland at the Stanwell Power Station. I will tell members how: we are not covering to Peter Dutton, like the Leader of the Opposition, with his coal-keeping, climate-wrecking, budget-meltdown nuclear policies. I will tell members how: since 2017, we have given Queenslanders \$1,125 in multiple asset ownership dividends and cost-of-living rebates.

I will tell members how we are supporting the citizens of Rockhampton: we are delivering them free kindy, free TAFE, free swimming classes and expanded school breakfast programs, and we have frozen car rego and so much more. I will also tell members how if you live in Rockhampton you pay less tax than the average Australian. Now federal Labor is backing our nation-leading cost-of-living rebate with a further \$300 for every household in the electorate of Rockhampton. I know the member for Rockhampton has been out there talking to the 12,000 seniors who live in his community, reminding them that they are eligible for a further \$372. I know that they are making sure they have let their power company know.

Rocky citizens know who is on their side. They knew it when the LNP prioritised these things when they were in office. They put a tax on the pharmacy allowance of vulnerable citizens. The LNP took an axe to the QBuild depot. They sacked 100 of the 110 staff at the Rockhampton QBuild depot. They knew it when power bills went up 43 per cent under those opposite, and they did nothing. In fact, the citizens of Rockhampton remember that the LNP was the only government in this state's history that cancelled a cost-of-living rebate on the eve of a 21 per cent pay rise. That is something the member for Broadwater must wake up to every morning regretting, feeling deep shame. He tells us he gets up early to exercise. I think he gets up early to reconcile that shame every single day.

Satellite Hospitals

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's record as health minister when he claimed he had listened to the experts and changed the name of a major Brisbane hospital. Will the Premier follow the advice of Queensland Health and medical professionals and rename satellite hospitals—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, sorry. Members to my right, the question will be heard in silence or I will start warning members. Member, please start your question again if you prefer.

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's record as health minister when he claimed he had listened to the experts and changed the name of a major Brisbane hospital. Will the Premier follow the advice of Queensland Health and medical professionals and rename the satellite hospitals to prevent dangerous confusion for patients?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Currumbin for her question—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Currumbin, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. When I call the House to order, I expect it to come to order.

Mr MILES: There are just so many directions I could go with the member for Currumbin's question, that it is hard to choose. I could talk about how the Queensland Children's Hospital has gone from strength to strength since its name was reverted to its name before Campbell Newman decided to use it in a culture war. I could go to the member for Currumbin's opposition to us building a satellite hospital in her own community. I could talk about how many Queenslanders have had fantastic services at the Tugun Satellite Hospital. I could talk about the day hospitals and private hospitals right across the state that do not have emergency departments or overnight beds that the LNP would have to shut down or rename under this bizarre policy.

I could talk about how Queensland patients are not all highly trained triage nurses and they are not necessarily able to determine exactly what category they are or the fact that, every single day, patients will go to their GP, present to an ambulance station, go to a pharmacy or go to a satellite hospital unaware of how critical their condition is and in every single case our highly trained health professionals will take care of them and make sure they get to where they need to be, including in the dedicated telehealth linked resus bays in every single one of our satellite hospitals. I could point out how irresponsible it is of the LNP to be saying that people should not seek care at a satellite hospital if it is their nearest healthcare location, because they should and they will be taken care of.

Instead, I will choose to answer the member for Currumbin's question by talking about the 'Elizabeth Line'. While those opposite—

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

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members to my right.

Mr POWELL: Category 1 patients turning up at a satellite hospital is not a joking matter.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for silence. For two minutes and more than 40 seconds I believe that the Premier was responding to that question. I would also ask you to ensure, member for Glass House, that your points of order are not frivolous. That goes for all members. Premier, you have 16 seconds remaining.

Mr MILES: While the leader might be obsessed—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders. In fact, you can leave the chamber immediately. I have not been able to catch you in the act today, as I usually do, but you can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Nanango withdrew from the chamber at 11.02 am.

Mr MILES: While those opposite might be obsessed with renaming things, on this side of the House we are getting on with the job of doing what matters for Queensland.

Homes for Queenslanders

Mr SULLIVAN: My question is of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works. Can the minister update the House on the progress of the Miles Labor government's Homes for Queenslanders plan, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms SCANLON: I thank the member for Stafford for the question. I know that he, alongside everyone on this side of the House, is a big supporter of our big social housing build. In his electorate of Stafford we currently have 83 homes under construction on three projects. Those are just a few of the nearly thousand homes under construction right now here in Queensland—like the new homes I visited with the member for Hervey Bay under construction in Torquay, the new units I visited with the member for Bundaberg and the Premier in Bundaberg or the newly completed units across two sites in Gympie which will soon be fully tenanted. One of those projects is a modular home project. I know that the member for Burnett has a problem with those.

Mr Bennett: Only the cost.

Ms SCANLON: He is continuing his opposition to modular homes here in Queensland. Of course, we will deliver thousands more homes as part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan. In fact, it is a plan to deliver 53,500 more homes. That is not a figure that we made up; it is a figure that has been underpinned by modelling by independent experts. It is a long-term vision to build more homes. Of course, we are also training the tradies, the chippies and the sparkies that we need to build those homes.

All of that is at risk under the LNP. Members do not need to just take my word for it. Just last week, when asked about housing, Queensland Council of Social Service Chief Executive Aimee McVeigh said—

We're hearing crickets from the opposition. We don't know what the alternative vision is for Queensland.

The member for Everton has also repeatedly failed to come clean on their plans. They have a plan to rename Cross River Rail the 'Elizabeth Line' but not a plan on housing. Apparently that is their priority. The *Courier-Mail* said just last week—

He refused to be drawn on whether the LNP would scrap the state government's current target of 53,500 social homes by 2046.

We know why those opposite do not want to tell us their plan—that is, they are going to cut. We know that because the Leader of the Opposition appointed the same person who did it all last time. Why else would you appoint the member for Everton if you were not going to gut social housing all over again? Instead of training more chippies and sparkies, they just closed down TAFEs. Instead of building more infrastructure, working with councils to unlock more supply, they stripped funding from councils. Instead of investing in our public builder, they cut 1,600 jobs. Instead of building more social houses, he managed to send the social housing stock backwards by 428 homes. It is extraordinary. The LNP cannot be trusted to take on board the priorities of this state to deliver more homes. Only a Labor government can be trusted.

Youth Crime, Relocation Sentencing

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Premier. Queenslanders cautiously welcomed the Premier's announcement of an intensive on-country trial because of its similarities to KAP's policy to send youth offenders bush. Will the Premier update the House on the outcome of the EOI process, or was this announcement just a ploy to buy the Miles government time and credibility?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for his question. He is correct in that we took, in part, the advice of Katter's Australian Party when we considered implementing an intensive on-country program. We are currently seeking expressions of interest and assessing expressions of interest in a program like that. The idea is to connect young people with elders, to connect them with country and to provide them with an opportunity to get their life back on track. The sad fact is: many of these young people have not had the kind of parenting and home environment that we would want them to have. I am looking forward to seeing the outcomes of that tender process. I hope that we see an intensive on-country program that works.

It is important, though, of course, because these are taxpayer funds, that we make sure there is an appropriate process and that it is evidence-based—that we pick a model and a provider that will improve outcomes. That is important not just in some theoretical sense; it is important because we have seen before what goes wrong when you do not follow an appropriate process and when you do not look for evidence. When the member for Kawana did a dodgy deal with an LNP donor to set up their boot camps—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I take personal offence at what the Premier said and I ask for a withdrawal.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, will you withdraw?

Mr MILES: I withdraw, Mr Speaker. When the member for Kawana did a deal with an LNP donor to deliver their boot camps, the result was incredibly expensive and proven to be ineffective. We are determined not to make mistakes like—

Mr Stewart interjected.

Mr MILES: They are not my words; that is from the Audit Office. I take that interjection from the member for Townsville.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr MILES: We are determined that this intensive on-country program needs to be good value for money and it needs to deliver results. I am sure that the member for Hinchinbrook would agree with us on that. In fact, we have discussed how important it is that this program works.

Mr Krause interjected.

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

Mr MILES: I have heard from not just Katter's Australian Party MPs but also our MPs in Townsville—and also from Townsville locals like Melissa, who was a victim of a ramming incident. I went and saw her in her house. She said to me that she thought a program like this could be precisely what is needed, particularly for that cohort of young offenders in Townsville. We will deliver that program. I look forward to updating the House in due course.

Education

Ms PUGH: My question is of the Minister for Education. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government's priorities are supporting young Queenslanders' education and reducing cost-of-living pressures, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for her question and I know how passionate she is about making sure that every child gets the best start in life. I know how excited every member on this side of the House is about our free kindy initiative and the workforce initiatives for early childhood—\$2 billion worth of funding to ensure that every four-year-old in Queensland receives 15 hours a week for 40 weeks of the year of kindy. This will save every family about \$4,800 for every child. With the cost of living such a big concern, this is a game changer for so many families. We will not get official figures of the take-up rate until after the census in August, but we are hearing figures from some of the providers. Goodstart Early Learning has seen a 16 per cent increase in kindy attendance and Lady Gowrie has seen up to a 10 per cent increase in regional areas like Townsville, the Sunshine Coast and Mackay.

These figures are fantastic but, figures or no figures, there would not be a single member of parliament in this House who has not heard from their local kindies and families just how important this initiative has been for them. Everybody knows how important this is—everyone except the LNP. If you read their little book about priorities for Queensland—it does not take long; it is only little and there is not much detail, so it is no biggie to read it—there is not only not one single thing about committing to free kindy; there is not one single mention of early childhood. It simply does not factor into their vision for Queensland. That book is so good at motherhood statements that one would think that they could manage to say, 'We want to give our kids the best start in life.' Why can those opposite not even say, 'We want to give our kids the best start in life'?

We know there is an election in October. Those families who are finally able to send their kids to kindy and who were struggling with bills and just wanted to give their kids the best start in life will want to hear from the opposition what it is going to do to give their kids the best start in life and a positive life trajectory. I go back to the member for Toowoomba South, who said that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. There were no announcements for early childhood when those opposite were in government. We know that they cut, sack and sell, so we know that they are going to cut the

\$2 billion investment in free kindy, we know they are going to cut the early childhood training places in TAFE, we know they are going to sack those teachers in TAFE who are training our early childhood teachers and we know they will sell off those TAFE campuses. It is time that they told the families of Queensland how they will give their kids the best start in life.

Housing, Residential Tenancies

Dr MacMAHON: My question is for the Premier. Last week the Labor Prime Minister moved to evict a tenant from their home because he wanted to sell his investment property vacant. Tenants in Queensland can be evicted for the same reason. Will this government stick up for renters and change rental laws to prevent tenants from being evicted simply because a property is being sold?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for South Brisbane for her question. I will not be commenting on the tenancy or otherwise of a property owned by the Prime Minister. What I can do, though, is advise the House that our Homes for Queenslanders plan and other policies have delivered greater support and greater protections for renters, but we also need investors. We need people in the property market to provide the properties for renters to rent. We need to ensure that the regulations we put in place achieve the objectives of supporting renters while not forcing investors out of the market. Some kind of policy that might require a landowner to continue to rent a property when they want to move back into it or when they want to sell it would have a dampening effect on people's interest in investing in the property market.

We should instead look to what the evidence says about how we can better support renters, and that is what has informed the policies that we have introduced such as banning rent bidding. I have heard from many people looking for properties who were frustrated that they would queue up, do an inspection and put in an application, only to be told that somebody else had offered to pay more rent. Our bond loans and bond transfer scheme are designed to make it easier for people when they do have to move rental properties. All of our programs are designed to support renters. Our cost-of-living initiatives will assist them with their energy bills as well as with other costs that we will outline further in the budget.

We on this side of the House will continue to be informed by the evidence. The Greens political party might have good slogans, but they have the privilege of never having to implement them. It is incumbent on those of us who instead joined a party of government to seek to implement policies that are informed by evidence and by an understanding of the implications of those policies. That is what we on this side of the House will continue to do. There might be a place for simplistic policy responses if all you ever aspire to be is a crossbencher, but if you want to be in government then you need to be informed by the evidence.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.16 am): I move—

1. That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages; and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) 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 Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (cognate debate) to be completed by 4.00 pm on Tuesday, 21 May 2024;
 - (b) the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill to be completed by 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 22 May 2024;
 - (c) the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill (cognate debate) to be completed by 1.00 pm on Thursday, 23 May 2024;

- (d) the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Amendment Bill to be completed by 6.25 pm on Thursday, 23 May 2024; and
- (e) a government motion to amend sessional orders to be moved by the Leader of the House—maximum 20 minutes.
3. The following time limits for the bills listed in 2. apply:
- (a) the minister to be called on in reply:
- i. for the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (cognate debate), by 3.15 pm on Tuesday, 21 May 2024;
 - ii. for the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill, by 12.00 pm on Wednesday, 22 May 2024;
 - iii. for the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill (cognate debate), by 12.15 pm on Thursday, 23 May 2024; and
 - iv. for the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Amendment Bill, by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 23 May 2024.
4. If all stages of the bills listed above have not been completed by the specified times, the 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, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 39:

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

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Howard, Simpson; Lauga, Molhoek.


Resolved in the affirmative.

POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

CORRECTIVE SERVICES (PROMOTING SAFETY) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment bill resumed from 21 March (see p. 856) and Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 13 February (see p. 36).

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (11.22 am): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

The Miles government has made it clear that community safety is a priority. The Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill support the safety of the Queensland community.

On 12 April 2024 the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee tabled its report on the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Community Support and Services Committee considered the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and tabled its report on 10 May 2024. The committees have recommended that both bills be passed. The committees have made further recommendations about the amendments in the bills. The police minister will provide further detail relating to the Queensland Police Service amendments and will respond to matters relating to the Queensland Police Service during consideration in detail. I will leave it to the police minister to table the government's response to the committee's report in relation to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I table the government's response to the committee report in relation to the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

Tabled paper: Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, government response [816].

Being tough on crime means making sure criminals who are a risk to community safety are detained and offered rehabilitation. As such, Queensland Corrective Services provides for the supervision and rehabilitation of almost 30,000 prisoners and offenders with around 10,800 prisoners in detention centres. It is vital that corrective services officers managing prisoners and offenders are supported in their roles and that their safety is protected. It is equally important to ensure the safety of victims and to protect the community. I extend my thanks to the committee for its consideration of the bill and to those stakeholders who made submissions and gave evidence at the public hearing. I will now discuss the committee's recommendations and the government response in detail.

First I mention recommendation 2 relating to parole applications. The committee's second recommendation is for the Queensland government to consider allowing non-written parole applications from prisoners. While there are no legislative barriers that prevent this recommendation from being implemented, QCS and the board will need to work through any changes to the parole application process to ensure they are operationally viable. Allowing prisoners to apply for parole in a non-written format will be considered as part of ongoing work.

The third recommendation in the committee report relates to clause 32 of the bill, which inserts new section 340AA into the Corrective Services Act. This section provides discretion for a decision-maker acting under the Corrective Services Act to withhold the detail of information that informed the decision for prescribed reasons. The majority of the committee recommended that the government consider the merit of amending new section 340AA to:

- provide for a public interest test in relation to the decisions in order to determine whether the impact of disclosure outweighs the right to natural justice;
- require that decision-makers keep a record of reasons even if they are not required to disclose these reasons to a prisoner; and
- clarify that the section does not apply to statements of reason under the Judicial Review Act.

Based on these recommendations, I propose that minor amendments to clause 32 of the bill be made during consideration in detail. The first recommendation is to provide a public interest test in relation to decisions to determine whether the impact of disclosure outweighs the right to natural justice. I am advised that a public interest test will not provide adequate protections for confidential victim information. However, I propose amendments to require a balancing test in relation to the decision. I want to be very clear: in a choice between the rights of offenders and the rights of victims, we choose the rights of victims.

These amendments will clarify that a decision-maker is not required to disclose sensitive information if the information fits within the prescribed criteria and the decision-maker considers the benefit of not disclosing the information outweighs the rights of the offender. The prescribed criteria include whether the disclosure could be reasonably expected to eventuate in harm to an individual or the community; would prejudice natural security or public safety; or would prejudice detection, investigation or prosecution by a law enforcement agency. If information is withheld the decision-maker will still be required to provide the essence of the information that was withheld. Amendments to section 340AA of the bill will also require a decision-maker to document and keep a record of any reason for withholding information under the section. This responds to the second point of the committee recommendation.

In relation to the third part of recommendation 3, the legislation does not exclude the application of new section 340AA for its statements of reason given under the Judicial Review Act. To do so would undermine the effectiveness of the provision by essentially enabling a prisoner or offender to obtain the withheld information by requesting a statement of reasons under the Judicial Review Act. Most importantly, this would not provide material protection and reassurance to victims. The importance of victims knowing that their information is protected and will not be disclosed to the person who offended against them was highlighted by Mr Brett Thompson, Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group, in his evidence to the committee. The new section 340AA in the bill is one of the ways the Miles government is supporting victims and improving their experience of navigating the criminal justice system.

The fourth and final recommendation in the committee report was that a privacy impact assessment be conducted before implementing provisions relating to corrective services officers using body worn cameras in the community. The government supports this recommendation and Queensland Corrective Services will conduct a privacy impact assessment for the use of body worn cameras in the community prior to the provision commencing.

I would now like to address the statement of reservation provided by opposition members of the committee. The member for Theodore and the member for Scenic Rim published a statement of reservation in relation to recommendation 3 of the committee report. The government response to that recommendation ensures that the original policy intent is upheld by ensuring appropriate protections for those impacted by these decisions.

The member for Mirani also published a statement of reservation expressing concerns with amendments that remove same-sex search requirements from the Corrective Services Act, replacing them with a head of power to prescribe these requirements in a regulation. I am assured by Queensland Corrective Services that the development of a future regulation will be subject to internal and external consultation to ensure the requirements for searches are tailored to the correctional environment and provide sufficient safeguards for all people involved with searches. The member for Mirani also expressed concerns that the new section 340AA is incompatible with the Human Rights Act and inconsistent with the rules of procedural fairness. The statement of compatibility accompanying the bill details how the amendment is compatible with the Human Rights Act. A further statement of compatibility will be tabled with the minor amendments made to 340AA.

The bill includes amendments to support victims by improving the Queensland Corrective Services victims register process. The bill streamlines the victims register registration process by enabling an entity supporting a victim, such as a victim support group, to apply on their behalf. This shields victims from having to repeatedly disclose potentially traumatising information. Currently, an eligible person must be removed from the victims register when a prisoner is no longer managed by Queensland Corrective Services. In circumstances where the relevant prisoner returns to custody, a new application must be submitted by the victim in order to re-register.

The bill provides discretion for an eligible person to be re-registered on the victims register within 90 days, removing the requirement for a new application. This bill also provides the chief executive with discretion to register a victim on their own initiative, with the person's consent. This provision may be used where Queensland Corrective Services already has the information or access to the required information, such as an interstate transfer or where a child victim turns 18 and consents to be registered. These amendments acknowledge that where information necessary to register a person on the victims register already exists, requiring a victim to retell their story is potentially traumatic and unnecessary.

The bill extends the victims register eligibility criteria to victims and persons affected by a homicide offence. This recognises that these offences, like other serious offences, have lifelong impacts. The bill allows for a victim to register against a homicide offender regardless of the offender being under Queensland Corrective Services' supervision for the homicide offence or a different offence. The bill also removes any doubt that a victim may register against an offender subject to an order under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act whether that offender is in custody or on a supervision order.

Providing a victim submission to the Parole Board Queensland in relation to a prisoner's parole application is an understandably stressful process for victims. Providing these submissions takes courage and victims must be supported through this process. This bill provides flexibility for the Parole Board Queensland to accept submissions in a format other than writing. It ensures a victim is not disadvantaged if they are illiterate or where English is their second language. Currently, while a victim

may nominate someone to receive information from the victims register on their behalf, this does not extend to notification of parole applications. Arguably, this is the most stressful information a victim may receive. The bill ensures that victims can nominate a person or body, such as a victims advocacy group, to receive this information on their behalf.

The bill updates the information that the victims register must provide and may provide to a victim under sections 324A and 325 of the Corrective Services Act. This includes changes, such as allowing the victims to be told about any matter relevant to the prisoner's parole rather than just the fact that the prisoner submitted a parole application. The prisoner's deportation or removal status under the Migration Act, if it is known, will also be disclosed to a victim. The bill also clarifies that a victim registered against a homicide offender who is on community-based supervision may be informed of matters about the offender that are known to QCS and if it is appropriate to disclose that information to the victim. The bill includes a safeguard that the chief executive does not have to provide information to a victim if they reasonably believe the disclosure will endanger the safety and security of a Corrective Services facility, the safe custody or welfare of a prisoner or the safety or welfare of someone else.

Regular positive communication with supportive family and friends is an essential component of the rehabilitative journey for many prisoners. However, some prisoners misuse communication systems to perpetrate crime and to re-victimise people in our community, particularly in relation to domestic and family violence. The bill includes a suite of amendments intended to limit abuse of prisoner communications. This includes strengthening the approval process for a prisoner to add someone to their phone list and clearly providing the chief executive with the authority to revoke or suspend the approval. The bill also expands the chief executive's powers to end calls involving violence, coercion, harassment or threats.

The bill introduces the concept of 'prohibited prisoner communication'. Prohibited prisoner communication includes a prisoner's personal call which constitutes or facilitates an offence, a breach of a domestic violence order or notice or other court order against the prisoner, domestic violence, a threat to a person's welfare or safety, an incitement to commit violence against a person or to destroy property, gambling by a prisoner or a threat to the security or good order of a corrective services facility. The bill enables the chief executive or delegate to set limits on the length and frequency of a prisoner's personal calls. More restrictive terms and conditions may be applied if the prisoner is likely to use personal calls to engage in prohibited prisoner communication. The bill includes a safeguard to ensure a prisoner must not be prevented from making at least seven personal calls in a seven-day period. The amendments do not impact a prisoner's ability to contact their lawyer or engage in authorised prisoner communications, such as with the Ombudsman.

A portion of offenders who are supervised by Queensland Corrective Services in the community under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act are also child sex offenders and reportable offenders subject to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act. These offenders are only required to make an initial report to the Queensland Police Service before their CPOR reporting obligations are suspended. As these obligations are suspended, some police powers that would ordinarily apply are also suspended. This bill enlivens the police powers that would ordinarily apply under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. The bill also amends the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act to clarify that police are authorised to inspect electronic devices where an officer forms a reasonable suspicion that the offender has committed an indictable offence against the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act. These amendments ensure police powers remain in place regardless of whether the offender is reporting to police or Queensland Corrective Services.

Body worn cameras play a vital role in capturing evidence and serving as a deterrent to antisocial behaviour. The bill provides clear authority for the use of body worn cameras by corrective services officers outside of the custodial environment. This includes safeguards to ensure staff and prisoners' rights to privacy are balanced with the need to maintain safety and security. The bill includes a higher threshold for body worn camera activation in sensitive locations such as a private residence or change room.

In addition to this, the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill includes amendments to the Corrective Services Act. The bill extends the maximum periods the board may decide to restrict a prisoner from reapplying for parole following a refusal. The maximum period that can be set increases from three years to five years for life sentenced prisoners, from six months to three years for long-term prisoners and from six months to one year for all other prisoners. Allowing the


board to set longer periods between applications where the board has determined there is no prospect of earlier release will reduce re-traumatisation of victims through frequent and unnecessary parole applications.

The bill also expands the range of suitably qualified professionals who can assess a prisoner's risk of self-harm or suicide in the correctional environment. The bill provides that an authorised practitioner may also perform such assessments. The practitioner must hold a relevant professional qualification and meet specific registration, competency and training requirements that are set out in the policy. I note the committee recommendation for Queensland Corrective Services to consider a proactive campaign to recruit qualified psychologists. I thank the committee for its recommendation and note the current targeted recruitment campaign and the psychological services workforce planning project which will continue to explore opportunities.

I now turn to the other amendments in the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, the Mental Health Act 2016 and the Public Health Act 2005. The bill amends safeguards in police, Crime and Corruption Commission and mental health and public health legislation for the exercise of particular powers to ensure that trans and gender diverse people receive the same protections as other Queenslanders. The amendment replaces the existing same-sex safeguard for personal searches with new frameworks to retain the same gender starting point but create a new dialogue model, enabling a respectful discussion. The bill also updates the same-sex safeguard that applies where a person authorised to perform a forensic procedure requests assistance from another person to conduct a forensic procedure. This aligns closely with the new safeguards for personal searches and applies only to people who are not health professionals.

This bill will also enable a police officer in some circumstances to require a person of any gender to expose their breasts for photography. Photographs capturing permanent distinguishing marks like birth marks, scars, tattoos, bruises or an injury can help provide evidence to ensure the detection and successful prosecution of offences. This bill again inserts new safeguards in line with those for personal searches.

The Queensland government is committed to cracking down on knife crime. This bill will strengthen the ability for police officers to detect knives and other potentially harmful objects and keep our community safe by enabling police officers to conduct a scan of any person regardless of sex or gender. This bill will not change other existing safeguards. This is a bill that aims to keep the community safe and prioritise the rights of victims. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (11.42 am): I rise to speak to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 cognate debate. I will speak to each bill separately. I say at the outset that, whilst the LNP opposition will not be opposing these two bills, we will be highlighting several serious issues and concerns around this legislation that we are debating today.

The Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 was introduced on 21 March by the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services. The bill was referred to the Community Support and Services Committee, which tabled its report on 10 May 2024. The bill proposes amendments to seven acts, namely: the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act; the Crime and Corruption Act; the Mental Health Act; the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act; the Public Health Act, the Summary Offences Act; and the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2005.

This bill seeks to achieve the following key objectives: to make the necessary amendments to ensure that trans and gender diverse people receive the same protections as other Queenslanders; and to achieve operational improvements in legislation administered by the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and Queensland Health. Whilst at face value the key objectives are clear and logical, the committee process highlighted concerns surrounding this bill in three of its four recommendations, the other being that the bill be passed. The committee called for guidance from the Queensland Police Service in regard to the implementation of the reforms proposed, called for the minister to further clarify circumstances in which it is not reasonably practicable to accommodate a preference for the gender of a searching officer and also for Queensland Corrective Services to undertake what they call a proactive recruitment campaign to address 'the current shortage of qualified psychologists'.

It is almost unheard of that a parliamentary committee needs to bring to the attention of a minister the impacts that staff shortages are having on their department—let alone the risk that those shortages pose to the public, to staff, to other prisoners and to the prisoners themselves—but it is here in the committee report and, frankly, it is something that the minister must commit to addressing as a matter of urgency. We know there are chronic shortages of psychologists in our communities. This will be no easy task to address.

Again, this bill highlights this government's arrogance. In my time as a police officer, conducting searches of offenders and prisoners was never an enjoyable task. As Ian Leavers of the Queensland Police Union of Employees told the committee, searches are 'one of the most horrible things that you have to do in the course of your duty'. Yes, they are invasive. Yes, they can be upsetting both for the person being searched and for the person conducting the search, but they are necessary. They are necessary for the welfare and health of the persons being searched and necessary for the officers conducting the searches.

Those watch houses, correctional facilities and health facilities are spread across the state—from large facilities with literally hundreds of staff to remote facilities where there may be only one staff member rostered or in some cases only one member in total. Currently, the requirements are for a person of the same gender to carry out an invasive search. Those of us on this side of the House recognise what the Queensland Police Union of Employees called the 'legal grey area' surrounding the concept of an 'improper purpose' which the person who is the subject of a search could use to delay or even prevent the search or to cause embarrassment or offence. It is all well and good to talk about a person being about to exercise discretion to conduct a search where a person of the preferred gender is not available or where there are ulterior motives at play.

In the Burdekin electorate, for example, I have several one-officer stations, staffed both by males and females, where the nearest officer of the opposite gender is some 45 minutes away. I have two- and three-officer stations staffed exclusively by male officers and, again, the nearest female officer is at least 45 minutes to an hour away. Like the committee, I call on the minister to provide clarity and, just as importantly, to ensure there are the necessary protections in place to protect people who are unable to accommodate a person's wishes for legitimate reasons. Furthermore, our police officers need assurances that, where they make a decision and have done the right thing, they will have the full backing of the minister and of the government of the day.

Whilst those on this side of the House have no objections whatsoever to amendments relating to the viewing or recording of searches, we do have concerns relating to clinical settings. Once again, we have seen this government's ideology replace genuine consultation with people directly affected by the pursuit of that ideology. It is quite simply beyond insulting that stakeholders were not adequately consulted on amendments to the Mental Health Act and the Public Health Act, a fact proven by the need for further consultation during the implementation period.

By debating these bills in cognate, we again see this government deny us the opportunity to speak in great detail about these bills. I will touch briefly on a few remaining elements. As I mentioned earlier, this bill confirms this government's failure to attract and retain staff in crucial government departments. I note the explanatory notes refer to 'timely decisions' when the reality is that it is the failure that necessitates the need for the expansion of the list of professionals who can provide assessments of prisoners. I also note the government's amendment to effectively reduce public consultation with regard to corrective services infrastructure, a practice we are seeing more and more frequently.

I also touch briefly on the changes to the Corrective Services Act relating to restricting prisoners from reapplying for parole. Whilst previously being a member of the Parole Board—and I can tell members that it is not an easy job—for some prisoners repetitive parole applications are a game where they have nothing to lose. It is a game that ties up resources unnecessarily, especially when the prisoner knows full well that their prospects are limited due to their actions or inaction. For that reason, I welcome empowering the Parole Board to instruct a prisoner to not reapply for a prescribed period. Let's not forget for one minute the impact that these applications have on the victims and on the families of victims throughout Queensland.

The Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 was introduced on 13 February by the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services. That bill seeks to achieve the following objectives: to enhance the legislative framework for the Queensland Corrective Services Victims Register to promote the safety and wellbeing of victims

engaging with the service; to require representation for victims on the Parole Board; to strengthen powers to respond to abuse of prisoner communication channels; to enable the use of certain police powers for reportable child sex offenders being supervised under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003; to increase the penalty for possession of a gel blaster on corrective services land; to protect the use of victim and intelligence information to support effective decision-making; to clarify the authority for corrective services officers to use body worn cameras while in the community; to provide greater flexibility for prescribing protections and requirements around searches; to update legislative requirements to support the independence, diversity and efficient administration of the Parole Board; to enable Queensland Corrective Services to lawfully detain prisoners from Norfolk Island; and to address a number of minor and technical issues.

Let's start from the beginning. The government gave 12 business days—yet another example of this government's arrogance and contempt for parliamentary process—for submissions to be made to the committee. It gave 12 days for victims of crime throughout this state to make a submission on a bill that the minister said in her explanatory speech 'puts victims' voices first'. Again, the opportunity for Queenslanders to contribute to important legislation has been restricted by this government. The difference this time is that many of those whose voices need to be heard are victims of the most heinous crimes, and I will have more to say on that later in my contribution.

The committee process itself highlighted concerns surrounding this bill in three of its four recommendations—the other being that the bill be passed. The opposition want to put on the record our concerns with regard to the committee's third recommendation. It is vitally important that when dealing with matters like these discretion is used when deciding to release information relating to a Parole Board decision. What all members must be aware of again is that these matters involve victims. Here we have a bill with an objective to enhance the safety and wellbeing of victims, yet there are questions relating to the release of information used by the Parole Board. If not handled correctly, this is information that could directly harm or create the opportunity for another person to do harm to a victim or their family. I call on all members to carefully consider the committee's recommendation.

As we saw in the bill being debated cognately with this one, there are amendments to the requirements surrounding searches and, as with the other bill, we are seeing the continuation of this government's ideological crusade regarding gender. In addition to that crusade, the amendments in this bill also, once again, move requirements to regulation rather than legislation and, again, those regulations are yet to be seen.

I will touch briefly on some of the other amendments contained in this particular bill before speaking on what I believe are the amendments of most importance. Thanks to this government's actions, the opportunity to properly debate these bills is once again restricted.

Queenslanders find offences committed by child sex offenders some of the most heinous. This is the reason for the outrage expressed by Queenslanders when this government failed to ensure the security of the Wacol facility and it is the same reason that Queenslanders would agree wholeheartedly with enabling police powers in relation to reportable child sex offenders subjected to post-sentence supervision.

Every member on this side of the House supports the men and women who work in our correctional centres. This government's track record shows overcrowded centres and increases in assaults on staff and, while the former minister supplied second-hand body worn cameras to staff, we welcome the use of these cameras as and where necessary to increase security for staff members.

I will move on to the amendments relating to victims of crime. The effects of crime on victims do not end when an offender is charged or sentenced. For some, the effects are lifelong. The prospect of a victim being contacted by an offender, let alone a prisoner, is an abhorrent thought and, for that reason, we welcome the changes to the abuse of prisoner communications.

As the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group said in their submission, enhancements to the victims register and communications require attention. As I mentioned previously, the effects of crime can be lifelong. It is for that reason that we support the streamlining of the registration process for the victims register and the extension of eligibility criteria. We also welcome enhancements allowing victims to engage in the parole process using telecommunications or voice recordings as we believe this provides an opportunity to reduce the trauma of this process for victims.

Ensuring the Parole Board is appropriately diverse, including with regard to cultural backgrounds and relevant qualifications, will ensure the board is effective and ensure the best outcomes. Let me be very clear: the rights of victims must always come first. Sadly, victims are clearly not this government's

priority. It is now more than 2,700 days—let me repeat that figure: 2,700 days—since the Queensland parole system review recommended a victims’ representative be added to the Parole Board. The vast majority of Queenslanders support this recommendation and, while the Prisoners’ Legal Service may oppose it, the fact is that this government supported the recommendation in its response. For the benefit of the House, I table page 233 of the final report of the review and the relevant page of the government’s response.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland Parole System Review report, dated November 2016, titled ‘Final Report’ [817].

Since then, almost 30,000 charges have been laid for murder, for grievous assault and for rape and attempted rape. That is tens of thousands of victims directly affected by the most serious crimes—crimes that, in most cases, will result in applications for parole. This government has refused to give those victims or any victim a voice for almost seven long years—but it gets worse.

Mr Ryan: It’s not true. I put Brett Thompson on the Parole Board.

Mr LAST: Not only did this government take seven years to give victims a voice; the responsible minister either did not care or simply did not prioritise it.

Mr Ryan: I put him on the Parole Board!

Mr LAST: I table the response—because I note that the minister is having a bit to say here today—

Mr Ryan: Because you’re telling lies.


Mr LAST: I table the response to question No. 8 of the estimates pre-hearing questions on notice relating to the Queensland parole system review.

Tabled paper: Answer to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee Estimates Pre-Hearing question on notice No. 8, undated, asked of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services [818].

As shown in the response, the minister advised that ‘all 89 recommendations supported or supported in principle have been completed or closed’. Yet as the committee report shows, a consultation draft of the amendments was distributed in December 2023—seven years after the recommendation and more than two years after the minister said the process was complete or closed. I will be writing to the Speaker with regard to these matters as it is imperative that Queenslanders understand that this government’s statements surrounding the importance of victims are nothing more than empty words.

The LNP, as I stated initially, will not be opposing these bills for a simple reason—that is, we support Queenslanders. We support victims of crime. We support the Queenslanders who work as our police officers and in our correctional system. It is our support of those Queenslanders that has led to raising our concerns relating to these bills. Those Queenslanders should be our priority. Instead, we have a government that is on an ideological crusade. That crusade is their priority, not Queenslanders. Important aspects of these bills have been overlooked due to this government having the wrong priorities.

As more and more Queenslanders know, this government’s failures have led to more crime, to greater demands on already stretched resources and, ultimately, to more victims. A voice for victims has been ignored by this government for seven years. The reality of life for police in regional Queensland has been ignored by this government. It is time for this crusade to end and for a government that is focused on keeping Queenslanders safe. Queenslanders will have an opportunity later this year to elect a government that will do just that—a government that will be focused on their safety.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (11.58 am): Mr Deputy Speaker, I will start by withdrawing the unparliamentary language.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Thank you, Minister.

Mr RYAN: I also start by responding to the member’s statement. I look forward to the member issuing an apology to Brett Thompson, the CEO of the Homicide Victims’ Support Group, who has been a member of the Parole Board. The member is suggesting that Brett Thompson, the CEO of the Homicide Victims’ Support Group, has not stood up for victims in his role as a member of the Parole Board. That is an outrageous insult to Brett Thompson. That is an outrageous insult to other members of the Parole Board who are victims of crime. The member for Burdekin has just said that they do not represent victims, that they have not brought a victims’ perspective to the Parole Board. What an outrageous insult from the member for Burdekin. He owes each and every one of them an individual apology, starting with Brett Thompson, the CEO of the Homicide Victims’ Support Group. He was put on the Parole Board to be a representative, a voice for victims.

I rise to speak in support of the cognate debate in relation to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. On 14 June 2023 this parliament passed the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023 in a monumental move to make sure that every Queenslanders' legal identity can be matched with their lived identity. The Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 delivers on this government's commitment to ensure that the core principles of the new Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act are reflected across the statute book in recognition of the true diversity of our Queensland community.

Through this bill the Miles government is modernising safeguards for the conduct of personal searches, inspections of a person's belongings and some forensic procedures to better recognise and promote the rights of trans and gender-diverse Queenslanders. The primary objective of this bill is to ensure that all Queenslanders are equally recognised by the law and afforded the same rights and protections without making specific reference to gendered language unless absolutely necessary. The amendments in the bill will enable our hardworking frontline officers to deliver even better services to trans and gender-diverse people when conducting personal searches, inspections and forensic procedures.

On 10 May 2024 the Community Support and Services Committee tabled its report on its examination of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I thank the committee for its timely consideration and support of the bill and extend my thanks to those organisations that made submissions and gave evidence before the committee. The committee made four recommendations, including that the bill be passed. I now table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 43, 57th Parliament—Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, government response [\[819\]](#).

The government's response supports or supports in principle all of the committee's recommendations. Recommendation 2 is that the Queensland Police Service conducts appropriate training of officers and support staff who focus on diversity and intersection of LGBTIQ+ individuals encountering the criminal justice system as part of the implementation of the reforms proposed in the bill. The government supports this recommendation.

The QPS recognises people of diverse genders, diverse sexualities and innate variations of sex characteristics. Each person has unique and distinct needs with diverse experiences and backgrounds. Every interaction between QPS members and people from LGBTIQ+ communities, whether in casual conversation or as a victim, witness or offender, is an opportunity to build relationships and strengthen trust. The amendments in the bill will support the service's continued dedication to delivering a professional, non-discriminatory and accessible policing service to diverse communities. The Queensland Police Service will review the existing training provided to members about conducting searches and policing for LGBTIQ+ communities. This training will be updated to ensure frontline members understand the new provisions and how to apply them.

Recommendation 3 is that further clarification be provided of when it may not be reasonably practicable to accommodate a person's preference in the conduct of personal searches. The government supports this recommendation. I will talk more about this shortly, but the government will provide further legislative clarity to implement this recommendation.

As touched on earlier, I would like to foreshadow amendments to the bill which I will move during consideration in detail. I understand that the amendments, explanatory notes and statement of compatibility with human rights have now also been circulated. The amendments respond to the feedback of stakeholders and the committee to provide more guidance for the terms 'reasonably practicable' and 'improper purpose' throughout the bill. These amendments are intended to provide clarity to the community and public officials on the policy intent of the provisions.

We heard that some stakeholders required further clarity in relation to the use of the term 'reasonably practicable'. Let me be clear: the government has no intention to reduce search protections for anyone. It is the government's clear intention that it is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor. There are many reasonable steps that may be taken and the search may be delayed until an appropriate officer is available. This includes calling another police officer from another police station to attend the scene to conduct the search if required.

The provision already provides that a police officer may direct another person who is not a police officer to conduct a search if necessary. This could be a helper such as a health professional or a trusted community member; therefore, it is unlikely that it would not be reasonably practicable to find a man or a woman officer—or to direct another person who is a man or a woman—to help conduct a search. For some gender-diverse people there may not be any officer of the same gender. This means there may be occasions where the requirement cannot reasonably apply.

The safety and dignity of every person involved in the conduct of a personal search or inspection of a person's belongings, including our frontline officers, is of the utmost priority. The amendments I will move provide more guidance for this position. The amendments state very clearly that for men and women who do not express a preference there will be no change in how the safeguard applies. They will continue to be searched by a person of the same gender.

We also heard that some stakeholders considered that the term 'improper purpose' required more guidance. The use of the term is important. It allows frontline officers to protect the Queensland community while ensuring the rights and safety of individual officers are also protected in the course of their duties. I thank the stakeholders who acknowledged the importance of this provision to keep our hardworking public servants safe.


To aid in interpreting the term, the amendments I will move provide clarity on what is considered an improper purpose. Several clear purposes will be included in a note to the provision. These are where the purpose expressed is a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose and/or an attempt to frustrate the process. In addition to the clarity provided by these amendments, the Queensland Police Service will develop clear guidance to its members through operational training policies and training materials about all of the new provisions.

The Miles government is proud to present a bill which supports the delivery of safe, fair and inclusive policing services that are accessible to all Queenslanders. This bill will ensure that our services are in line with modern values and reflect the true diversity of our community. Everyone deserves to receive equal protection under the law. The changes ensure that Queenslanders continue to enjoy the most stringent search safeguard provisions in Australia and will provide the broadest protections to LGBTIQ+ people in Queensland.

Before concluding, I want to touch on some of the amendments to the Corrective Services Act. Currently, only prisoners serving a life sentence can be restricted from reapplying for parole for up to three years after having an application refused. Amendments in the bill extend the maximum period that Parole Board Queensland may decide to restrict the prisoner from reapplying for parole after refusal: from three years to five years for life prisoners; from six months to three years for prisoners sentenced to 10 years or more; and from six months to 12 months for all other prisoners. The board may also have regard to the likely effect the prisoner making a subsequent parole application will have on a victim or whether delaying a prisoner from reapplying for parole is in the public interest.

On this point, I want to particularly acknowledge the Allison Baden-Clay Foundation and the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group for their advocacy for these changes when I was the corrective services minister. These amendments are a credit to them and their advocacy and will ensure that many victims into the future will be protected from the retraumatisation associated with constant applications from prisoners. I thank the Queensland Police Service Legislation Branch and Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. I commend the bill and encourage all members to support it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Before calling the member for Ninderry, I will remind the House that the following members who are on a warning: Callide, Burleigh, Bundaberg, Buderim, Mudgeeraba, Kurwongbah, Woodridge, Kawana, Logan, Currumbin, Everton, Nanango and Scenic Rim. There will be no more warnings; those people will be straight out if they interject.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (12.08 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill amends Queensland statutes to provide safeguards to a person being searched by police by introducing a new framework that enables them to express a preference for the gender of the person conducting the search in the event the same gender starting point is not appropriate. The bill also provides for similar gender preferences in correctional facilities and medical and mental health clinic settings for the safety of patients, visitors and staff. In the police setting, the amendments also remove the ability for any police officer to view the monitor of a video camera in the area where a person is being searched.

The bill amends eight separate pieces of legislation that fall under the police, Attorney-General and health portfolios. Of those, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act and additional amendments to the Corrective Services Act 2006 are of particular interest to me in my current role. Proposed changes in the child protection space relate to offender reporting and the regular photographing of offenders to keep pace with identifying markings. Proposed changes to the Corrective Services Act include an increase in the Parole Board Queensland's discretion to extend the period of time between prisoner parole applications.

Week after week, year after year, I repeatedly raise the appalling state of police resourcing and Labor's failure in all areas of its duties to adequately protect Queenslanders from harm. I proudly stood in this place when Sian's Law was passed in 2021—a law that was borne of the Kingi family's petition that I tabled on their behalf and the 72,000 Queenslanders who supported our calls to change the law so that the worst of the worst offenders, like Sian's killer Barrie John Watts, remain behind bars. This law meant that Watts' application for parole has now been denied for another 10 years. To the Kingis, it meant a little justice that they might have a better chance of sleeping and may be able to breathe a little easier knowing that Sian's murderer will not be able to offend again while out on parole.

The new amendments to the Corrective Services Act 2006 contained in this bill extend this logic to a broader category of prisoners by proposing that a person may not make an application for parole without the consent of the Parole Board for the following periods: five years for a person sentenced to a term of life imprisonment, up from the current three years; three years for a person sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 10 years or more but not life; and 12 months for a person serving a term of imprisonment that is less than 10 years, up from six months. A number of committee submitters did not agree with these extensions and expressed concern about the additional strain on the prison system. I argue, as I am sure most Queenslanders would, that if there is no room in prisons to hold prisoners who remain a threat to the public then there is most certainly no room for those offenders in the community.

One of the cornerstones of the LNP's law and order policy is to rebalance the scales of justice to increase the rights and protections for victims. I take this opportunity to thank our brave corrective service and police officers who must accept that the systems they represent and defend are broken. Correctional facility failings, including in those that house young offenders, remain a debacle under Labor and are yet another piece in the law and order fiasco that will be their legacy.

The litmus test here is simple: do the amendments to both pieces of legislation help Queenslanders feel safe, feed their family and access health care? Do we have enough people in the right places to make a difference on the ground? The answer is a resounding no. Currently, the Queensland Police Service, the QPS, at least in major centres, ensures there are a number of male and female officers rostered on duty at watch houses so that search safeguards can be complied with. In their submission, the Queensland Police Union, the QPU, stated that:

... the proposed amendments are considerably loose and would allow the QPS to have a person who identifies as male search a person who identifies as female, simply because there is not an officer who identifies as female rostered on duty.

The absence of a definition of 'improper purpose' does not offer the protections the bill intends. The QPU submission states—

For example, the QPU recommends the expression 'improper purpose' include (a) a purpose designed to frustrate, prevent or unreasonably delay a search; and (b) a purpose to cause embarrassment or offence to an officer.

I note that, in the police minister's contribution and in some amendments that have just been tabled, there might be some amendments to these provisions. I will support them if they are in line with the QPU's request.

The bill proposes to strike out the ability for any police officer or authorised commissioned officer to view the monitor of a video camera in an area where a prisoner is searched. I share the QPU's concern that this provision increases the risk to police and it seeks safeguards for police from false claims of misconduct. The QPU believes there must be a clear recognition in the legislation that an officer, or an authorised searcher, may not disclose their own gender to the person being searched, nor can such officer be required to undertake a search if the officer themselves feels undertaking the search would make the officer uncomfortable or embarrassed. It must work both ways. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. This is where woke ideology gets us to some degree.


Like most initiatives in the law and order space by this government, the legislation does not come with appropriate resourcing and changes to the operational nature of policing. I can assure those opposite that the police feel that they are responsible for a number of complex issues inside the

community, often without the laws or increased resourcing, plans or equipment to meet the expectations of the community. Therefore, it is no wonder attrition rates exceed recruitment, morale is at an all-time low and burnout is at extreme levels. We need only look at the lack of support for our police to gauge this government's appetite for real change.

My LNP colleagues and I, together with frontline officers, have repeatedly called on this government to address this shortfall. Police officer numbers have fallen well below historic police-to-population ratios. Without addressing this reality, other recent amendments to the CPOR bill will place approximately 1,700 extra reportable offenders on the register by 2028, taking the total to an estimated 5,722, making it even harder for the small number of CPOR officers who are already struggling to monitor these dangerous child sex offenders. Perhaps this government could start listening to frontline police, experts and maybe even the recommendations made by the CCC into Queensland's child protection offender reporting regime before making announcements that may sound good in a press release but fail to enhance law enforcement's ability to better protect our kids. With just four sitting weeks until the election—two of which will be consumed by balancing budget blowouts with election bribes—is this the best Labor can give Queenslanders?

The LNP know that we are fighting our biggest war on crime yet and that we are in the grips of a housing, health and cost-of-living crisis, yet time and time again Labor turn up to this place with nothing. They have nothing. They are out of touch. They have stopped listening. They have given up. Queenslanders are still begging for real reforms. They need to feel safe in their homes and their communities. This will not change under Labor. Queenslanders do not come first under Labor. The government repeatedly prove this in their pathetic attempts at meaningful consultation with anyone but their union mates. The union voice is the only voice they hear.

Anything to help attract police to join or remain in the fight for their communities is a plus. Rebalancing the scales of justice in favour of the victim and not the perpetrator is a must. Large sections of this bill prove that the government has wrong priorities and is not listening to Queenslanders about the issues that are of most concern to them. While there are obvious problems in these bills, their lofty attempts to appease everyone may in fact appease no-one. For the small improvements these bills make around the edges, I will not be opposing the bills.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (12.17 pm): I rise to speak to the cognate bills being debated today: the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Both of the committees that conducted hearings on these bills have recommended that the bills be passed. I will now deal with some aspects of the bills.


The objective of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is to make the necessary amendments to ensure that trans and gender diverse people receive the same protections as other Queenslanders in legislation without making specific reference to gendered language, unless absolutely necessary. In making the necessary amendments, the bill aims to achieve operational improvements in legislation administered by the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and Queensland Health.

The main objectives of the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill are to: enhance the Queensland Corrective Services' victims support; require representation for the victims on the Parole Board Queensland; strengthen powers to respond to abuse of prisoner communication channels; enable the use of certain police powers for reportable child sex offenders being supervised under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act; increase the penalty for possession of a gel blaster on corrective services land; protect the use of victim and intelligence information to support effective decision-making; clarify the authority for corrective services officers to use body worn cameras while in the community; prescribe search requirements to accommodate diverse prisoner needs; update legislative requirements to support the independence, diversity and efficient administration of the board; enable Queensland Corrective Services to lawfully detain prisoners from Norfolk Island in line with the Queensland government's commitments under the Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement on State Service Delivery to Norfolk Island; and, in other minor and technical issues, support the continued safe operations of corrective services.

I will now speak to the investigations done into the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee. This bill is about supporting victims of crime and enhancing safety in Queensland's correctional system. The bill would promote safety for victims and their families, safety for corrective services officers and safety for

offenders. The key issues raised during the committee's examination of the bill included: withholding sensitive decision-making information in parole decisions; use of regulation and changes to same-sex safeguards in relation to invasive searches; privacy issues relating to the use of body worn cameras; police powers for reportable child sex offenders; victim representation on the Parole Board Queensland; and restrictions on prisoner communications.

Stakeholder consultation revealed shortfalls in how victims of crime are represented, supported and protected within this system. The committee heard how the safety of victims can be jeopardised if sensitive victim information is provided to offenders as part of the parole process. While there are many parts to this good reforming legislation, I will conclude my contribution on the debate and recommend to the House that these cognate bills be passed.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (12.21 pm): In contributing to this cognate debate, I will focus on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. It is noted that the underlying purpose of the bill is to recognise trans and gender diverse Queenslanders and provide a legislative framework which allows police and watch house officers powers to conduct searches of citizens in particular circumstances, whilst ensuring the searched individual's dignity is preserved to the greatest extent. The committee made four recommendations: that the bill be passed; that the QPS provides appropriate guidance in regard to the implementation of the reforms proposed by the bill; that the Minister for Police and Community Safety provide clarification of when it is not 'reasonably practicable' to accommodate a preference for the gender of the searching officers; and that Queensland Corrective Services undertake a proactive recruitment campaign. That has been spoken about already today.

Similar provisions are proposed for other individuals also granted the power to search. The principles expressed in the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act are proposed to be reflected in this bill. This is an enabling bill to allow that, and I put on record that we voted against that particular piece of legislation. The definition of 'gender' and 'sex' has changed to reflect the diversity in our community, and many submitters to the committee were supportive of the law moving to a place that better reflects the diversity in our community.

The committee deliberations did raise some issues around protections of particularly police officers, and I questioned those protections. The bill will allow police and watch house officers to disregard a detainee's preference about the gender of the searching officer if the officer reasonably believes the preference is expressed for an improper purpose. Several submitters were concerned about the expression 'improper purpose' if it is not defined in the act. There were recommendations that there should be a definition consistent with the explanatory notes. I do note the minister has tabled amendments to that particular clause and that will go a long way to supporting all the stakeholders who provided information, including the Queensland Police Union and the Law Society. It was noted that the definition should include examples of what is an 'improper purpose'. For example, the Police Union recommended—

... the expression 'improper purpose' include (a) a purpose designed to frustrate, prevent or unreasonably delay a search; and (b) a purpose to cause embarrassment or offence to an officer.

I think it is only reasonable that those protections be enforced. I note the Queensland Law Society also expressed concerns with the definition.

In addressing the issue of 'reasonably practicable', an officer retains a limited discretion about who may exercise the power to search as a result of the exemption provisions that enable, for example, the power to be exercised in certain situations where an officer of the person's preferred gender may not be available or an urgent nature of a situation warrants immediate action. According to the QPS, the 'reasonably practicable' qualifier is necessary for the following reasons: there are a wide range of genders and there may not always be an officer of the same gender as the person, and a person may have a different gender identity to someone else who uses the same word to describe it. The proposed legislation is introduced, I believe, with respect and dignity as its focus. I acknowledge my contribution has focused on the Queensland Police Service's role in keeping our community safe.


This legislation brings with it renewed calls for appropriate police resourcing and now requires further changes to the operational nature of policing. I will reference comments made to the committee in relation to policing—

Overwhelmingly police feel that they are responsible for a number of complex issues inside the community, often without increased resourcing, plans or equipment to meet the expectations of the community. When proceeding with this legislation the Committee must consider these factors and make recommendations that can give our members the certainty that their previously good conduct in this space will continue to be recognised and will be enhanced, not further complicated by this process.

The proposed amendments that the bill makes to the Corrective Services Act as it relates to a prisoner's ability to reapply for parole after a previous application has been refused also reflect elements of community safety. The bill will amend the act to extend the period before a new application can occur to the following: five years for a person sentenced to a term of life imprisonment; three years for a person sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 10 years or more; and 12 months for a person serving a term of imprisonment which is less than 10 years and is not a term of life imprisonment.

The committee received submissions from the legal fraternity highlighting concerns, including the following: that Queensland prisons are experiencing ongoing issues with prison overcrowding, noting that delaying the time frame to reapply, and potentially be granted, parole will increase the amount of time people spend in custody, and noting that prison overcrowding has a disproportionately detrimental impact on prisoners; that First Nations people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system; and that there are significant delays in the availability of programs for prisoners which are required to be completed before a prisoner will be able to successfully apply for parole, which will only be further exacerbated if prisoners are incarcerated for longer due to being ineligible to reapply for parole.

The committee acknowledged stakeholder views that the parole system provides particular challenges to certain groups, including First Nations people, people with disability and those who have trouble with literacy and numeracy. The committee believes, on balance, that the proposed amendments that would allow the board to determine a longer period before the prisoner can reapply are reasonable and supported. I thank all of the committee for the work we did on this. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (12.27 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the cognate bills for police powers and corrective services. I thank my fellow committee members and of course the secretariat for their hard work on these reports. The bill seeks to strengthen support for victims of crime in a number of ways: improving the operation of the victims register; protecting the use of victim and intelligence information in parole decisions; requiring representation for victims on the Parole Board Queensland; strengthening powers to respond to the abuse of prisoner communication channels; and increasing oversight of child sex offenders.

This government places victim safety as a very high priority, as is evidenced by such things as the creation of a Victims' Commissioner. Unwilling to stop there, our government is going further in this bill. This bill proposes to streamline the registration process for the victims register. While retaining existing registration processes, it adds additional pathways with the aim to 'reduce the re-traumatisation that can occur when information is required to be re-disclosed by a victim'.

A component of the bill that I fully support is that it proposes to increase flexibility in relation to engagement with the victims register and parole process by allowing the board to accept non-written submissions from an eligible person about a parole decision. From my previous experience as a custodial officer, this is a very significant proposition that will put many victims in a better supported environment when responding to the Parole Board. It is no secret that much criminal activity goes hand in hand with abject poverty and that a great deal of crime is committed against our poorest and most vulnerable citizens.


I remember when I first started as a custodial officer I was doing a shift in the residential accommodation at Woodford Correctional Centre. I called a prisoner over to the officers' station and asked him to clarify what he had written on a request form. He told me he did not know what was on the form because his mate had filled it out for him. I said, 'Alright. Well, that's fair enough, but you are here now, so exactly what are you chasing on this form?' He looked me right in the eye and said, 'Chief, I can't read or write. Only my sister can in our family.' I sent the prisoner away to process what he had just told me and to figure out who had filled out the form on his behalf. In my life I have met people who have had trouble with reading or writing, but I had never met an adult in their mid-20s who could not read or write at all. I tried over several days to talk to the prisoner about what our education officers could do for him and how he could start the process towards at least functional literacy but he simply was not interested, and I have always considered that a personal failing on my part. It is for this reason that I would also highlight recommendation 2 of the report, that the Queensland government consider allowing non-written parole applications for prisoners.

The bill will also amend the Corrective Services Act to strengthen powers to respond to the abuse of prisoner communication channels. This bill provides that contacts be revoked for a prisoner's personal calls if the chief executive reasonably believes an individual proposed to be approved is a victim or an alleged victim of an offence committed or alleged to have been committed by the prisoner;

and the contact details proposed are not correct or are not suitable for a personal call to be made by a prisoner. Sadly, there are web-based companies that provide essentially fake landline numbers or numbers that look like landlines that are actually connected to mobile phones. These companies are actively inhibiting law enforcement with this practice, and this legislation will go some way towards helping mitigate these shady practices.

The bill proposes to expand some police powers in response to DP(SO)A offenders who are also reportable offenders. Let us compare this to the LNP track record weakening the reporting structures around child sex offenders and allowing 1,700 of them to slip silently into the night untracked and unaccountable. This is yet another example of this government's commitment to real community safety outcomes for Queensland as opposed to the LNP which is not terribly worried about paedophiles roaming our streets unmonitored. For genuine community safety outcomes, I back this government every day of the week and I commend the bills to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Before calling the member for Maiwar, I recognise the school captains and staff from Wellington Point State High School in the electorate of Oodgeroo who are in the gallery.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.32 pm): I rise to give my contribution to this cognate debate. Yet again the government is pushing through two bills in cognate so I have limited time to deal with all of the issues raised in both. Moreover, this entire debate is to be conducted in only three hours which is completely inadequate and is really quite a shocking denigration of the process in here.

In short, some of the intentions behind both bills are positive, but the overall approach is, as always, to expand the powers and discretion of police and corrections officers without sufficient safeguards or protections for people's human rights in the criminal legal system. We support the corrective services bill changes that allow victims of crime to access their rights under the Victims Register without, as far as possible, being subjected to further retraumatisation. This includes expanded eligibility, streamlined application processes, clearer and more fulsome information and more flexibility around involvement in the parole processes. We are also supportive of ensuring diverse representation on the Parole Board, provided there are no conflicts of interest. However, these bills ignore some of the real systemic issues with parole. The committee report notes that we are still waiting on the QPSR2, the parole system review report. This was finalised last year and the government has been sitting on it and refusing to release it ever since.

The changes in the police powers bill, which extend the period before which a prisoner can reapply for parole, were strongly opposed by stakeholders. Parole delays are already placing additional pressure on Queensland's prison system, and overcrowding is significantly impacting on prisoners' safety and human rights. The changes proposed in this bill can only be expected to make that situation worse. As with most of this government's bandaid reforms to the criminal legal system, this will disproportionately impact vulnerable populations, including disabled prisoners, First Nations people and people with English as a second language.

I understand that the QPS is currently considering Queensland government recommendations to provide non-written parole applications as recommended by the Prisoners' Legal Service. We support the changes in the corrective services bill to allow parole submissions from victims to be made orally. This should also be the case for prisoners, especially noting the disproportionately low literacy rates and high rates of intellectual disability in prisons. Probably most concerning, and perhaps ironically, the outcome is that the proposed amendments to the parole regime will likely reduce community safety. The purpose of parole is to reduce the risk of reoffending by providing prisoners with gradual release into the community, subject to supervision and conditions, before the expiry of their sentence. Stakeholders like ATSILS and the Prisoners' Legal Service pointed out that extending the prohibition period on prisoners reapplying for parole may actually mean that more prisoners are released only at the end of their sentences, thereby losing access to parole services and being released into the community without any prior structured community-based supervision. In fact, the changes mean that this is even more likely where they have spent a longer time in prison which increases the risks around effective reintegration.

The corrective services bill also allows Corrective Services to withhold information used in deciding a parole application for a broad range of reasons, including law enforcement, public safety, individual welfare and state security. Many submitters pointed out that this undermines fundamental principles of procedural fairness. With this reform, a person could be repeatedly denied parole without

having any idea as to why and without the ability to respond to the case against them. This seriously limits their chances of getting parole which in turn limits their rights, prevents the community benefiting from reintegration measures and leads to more overcrowded prisons.

I am glad to see that the government has foreshadowed amendments to introduce a public interest test for exercising this new power, but I still question the need for these reforms. As the Prisoners' Legal Service pointed out, 'Public interest immunity, which is routinely invoked by the Board, already protects sensitive information from disclosure' and, importantly, judicial oversight of these decisions is already available. Yet again it seems the government is legislating its way out of an adverse court finding, in this case where they were caught failing to comply with obligations to disclose reasons for parole suspension. Again, they are taking this so-called correction even further at the expense of basic rights.

The changes in both the corrective services bill and the police powers bill around invasive searches in prisons and watch houses appear to be well intentioned, allowing for consideration of trans, gender diverse and intersex people and their preferences. The lack of clarity, though, creates a concerning risk that existing protections will be undermined. The corrective services bill leaves the provisions largely up to regulation, leaving the protections unclear and inadequate. Meanwhile, the police powers bill replaces the existing safeguards requiring searches to be conducted by an officer of the same sex with a new system that rests ultimately on some degree of police discretion. The bill means that a person can express a preference regarding the gender of the officer who searches them, but this can be refused in circumstances where it is not reasonably practicable or for an improper purpose.

Although I support updating the terms used in the legislation from 'sex' to 'gender', it seems to me a reasonable concern that women may lose the protections they currently have against being subjected to strip searches made by male officers. I also agree with the various stakeholders who suggested that the examples for an 'improper purpose' listed in the explanatory notes be inserted into the bill. This includes the Queensland Human Rights Commission, the QLS and even the QPU, which are not often on the same page on this sort of matter. The committee requested the minister consider amendments to this effect as well as to clarify when it is not reasonably practicable for police to accommodate a gender preference for a search. While I appreciate the minister has foreshadowed amendments intended to retain existing protections, it seems to me that it is still down to police discretion where a preference is expressed, so it remains to be seen how this particular reform will be implemented in practice.

As the LGBTI Legal Service have pointed out, the failure of the bill to define gender also risks obscuring the gendered experiences of people subject to police searches. It is unclear why, for example, the definition from the recently amended BDMR Act was not used. They also support the suggestion by DVConnect that greater checks and balances be required on the exercise of police discretion around invasive searches—for example, through mandatory review by a senior officer.

The police powers bill also allows a forensic examiner to photograph a person's breasts, potentially without their consent, by reclassifying it not as an intimate forensic procedure. Frankly, this seems a little bizarre and creates a clear erosion of existing safeguards for women. If the objective was to update the law to allow for flexibility around gender identity, the bill could have amended the definition of breasts as suggested by the LGBTI Legal Service—for example, to include the breasts and chests of trans and non-binary people as well as women who have undergone a mastectomy.


The bill also removes the requirement for an officer conducting a suspicionless search with a handheld scanning device to be of the same sex or gender as the person being searched. Pride in Law, DVConnect, the LGBTI Legal Service and the Human Rights Commission also opposed this change, noting that this could give a male officer free rein to pat down or stripsearch a woman if the scanner detects something. Even if no touch is involved in the search, a police search is still a potentially traumatising experience underpinned by a really significant power imbalance, which is why the safeguard is important. Particularly given what we know about the Queensland Police Service and in the absence of an independent police integrity unit, as was recommended by the inquiry into police responses to domestic and family violence, this bill is not clear enough to safely allow that new level of discretion.

All of this is aside from the fact that strip searches are an outdated, violent and unnecessary practice that should not be happening at all while an alternative exists. The Queensland Human Rights Commission's report on this last year, titled *Stripped of our dignity*, concluded that strip searches fail to achieve improved prison safety and, at the same time, unreasonably limit the human rights of prisoners,

their children and families, and prison staff. The Human Rights Commission recommends that, even upon someone's first entrance to a watch house, strip searches should only happen where it is the least restrictive option available.

Unfortunately, these bills have little regard for the rights of anyone involved in the criminal legal system, and I share concerns stakeholders raised about the police powers bill's changes that expand who can assess a prisoner for a safety order. These orders can often mean someone is kept in solitary confinement, which has serious impacts on their mental health and ultimately their chances of rehabilitation. It seems appropriate that they are reserved for exceptional circumstances and only following an assessment by a doctor or a psychologist.

There was a little more I wished to say on this but, again, having to cram two bills into a 10-minute speaking slot has deprived me and many others in the House of that opportunity. I would observe that we have—yet again—this government wanting to ram through two bills, apparently with not only not much regard for the debate in here but also little concern for the actual consequences of the legislation.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (12.42 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate. I want to pick up on some of the comments that have been made already by those opposite. I find it so amazing when they come in here and suggest that they are an ally to victim services. I find those types of statements so farcical. I remind the House that I have not forgotten, victim services have not forgotten and victims have not forgotten the way they were treated when the LNP were in power. The LNP when in power actually closed DV shelters. They cut the funding to victim support groups. They not only cut it; they wove into the funding arrangements the removal of any type of systemic advocacy, basically gagging victims agencies from speaking up and advocating to government. They have not forgotten that. They cut QSAC without warning, getting rid of such an important oversight body that had victims of crime represented, and cut funding to Victim Assist Queensland. To suggest that people have forgotten that or that the LNP is an ally to victim services is absolutely extraordinary.

To suggest that there is a lack of victims' voices completely dismisses the many victims who have worked with this Labor government to produce amazing outcomes for victims of crime. I appreciate that the minister has already spoken about Brett Thompson, the CEO of the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group, who I am confident will not be pleased to have heard the way he was spoken about in this House. I will also talk about Sherrie Meyer, who was appointed last week to QSAC as a victim of crime. I have known Sherrie for 20 years. She has been supporting homicide victims in this state, working productively with the government, since the homicide of her son in 1993. To suggest that those victims have not had a role in giving a voice is absolutely ludicrous. I just need to make that statement on behalf of victims.


There are a lot of good things in this bill. I will touch on just a couple of them in the time I have available to me. I want to focus on the clauses that amend Queensland's victims register. The victims register is a unit that is embedded within Queensland Corrective Services. It was established almost 30 years ago—under a Labor government—and has provided a really important connection for QCS, for thousands of victims and for loved ones. The register and the parole process are the final connections between victims and the justice system. I remind members that for victims the impact of crime is long felt and that their need to stay involved in the justice process lasts all the way through to parole and beyond.

As members know, I have a long history supporting victims of homicide. Here in Queensland we have mandatory life sentencing for murder, with a non-parole period of between 15 and 20 years. There is a long time that victims are interacting in the criminal justice system, and the register continues to keep victims up to date throughout that period, letting them know about important parole application information and supporting them to respond to that. It is a really important service and a service that I continue to hear positive things about. Of course, there are always opportunities to do better. We have heard that the process can retraumatise and that it can be clunky for victims to register. The bill proposes to sort this out by streamlining the registration process for the victims register. While retaining the existing registration process it adds additional pathways, with the aim to reduce retraumatisation.

Amendments will enable other entities such as victim support services to refer individuals to the register so they will not be required to complete another form. They will allow approval of registration of an individual without an application in circumstances where they already have a lot of the detail and the consent of the victim. They will provide discretion to reinstate an eligible person's registration without an application.

The bill proposes to extend the eligibility criteria for registration, allow victims of homicide to re-register, and recognise and allow for First Nations family and kinship arrangements. I know that this will be a great change. Finally, the bill proposes to increase the flexibility of how victims can engage with the victims register. For many years I have heard from victims who have not been able to provide a submission in written form, so having the ability to provide a submission in other forms is vital.

These reforms have the support of victims agencies, which have impressed on us through the committee process the importance of identifying and reforming those intersections in the justice system that retraumatise victims. Like I said, there is a lot of reform in these proposed bills. I would like to recognise all of the victims agencies that worked constructively with many government departments and ministers to bring about real, lasting and positive change for victims of crime. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (12.47 pm): The state Labor government have a record, and it is not one to be proud of. Crime is at an all-time high and Queenslanders have never felt less safe in their homes, at their local shopping centres or in their cars. Blame for this lies squarely at the feet of this third-term Miles Labor government. Almost a decade ago, this state Labor government chose to water down our youth justice laws and, in doing so, created a generation of young offenders who know that their rights outweigh the rights of victims. It is this continued position by this state government, of putting the rights of offenders before the rights of victims, that I am seeing unfold in the amendments foreshadowed by the minister today in her second reading speech.

One of the amendments proposed to the corrective services bill is to insert a new section 340AA into the Corrective Services Act, essentially to provide the Parole Board with a broad discretion to withhold the details of information provided to the Parole Board. This can include a range of confidential information—it can include information about the offender’s suitability to be released into the community on parole, information from a victim of crime or intelligence about criminal activity of that prisoner—to inform the Parole Board’s decision about whether or not that prisoner is suitable to be released back into the community, ensuring and critical to the safety of not only victims of crime but also the community as a whole. That is the position currently drafted in this bill, to give the Parole Board that broad power.

Today the minister has come in here and watered down her own bill with amendments that propose to weaken that broad power and has introduced a balancing test to balance the rights of prisoners, murderers and rapists instead of prioritising the rights of victims and community safety. The minister in her second reading speech has indicated that she will accept the Labor members’ recommendation in the committee report and move amendments to this section which risk putting the rights of offenders before the rights of victims. The amendments mean that there will now be a balancing test between the human rights of the offender and the rights of the offender to natural justice rather than the original drafted broad power which allows the Parole Board to withhold information to ensure the safety of our community and to protect the information that might be given to them from victims of crime.

Let us look at the reason this section has had to be legislated and included. It has come about as a result of a Court of Appeal decision in the case of McQueen. McQueen won a Court of Appeal decision. The Parole Board rejected McQueen’s parole and decided he was not suitable to be in the community. McQueen appealed that decision and the Court of Appeal determined that, because natural justice was not provided to this murderer, McQueen is entitled to have that decision overturned. This section has been inserted in the Corrective Services Act to undo that harm and this minister has come into the chamber and watered that down with a balancing test. McQueen is a convicted murderer who is a prime suspect in the bludgeoning death of a teenage girl and was eligible for parole following that Court of Appeal decision. The Parole Board failed in its bid to suspend the parole of McQueen after its decision was found by the Court of Appeal to lack procedural fairness. This section is designed to correct this error, yet this minister has come into this chamber and once again watered down laws that are designed to protect our community and victims of crime. Mr McQueen’s involvement—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Currumbin—

Mrs GERBER: Yes, I can assure—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You knew what I was going to say.

Mrs GERBER: Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. I can assure this chamber that this matter is currently not before the courts. Mr McQueen was called before an inquest in 2018 into the death of Annette Mason, who was 15 years old and found dead in her Toowoomba home, and Mr McQueen was implicated in this. The Parole Board was considering confidential information provided to it in relation to this case and on the basis of that decided to withdraw McQueen’s parole—a murderer who had

already murdered a prisoner in the prison system and who was accused of murdering a 15-year-old girl. The Parole Board withdrew his parole and that decision was overturned by the Court of Appeal because this murderer was not given natural justice and this section is designed to correct that error, but this minister comes into this chamber and waters down her own laws that are designed to protect victims of crime.


We have a bill before us which might see parole decisions overturned, but once again we see this government coming into this chamber and putting the rights of offenders before the rights of victims, putting the rights of murderers and rapists like McQueen before the rights and safety of our community and the rights of victims. The LNP members of the committee did not support this watering down provision of section 340AA in their statement of reservation. They stated that they agreed with the broad discretion to be provided to the Parole Board to withhold confidential information to the prisoner or the perpetrator—confidential information that might include information from a victim of crime and might include information about other criminal activities that a prisoner might be undertaking—in order to protect our community and protect victims of crime. This will water down that section so that now the Parole Board must do a balancing test. The Parole Board now must balance the rights of murderers and rapists against the rights of victims. Why can the Parole Board not have the broad discretion to be able to protect our community when looking at whether rapists and murderers should get parole? I urge the minister to reconsider this watering down provision and put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders, but we know that this government's heart is not in it. We know it is more concerned about the human rights of murderers and rapists than it is the rights of victims.

With the limited time I have left I want to focus on some of the other parts of this bill that deal with victims and youth justice. At the outset let me put on the record my sincere appreciation for the tireless and often thankless work that our corrective services officers do in not just our youth detention centres but our Corrective Services facilities across Queensland. Victims of crime have been telling us that this state government is failing them. We have been listening to victims of crime and we know that they are not getting the support that they need from this state government. We know that victims of crime are having to wait up to 18 months to two years to be able to get the financial assistance that they need to cover them when they are victims of crime. These people who have had their lives torn apart and who have lost loved ones to the most heinous of crimes have told us that they have to relive that horror and that the crime does not end, and they have been calling out for tangible action and an effective advocate service.

The proposed alteration to the Queensland Corrective Services Victims Register, while not an advocate service, will do a little bit more to allow victims of crime and their families to be kept informed as to information about their offender. It is our hope that this may assist victims of crime and their families to plan for safety if an offender is released and that they will be notified when the offender is applying for parole and of events that may affect their safety. It is our hope that it will simplify the process of getting this information through an opt-out service. We on this side of the chamber want to see much more done to protect the rights of victims. We want to see much more done to protect victims and ensure that their rights are put before the rights of offenders. The department stated—

The provision as currently drafted ... is necessary as there is a higher threshold for non-disclosure of information on the basis of public interest. Therefore, public interest immunity may not protect the full scope of sensitive and confidential information captured by the provision from disclosure.

Even the minister's own department wants to see this section in the bill, drafted to correct the outcome of McQueen, remain as it is, but this minister has come in here and watered down that section and not listened to her own department that say that it is necessary as currently drafted. This state Labor government does not have its heart in it and it does not care about the rights of victims.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (12.57 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This is about the Miles government listening to Queensland and knowing that governments need to evolve to match the expectations of modern society, and that is why this bill restricts prisoners from reapplying for parole after it has been refused in a range of different ways. The bill amends the CSA to provide the board with broader discretion to set a longer period during which a prisoner cannot reapply for parole after having an application refused and sets an appropriate timeframe that is proportionate to the length of the sentence. There are a range of details around the amendments that have been spoken about in a number of different ways throughout this debate. Most importantly for me, this bill will provide victims with an assurance that another parole application or release is not imminent.


It is the situation of the victim that I want to discuss in my short contribution today. We know that what has happened to victims is a lifelong sentence for them. It might be that a crime that has occurred may seem small in other people's language but has high impact. Even someone breaking into your home when you are there can be the most traumatic experience which can have long-lasting impacts. However, in many of these instances we are talking about the most heinous crimes and we need to be very aware how they impact victims. We have been talking a lot over the last year to 18 months about supporting victims in new and expanded ways. Last week I was grateful to attend the independent ministerial advisory committee to talk to an excellent group of people, including victims and victims' representatives, who are looking at ways that this government can support victims. We are already offering increased funding, we are appointing a victims of crime commissioner and we have a community response pilot program, but we need to continue to do more because we are still only at the beginning of understanding the long-lasting impacts on victims and what we need to do. Therefore, this is a really important message that we are sending.

Debate, on motion of Ms Farmer, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Miles Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): The Miles government has given up—given up on fixing the Queensland health crisis, given up on being honest with Queensland patients and given up on compassion. In the last 24 hours we have learnt another Queenslanders lost his life on the ambulance ramp. How did we find out about that? It was not from data, not from information shared by the health minister but from a news report. The response we saw today was insincere, it completely lacked compassion and, quite frankly, it was devoid of any action that Queenslanders would want to look to and expect to see from a government—a government that should be keeping Queenslanders safe but are not.

Instead of prioritising the patient, the government quibbled about whether the patient was inside or outside the ambulance while ramped. Instead of acknowledging the worst ramping in history and coming up with a plan to fix it, this government came up with a different way of measuring the problem. Let that sink in. Rather than fixing the problem to protect patients, this government decided to fix the figures to protect itself. What we have seen today is a focus on spin, on fixing the narrative and not fixing ambulance ramping. That is the culture of this government—a government that has presided over a deteriorating health system for nearly a decade and chooses to try to change the narrative and change what Queensland patients are living through.

We acknowledge the pain that the family of the 78-year-old man is going through. We acknowledge the staff working in that hospital and we thank them for what they do. We thank them for what they do every day, trying their best under a broken system. We thank them for their dedication to their cause and the calling that is helping people in our hospitals.

It was following a death in the same week that the health minister tried to tell the media that ramping was getting better. It was on a weekend, when Queenslanders' eyes were on other things, when the minister released the quarterly figure of 45.5 per cent ambulance ramping, the worst ever recorded. After releasing the quarterly figures, the minister attempted to tell the media that, in fact, things were getting better because one of the months was better—while releasing quarterly figures. That is the problem with this minister and this government: a culture of cover-ups, a culture of a lack of transparency and accountability and, indeed, a culture of failure. Shortly the shadow health minister will go through those figures and explain why every Queenslanders deserves so much better than they are getting.

If government changes in October the LNP will act to heal the Queensland health crisis—better resources, better triaging, putting doctors and nurses back in charge and sharing data in real time. Within 100 days of an LNP government winning election in October Queenslanders will see in real time what is happening in their hospitals. That is a way to make sure that accountability will matter again: the eyes of 5½ million Queenslanders will hold the minister accountable for the targets that are set.

This government is failing when it comes to frontline service delivery—it is failing to keep police on the front line with the right laws to drive down crime, to keep infrastructure rolling out with the right planning laws to fix the housing crisis, to keep our power plants online to drive down power prices and to fix the cost-of-living crisis. Shortly the shadow minister for cost of living and energy will explain a little more about the missing Brady report.

On youth crime, we have heard the spin for that one, too. Let's run through a calendar of a week in Queensland under this government. On Sunday a woman was allegedly carjacked at knifepoint in Townsville. On Monday Queenslanders watched an interview with Lee Lovell in which he called out the laws that let down his wife, Emma. On Tuesday we read the victim impact statement from the Kefus and we learnt that youth crime does not just impact families when it happens; it has an ongoing impact on their psyche forever. On Wednesday I learnt of Burleigh businesses that are at breaking point because of a generation of untouchables running riot through their beautiful little village and the action they are trying to take because they know of the situation with weaker laws and fewer police. On Thursday police numbers—when a government tried to somehow again tell Queenslanders that something is happening with police numbers that quite frankly is not. The reason for that is, despite a pipeline of recruits, our brave police—those experienced officers—are leaving in droves and the numbers show that. At the last election this government promised 1,450 extra police—full-time-equivalent, frontline officers—and on the latest figures that number has gone backwards. To use the minister's term, that would be a Labor cut of over 1,500.


The LNP commits to releasing the workforce data twice a year every year and that is the way that Queenslanders working in our Public Service can know that they have a government that values what they do and is prepared to be held accountable for the numbers on the front line delivering those services. The reports from Townsville when it comes to the youth crime crisis show a case of 'here we go again'. The residents of that city are again wondering at what stage will they get a government that gives them the laws they need, because this government said they threw everything at it and yet the problem keeps getting worse. The Making Queensland Safer Laws will remove detention as a last resort and will put the rights of the victims ahead of the rights of offenders. If the government changes in October, the Making Queensland Safer Laws will be laws and they will be laws this year. It will not be a rewrite, a rejig or a rehash; it will be a removal of detention as a last resort, and this government cannot admit that its decision nine years ago created the Queensland youth crime crisis.

I know fire ants might not be something that captures the attention of all Queenslanders all of the time, but those who have been impacted by them know this has been another failure of frontline service delivery when it comes to this government. They have been in power so long their list of broken promises makes sober reading, and today we learnt more about the botched fire ant eradication program. Under Labor we are seeing fire ant infestation, not fire ant eradication. Fire ants could end up costing the Gold Coast \$180 million per year according to a council briefing. A great city built on an amazing tourism reputation will potentially be at risk because of a government that cannot do what it said it was going to do. I have had fire ants in my own electorate—in parks, in shopping centres—because of a government that said it was going to do something and has not done so.

The fire ant treatment area has ballooned in South-East Queensland under Labor's watch with more communities now at risk from this pest which poses a serious risk to agriculture and Queensland's environment. They are west of Toowoomba and south of the border, areas that fire ants have never been before. We know the increased infestation is a direct result of complete mismanagement by this government and they have allowed the pest to run rampant across Queensland.

In 2001 a milestone set by the Ministerial Council for the National Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program was for a functioning information system to collect and report reliable and consistent performance data. Fast forward over 20 years and still that has not occurred. Wherever you look in Queensland Queenslanders are saying they deserve better. When they turn up to a hospital and see the pressure our valued staff are under and ambulances ramped they deserve better; when we hear about young mothers being held up at knifepoint in their car because of weaker laws and fewer police we know they deserve better; when we hear of people living in tents, when we hear of people unable to dream of owning a home because of a lack of infrastructure and proper planning we know Queenslanders deserve better. The only way this will change is if the government changes in October. In a few short months Queenslanders have the chance to show Labor the door in 2024

Miles Labor Government, Performance

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (2.10 pm): Once again we hear the LNP saying anything to undermine the public's confidence in the work of our frontline doctors and nurses. In particular, for the Leader of the Opposition to come in here today and say that a gentleman lost his life on an ambulance ramp was deliberately misleading and wrong. In fact, as I have outlined to the House today, that gentleman was cared for in the ED and ICU and was receiving treatment for about 11 hours at the

hospital. As I have repeatedly said today, the family of the gentleman who tragically passed away has said they are distressed by the coverage, yet the Leader of the Opposition does not seem to care about the family's wishes and instead chooses to score political points on this issue.

Opposition members interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: He needs to do the responsible thing: give the family the privacy they need to grieve and let the clinical experts do their job in reviewing the case. The Leader of the Opposition says he wants to put doctors and nurses back in charge. I say: let them do their job; let them investigate this case. We know that the Leader of the Opposition will always cherrypick and criticise our health data.

Not once have those opposite congratulated our frontline health staff who have seen an extra 23,000 people in the ED. Compared to last year, more of them are being seen on time. Not once have they congratulated our staff for seeing eight in 10 patients in time. How many times have they congratulated our staff for the record elective surgery here in Queensland, for reducing the long-wait surgery list by 38 per cent or for getting 4,200 more patients off the stretcher within 30 minutes? How many times have they congratulated our staff?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members on my left, the Leader of the Opposition was heard in relative silence. I would expect that courtesy to be extended. I will start to warn people.

Ms FENTIMAN: We know fundamentally that those opposite do not care about the success of our staff. We know that when they were in government they sacked thousands of them. We know that their sole focus is on tearing down our health system. We know this because they have not one single policy, not one single idea—

Dr Robinson interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Oodgeroo is warned.

Ms FENTIMAN:—and not one single dollar committed to improving our health system. It is not just me saying this. The Leader of the Opposition's own mentor, Campbell Newman, has offered his insight into the Leader of the Opposition's statements about ambulance ramping. He said—

'How will you do this?

Magic wand?

Mystic incantations?

Or will you implement the same measures we put in place in the period 2012 to 2015?'

I cannot believe I am saying this, but I agree with Campbell Newman. Tell us, Leader of the Opposition: how are you going to magic up this wonderful improvement in ambulance ramping? How are you going to choose between the magic wand and sacking 4,000 workers again? But he will not. All he cares about is his slick slogans and not being up-front and truthful with the people of Queensland.


Today I was pleased to join the Chief Health Officer to talk about an important health issue and that is to make recommendations on the use of social media for young people. Those recommendations include limiting access to social media for children aged under 14 and closely supporting teenagers over the age of 14 as they begin to use social media. As I said this morning, the data is alarming. We have seen a tripling of self-harm among young girls aged under 14 and a doubling for those aged 15 to 19 since 2008 when the first smartphone was released onto the market. Now more than ever is the time for us to have difficult conversations.

The Chief Health Officer's recommendations are very important because parents are crying out for advice and tools to be able to have those conversations with their teenagers. We all know we are busier than ever and those conversations are difficult, so making it easier for parents to access toolkits and resources is critical. It is also why our government has the biggest investment in mental health support, particularly youth mental health support, in the state's history and that is only because of our mental health levy; the mental health levy that those opposite did not support and do not support. Their record on mental health was to be the first government to cut mental health funding and close the Barrett Adolescent Centre. We know how so many vulnerable families felt when that closed.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker I remind the House that due to the structure of the sitting today any warnings that are issued now will carry through to the end of the sitting day.

Miles Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): Everything that is wrong with the Queensland Labor Party is the Minister for Health, Shannon Fentiman. The excuses she was just rolling out for a man losing his life in the back of an ambulance on a ramp at a hospital are the same excuses that former minister for health D'Ath gave, the same excuses former minister for health Miles gave and the same excuses former minister for health Cameron Dick gave. After nine years in office they are still looking for who to blame. If the Minister for Health wants to know who is to blame, pick up the mirror, or borrow it from Cameron Dick, and ask yourself the question—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am sorry; 'Treasurer'. I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Use correct titles.

Mr BLEIJIE: I say to the Minister for Health, borrow the Treasurer's mirror and ask yourself the question: who is to blame for the Queensland Health crisis? The answer will be staring right back at the minister.

We all talk about Labor's chaos and crisis. I did not think it could get any worse in the Labor Party in Queensland until I heard the Assistant Treasurer, handpicked by the Premier himself, on Steve Austin's 612 radio program the other day announce that she was running a preselection challenge to her federal factional colleague, Shayne Neumann, in Ipswich. She has effectively said, 'I am giving up on the Labor Party in Queensland. I am giving up on the Premier's leadership in Queensland. I am jumping ship. I am going after the position that Shayne Neumann has.' Shayne Neumann answered it well at the Ipswich Show when he said, 'The member for Ipswich needs to explain why she has abandoned the people of Ipswich.' Just like the Labor Party abandoned the people of Ipswich West, so too has the Labor Party abandoned the people of Ipswich and so too has the Labor Party abandoned regional and rural Queensland. The Assistant Treasurer should be crunching the numbers on the cost-of-living crisis, not crunching her political numbers. That shows that the Labor Party's priorities are all wrong in Queensland. They are all about the election. They are all about maintaining power because they are power hungry.

I see the member for Redlands in the chamber today. I just had the pleasure of meeting with the LNP candidate for Redlands, Rebecca Young, on the parliamentary precinct. She is up in the gallery. Welcome, candidate for Redlands. What a fantastic member she will make with the right priorities for the people of Redlands and the right priorities for Queensland's future.

When we talk about the Minister for Housing and the housing crisis and other incompetent ministers, we must talk about Minister Yvette D'Ath. She was a failed Attorney-General, a failed health minister and now is a failed Attorney-General for the second time. She so badly weakened the youth justice laws in 2015-16 that she was promoted to the Attorney-General portfolio to do it all over again. It is an absolute disgrace that the Labor government has caused the youth crime crisis in Queensland. The Labor Party wants to know who is to blame. It is the Labor Party. Nothing will change until the government changes in October.


We talk about friends in the Labor Party and the Minister for Health talks about mentors. Who is her mentor? Jackie Trad. I see Jackie Trad in the paper again today with the government—

Mrs Frecklington: She's back.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection; she's back. I see the smile from the member for Gladstone who was a mentee. Jackie Trad was his mentor as well. She is coming back. She is the puppetmaster of the Labor Party. If the Premier wants to know how to release the Crime and Corruption Commission report into Jackie Trad, all he has to do is make the decision. He is the Premier of the state. He did not need an independent review from Catherine Holmes. He could make the decision. Why will he not do it? Because Minister Fentiman went on a skiing trip with Jackie Trad. Jackie Trad controls the Labor Party, and they will protect Jackie Trad. That is why Queenslanders are not seeing that CCC report.

Look at the cost-of-living crisis. Minister Enoch spent \$126,000 on overseas travel in a cost-of-living crisis. That is on top of a minister and the Premier using two luxury jets. The Labor Party's priorities are all wrong. Today they were attacking the late Queen. Just as they were attacking the late Queen, I received an email from the Albanese Royal Australian Mint saying I had won my bid for the first collection of King Charles III coins. How exciting! What about the irony at the same time? Labor is a disgrace.

Regional Queensland, Manufacturing

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (2.20 pm): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly. I am wondering what it costs to hire helicopters these days? The member should know.

Last week's federal budget was certainly straight from the Labor playbook. Cost of living and manufacturing were front and centre of the budget. In terms of cost of living, there is an additional \$300 in energy rebates for households and \$325 for our fantastic small businesses in Queensland. It is great to see a federal government getting on board with its own energy rebates. There is \$1,000 from the Queensland government and \$300 from the federal government. We are not delivering cost-of-living relief just for brownie points; we are delivering cost-of-living relief because it is what Queenslanders need right now. What Queenslanders need from us is Labor governments always delivering, and that is what we will continue to do.

We can deliver this hip-pocket relief because we have multinational miners paying their fair share to Queenslanders. It is because we have kept our energy assets in public hands. Let us remember what the LNP's contribution was to cost-of-living relief last time it was in government. Jobs at the Gladstone Ports Corporation were on the chopping block under the LNP, just like the jobs of the energy and health workers in the Rockhampton region. They did it before and they will do it again. What about Central Queensland LNP members whingeing about last week's federal budget? There were a few half-hearted Facebook posts and radio grabs—just like noisy seagulls at the beach—offering nothing but consistently complaining about the good things being delivered by Labor governments in Australia.


Members of the LNP do not care about Central Queensland; members of the LNP care only about themselves. Instead of talking up bill relief for people in Calliope, tax cuts for families in New Acland or rent help for pensioners in Tannum Sands, all the member for Flynn is interested in is his pet project—nuclear energy in Central Queensland. It was much the same from the LNP's Michelle Landry and Matt Canavan—zero on cost of living and zero in substance. Under the LNP's watch, regional jobs were slashed and manufacturing went offshore with no plan for our future energy mix. It says it all about the LNP in Queensland.

Meanwhile, the Miles Labor government is just getting on with it, delivering hydrogen jobs in Gladstone and renewable and manufacturing jobs right across the regions right now. There is more to come thanks to this Miles Queensland government. I am pleased to see the Albanese government's \$22 billion Future Made in Australia package. This is a nation-building package from a Commonwealth government that is building on all the important steps that we have taken to support our manufacturers in Queensland. Our government has invested over \$207 million in manufacturing, creating and supporting 7,400 jobs in Queensland. This is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of what we can achieve in the future and what is coming. The Albanese government wants to make Australia a renewable energy superpower. Manufacturing will certainly be a big part of that. There is \$1.5 billion for clean energy manufacturing through the Solar Sunshot and Battery Breakthrough programs.

I will continue to work with the Australian government, because that is what good state governments do, to make sure we get our fair share and to realise our potential as manufacturing leaders in this country. While the LNP get bogged down in their tired cultural wars and nuclear noise, we are getting on with it here in Queensland. We are benefiting from the renewables revolution and we will continue to benefit off the back of that. All we hear from those opposite and their mates in Canberra is negativity. They cannot help themselves in talking down jobs and the regions. It is in their DNA just like cutting, sacking and selling. I will be the first person to stand up for regional Queensland. I want to make sure we get a fair share for our state. Apart from seeing this hardworking Labor government re-elected in October, clearly we need more Labor MPs in Canberra as well, because those LNP seagulls opposite are just a distraction—all squawk and no solutions to anything. Never mind the right priorities. The LNP tagline needs to be: promise the world and deliver nothing. The Miles government will continue to deliver cost-of-living relief in Central Queensland and we will back our manufacturers.

(Time expired)

Miles Labor Government, Performance

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.25 pm): Today I have a few points I want to raise on the performance of the Labor government's management of the health system. To start, I address the minister's claim this morning in an answer to the first question during question time. The minister said words to the effect of the following: 'On every measure the health system is performing to pre-pandemic levels.' I have not yet been able to view the direct quote as *Hansard* is yet to be published, but it was

words to that effect. That could not be further from the truth. It is astounding that the minister would ever consider uttering those words. In the very interview in which the minister said the measures she wanted to see return to pre-pandemic levels she referenced three key metrics. They are the same metrics which have always been used in Queensland, and those metrics are as follows: ambulance ramping; the elective surgery waiting list; and the waiting list to see a specialist.

The targets the minister set were clear: ambulance ramping would return to the pre-pandemic level of 28 per cent; the elective surgery waiting list would return to the pre-pandemic level of 56,176; and the specialist outpatient waiting list would return to the pre-pandemic levels of 248,905. None of that has happened—none of it. In fact, unbelievably, each of those performance measures has gotten worse—no ifs, no buts. Ramping is now at record highs at 45.5 per cent. There are over 60,000 patients waiting for elective surgery and there are nearly 290,000 patients waiting for an appointment to see a specialist. I repeat this point: not only are those performance measures not at pre-pandemic levels; they are worse than when the minister took over. The minister has made it worse. The three measures the minister herself set as the barometer for her success are worse.


These egregious and very deliberate comments this morning by the minister were blatant mistruths. I urge the minister to correct the record and apologise to the House for making such patently false claims. I also urge the minister to consider whether she is really up to the job. I mentioned the numbers today behind ambulance ramping, but it is so much more than a number. These are people behind those numbers. They are waiting for treatment. They are waiting for care. Last night we learnt that a gentleman sadly lost his life after being ramped for an extended period after arriving at the Gold Coast University Hospital via ambulance. I convey my sincere and heartfelt condolences to the gentleman's family, because these are truly tragic circumstances. I and my colleagues on this side of the chamber feel deeply for them.

I also want to place on record my deep admiration and respect for the staff at GCUH in that ED department who were present at the time of this tragic accident. As ED clinicians, they are trained and they are well equipped to respond to tragic incidents like these, but it does not make it any easier. I am reliably told that the staff are distressed about the circumstances involved. The staff at GCUH are concerned about 'the ramp' in the ED which is effectively a corridor. I have been told by the staff that those patients are often the most unwell in the ED, yet the same whistleblower has said that it is typically up to one nurse to monitor seven or more patients. The staff describe that patients can be moved from a bed space back to the ramping area and that the congestion in this area is a danger to patients and staff.

Staff have also raised concerns that this congestion can impede trauma to the resus area for a trauma response. They have told me that the sheer volume of ramped patients at times can diminish privacy and dignity for those patients who are passing in the resus area. That is not good enough. They are fed up. They are at breaking point. Those ED staff are calling out for help. They say they are sick of bandaid solutions; they want genuine change. The government has long been warned that deaths would occur on ramps or because of ramping. It has now happened twice in only a matter of months. It is not acceptable. It is devastating for the families and staff who are involved. Queenslanders deserve better than this chaos and crisis. The health crisis is deepening under Labor—it is only getting worse—yet this minister and her colleagues continue to keep up the facade that everything is fine. Labor will say and do anything to cling to power. Tragically, it is costing lives.

(Time expired)

TAFE

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (2.30 pm): Labor is proud to tell Queenslanders what we stand for and that we will work hard each and every day for a Queensland where every family is helped to pay the bills and to make ends meet, where every student can gain skills without being saddled with crushing debt and where our essential services stay publicly owned. We will always put people before profits—right where they should be. This vision is not a dream. Under the leadership of our Premier it is a promise that Labor can, will and is delivering.

We understand the struggles that Queenslanders face every day because we are talking to them—the anxiety of opening bills, the worry about their children's future and the fear of losing control over our essential services. We want Queenslanders to know that we hear you and we are taking real action. We are not afraid to fight for what is right—which is why we have taken on multinational mining companies. The Miles Labor government is making them pay their fair share and delivering the biggest

energy rebates in the nation's history. These rebates are not just numbers on paper; they are a lifeline for families who are already stretched to their limits. We will keep our energy assets publicly owned, ensuring that profits are reinvested back into our communities, not into the pockets of private overseas shareholders.

In contrast, what do the Liberals and Nationals actually offer? They want to rip our assets away from us, selling them to the highest bidder—reckless privatisation that will lead to skyrocketing bills and poor services.

Opposition members interjected.

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

Mr McCALLUM: We know this because we have seen it before. When the LNP gets its hands on our public assets, the people of Queensland suffer. We saw it again only weeks ago when they voted against laws for public ownership in this very chamber—

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Theodore!

Mr McCALLUM:—making it crystal clear that they will take the billions that Labor puts into the pockets of Queenslanders and put them into the bank accounts of big corporations. This will not happen on Labor's watch. We will fight every day for everyday Queenslanders to keep our promise.

In addition to the immediate electricity bill relief, we are backing Queenslanders with the skills that they need for the jobs that they want. The new Miles Labor government is dedicated to maintaining public ownership of our TAFEs. This ensures that every aspiring Queenslander seeking to improve their skills can access—

Mr Boothman interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Theodore, I have warned you several times to cease your interjections. You have ignored that. You are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr McCALLUM: This ensures that every aspiring Queenslander seeking to improve their skills can access high-quality education without the burden of overwhelming fees. Publicly owned TAFE is a cornerstone of our communities, providing opportunities for all regardless of background or financial circumstances. A Liberal National Party government would dismantle our public TAFE system and slam the door on countless Queenslanders who simply want a fair chance at a better future. The LNP would rob our young people of the chance to pursue their career dreams and aspirations, jacking up course fees, closing campuses, sacking teachers and bringing free TAFE to a dead end.

The choice before us is clear: a Queensland Labor government that fights for the people, a government that believes in public ownership and delivering real cost-of-living relief; or the risk of the LNP stripping away our assets, hiking up our bills and selling off our future to the highest bidder. We have seen their track record and we know the pain it causes. Labor is backing the path of fairness, of opportunity and of a government that puts people before profits. Together we can ensure that our essential services remain ours, that education remains accessible and that every Queenslander can afford to live with the dignity of work. It is not political rhetoric; it is a very real reality. The Liberal National Party will sell our power assets and our TAFEs. They will hand billions back to mining companies and make cuts to our rebates and our free TAFE. They cannot be trusted with Queensland's future.

(Time expired)

Cost of Living

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.36 pm): It is very obvious that the member for Bundamba spent way too much time living in Melbourne and not in Queensland when who sold the assets? Labor sold the assets. I visited HQPlantations in my electorate this week. It was flogged off by the Labor government. It is obvious that the minister over there does not listen in this chamber because the Leader of the Opposition has said on numerous occasions, including in debate on a bill only last sitting week, that they are not for sale. We know that the minister does not listen to Queenslanders because it is obvious that if the minister were listening to Queenslanders he would know that Queenslanders are struggling with the cost of living.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Logan and member for Gregory, cease your quarrelling.


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Why are they struggling? Because after 10 years of this incompetent government their power bills are through the roof. You have to ask why. The one major reason, apart from the incompetent government over there, is that Callide has been offline for nearly three years. On the 25th of this month—in four days time—it will have been offline for three years. Why? We are all asking that. We know Queenslanders' power bills went up 20 per cent last year—the highest increase in the nation.

Forensic engineer Sean Brady, who is meant to be doing the report, would probably like to release the report. You have to ask why it cannot be released. We know from the farcical nature of what went on in the Federal Court just yesterday—four hours under questioning—who was stopping Dr Sean Brady from answering. It was not him. It was CS Energy's legal counsel because they know that the government is running a protection racket around what happened at Callide. I am thankful each and every day that no-one was killed in that horrific explosion. I know that workers have since left Callide because of the stress every time they think about that horrific day. I say to the government: release the Sean Brady report. Be up-front and honest with Queenslanders about what went on at Callide and why our power bills have gone through the roof.

Last week I was in Cairns with Bree James. She will be an amazing member for Barron River if we are so lucky to get there. I sat with Emily and her son Reef, who live in a one-bedroom unit. Their last quarterly bill was \$900. They sleep together. They consume as little energy as possible. Poor Emily is struggling with the cost of living. She blames the Palaszczuk-Miles government because she knows that nothing better has happened in the last 10 years, so why should they believe a government that has so far lost priorities. Minister Enoch stood up and delivered a ministerial statement in this House today but failed to explain to Queenslanders what she did with \$126,000 of their money. I call on the minister to publicly say to the people of Queensland what she did. We all know that ministers should and must travel overseas to benefit Queensland. What value did Queenslanders get from Minister Enoch's \$126,000 trip? I call on the minister to stand up in this parliament and explain that to Queenslanders like Emily, who is struggling to pay her electricity bill.

It was interesting to hear the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water say something like—and I will check the record—'We need to see more Labor politicians in Canberra.' Was he referring to the member for Ipswich? We know that the factions over there are all fighting. Today the Minister for Health has proven that she simply cannot be the premier of this state. We know the Premier cannot be the premier because we know the factions are juggling each and every way, so no wonder the member for Gladstone is telling the member for Ipswich to run to Canberra. We need to show Labor the door in '24.

Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (2.41 pm): I am incredibly proud to be part of the Miles Labor government that is delivering fully funded passenger rail to the Sunshine Coast. Since I was elected in 2020 I have worked hard to make this new rail line a reality, and I am proud to say that it is now fully funded and good to go. The Sunshine Coast is one of our fastest growing regions. As the third largest city in Queensland and the ninth largest in Australia, it needs a direct rail connection to South-East Queensland. I am pleased to report that we are getting one thanks to the Miles Labor government.

Yet incredibly, the 'railway sleepers' over there on the LNP benches are outraged that Caloundra is getting the first stage. There are crocodile tears over a project they refused to advance one inch. The LNP is disappointed that Caloundra is being prioritised in stage 1. As the member for Caloundra, I am delighted. I will continue to put the interests of Caloundra first. I wonder if the LNP realises that to get to Maroochydore the rail link has to go through Caloundra first. Perhaps they are referring to the member for Maroochydore's logic-defying plan to link Caloundra and Maroochydore but then not link it to the state rail network, which creates not so much a railway as an amusement park ride.

Over 40 years of achieving precisely nothing, the Queensland LNP has been shown up for what they are—disinterested. It took the Miles Labor government, the Albanese federal Labor government and two local Labor MPs to do in one term what the LNP could not be bothered delivering in decades. The previous four LNP members who represented Caloundra have included a cabinet minister, a state treasurer and two premiers, and with that level of representation they did not manage a single extra railway spike hammered into the ground for the Sunshine Coast. I remind the House that this is the party that could not erect a single set of traffic lights at Ridgewood Road in 17 years; \$3.7 million was

too much effort for the LNP on the Sunshine Coast. The two federal LNP members on the Sunshine Coast are more concerned about where they are going to put their nuclear reactors and were so half-hearted about passenger rail they refused to pass a budget with a rail commitment in it.

Funding for Sunshine Coast passenger rail has been provided by state and federal Labor governments, and that is an irrefutable fact. The state LNP was no better when last in government—not a single dollar was committed by them. By contrast, \$5.5 billion has been committed by both state and federal Labor governments. Even if we include the cost of the six corflute signs the state LNP had made up for Sunshine Coast rail, that means the actual amount of money spent by the state LNP is equal to 0.0002 of one per cent of the total spend. What a fantastic expression of how much the Sunshine Coast means to the LNP. Our money is there on the table; \$5.5 billion is ready to go. The LNP does not support progressive coal royalties, so there is \$9 billion they will have to find if elected. We all know what the LNP does when they need to scrape up dollars—they cut, they cut hard and then they sack people.

One of their own shadow ministers has identified another \$10 billion in cuts—sorry, pruning—so they are going to rip \$9 billion out of the revenue stream. Then we are supposed to believe that, having struggled to put a set of traffic lights on Caloundra Road, they are going to build a railway line. Nobody believes that—not even the LNP. This fully funded, region shaping project is only possible now because of three vital components that were needed to make it happen: a federal Labor government that actually passed a budget with matched funding; a Miles state Labor government willing to do what an LNP minister, an LNP treasurer and two LNP premiers would not do; and two local Labor MPs prepared to do the work to make it happen. We are building the biggest public transport project the coast has ever seen, and my community cannot wait to see it started. Only a Labor government will deliver this. You can only have confidence in a Labor government to see this line operational.

Miles Labor Government, Performance



Mr JANETZKI (Toowoomba South—LNP) (2.45 pm): The state and federal treasurers have a great deal in common: their offices are right beside each other; they both live in Logan, perhaps via Greenslopes; and they both love speculating with taxpayers' dollars. We only need look at PsiQuantum for that. As of last night they have one more thing in common and that is deficits across the horizon, whether it be the state or federal budget. Perhaps at the end of last year the Premier and Treasurer were too busy looking after leadership numbers to identify the missing billions. Perhaps they were too busy looking after their own numbers rather than the billions of Queenslanders.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Logan.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Logan and Leader of the Opposition, you are both warned under the standing orders for quarrelling.

Mr JANETZKI: The Premier lost track of billions at a press conference today when he was talking about rebates being in the 2024-25 budget despite there being a bill in the House that says it is in this year's budget. While Queenslanders worry about the cost of living, the Premier loses track of billions. I wonder where these billions are. Could they be in luxury jets? Could they be with the arts minister on her travels? Where are the missing billions the Premier has mislaid today? When we are looking at the federal budget—and the state budget too—we need to always focus on what is done rather than what they say. Announcements and glossy brochures are good, but we need to look at what is delivered by state and federal Labor here in Queensland.


The federal budget last week was another example of why we should look at what they do rather than what they say. If you recall the first federal Labor budget of Jim Chalmers, there were significant cuts to water infrastructure projects such as the Hughenden Irrigation Scheme, Urannah, Hell's Gates and Emu Swamp Dam in the Southern Downs. In their second budget and in the infrastructure review we saw significant cuts to infrastructure, including the Mooloolah River Interchange, New England Highway upgrades, the Beenleigh Railway Station and the Loganlea Railway Station. We saw those infrastructure cuts in their second budget. What was cut last week from the federal budget here in Queensland? We saw significant cuts: \$52 million in health care; \$498 million across the forwards in housing; and over \$1 billion in infrastructure. I recall back in the days of the last federal coalition

government when the treasurer in Queensland issued media release after media release. In fact, I have some of the treasurer's comments from that time, particularly around housing. He said, 'We'll never be able to do what we need to do with social and affordable housing so long as we have a federal government that is in full-blown retreat from supporting social and affordable housing.'

I was waiting for the Treasurer to issue his media release when there was a \$498 million cut across housing for Queensland but all we hear are crickets from this Treasurer. At the end of the day, he is more concerned with how things look than how things actually are. He is now officially Jim Chalmers's publicist here in Queensland. Never has a Queensland government spent more, borrowed more or taxed more and left Queenslanders with less to show for it. Never before have we seen record debt, record interest costs and record failures in waste and project overruns like we have seen from this Treasurer and this government here in Queensland.

With record debt, record interest costs and record project overruns, what does Queensland have to show for it? We have record numbers of homeless, record numbers of victims of crime and record numbers of people waiting on the ramp. Whether it be the record numbers of homeless, victims of crime or people waiting on the ramp, Queenslanders deserve more. That will not change until Queensland changes the government this October. Queensland deserves better and we must show Labor the door in 2024.

Bundaberg Electorate

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.50 pm): I thank the member for Toowoomba South for being the cure to insomnia. It really is quite wonderful. If you are a rough sleeper, just go back and watch his speeches and you will be asleep in no time at all. You will not even need to count any sheep.

I want to report on the great news that we had last week in Bundaberg, and it is great news that will continue for many decades to come for our community. It started on Tuesday afternoon when the ministers joined the Premier and I to go doorknocking and let everyday Bundy locals know that they will have \$1,000 taken off their power bills. Families, pensioners and everyday working people know they have a government that is on their side and is providing cost-of-living relief. What was even better was that, when we all watched the budget that night, we saw that the federal Labor government is providing an extra \$300. That means that everyday Bundy locals will be getting \$1,300 in cost-of-living relief off their power bill and, if they are a concession cardholder or a pensioner, they will be getting \$372 extra as well. That is what good Labor governments do.

Mr Saunders: Woo hoo!

Mr SMITH: I will take the member for Maryborough's interjection. It sounded like a train, but I think he was saying, 'Woo hoo.' You never know with the member for Maryborough.

The next big news was that we turned the sod on the brand new Bundaberg hospital. The brand new Bundaberg hospital is under construction, it is underway and it is reshaping the skyline of our great community. Not only will it reshape the skyline of Bundaberg; it will reshape the future of health care, jobs, education and good lifestyle right across the Bundaberg region. There will be 2,800 jobs in construction and then there will be a lifetime of jobs not only for our health workers, doctors and nurses but also for administration workers, laundry staff, hospitality staff, cleaning staff, maintenance staff and trade staff. This sets Bundaberg up for the future in jobs. I talk to the principals at our primary schools and our high schools and they are thrilled because they now have an opportunity to tell the young people in their schools that they can have a career path and stay in the Bundaberg community. It is vitally important to regional towns to keep our young people.

The good news continued on Wednesday when Minister Scanlon, the Premier and I inspected the block of land we have just bought to construct seven new units. That is more than seven new units; that is seven new homes for Queenslanders, for Bundaberg locals. It will be a place for them to call home and for families into the future as well. It is vitally important that we recognise that number seven because that number seven is already more than what the LNP contributed to housing in Bundaberg when they had three years in government. We are already 7-0 up on the LNP, who went into the negatives. We know that their plan for housing is not our plan because our plan is too much. That is right: the LNP have said that our Homes for Queenslanders plan is too much. Therefore, the seven new units that we are building are already too much, according to the LNP. But do not worry, Mr Speaker, as we will keep building for the people of Bundaberg because that is what we do.

I also need to give a big shout-out to Sue and Jas from Angels Community Group who do such a great job. They run a local charity. They engage with vulnerable people right across Bundaberg. They engage with local businesses. They also provide school lunches for close to 400 students a week. It

was fantastic to stand with Sue and Jas and hear the Premier announce a surprise that they will be getting their \$359,000 for Skilling Queenslanders for Work and also a \$20,000 donation from our government to ensure that they can do their schools program. It is absolutely outstanding because they are such a good community organisation and they know that the Miles Labor government is on their side.

We know that the new hospital is already under threat by the LNP. They have a regional spokesperson in the Wide Bay saying that the hospital should not be built in Bundaberg. They are calling for the hospital not to be built in Bundaberg, and that comes from an LNP spokesperson in the region. One would think that is madness but it is double madness because we also know that the LNP have said that they do not want \$20 million to go towards expanding works on the Bundaberg police station. The LNP are opposing works that will provide better support for victims. We know the granddaddy of them all—no pun intended—the member for Burnett, has a plan to make sure that the LNP get rid of those ‘unrealistic’ entitlements and wages that our Queensland Health workers receive. That is their plan. They oppose hospitals. We build hospitals in Bundy.


POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL


CORRECTIVE SERVICES (PROMOTING SAFETY) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from p. 1598, on motion of Ms Boyd—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (2.56 pm), continuing: In finishing, I wanted to comment on the contributions of the LNP to this debate. One would think theirs was a party that had a raft of initiatives to recognise victims. One would think that they had a complete policy document detailing about what they will do to make the lives of victims better, but there is absolutely nothing. Maybe there is a bit of a slogan, although not even a whole slogan, and we do have whole slogans in that little booklet of theirs. It is absolute hypocrisy for those opposite to lecture this government on support for victims when they have said nothing about what they would do if they get into government. Their track record of supporting victims is absolutely appalling. They cut \$259 million from community organisations that provide support for victims. They cut the Victim Assist Queensland budget by \$323,000—who even does that? They abolished the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council, pretty much silencing victims. We do not want to hear any more from them about what they are ‘gunna, gunna, gunna do’. We need to know now. The election is at the end of October and it is time Queenslanders know what is their real agenda.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (2.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate. I want to specifically talk to the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and especially the concerns that opposition members have with clause 32, which proposes to insert a new section 340AA. The intent of the bill is to ensure that there are absolute rules when it comes to the governing of information and the withholding information to prevent information from potentially being released through right to information. If you think about it, though, a lot of the individuals in incarceration centres are very dangerous people. If you have a situation where an inmate has reported the actions of another inmate who was coming up to their parole hearing and that person’s parole was denied, we fear what would actually happen to that individual. Therefore, there need to be protections in that respect.


Therefore, the original intent of the bill is good. Changing it to a balanced test approach, or a privacy test, worries me because we need to think about the victims and the informants and make sure that prosecutions are not put in jeopardy. I say to the minister that this is crucially important. The amendments that the minister just put forward today watered down the intent of the department. I asked

the department a question about this clause because there was quite a bit of toing and froing from the witnesses before the committee. The Bar Association of Queensland expressed their concerns about the public interest test versus an absolute law. The department's response was—

The provision as it is currently drafted is necessary as there is a higher threshold for non-disclosure of information on the basis of public interest. Therefore, public interest immunity may not protect the full scope of sensitive and confidential information captured by the provisions from disclosure. The provision is intended to ensure public confidence in the correctional system by protecting victim and intelligence information from being released through a clearer legislative provision. The provisions are also important in promoting the safety and wellbeing of victims and encouraging victims to disclose the information while knowing that it will be protected.

What would happen to an individual who decides to be an informant against another prisoner? If this information comes out, one would think that individual would be vulnerable because the prisoner could have the ability to seek revenge. It is important in the carriage of justice that this information is protected; this information cannot get into the hands of these individuals. These individuals are in jail for a reason, and we have to remember that. We also have to remember that, when you go to jail and are convicted of a crime, you will lose some of your rights. You will lose some of your human rights because you have taken the human rights away from another individual and that is why you are in jail.

It is important that the minister looks back at the original intent of the department to ensure that there are protections for victims and informants and that intelligence is not compromised. We need to ensure that the original intent is withheld. The amendment is watering it down. I again say to the minister that the original intent was good because it will protect the rights of victims, it will protect potential information and it will protect potential informants in the prison system itself.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.03 pm): I rise to speak on the cognate debate with regard to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Both bills speak directly to, and aim to protect the rights and liberties of, the people that these bills affect. I will focus my speech mostly on the police powers and responsibilities bill.

I was part of the committee that took carriage of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Since the examination of the bill, I have a much greater appreciation for fairness when it comes to protecting the rights and liberties of the LGBTIQ+ community. The thought of being searched at the best of times can make anyone feel uneasy or anxious. I believe everything that the police powers and responsibilities bill aims to achieve carefully considers the impact for not only the individual being searched but also the individual having to carry out a search. It promotes safe practices and, as such, will certainly build relationships, trust and community confidence.


The Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill proposes to introduce a range of changes that are designed to promote and protect the rights of gender diverse people undergoing personal searches or other procedures in law enforcement and/or clinical settings in Queensland. The key objectives of the bill are to make the necessary amendments to ensure that trans and gender diverse people receive the same protections as other Queenslanders in legislation without making specific reference to gendered language unless absolutely necessary; and achieve operational improvements in legislation administered by the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and Queensland Health.

The bill's stated purpose is to amend Queensland statutes to enshrine safeguards in primary legislation relevant to people who are being searched being able to express a preference regarding the gender of the officer conducting the search. It will ensure that searching officers can continue to conduct lawful searches to protect the community while also protecting searching officers. The bill will replace existing same-sex safeguards with a new framework to provide protections in the exercise of powers, enabling the consideration of a person's gender. The bill proposes that provisions regulating searches or procedures would be governed by a 'same gender starting point' approach, supported by a 'dialogue model safeguard'. This would mean that gender diverse Queenslanders would be able to express a preference as to how the search would be conducted and the gender of the officer conducting the search or procedure.

The bill will also remove the ability for any police officer to view the monitor of a video camera in the area where a person is being searched. The new safeguards retain the safe gender starting point—that is, the officer and the subject person should be of the same gender. The bill also provides for similar gender preferences in clinical settings for the safety of patients, visitors and staff. Ultimately, this bill aims to keep people safe by respecting and protecting the rights of individuals.

The Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is about supporting victims of crime and enhancing safety in Queensland's correctional system. The bill would promote safety for victims and their families, safety for corrective services officers and safety for offenders. The bill seeks to strengthen support for victims of crime in a number of ways, including by improving the operation of the victims register; protecting the use of victim and intelligence information in parole decisions; requiring representation for victims on the Parole Board Queensland; strengthening powers to respond to the abuse of prisoner communications channels; and increasing oversight of child sex offenders.

I want to acknowledge both the Community Support and Services Committee and the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee, the committee chairs, the committee members, the committee secretariat and Hansard for all their work in the examination of both bills. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (3.07 pm): I rise to speak on the cognate debate with specific reference to the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. According to the explanatory notes, the bill's purpose is to enhance the safety of frontline corrective services officers, victims of crime and the broader community. The bill includes provisions that will allow the chief executive to revoke approval for, or place limitations on, a prisoner's personal calls depending on the level of risk and other factors. Neither the prisoner nor the individual affected would have any opportunity to have input into the chief executive's decision to suspend approval for a personal call to an individual.

According to Queensland Corrective Services, these unlimited powers for restricting a prisoner's personal calls are to ensure the continued safety and security of corrective services facilities in Queensland. Along the same lines, the bill greatly expands police powers, including the circumstances in which a police officer may enter premises where a reportable offender resides; photograph a thing if a reportable offender is required to report information about that thing; and access a reportable offender's digital device. Under the bill, it will be an offence for a reportable offender to fail to comply with a requirement to give a police officer access to a digital device and its contents. The explanatory notes acknowledge that these amendments may be inconsistent with fundamental legislative principles and could result in self-incrimination.

A number of submitters raised concerns over how broad the powers are. Legal Aid Queensland notes that the expanded powers—

... have the potential for overuse or be abused with respect to a group of prisoners whose movements are already heavily monitored and restricted.

LAQ also points out that—

There is no requirement that the exercise of the power is reasonably necessary to monitor compliance with the order.

In relation to the expanded powers around accessing digital devices, LAQ observed that—

These provisions provide: .. a blanket authority for police to access a device where it is not reasonably necessary to investigate the indictable offence under the order, and therefore unreasonably infringes upon the prisoner's right to privacy in circumstances where it is gratuitous.

The requirement for a searching officer to be the same sex as the prisoner is one of several safeguards in the current Corrective Services Act 2006. The safeguard was originally introduced to protect the privacy of female prisoners, particularly given the intrusive nature of some searches. The current bill removes the safeguard, saying that a new principle of flexibility will be added to the requirements in subordinate legislation after the bill is passed. As the Queensland Human Rights Commission noted, the benefit of 'increasing flexibility will likely be outweighed by a reduced level of legislative protections, and reduced opportunity for input into the drafting of regulations'.

The commissioner expressed concerns over this use of regulation, instead of primary legislation saying—

While there may be an intention to consult with stakeholders while developing regulation in the first instance, the principle's removal from the primary legislation diminishes the opportunity for community input and parliamentary scrutiny of these issues. In the QHRC's experience, amendments to regulations are rarely the subject of consultation by departments.

The commissioner goes on to say—

... while a human rights certificate must be completed for subordinate legislation, the human rights analysis and parliamentary scrutiny is perfunctory.

The bill also expands the use of body worn cameras by corrective services officers to include when they accompany prisoners out in public areas within the community. As the Information Commissioner submitted, this expanded use of body worn cameras should be subjected to privacy impact assessments. The OIC has produced guidelines for agencies outlining the privacy impacts and information access obligations agencies must consider when implementing or expanding a camera surveillance system, which includes body worn cameras. According to the OIC—

While the collection of personal information using these technologies may be considered necessary to ensure the safety and security of corrective services staff, prisoners and other individuals, it should be appropriately balance so as not to intrude unreasonably into the personal affairs of those individuals. A PIA will assist to identify privacy risks and appropriate mitigation strategies.

The OIC advised that a privacy impact assessment also needs to be—

... updated at key phases throughout the life cycle of the implementation and use of surveillance technologies, including the passing of the legislation and prior to adoption of any new surveillance technologies.

The bill inserts new section 340AA into the act to provide decision-makers with the discretion to withhold the details of information or reasons behind a decision. Information can be withheld if the decision-maker is satisfied that releasing the information could reasonably be expected to cause harm, prejudice public safety or national security, prejudice the detection, investigation or prosecution of an offence, disclose the identity of a confidential source or releasing the information is prohibited under another law. Again, all this is very broad, not to mention inconsistent with the rules of procedural fairness.

The principle of procedural fairness, which is also known as natural justice, is one of the fundamental legislative principles specified under section 4 of the Legislative Standards Act 1992. Moreover, Queensland's Judicial Review Act grants people adversely impacted by a decision the right to know the reasons for that decision. Currently, information may only be excluded in cases where the Attorney-General has certified that disclosure of the information is contrary to the public interest.

The bill before the House will bypass this important safeguard by removing any need for a public interest assessment to be carried out by the Attorney-General. The proposed section also removes any requirement for the Attorney-General to keep a record of the reasons on which a decision to restrict certain information was based. This is clearly inappropriate. The absence of such a requirement in the bill will significantly undermine the capacity of the courts to examine a decision as part of judicial review proceedings. The section is also incompatible with Queensland's Human Rights Act, which states that a party to a civil proceeding has the right to a fair hearing.

A number of submitters also expressed serious concerns that these amendments would greatly limit a prisoner's ability to respond to reasons for a decision. According to the Prisoners' Legal Service—


PLS considers that the proposed amendments undermine accountability and transparency in executive decision-making and fail to promote community safety. Accountability, transparency and related rights are especially important in the context of parole decision-making because these principles allow a prisoner to understand their responsibilities in relation to release and rehabilitation.

The proposed amendments provide expansive discretionary powers for withholding details of relevant information from prisoners who are eligible for parole about why they remain in custody. As Legal Aid Queensland states—

... an information notice provided to a prisoner making an application for a parole order that refers only to 'confidential information' as a reason for a substantial reason for parole cancellation does not give the prisoner any information to which they can meaningfully provide a response.

The practical consequence of this is that prisoners will remain in custody for longer because they will be unable to address any of the criteria used—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member, can I please ask you to take your seat? Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.15 pm), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the cognate debate on the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Miles government is committed to protecting the safety of all Queenslanders. I am proud to deliver a suite of amendments to ensure the safety of frontline corrective service officers, police, victims and their supporters and the broader community.

Firstly, I would like to address some of the matters raised by members during the course of this debate. I will start with matters relating to the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The member for Burdekin's contributions have cemented his position in this chamber as the exemplar for incongruity. His suggestion that the government needs to ensure our frontline services have the backing of this government is at odds with his own party's abhorrent treatment of police and corrective services officers. Their restructure of police in 2013 resulted in a reduction of 110 commissioned officer police positions. Under the same LNP government, 180 corrections staff lost their jobs—not the actions of a government that backs frontline officers. By contrast, we will always put our frontline officers first, not last.

The member for Burdekin inferred that this government does not support victims. The Miles government has made a commitment to victims to ensure their voices are considered when the Parole Board Queensland is considering a parole application and to establish the Queensland Victims Commissioner. The Miles government has passed legislation to establish the Queensland Victims Commissioner. In addition to this, the bill includes an amendment to require victims' representation on the board. The amendment is not limited to a person with lived experience as a victim of crime, but it has been tailored to specific circumstances of the board. This could include someone with lived experience as a victim of crime or someone with experience working with or counselling victims of crime. I note that the membership requirements for parole boards in other jurisdictions already include requirements that capture a broad range of expertise and experience. This experience may include having an understanding of victims of crime and vulnerable persons facing the criminal justice system. The amendment in this bill aligns with the approach taken in other Australian jurisdictions.

The opposition is correct in that clause 11 of this bill inserts a requirement that a professional board member is First Nations. This does respond to the Queensland Parole System Review recommendation 39.

Since commencement in 2017, the board has matured and evolved and, through the provision of additional temporary funding, has expanded from three board teams to its current seven teams. It is therefore appropriate to finalise these arrangements and implement this recommendation.

The member for Ninderry reiterated the need for additional police officers, selectively ignoring the LNP's own track record for restructuring away police positions. He then went further and raised concerns around police resourcing. Given the member was a serving police officer at the time, you would think he would remember when the LNP cut police training, reduced firearms training and forced police to pay for their own body worn cameras.

I would now like to address the comments made by the member for Ninderry in relation to the amendments in the bill increasing the number of child sex offenders that the Queensland Police Service will be required to manage in the community. This is simply not true. The amendments in this bill only enliven specific police powers in relation to offenders subject to both the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act and CPOR act. Queensland Corrective Services is currently responsible for, and will remain responsible for, supervising all offenders subject to a Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act supervision order. There are currently 138 offenders supervised in the community under the DP(SO) Act. Not all of these are child sex offenders, meaning the impost on police will be limited. Where corrective services officers suspect an offender has contravened their Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act order, there will be limited powers to verify an offender's compliance or investigate any concerns of further offending.

The bill will enable police to verify personal details of offenders who are subject to both the DP(SO) Act and the CPOR act, providing consistent mechanisms across both offender cohorts. The Queensland Police Service's powers are intended to complement Queensland Corrective Services case management and supervision of Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act offenders to promote community safety.

I note the comments by the member for Maiwar that, in the member's view, the amendments in the bill which are designed to protect victim and intelligence information by inserting new section 340AA into the Corrective Services Act will undermine a prisoner's right to procedural fairness. While I acknowledge the importance of providing procedural fairness, this right must be balanced with the need to prevent prisoners from accessing sensitive and confidential information. In particular, victims' information must be protected to ensure victim safety. The member considered that the decision-makers under the Corrective Services Act should be able to rely on the public interest immunity test; however, I would like to clarify that the threshold for non-disclosure of sensitive information in

Corrective Services decision-making is different from a public interest immunity test. Public interest immunity may not protect the full scope of sensitive and confidential information which the Parole Board Queensland and Queensland Corrective Services need to rely upon to ensure safe and considered correctional decision-making.

To ensure compliance with human rights and as much transparency as possible to afford the prisoner natural justice, the prisoner will still be provided with the gist of the information which has been withheld. The gist will include as much of the information possible without jeopardising safety or security. These amendments aim to ensure public confidence in the correctional system by protecting victim and intelligence information from being released. The amendments are also important in providing victims with certainty that their information will be protected. This will encourage victims to share relevant information with Queensland Corrective Services or the board.

I would also like to address the member for Currumbin's comments in relation to the new section 340AA of the Corrective Services Act. The amendments to this provision, which are being proposed in response to the majority of the committee's recommendations on the bill, will still protect the safety and welfare of victims. The amendments will not amount to a watering down of this provision or change the original policy intent. As the opposition should be aware, decision-makers are already required under the Human Rights Act to ensure decisions are compatible with human rights. The amendments being proposed to the new section 340AA merely codify the decision-maker's obligation to undertake a balancing test in the provision itself. This will not impact the practical application of the provision. Decision-makers will still have the discretion to withhold information when giving reasons where the reasonably expected consequence of disclosure in subsection (1) outweighs any unfairness associated with the non-disclosure of the information. The consequences in subsection (1) capture considerations of where it could reasonably be expected to cause harm to a victim or the community. This does not mean that a prisoner's or offender's rights will be prioritised over victims' rights. I note the member for Currumbin's comments regarding the decision in *McQueen v Parole Board Queensland*. The Miles government respects the independence of the judiciary.

Members of the opposition raised concerns about prescribing search requirements for prisoners in the Corrective Services Regulation 2017. This will provide appropriate legislative protections, provide flexibility to consider the preferences of the person being searched and, most importantly, ensure the ongoing safety of everyone involved in those searches.

In addition to a trial of body scanners at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre, Queensland Corrective Services is preparing amendments to the Corrective Services Regulation. It is intended to retain the general protection for officers or health practitioners to search prisoners of the same gender and include discretion to allow a different approach where safe and appropriate. This will ensure that corrective services officers have the necessary discretion to ensure the search is conducted safely while taking into account the prisoner's preference. Queensland Corrective Services is also working to respond to the Queensland Human Rights Commission's report *Stripped of our dignity: a human rights review of policies, procedures and practices in relation to strip searches of women in Queensland prisons*.

A number of members raised concerns about prisoners who are refused parole and restricted from reapplying for parole for a set period being disadvantaged if they have difficulties with literacy. Queensland Corrective Services is committed to supporting vulnerable prisoners, addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody and supporting prisoners with a disability. Communication with prisoners occurs in a manner which is fair and does not place the prisoner at a disadvantage.

It is common knowledge that Queensland Corrective Services is experiencing significant pressure in corrective services facilities across the state due to unprecedented prisoner numbers. The amendments in the bill in relation to restricting prisoners from reapplying for parole after a refusal are not likely to result in further demand on capacity. The amendments intend to reduce the number of repeat parole applications when it is unlikely that they will be granted. The amendments only apply in the circumstances that a prisoner has had their parole application refused by the board. The board then has the discretion to set a period—whether it be the applicable 12 months, three years or five years—that the prisoner must not reapply for parole. The time frame set for each prisoner will be proportionate to the time the board considers it will take the prisoner to make changes and increase their prospects of a successful parole application. Therefore, these prisoners would remain in custody whether they have a parole application afoot or not.

Comments were made in relation to the Queensland Parole System Review 2 report. This report has been provided to Queensland Corrective Services and is currently under consideration. The QPSR2 report was received by Queensland Corrective Services in late 2023. It is a comprehensive and wide-ranging review undertaken by former District Court judge Mr Milton Griffin KC. The report required careful consideration and response by Queensland Corrective Services prior to government being briefed. The amendments in this bill were developed prior to the report being finalised, so they are not related to the report.

Comments were also made regarding the opposition's support for eligible persons to provide oral submissions to the Parole Board Queensland. As noted earlier today, the government has committed to consider allowing for non-written parole applications for prisoners, in response to recommendation 2 of the committee report. Queensland Corrective Services will work with the Parole Board Queensland to work through operational process in response to the recommendation. There is already ongoing work to streamline and simplify the parole application process for prisoners, and it is vital that this recommendation is considered in addition to that work to support effective delivery of holistic improvements in this space.

I would now like to speak to the concerns raised regarding amendments to provide timely prisoner safety order decisions, in particular who can make these orders. The bill introduces the ability to appoint a large range of professionals with suitable and relevant expertise and training in mental health. This is to ensure Queensland Corrective Services engages staff that have the relevant training, competencies and expertise to assess a prisoner's risk of self-harm in the correctional environment. Relevant professional qualifications include social worker, speech pathologist, occupational therapist and appropriately qualified registered nurse. These professions complete similar assessments for Queensland Health under the Mental Health Act. Each of these professions undertakes formal training in assessing an individual's mental health and undertakes these functions in other agencies such as Queensland Health's mental health teams.

Expanding the range of professionals that Queensland Corrective Services can recruit to assess prisoners at risk of self-harm will support timelier assessments of prisoners at risk of self-harm or suicide. The bill will ensure that suitably qualified allied health professionals can make recommendations regarding safety orders following assessing a prisoner's risk of suicide or self-harm.

I am informed that the formal training of health professionals will be complemented by tailoring training on making a mental health risk assessment in the correctional context. These highly skilled clinicians have the required skills to assess prisoners for a safety order consistent with the risk-based assessments performed under the Mental Health Act. Given the current difficulties in recruiting psychologists, it is of benefit to ensure there is flexibility in the future to recruit clinicians with the appropriate skills to perform these assessments. Additional safeguards in the corrective services bill will require an authorised practitioner to maintain their professional qualifications and to have the necessary training and competency to assess a prisoner's risk of self-harm or suicide in the correctional context. This approach will exclude any professionals who do not have the necessary clinical expertise in assessing prisoners' mental health in the context of the safety order.

This government and these bills support victims and I am sure all victims will feel buoyed, not last. In conclusion, I once again thank all honourable members for their contributions during the cognate debate. I also wish to thank our fantastic public servants for their hard work and dedication and members of Queensland Corrective Services and Queensland Police Service for the development of these bills.

Question put—That the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill**

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—



Mr RYAN (3.32 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 6 (Insertion of new s 31A)

Page 8, after line 12—

insert—

Notes—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | An improper purpose includes the following— |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose; • an attempt to frustrate the process. |
| 2 | It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor. |

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes to Hon. Mark Ryan's amendments [\[820\]](#).

Tabled paper: Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Mark Ryan's amendments [\[821\]](#).

As mentioned in my seconding reading speech in this debate, this is about clarifying the existing provisions and providing guidance to the community and obviously the public officials who will be involved in these matters.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Clause 22—



Mr RYAN (3.33 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 22 (Insertion of new s 100A)

Page 20, after line 22—

insert—

Notes—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | An improper purpose includes the following— |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose; • an attempt to frustrate the process. |
| 2 | It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor. |

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 22, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 35, as read, agreed to.

Clause 36—



Mr RYAN (3.34 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 Clause 36 (Amendment of s 517 (Help with, and use of force for, performing forensic procedure))

Page 25, after line 31—

insert—

Notes—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | An improper purpose includes the following— |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose; • an attempt to frustrate the process. |
| 2 | It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor. |

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 36, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 37—



Mr RYAN (3.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

4 Clause 37 (Insertion of new s 519A)

Page 27, after line 2—

insert—

Notes—

- 1 An improper purpose includes the following—
 - a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose;
 - an attempt to frustrate the process.
- 2 It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 37, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 38 and 39, as read, agreed to.

Clause 40—



Mr RYAN (3.36 pm): I move the following amendment—

5 Clause 40 (Insertion of new s 553A)

Page 28, after line 27—

insert—

Notes—

- 1 An improper purpose includes the following—
 - a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose;
 - an attempt to frustrate the process.
- 2 It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 40, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 41, as read, agreed to.

Clause 42—



Mr RYAN (3.36 pm): I move the following amendment—

6 Clause 42 (Insertion of new s 624A)

Page 30, after line 13—

insert—

Notes—

- 1 An improper purpose includes the following—
 - a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose;
 - an attempt to frustrate the process.
- 2 It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 42, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 43 to 45, as read, agreed to.

Clause 46—



Mr RYAN (3.37 pm): I move the following amendment—

7 Clause 46 (Insertion of new s 644A)

Page 32, after line 27—

insert—

Notes—

- 1 An improper purpose includes the following—
 - a lewd or otherwise offensive purpose;
 - an attempt to frustrate the process.
- 2 It is expected that it will be reasonably practicable to accommodate a genuine preference expressed in terms of a preference for a man or a woman. In other cases, the availability of a suitable person may be a determining factor.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 46, as amended, agreed to.
Clauses 47 to 57, as read, agreed to.
Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

Clauses 1 to 31, as read, agreed to.

Clause 32—



Ms BOYD (3.38 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 32 (Insertion of new s 340AA)

Page 37, after line 7—

insert—

- (1A) In deciding whether to rely on subsection (1), the decision-maker must weigh the need to avoid the reasonably expected consequences of disclosure mentioned in subsection (1) against the need to avoid unfairness to an individual that the decision-maker is satisfied could reasonably be expected as a consequence of non-disclosure.
- (1B) If a decision-maker relies on subsection (1), the decision-maker must keep a written record of the decision to rely on the subsection and the reasons for the decision.
- (1C) The contents of the record may only be disclosed—
 - (a) to a court for the purpose of a proceeding relating to the decision or proposed decision; or
 - (b) with the approval of the chief executive.
- (1D) The court must ensure that the contents of the record are not disclosed except to a member of the court as constituted for the purpose of the proceeding.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes to Hon. Nikki Boyd's amendments [822].

Tabled paper: Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Nikki Boyd's amendments [823].

Mr KRAUSE: In speaking to this clause and to the amendment I want to touch on the original proposed section 340AA as it appears in the bill. As it is set out in the committee report—and I was a member of the committee looking at this bill—the original section 340AA would provide the Parole Board with a discretion to withhold details about the matters they took into account when making a decision. Queensland Corrective Services spoke in favour of this provision at the committee hearings. They noted that balancing safety and also a prisoner's right to a fair process are key considerations, but they pointed out that this does not override the need to prevent the disclosure of certain information that could result in further harm.

There was an objection to this provision by the Prisoners Legal Service and also the Bar Association of Queensland. Again, under questioning from the member for Theodore, I think it was, Queensland Corrective Services was quite adamant that the bill as drafted—before this amendment was moved—was the appropriate way of dealing with the withholding of information that goes into a Parole Board decision and that the bill applied the discretion accordingly. The Bar Association of Queensland proposed amendments and I believe those amendments as suggested by the Bar Association are substantially the ones the minister is moving here today.

I have two questions for the minister and I would appreciate some clarity. The original amendment in the bill provides discretion for the board to withhold information whereas the amendment just moved by the minister provides that there needs to be a balancing of interests between the public interest and other interests in terms of the reasons for withholding information—discretion versus a balancing of interests. How is that compatible and how is that the same thing? They are clearly different. Secondly, why has the government ignored its own department, which was strongly advocating for the original clause, and instead listened to the Bar Association and the Prisoners Legal Service in bringing forward this amendment, which QCS does not support?

Mr BOOTHMAN: I also rise to pose a question to the minister about the proposed amendment. What happens if information is disclosed by an inmate to the prison staff and that information is then used in a parole hearing? What protections will these amendments give that individual who came forward from potential harm from other prisoners in the jail environment?

Ms BOYD: In response to the committee's recommendations, I am moving two amendments to the proposed new section 340AA. New section 340AA of the CSA clarifies that when a decision-maker is required to provide reasons for a decision made under the Corrective Services Act the decision-maker may withhold the details of the information that informed the decision for prescribed reasons. The committee report on this bill recommended that it be passed and included a recommendation to consider amending new section 340AA. In response to those recommendations, I am now proposing to insert an amendment in new section 340AA that will require a decision-maker to balance the reasonably expected consequence of disclosure against the unfairness associated with withholding the information.

The member for Scenic Rim asks what has changed. Those opposite frequently like to claim that the committee process is, in fact, broken or that the estimates process is broken and does not deliver outcomes. This is a very good example of how the committee process is very much functioning and that the provision of information that has come to the committee has enabled them to make a recommendation and, as a responsive government that listens, we are moving this amendment here today.

In relation to the amendment, while it is not a public interest test that is recommended, the balancing test will achieve the purpose while protecting sensitive information from release. For the benefit of those opposite, what we are talking about here is sensitive information that prisoners may be getting in relation to victims. I think it is worthwhile highlighting that there is a very good reason to have a balancing test here that is sensible and is fit for purpose. That is the very reason we are moving this amendment to insert new subsections in section 340AA. The amendment will require the decision-maker to keep a record of reasons for withholding information in making a decision. This is also in line with the recommendations made in the committee's report.

The amendment that is being proposed does not amount to a watering down of this provision or a change to the original policy intent. There is no change to that original policy intent through this amendment. Decision-makers are already required under the Human Rights Act to ensure decisions are compatible with human rights. The amendment being proposed to new section 340AA merely codifies the decision-maker's obligation to undertake a balancing test in the provision itself. The new section 340AA in the bill is one of the ways that the Miles government is supporting victims and improving their experience in navigating the criminal justice system.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 32, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 33, as read, agreed to.

Clause 34—



Ms BOYD (3.46 pm): I move the following amendments—

2 Clause 34 (Insertion of new ch 7A, pt 17)

Page 37, line 20, 'provision'—

omit, insert—

provisions

3 Clause 34 (Insertion of new ch 7A, pt 17)

Page 38, after line 11—

insert—

(3A) For subsections (2) and (3), any non-compliance with new section 340AA(1A) or (1B) is to be disregarded.

Amendments agreed to.



Ms BOYD (3.46 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Ms BOYD: I move the following amendment—

4 Clause 34 (Insertion of new ch 7A, pt 17)

Page 38, after line 22—

*insert—***490ZJ Validation of certain decisions of parole board**

- (1) This section applies to a conditional parole decision made by the parole board on or after 26 May 2017 and before the commencement.
- (2) A decision made before the commencement by the parole board, or 1 or more members of the parole board, that the conditions referred to in a conditional parole decision have or have not been fulfilled is taken to be a parole decision of the parole board.
- (3) A decision made after the commencement by the parole board (properly constituted for a parole decision) that the conditions referred to in a conditional parole decision have or have not been fulfilled is also taken to be a parole decision of the parole board.
- (4) If a decision under subsection (2) or (3) is that the conditions have been fulfilled, the parole decision is a decision to release the prisoner on parole.
- (5) If the decision under subsection (2) or (3) is that the conditions have not been fulfilled, the parole decision is a decision not to release the prisoner on parole.
- (6) The parole decision is, and is taken to have always been, as valid as it would have been if the decision had been made by the parole board as a parole decision without a conditional parole decision having been made.
- (7) To avoid any doubt, it is declared that, if subsection (6) applies, anything done or purported to have been done by an entity relying on the decision or the conditional parole decision is, and is taken to have always been, as valid as it would have been if the entity had relied on a valid decision of the parole board.
- (8) This section applies despite—
 - (a) any lack of power for the making of—
 - (i) the conditional parole decision; or
 - (ii) the decision mentioned in subsection (2) or (3); and
 - (b) any defect in the constitution of the parole board, lack of quorum, or other procedural defect, for the making of the decision mentioned in subsection (2).
- (9) In this section—

conditional parole decision means a decision, however expressed, that is—

 - (a) a parole decision that will have effect if a condition is fulfilled; or
 - (b) a decision to make a parole decision if a condition is fulfilled.

parole decision means a decision to release or not to release a prisoner on parole by—

 - (a) making or refusing to make a parole order; or
 - (b) changing or not changing a decision suspending a prisoner's parole order.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 34, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 35 to 57, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—

**Ms BOYD** (3.47 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Ms BOYD: I move the following amendment—**5 After clause 57**

Page 56, after line 17—

*insert—***Division 4 Amendment of Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009****58 Act amended**This division amends the *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009*.**59 Amendment of ch 10, hdg (Other transitional provisions)**

Chapter 10, heading, after 'transitional'—

*insert—***and validation**

60 Insertion of new ch 10, pt 4

Chapter 10—

*insert—***Part 4 Validation****291 Failure of member to take or make oath**

- (1) This section applies in relation to a person who—
- (a) was appointed to the office of supplementary member during the relevant period; and
 - (b) did not take or make the prescribed oath before performing a function of the office.
- (2) It is declared that, despite section 228, a relevant exercise of jurisdiction by the member is, and always has been, as valid as it would be or would have been had the member taken or made the prescribed oath before performing a function of the office.
- (3) In this section—

prescribed oath means the oath prescribed under section 228(2).**relevant exercise of jurisdiction** means an exercise of the jurisdiction, powers and functions conferred on a supplementary member by or under any law of the State (including the making of any decision or order) by the member during the relevant period.**relevant period** means the period from 1 February 2017 to 15 May 2024.

Amendment agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading (Cognate Debate)**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (3.48 pm): I move—

That the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

**Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.48 pm): I move—

That the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title (Cognate Debate)**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (3.49 pm): I move—

That the long title of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.49 pm): I move the following amendment—**6 Long title**Long title, 'and the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*'—*omit, insert—***, the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* and the *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009***


Amendment agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEGISLATION (SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.51 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): The message from Her Excellency recommends the Criminal Justice Legislation (Sexual Violence and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEGISLATION (SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

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


A Bill for an Act to amend the Attorney-General Act 1999, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Criminal Code, the Evidence Act 1977, the Evidence Regulation 2017, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the legislation mentioned in Schedule 1 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 21 May 2024

Tabled paper: Message, dated 21 May 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Criminal Justice Legislation (Sexual Violence and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2024 [\[824\]](#).

Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.52 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Attorney-General Act 1999, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Criminal Code, the Evidence Act 1977, the Evidence Regulation 2017, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Criminal Justice Legislation (Sexual Violence and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2024 [\[825\]](#).

Tabled paper: Criminal Justice Legislation (Sexual Violence and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[826\]](#).

Tabled paper: Criminal Justice Legislation (Sexual Violence and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[827\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Criminal Justice Legislation (Sexual Violence and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2024. This bill further reflects the government's unwavering commitment to end all forms of domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland and to improve the experiences of women and girls across the criminal justice system. In 2021, this government established the independent Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, comprising experts from various fields relating to domestic and family violence and chaired by the Hon. Margaret McMurdo AC. The first report of the taskforce, *Hear her voice—Report 1: Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*, examined coercive control and reviewed the need for a specific offence of domestic violence. In this report, the taskforce proposed two tranches of legislative reform to prepare for and implement a new offence to criminalise coercive control: the first tranche containing immediate reforms and the second tranche containing the offence of coercive control as well as other domestic and family violence reforms. This government has acted in accordance with the road map set out by the taskforce.

In August last year, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023 fully commenced, addressing the patterned nature of coercive control and laying a foundation to create a standalone offence of coercive control. In March of

this year, the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill passed, introducing landmark laws to criminalise coercive control and to introduce an affirmative model of consent in Queensland. The Miles government continues to build on that momentum with the introduction of the bill today.

This bill gives effect to nine taskforce recommendations, eight of which were made in the second taskforce report, *Hear her voice—Report 2: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*. This report was a continuation of the work of the taskforce and examined the barriers faced by Queensland women and girls accessing the criminal justice system, both as victims and as offenders. The report examined why women and girls withdraw complaints of sexual violence at almost every stage of the criminal justice system and contemplated how we can provide greater support to these brave victim-survivors who, by seeking to bring a perpetrator of violence to justice, play an important role in keeping our community safe. The taskforce was told that women and girls who have lived experience of the criminal justice system were angry, tired and wanted change. The Miles government has heard these calls for change and this bill is a continuation on a path to improve the experiences of all victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence.

Before I speak to these amendments in greater detail, I wish to thank those victim-survivors who courageously shared their stories with the taskforce. I also acknowledge the extensive work undertaken by the taskforce, which provided the foundation for the historic reform that has been progressed since 2022. I also wish to thank those stakeholders, community leaders and government agencies who shared invaluable insight and expertise when providing feedback to my department during the development of this bill. I will now outline the bill's significant amendments.

The bill amends the Criminal Code to establish the new position of authority offence: sexual acts with a child aged 16 or 17 under one's care, supervision or authority. Further, the bill expands the existing offence of repeated sexual conduct with a child to also apply in circumstances where an adult maintains a sexual relationship with a 16- or 17-year-old child under their care, supervision or authority. These amendments are part of the government response to recommendation 42 of the second report of the taskforce, which was to review chapters 22 and 32 of the Criminal Code to ensure it addresses sexual exploitation of children and young people aged 12 to 17 years by adults who occupy a position of authority over those children.

The taskforce, through stakeholder engagement, identified that the code does not currently contain nuance as to issues such as a position of authority or the difference in age between an adolescent child victim and the offender. The amendments bring Queensland in line with other states and territories. The amendments do not otherwise disturb the raft of criminal offences within chapter 22 of the code that protect children under the age of 16 years from sexual exploitation. The bill makes it an offence for an adult to engage in sexual interactions with a child aged 16 or 17 where the adult has the child under their care, supervision or authority. Importantly, a child may not be charged with the offence, removing the risk of capturing and criminalising peer-to-peer interactions between children.

The new standalone offence will capture acts such as penile intercourse, indecently dealing with the child and exposing the child to indecent acts. The expansion of the offence of repeated sexual conduct with a child will capture an adult who maintains a relationship with a 16- or 17-year-old child under their care, supervision or authority. Depending on the acts engaged in, an accused adult will be exposed to a maximum penalty of 14 years or 10 years imprisonment in relation to the new offence. These maximum penalties are consistent with other sexual offences within chapter 22 of the Criminal Code. Where an adult is convicted of the offence of repeated sexual conduct with a child as amended by the bill, the existing maximum penalty of life imprisonment will apply. These penalties are intended to send a clear message that those adults who are entrusted with the care or supervision of young people should not be engaging in sexual interactions with them.

The terms 'care', 'supervision' or 'authority' are not defined within the bill. The bill does, however, include an evidentiary provision that deems certain people as being taken to have a child under their care, supervision or authority. This will operate to ensure the prosecution is relieved of the burden of proving a dynamic of care, supervision or authority in cases involving identified cohorts of adults. The deeming provision will capture a range of people in the community, including a teacher where the child is a student, a health practitioner if the child is their patient and a person who is employed or provides services at a place where the child is in custody. This provision is intended to capture positions of authority where the adult's position relative to the child is, of itself, sufficient to establish the exploitative nature of any sexual relationship or interaction that occurs. Other adults in the community may also be captured by the offence, despite not appearing in the deemed list of people who are taken to have a child under their care, supervision or authority.

The bill includes legislative examples of such people who may be captured. These examples include employers, police officers, a spiritual leader and sporting coaches. Importantly, however, where an adult is not captured by the list of deemed categories, a jury must assess the case according to the circumstances and be satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the adult did, in fact, have the child under their care, supervision or authority.

The bill provides three defences to this offence. Firstly, a defence will operate if an accused adult and the child are lawfully married. This defence operates in other jurisdictions and recognises that children over the age of 16 may be married in Queensland in particular circumstances; another defence may operate if the accused adult believed, on reasonable grounds, that the child was at least 18 years of age; and, finally, a similar-age defence may apply where the accused person is no more than three years older than the complainant child, and the acts did not in the circumstances reasonably constitute the sexual exploitation of the child. This provision may provide a defence to some 19- and 20-year-old accused persons. This defence is not, however, available to those adults captured in the deeming provision that applies to teachers, medical practitioners and similar positions of authority. These defences apply to both the standalone offence and to the expansion of the offence of repeated sexual conduct with a child.

The bill also amends the Evidence Act to codify rules around the admissibility of tendency evidence and coincidence evidence in Queensland. Tendency evidence and coincidence evidence is evidence about the accused's discreditable character, prior conduct or past events that is adduced as circumstantial evidence to prove that the accused acted in a particular way or had a particular state of mind or had a tendency to do so.

The taskforce heard from victim-survivors who described perpetrators committing extensive domestic, family and sexual violence on multiple victims. As the taskforce noted at page 325 of its second report, victim-survivors expressed frustration and concern that—

... in criminal trials the defendant is not allowed to have any of their history produced before the court as it can be considered prejudicial.

Victim-survivors and those who support them told the taskforce that the law does not allow the whole truth to be told to jurors. Important information is sometimes excluded because of the application of the rules of evidence.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse also emphasised that how the criminal justice system deals with allegations against an individual accused of sexual offending against more than one child was one of the most significant issues identified in its criminal justice work. Concerningly, the royal commission identified a link between the laws relating to the admissibility of tendency and coincidence evidence and unjustified acquittals of child sex offenders. Given these findings, the royal commission recommended legislative reform throughout Australia, noting that Queensland has the most restrictive approach to the admission of this kind of evidence out of all Australian jurisdictions. The taskforce noted the findings of the royal commission and considered that this was a compelling argument for urgent change, despite arguments from some legal stakeholders to the contrary.

As recommended by the taskforce, the bill amends the Evidence Act to bring the law on the admissibility of tendency evidence and coincidence evidence in Queensland into line with uniform evidence law jurisdictions. Queensland will benefit from the existing jurisprudence on these provisions in such jurisdictions.

These new rules on the admissibility of tendency evidence and coincidence evidence will replace the common law on the admissibility of such evidence as stated in the High Court's decision of Pfennig. Consistent with uniform evidence law jurisdictions, under the bill tendency evidence or coincidence evidence will only be admissible in criminal proceedings if it satisfies a two-limb test regarding its probative value. This two-limb test requires, firstly, that the evidence will have significant probative value and, secondly, that the probative value of that evidence outweighs the danger of unfair prejudice to the defendant.

The bill introduces a rebuttable presumption that tendency evidence about a defendant's sexual interest in children will have significant probative value for the purposes of the two-limb test. This presumption only operates in criminal proceedings where a child sexual offence is a fact in issue. This rebuttable presumption is already in place in almost all uniform evidence law jurisdictions; namely, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Importantly, these reforms do not undermine the presumption of innocence or the fair trial rights of the accused.

The royal commission examined the assumption that juries will use tendency evidence to engage in unfair reasoning, causing prejudice to the accused. It commissioned research using mock jurors to examine the actual reasoning process undertaken by juries. The royal commission observed at pages 462 and 463 of the *Criminal Justice* report that this research found that it is 'unlikely that a defendant will be unfairly prejudiced in the form of impermissible reasoning as a consequence of joinder of counts or the admission of tendency evidence' and, instead, 'jury verdicts were logically related to the probative value of the evidence'.

In addition, the provisions are still subject to section 130 of the Evidence Act which gives the court the power to exclude evidence if it is satisfied that it would be unfair to the person charged to admit the evidence. Further, if tendency evidence or coincidence evidence is admitted, jury directions may be provided to ensure the jury correctly uses such evidence. As recognised by both the royal commission and the taskforce, these reforms will promote consistency, clarity and certainty in the law across Australia while facilitating greater admissibility and cross-admissibility of tendency evidence and coincidence evidence and joint trials.

The taskforce also found that the court process can be retraumatising for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence and sexual violence. Many of the victim-survivors from whom the taskforce heard were treated in a way they found unnecessarily traumatic, preventing them from giving their best evidence. The bill amends the Evidence Act to address these concerns and improve protections for victim-survivors in the court process.

Firstly, the bill introduces a presumption in favour of granting certain alternative arrangements for special witnesses in domestic violence offence and sexual offence proceedings. The alternative arrangements include: that the person charged is obscured from the view of the witness; that the witness gives evidence remotely; that an emotional support person for the witness be present; and that the witness gives pre-recorded evidence. The bill provides that, on an application of a party to the proceeding, the court must order these alternative arrangements unless it is not in the interests of justice, or appropriate facilities and equipment are unavailable. This removes the need for victim-survivors to satisfy the court that they should have these measures, reducing retraumatisation. Providing the court discretion not to order the measures where it is not in the interests of justice will ensure that a defendant's right to a fair trial is not limited by these amendments.

Secondly, the bill introduces directions hearings for special witnesses in domestic violence offence and sexual offence proceedings. These hearings are based on ground rules hearings in Victoria and will provide the court an opportunity to consider the communication needs of the witness and give any directions about the giving of evidence by the witness that the court considers appropriate for the fair and efficient conduct of the proceeding. Directions could include: the manner and duration of questioning the witness; the questions that may, or may not, be put to the witness; if there is more than one defendant, the allocation among the defendants of the topics about which the witness may be questioned; and the use of models, plans, body maps or similar aids to help the witness communicate.

Thirdly, the bill introduces a requirement that the evidence of all special witnesses in sexual offence proceedings, except for the person charged, is videorecorded and stored for use in subsequent trials such as retrials or appeals. This will minimise the number of times a victim-survivor has to give evidence, reducing retraumatisation. The witness will still be able to be recalled by court order to give evidence in a subsequent trial; however, only where, if they had given evidence in the ordinary way, they could be recalled, and if it would be in the interests of justice. This may include where it is necessary to clarify any matters relating to the witness's original evidence or to canvass information or material that has become available since the original evidence was given. This will ensure that defendants are not unfairly prejudiced by these amendments.

Furthermore, the taskforce heard that rape myths sometimes operate within the criminal justice system to the detriment of victim-survivors. Impacts of trauma on victim-survivors during and after the assault, and while being interviewed, medically examined and giving evidence, are sometimes not well understood. The research commissioned by the taskforce revealed evidence of rape myths influencing participating community members' understanding and attitudes to sexual consent. For example, a victim-survivor who does not immediately report a sexual offence may be improperly viewed to be less credible than a victim-survivor who does make an immediate report. We know that there is no single right way to make a complaint about a sexual offence and that there may be many factors impacting a victim-survivor's behaviour. The taskforce found that the admission of expert evidence in a proceeding is likely to help address this lack of understanding of sexual offending.

The bill permits the admission of expert evidence about the nature of sexual offences and factors which impact victim-survivors' behaviour in sexual offence proceedings. The provisions in the bill have been modelled on Victorian provisions and abrogate two common-law rules of evidence:

- ultimate issue, which prevents a witness from expressing an opinion about a law or fact that the court or a jury must determine themselves; and
- common knowledge, which provides that matters of common knowledge or experience cannot be the subject of expert evidence.

The common-law credibility rule will also be abrogated if certain conditions are met including obtaining leave from the court. The credibility rule, also referred to as the bolster rule, broadly prevents a party from leading evidence to bolster its own witness's credit. This will safeguard against the improper admission of evidence.

The expert evidence will not be able to be used to reason that it is more likely the victim-survivor is telling the truth or that the offence is more likely to have occurred; rather, the purpose of the evidence will be to assist the jury in reaching their decision in an informed way and dispelling myths, stereotypes or assumptions about victim-survivor behaviour.

The bill also expands the sexual offence expert evidence panel to be established by the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) Act so that an expert can also be appointed to the panel for the purpose of giving expert evidence on the nature of sexual offences and the factors that might impact the behaviour of victims. This will ensure that the expert evidence is accessible to the prosecution, defence and the court on equal footing. The expanded panel will initially operate in the supreme and district courts in Brisbane and Townsville, and committal proceedings in the magistrates courts at Brisbane, Caboolture, Cleveland, Redcliffe and Townsville.

The taskforce recognised that victim-survivors of sexual violence sometimes need the same protection as victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, and that consistency in the duration of protection orders would send a message to the community that both forms of offending are treated seriously by the courts. The bill therefore extends the maximum duration of non-contact orders from two to five years. The bill also increases the maximum penalty of breach of a non-contact order from one to three years. This is consistent with the penalty for breaches of domestic violence orders and restraining orders for unlawful stalking, intimidation, harassment or abuse.

The second taskforce report also recommended legislative amendments to remove any doubt that participation in a prison program cannot be used in evidence in any proceedings relating to the offence for which the person has been charged and detained in custody on remand. The adult correctional system is a fundamental frontline service that keeps our community safe while ensuring prisoners, detainees and offenders are humanely detained and rehabilitated.

Every day, Queensland Corrective Services is responsible for delivering this service to the highest of standards for almost 11,000 prisoners in custody and over 18,000 offenders in the community. As of 13 May 2024, Queensland Corrective Services were managing 4,060 remand prisoners—472 were women. These amendments aim to remove barriers for participation in programs while prisoners are remanded in custody. This is to enable prisoners to use their time in custody more productively in preparation for release. Additionally, the bill clarifies the admissibility of recorded evidence-in-chief in committal proceedings for domestic and family violence offences, including importantly that the complainant does not need to be present at court for the recorded statement to be tendered.

The bill also provides for a statutory review of all three tranches of taskforce related legislation as well as certain other taskforce related amendments. It will occur as soon as practicable five years after the last relevant amendment commences. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.13 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee

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

TRUSTS BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.14 pm): I present a bill for an act to consolidate and amend the law relating to trusts, to repeal the Trusts Act 1973, and to amend this act, the Aboriginal Land Act 1991, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the District Court of Queensland Act 1967, the Funeral Benefit Business Act 1982, the Public Trustee Act 1978, the River Improvement Trust Act 1940, the Succession Act 1981, the Torres Islander Land Act 1991, the United Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Queensland Trustees Act 1942 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 2 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Trusts Bill 2024 [828].

Tabled paper: Trusts Bill 2024, explanatory notes [829].

Tabled paper: Trusts Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [830].

I am pleased to introduce the Trusts Bill 2024. This bill will replace the current Trusts Act 1973 with modernised trust legislation, drafted in line with contemporary drafting practice in plain English.

Trusts law is a longstanding, complex body of law arising predominantly out of case law rather than statute which is also the case in other Australian and similar common-law jurisdictions. The current Trusts Act 1973 does not codify the law of trusts but rather supplements the common law to ensure the efficient administration of trusts.

The current act confers powers on trustees that might be lacking under the trust instrument, provides for the replacement of trustees where not otherwise provided for or able to be given effect to under the trust instrument, and ensures that the court has appropriately wide powers to supervise the administration of trusts.

The current act, which commenced in 1973, has served Queensland well. Aside from the significant changes to investment powers that were introduced in 1999, only minor amendments have been made to the act since its commencement over 50 years ago. The Trusts Act 1973 governs many aspects of trusts law including:

- mechanisms for the appointment and removal of trustees and the vesting of property without the need for a court order;
- providing trustees with general powers to administer trusts;
- providing trustees with specific powers, such as the power to invest trust assets, and the power to distribute or accumulate income and capital of a trust, including for the maintenance, education and advancement of a beneficiary;
- providing protections and indemnities for trustees;
- granting powers to the court to ensure the efficient administration of trusts;
- granting the court the power to amend the purpose of charitable trusts to apply property 'cy pres', meaning as near as possible to the original charitable purposes; and
- provisions to deal with gifts made by prescribed trusts for philanthropic purposes.

Many Queenslanders will encounter trusts law at different points in their life. This might occur in the context of dealing with superannuation funds, in the administration of a deceased person's estate, for the purpose of business and asset structuring, or where a bank account is held on trust for a minor. It is important that our trusts laws are fit for purpose and reflect modern societal standards and that trusts can be administered efficiently.

In January 2012, the Queensland Law Reform Commission was engaged to undertake a broad-ranging review of the current Trusts Act, with a view to modernising and streamlining the administration and regulation of trusts in Queensland. The QLRC's review involved a comprehensive and independent review of the entire act, the consideration of equivalent provisions in other jurisdictions and substantial consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

The QLRC issued an interim report in June 2013 and a final report in December 2013, which recommended a raft of changes to the current act, including that the current act be replaced with new trusts legislation. As part of the final report, the QLRC also provided a recommended draft Trusts Bill. I would like to commend the work of the QLRC, as variously constituted throughout the review with former Supreme Court Judge the Hon. Roslyn Atkinson AO as its chairperson. The QLRC's recommendations have been instrumental in the development of the modernised trusts law framework reflected in the bill. The bill that I introduce today has been drafted broadly in accordance with the recommendations of the QLRC's review.

During drafting of the bill, feedback was sought from targeted stakeholders and peak bodies in the trust and legal industry, and a draft bill was released for public consultation in November and December of 2023. The bill takes into account the feedback received from this targeted and public consultation, and the bill is supported by stakeholders subject to some limited issues on which consensus has not been reached.

I would like to thank the stakeholders who provided valuable feedback on the bill including the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association of Queensland, the Queensland branch of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, the Public Trustee of Queensland, the Public Advocate of Queensland, the Office of the Public Guardian of Queensland, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, the Local Government Association of Queensland, Legal Aid Queensland, Thompson Brain and Mind Healthcare, the heads of jurisdiction, Titles Queensland, as well as a range of legal practitioners and private citizens. No-one can say that we have not consulted on this bill.

The bill introduces several new or substantially changed provisions to streamline the current act, meet modern needs and address existing gaps in the act. The bill limits who may be appointed as trustee of a trust to prevent parties who would impact on the effective administration of a trust being appointed. This includes children; a person who is bankrupt or taking advantage of the laws of bankruptcy as a debtor; companies that are being wound up, under administration or receivership; or persons who have been disqualified from being a trustee by a court.

The bill expands and modifies the powers relating to replacement, removal and appointment of trustees to ensure the cost-effective administration of a trust without the need to seek court orders. For example, in certain circumstances an administrator or attorney of the sole remaining trustee who has impaired capacity may replace that sole remaining trustee, or the sole remaining trustee who is bankrupt or taking advantage of the laws of bankruptcy may replace themselves.

The increased complexity of modern trust instruments is also addressed in the bill by ensuring that all mechanisms provided under a trust instrument to replace a trustee are given priority before the default legislative processes to replace a trustee apply, ensuring that the intent of the trust instrument is preserved. The power to replace a trustee who is out of the jurisdiction for more than a year has also been removed as this is no longer in keeping with modern societal expectations or reflective of the electronic society in which we live.

Under the bill trustees are also granted greater powers to administer the trust property, such as powers to sell, lease, mortgage and insure trust property, which are akin to the powers of absolute owners of property. Trustees will also be given the power to delegate their investment powers and be permitted to advance greater amounts of capital to a beneficiary for their maintenance, education or advancement in recognition of modern societal standards. However, these greater powers are subject to new minimum statutory duties imposed on trustees which are reflective of the duties found at common law.

The bill provides that a trustee must act honestly and in good faith for the benefit of the beneficiaries of the trust or, in the case of a charitable trust, to further the purposes of the trust. A trustee must keep separate trust accounts and records for each trust for at least three years after the termination of the trust and make these records available for inspection by a beneficiary or provide a copy to the beneficiary at a reasonable cost. The trustee also has a general duty to exercise the care, diligence and skill of a prudent person in administering the trust, with this duty being more onerous for professional trustees or trustees who hold themselves out as having special knowledge or experience.

The trustee's power to delegate in the event of a temporary physical incapacity or being absent from the jurisdiction is also qualified in the bill so that this delegation cannot be greater than 12 months. Additional safeguards regarding delegations are also included in the bill which require the trustee to give notice to certain persons when a delegation is made as well as giving notice to the delegate if the trustee is removed so the delegate is aware that their power has ended.

The bill confers additional statutory powers on the court to enhance the effective administration of trusts. The court may, when removing a trustee, also disqualify them from being a trustee of another trust. The court will also have the power to appoint, remove and replace other office holders of the trust, such as appointers of the trust, and will have the power to reduce the amount of commission and professional expenses charged by a trustee if these amounts are excessive. The bill enables trusts to be more cost-effectively managed by providing more flexibility in how certain matters may be determined.

Under the bill, the District Court will be given the same powers that are currently conferred on the Supreme Court where the value of the property relating to the matter does not exceed the District Court's monetary limit. The bill also enables more cost-effective administration of charitable trusts through the modernisation of cy pres schemes. Under the current act, where the purpose of a charitable trust is incapable of being carried out, for example, because a named charity has ceased to exist, the court can approve a scheme for the trust property to be applied to another charitable purpose as near as possible to the original. This is known as a cy pres scheme. However, the bill will now provide for the Attorney-General to also have the power to approve certain cy pres schemes where the value of the assets does not exceed the District Court's monetary limit which will reduce the administrative costs of having to seek a court order. Furthermore, in determining a cy pres scheme, the court or Attorney-General will also be able to consider current social and economic conditions as well as the spirit of the trust which will enable a more modern consideration in line with societal expectations.

The bill is also modernised through updating the provisions that deal with certain philanthropic gifts by reflecting recent amendments to relevant Commonwealth legislation. The bill repeals outdated or unnecessary provisions in the current act which relate to matters that have been repealed or abolished such as settled land provisions and references to rent charges and estate duty. Certain provisions of the current act are also no longer required due to the broader effect of certain provisions in the bill. Various procedural provisions have also been removed given that the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999 now regulate these matters.

The bill also streamlines the law by moving some provisions of the current act to the Succession Act 1981 because they are only relevant for personal representatives of deceased person's estates rather than trustees generally. The bill makes important improvements to Queensland's trusts laws to ensure the efficient and cost-effective administration of trusts for the benefit of those with an interest in trust property. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.25 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee

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

MOTION

Amendments to Sessional Orders

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.25 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That amendments to the Sessional Orders for the 57th Parliament circulated in my name be agreed to and effective immediately.

1. (b) and (c)—*Omit, Insert—*

- (b) The House shall sit each day from 9.30am until the automatic adjournment is declared in accordance with Sessional Order 2(2)(c), unless adjourned in accordance with Sessional Order 2(3) or 2(4).
- (c) The Order of Business for each Sitting Day shall be as follows—

Tuesday*9.30am — 10.15am—Preliminary Business **

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Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.15am — 11.15am—

Question Time

11.15am — 11.20am—

Business Program Motion (in accordance with Sessional Order 4)

11.20am — 1.00pm—

Government Business

1.00pm — 2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm — 3.00pm—

Matters of Public Interest

3.00pm — 5.30pm—

Government Business

5.30pm — 7.00pm—

Disallowance Motions, Private Members' Bills or Government Business (in accordance with Sessional Order 1(d))

7.00pm — 8.30pm—

Government Business

8.30pm — 9.00pm—

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.)*

Wednesday*9.30am — 10.15am—Preliminary Business **

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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)

10.15am — 11.15am—
Question Time

11.15am — 12.30pm—
Government Business

12.30pm — 1.00pm—
Introduction of Private Members' Bills #

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 — 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 — 8.30pm—
Government Business

8.30pm — 9.00pm—
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.)

Thursday

9.30am — 10.15am—Preliminary Business *

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Ministerial Statements

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Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.15am — 11.15am—
Question Time

11.15am — 1.00pm—
Government Business

1.00pm — 2.00pm—
Lunch break

2.00pm — 3.00pm—
Private Members' Statements (Total time 60 minutes, 20 members x 3 minutes each)

3.00pm — 6.30pm—
Government Business

6.30pm — 7.00pm—
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.)*

2. Budget Week—Days and Hours of Sitting and Order of Business

1A.—

Omit, Insert—

1A. The days, hours of sitting and order of business for budget sitting weeks (as identified in the sitting calendar) are as follows:

Tuesday

*9.30am — 10.15am—Preliminary Business **

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Notification and tabling of papers by the Clerk

Ministerial Papers

Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.15am — 11.15am—

Question Time

11.15am — 1.00pm—

Government Business

1.00pm — 2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm — until adjournment moved

Government Business

** (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.)*

Wednesday

*9.30am — 10.15am—Preliminary Business **

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Notification and tabling of papers by the Clerk

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Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

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)

10.15am — 11.15am—

Question Time

11.15am — 11.20am—

Business Program Motion (in accordance with Sessional Order 2B)

11.20am — 12.00pm—

Introduction of Private Members' Bills #

12.00pm — 2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm — 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 was given during Preliminary Business)

6.00pm — 8.30pm
Government Business

8.30pm — 9.00pm—
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.)

Thursday

9.30am — 10.15am—Preliminary Business *

Prayers

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Ministerial Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

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Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.15am — 11.15am—

Question Time

11.15am — 1.00pm—

Government Business

1.00pm — 2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm — 6.30pm—

Government Business

6.30pm — 7.30pm—

Dinner break

7.30pm — until adjournment moved (no adjournment debate)—

Government Business

** (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.)*

Friday

From 9.30am — 10.00am—

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

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

10.00am — 10.30am—
Question Time

10.30am — 1.00pm—
Government Business

1.00pm — 2.00pm—
Lunch break

2.00pm — 6.30pm—
Government Business

6.30pm — 7.30pm—
Dinner break

7.30pm — *until adjournment moved (no adjournment debate)*—
Government Business

3. Automatic Adjournment

2.—

Omit, Insert—

2. (1) Standing Order 56 is suspended for this session.
- (2) At the time specified for the Automatic Adjournment in the Order of Business for each Sitting Day, the Speaker shall:
 - (a) notify the House that it is the time for the Automatic Adjournment of the House;
 - (b) shall call on up to 10 members to speak for no more than three minutes each to make an adjournment statement; and
 - (c) at the conclusion of the members' statements in 2(b) above, shall declare the House is adjourned to the date and time previously agreed to by the House.
- (3) Notwithstanding Sessional Orders 1(b) and 2(2), the Leader or Acting Leader of the House may advise the House, no later than two hours before the scheduled or rescheduled Automatic Adjournment, that the House may continue to sit for a further stated period of up to 2 hours after the time set for the Automatic Adjournment or at the conclusion of a nominated item of business, whichever is earlier, at which time the Automatic Adjournment will occur.
- (4) Notwithstanding Sessional Orders 1(b) and 2(2), the motion "That the House do now adjourn" may be moved by the Leader or Acting Leader of the House at any time despite the order of business, in which case there will be an Adjournment Debate for 30 minutes and then the question shall be put.

Today I am moving that amendments to the sessional orders for the 57th Parliament circulated in my name be agreed to and effective immediately. The motion before the House today is simple. It provides for a minimum of an additional 3½ hours of government business time in each week's sitting. The House will work harder under the Miles government. The Premier works hard every day for Queenslanders, and it is no surprise that his vision for Queensland requires the government and the parliament to work harder too. This means more time to debate important legislation. The Miles Labor government is a new government under new leadership and we have more positive work to do for Queenslanders. The government is getting on with the job of delivering for Queenslanders and ensuring they have the policies, laws and legal framework they deserve to enable them to get on with their lives. We are listening to Queenslanders and delivering on those expectations.

In addition to the increase in hours, the updated sessional orders will allow the Leader of the House to extend the sitting hours by up to two hours at a time by advising the House. That means that if more time is needed the House can be extended and time is not wasted on motions and arguments; the House just gets on with the debate, which is also why this debate will be short. When you govern a state that is going forward, this House cannot afford to waste time on the luxury of repeated and repetitive debate about the time for getting on with the job. It should just do it.

The Miles government has a strong legislative agenda with more to come. To ensure that we have the ability and flexibility to deal with the legislation, we are increasing the available hours. The motion builds on the motion moved in the previous parliament to set appropriate timeframes around when this House sits. The parliament is like any other workplace: health and safety measures need to be considered and they need to be implemented. Setting fixed hours parameters are one way of ensuring this place functions smoothly but more importantly functions safely.

This is not a foreign concept. Setting sitting hour timeframes is most common in other parliaments. For example, I am advised that in Victoria their Legislative Assembly sits until 7 pm on a Tuesday and Wednesday and 5 pm on a Thursday. In Queensland we will sit a bit longer. I am advised that the Australian House of Representatives usually sits until 8 pm on most days and 5 pm on Thursdays. We will sit a little bit longer. Additionally, members have moved back into the Parliamentary

Annexe. Members and staff now have their own spaces and will no longer be sharing spaces with others for extended periods of time. As such, the time is right to increase the availability of hours so we can continue to get on with our positive legislative agenda.

I was reflecting on what occurred when we established fixed hours in the previous parliament. No-one has forgotten that the then manager of opposition business, the member for Kawana, moved an amendment which, as I am advised, worked out to be about 1½ hours less sitting time than what the government was then proposing. Ever since the opposition has been coming in here and using debate on the business program motion that used to exist attempting to cover up for the incompetence of the member for Kawana.


We all know the LNP are adept at saying one thing and doing another. At last night's Business Committee meeting, I discussed the additional hours that we decided were appropriate from this week due to a number of factors and they were effectively agreed to. It was surprising that, when the motion was put, the Manager of Opposition Business voted against it. Last night, the member for Glass House voted against the additional sitting hours. That was a surprise because, at the previous meeting, the Manager of Opposition Business moved a motion to extend the sitting hours, which would have resulted in an increase of 2½ hours. One week they wanted to increase the hours of this place and the next week, when the opportunity arose and we proposed even more hours, they voted against the proposed sitting hours arrangements. That is the LNP through and through. They say one thing in public, they beat their chests and they say they want more sitting hours but, in private, they do the complete opposite.

The LNP cannot be trusted on anything. They have what we could only describe as a non-exclusive relationship with the truth. We all remember when Campbell Newman said public servants had nothing to fear under the LNP. When the LNP took office, they took an axe to 14,000 Public Service jobs. I should not have been surprised by the flip-flopping approach of the Manager of Opposition Business and the LNP this week because it is a matter of public record, in *Hansard* no less, that during the LNP government years, not long after question time concluded on a Thursday, a junior minister would head home. He could not even work the full week.

The motion before the House will ensure there is additional time available for members, including members of the crossbench, to make a contribution to debates. Whilst I note there is a high level of sophistication and maturity in the business committee's approach in Victoria, it is disappointing that the LNP opposition here in Queensland remain unable and unwilling to work cooperatively to facilitate the positive workings of this chamber. Those opposite are more concerned about playing politics than working cooperatively to make this place work. There is no clearer evidence of that than this week when the Manager of Opposition Business failed by voting against something that the government was considering and that, in fact, he had been asking for. It goes to show that the LNP are devoid of policy. They are an opposition who say 'no' just for the sake of it. In fact, we were effectively of the same opinion on the business program yet the LNP still came into the House and divided on it, wasting the time of the parliament.

I am sure we are about to hear the opposition claim this motion as a win for them, but we disagree. The motion before the House enhances the current processes and is a win for democracy and a win for Queenslanders. This government will use this time to pass law reforms. We will introduce and pass more bills like the cheaper power bill that we will debate later today, new rental fairness laws, new laws to protect the tenants and owners of manufactured homes and laws to protect Queensland's pristine environment. On this side of the House, under our new Premier, we are open to all views and building on the effective workings of this chamber and the parliament of Queensland for the better.

We have already increased crossbench input by ensuring time for a crossbench motion each sitting, in addition to the non-government motion. We will continue to look at ways to increase the transparency measures in this chamber. This side of the House will always stand up for democracy and the good and effective practices of this chamber. The motion before us does exactly that by delivering additional time for debate of important legislation. I ask all members to support the motion. Let's get on with it. Let's get on with our progressive agenda. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.33 pm): We were just debating whether the saying is more front than a London high street or more front than Myer or David Jones, to use the Australian colloquialism. My goodness! How the Leader of the House could come in here and, with a straight face, deliver that speech is completely and utterly beyond me.

When it comes to youth crime, we knew that the Labor government's policy cupboard was bare but we did not know that it was so bare. Now we can add to the long list of LNP policies that the Labor government has included. Let me run through a few: criminalising breach of bail; reducing learner

licence fees; establishing a clearing house for complaints; putting a victim of crime on the sentencing advisory panel; delaying renters tax; parking the patients tax; establishing the original DNA lab inquiry; reopening the DNA lab inquiry; establishing the Caboolture Hospital inquiry; establishing an independent review into the treatment of Kaleb and Jonathan—the child safety matter; developing a Queensland Health workforce plan; opening up the Children's Court to families of victims and the media, which is in progress, mind you; providing police helicopters in Townsville; freezing car rego; establishing an independent Olympic infrastructure delivery authority; and, now, restoring a level of balance, although it is not perfect, to the amount of debate that occurs in this chamber.

The Leader of the House used the term 'flip-flopping'. Let me give members in this chamber and people in the state more broadly a history lesson on what we are debating here tonight. I will go back to the start of this political term—I think it was November 2020. The then leader of the house moved the sessional orders that we are now overthrowing. She used these words—

These fixed hours are sensible and have brought the Queensland parliament into the 21st century and aligned it with modern workplaces, including parliaments right across this country.

In addition, when referring to the Business Committee and the business program process, the then leader of the house, the member for Redcliffe, said—

This great change in the last parliament has assisted the efficient running of the chamber while ensuring members can continue to have their say on the matters that are important to them. The system can only work if all members buy into the process and work with the process.

She concluded—

The cornerstone of our democracy is the ability to debate ideas and challenge different policy proposals.

I contest that it is for those exact reasons that we are here today changing what the then leader of the house established in sessional orders. Why? Because every single time the current Leader of the House has come in here and moved his business program, he has been earbashed about the fact that guillotining debate is impacting the ability of not only members of the opposition but also the crossbench to contribute to debate on legislation. The Leader of the House has well and truly heard it from the likes of the member for Noosa, and I suspect he has also heard it from his own members who are sick and tired of having their contributions on important legislation guillotined.

I mentioned flip-flopping and I mentioned the fact that this was LNP policy. I actually put this forward on Friday, 1 March and it was reported by the ABC online. We put forward that we would not sit around the clock, like we have in the past, but would have a better balance to ensure that we get the required debate and lessen the guillotining of debate that we currently get from the state Labor government. When asked whether he agreed, the government's Leader of the House, Mick de Brenni, stood by the existing arrangements as little as 2½ months ago.

The ABC and other media outlets have started reporting on the farcical situation in this session of parliament whereby bills are rammed through with very little contribution from any members in the House and the new addition whereby the minister is getting 15 minutes to sum up any consideration in detail. I acknowledge Steve Austin at the ABC for highlighting what has been occurring. I suspect it is like everything else we see with this Labor government: they only respond when they get negative media and that is why we are considering these sessional orders. The Leader of the House said that the Miles government will always support modern, progressive workplaces and that the Queensland parliament is no different. Does going back to where we were previously make us less modern and less progressive? It is interesting. I must admit that I have a little bit of a chuckle when I think that the Leader of the House is having to eat his words.

I also want to highlight, because the Leader of the House went there, that in yesterday's Business Committee he is right: I did vote against what was put, even though we are getting more debate time. I will add that the member for Noosa also voted against the business program that was put. It is not just about adding additional time; it is also about determining how many pieces of legislation the government is trying to ram through in the time that is determined. If I use those last two cognated bills as an example, I have it on a good undertaking from the Opposition Whip that only seven members of the opposition and crossbench got to contribute on two important pieces of legislation. In fact, the member for Mirani was on his feet when he got guillotined in his contribution on the debate. Do not come in here and say that just because there is additional time to debate the legislation it is all fixed. It is not. Those opposite are still cognating legislation—we have two lots of cognated debate this time—they are still guillotining the debate, and they are still setting arbitrary ministerial replies and consideration in detail.

Mr McDonald: It's undemocratic.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. It continues to be undemocratic. As long as that exists, I will continue to vote against the business program, the LNP will continue to vote against the business program and, as members saw today, every member of the crossbench will vote against the business program.

I want to point out an interesting addition, and the Leader of the House alluded to this in his contribution. We all know what happens with the automatic adjournment—that at the specified time the adjournment is called and up to 10 speakers can speak for no more than three minutes each. However, two additional clauses have been added. The first states—

Notwithstanding Sessional Orders 1(b) and 2(2), the Leader or Acting Leader of the House may advise the House, no later than two hours before the scheduled or rescheduled Automatic Adjournment, that the House may continue to sit for a further stated period of up to 2 hours after the time set for the Automatic Adjournment or at the conclusion of a nominated item of business, whichever is earlier, at which time the Automatic Adjournment will occur.

In one essence, the Leader of the House is now giving himself a free pass to extend at will the amount of time we sit. Fair enough: that may actually give us more time to have debates on important pieces of legislation. As I have said, we here in the opposition stand ready and waiting to debate as long as those opposite want to. We have never considered those sessional orders that have been in operation until today to be family friendly. Very few of us have an opportunity to duck home to see our families of an evening. However, there is an additional item added to this which states—

Notwithstanding Sessional Orders 1(b) and 2(2), the motion 'That the House do now adjourn' may be moved by the Leader or Acting Leader of the House at any time despite the order of business, in which case there will be an Adjournment Debate for 30 minutes and then the question shall be put.

On the flip side, he has hedged his bet the other way. He can just decide that we are not going to sit until nine o'clock any night and we are going to pull up stumps early. They are going to knock off and they can all go to their P&C meetings et cetera. He is having a bet each way, which goes to show that those opposite treat this House, this chamber, as their political plaything. They have no interest in ensuring democratic parliamentary contributions. They want to make sure that they control anything that is coming out of this House because they have lost control of the state. It is the only place they can continue to have any level of control because they have the numbers in here. Outside of this chamber, it is chaos and crisis and it will continue to be like that for as long as those opposite are in charge of the government. The people of Queensland have one opportunity in October, and that opportunity is to show Labor the door in '24.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION) BILL

Resumed from 2 May (see p. 1484).

Second Reading

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (4.43 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, particularly the member for Logan for his great work chairing that committee. I want to thank the committee for the report it tabled on 17 May 2024 regarding the cheaper power bill. I would also like to thank all Treasury officials who appeared as witnesses and the work that Treasury did in drafting and bringing the bill together for the House. I also want to thank all of those organisations which made submissions. I note the committee made one recommendation to parliament—that is, for the bill to be passed.

The fundamental purpose of the cheaper power bill is to provide for supplementary appropriation relating to unforeseen expenditure incurred in the 2023-24 financial year. 'Unforeseen expenditure' is the term used to describe payments from the Consolidated Fund to a department which are above the amounts approved in prior appropriation acts. In this instance, the cheaper power bill relates to a specific government initiative. The amount being appropriated relates to providing households and small businesses with much needed cost-of-living relief. As I said in my introductory speech, the cheaper power bill represents and reflects Labor values.

Right now, many Queenslanders are struggling with global and national cost-of-living pressures. We know families are feeling the pressure of increased household bills, and our Labor government is here to help. That is why we are delivering the biggest electricity rebates in Australian history, consisting of \$2.267 billion for households and small businesses appropriated through this bill as well as our Queensland electricity rebate for vulnerable households. This investment back into the people of our state is only possible because we have kept our energy assets in public hands and the Miles Labor government is collecting Queensland's fair share through our progressive coal royalties.

Through the cheaper power bill, we are delivering a \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate to all Queenslanders and a \$325 cost-of-living rebate to small businesses. In addition, we also announced that we would extend the \$372 Queensland electricity rebate for 2024-25. Combined with the recently announced federal government rebates—and I acknowledge here the Albanese federal Labor government and the federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, for their initiative to support Queensland households as well—Queensland households will receive at least \$1,300 off their power bill and small businesses will receive \$650. This direct action will put more money back in Queenslanders' pockets and ease cost-of-living pressures. The budget I will hand down on 11 June will prioritise more cost-of-living relief, building on the record measures we have already announced.

We know the LNP does not support these rebates. While they made no statement of reservation in relation to the bill, members of the LNP have publicly criticised these rebates. The member for Gympie said that this 'cash splash' was a blatant, cynical move by a desperate government and the \$2½ billion could have gone towards a new multipurpose sport and entertainment facility. Not content with giving money back to Queenslanders, he wants to build a stadium. What a surprise! They always return to the vanity projects, don't they? We want to help them in their own electorates on the Sunshine Coast. We announced that last week, but it was condemned by the members on the Sunshine Coast. I could not believe it on the day that they were condemning this investment in their community. The member for Gympie says this is a cash splash and a waste of money and that it should be put into a stadium in his own electorate.

What did we hear from the leader of the Nationals, David Littleproud, a Queensland? He said that the \$300 energy rebate from the federal government was an admission of failure of an all renewable energy approach. Scrap that—we are not going to get \$300 from David Littleproud! He will save the \$300 and put it into the \$90 billion nuclear plan for Queensland. We know that Hinkley Point, the latest nuclear reactor to be built in the United Kingdom, is now 14 years late and costing twice as much or more than originally planned at a cost of \$90 billion. For every Queensland household, that would be \$44,000. We can forget energy rebates from David Littleproud because all of that money has to go into their nuclear nightmare.

Let's look back. Do not look at what the LNP says, look at what they do. What happened the last time they controlled the Treasury? In 2013, the LNP Treasurer, the member for Clayfield said, 'The government could not afford to pay all customers an electricity rebate.' When household electricity prices rose, it was by 22.6 per cent. If they shoot up through the roof, a total of 43 per cent over their period in government—

A government member interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection. So when power prices go up, what does the LNP say? 'You do not get anything from us. You do not get electricity rebates. You get nothing.' The member for Clayfield, not content with that claim, tried to cut electricity concessions for 435,000 seniors and pensioners. Of course, the pensioners of Queensland rose up, because the pensioners of Queensland in places like Woodridge, Logan and across the state always feel the lash from the LNP. It is the weakest and the most vulnerable who receive the lash of the LNP. The LNP government, in which the Leader of the Opposition was proud to serve as a minister, and absolutely championed and cheered that budget, answer to Queenslanders when electricity prices were going up was, 'You get nothing.' They were going to cut that from 435,000 of the most vulnerable Queenslanders.

As sure as I am standing here today, the LNP leader or, as he demands his staff call him, 'The Leader'—capital T, capital L—will sell out power assets and he will sell out TAFEs. We announced yesterday a \$370 million package to back in more free TAFE places in Queensland and to sustain public training and skills training in Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition—'The Leader'—will hand back billions. He will hand it back to mining companies and make cuts to our rebates as well as health and education. It is what they always do.

Mr Zanow: Rubbish!

Mr DICK: They say, 'Rubbish!' Welcome to the House, member for Ipswich West. Welcome to these people you have joined. Every single time they have a chance to do something for Queensland, they cut and they cut hard.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Treasurer has been in this House for some time and he knows to refer to members by their correct title.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Treasurer, you will refer to members by their correct title, so that would mean no 'The Leader' and no 'you'.

Mr DICK: I welcome to the House the member for Ipswich West. He has joined the most vicious group of politicians ever to serve in this state. It is not surprising the member for Nanango would take a point of order when it comes to power. When it comes to power and rebates, we know what the member for Nanango did. When electricity prices went down, she was part of the government that championed closing down and shutting down generators so electricity prices would go up. More to the point, when she was called out a few months ago, she hid the media release from her website.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gympie!

Mr DICK: She scurried away from—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order, given I have already written to the Speaker on this exact issue, but I also take personal offence and I ask that the member withdraw.

Mr DICK: I withdraw. The record of the LNP is clear—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Treasurer, hold on. The member for Gympie will cease his interjections or he will be warned.

Mr DICK: The record of the LNP is crystal clear to every Queenslanders. When they get the chance, they jack up power prices and they rip rebates away from Queenslanders. That is what they did last time and that is what they will do again. When you blow a \$6 billion black hole in your budget and promise to reduce taxes and reduce debt, there is only one option and that is to cut, to cut hard and to cut deep.

No doubt the LNP will take the advice of the Australian Institute for Progress that made a submission regarding the bill. I know that submission was considered carefully by the committee. The Australian Institute for Progress said the size and timing of the payment suggested the real purpose of the rebates was, 'electoral gain, not alleviation of the cost of living'. They also said the government had the wrong mindset about royalties. What would the right mindset be? That would be right; that would be to take the coal royalties, as the Leader of the Opposition said to the QRC round-up, when he met with that group, saying, 'When you hear our tax policy, you can take it to the bank.' That would be the right mindset—to give billions of dollars back to multinational coal companies that are making record profits, employing a record number of employees, creating a record number of jobs in regional Queensland and give them the money we would give to Queenslanders through these rebates so it could go offshore. That is what the Leader of the Opposition would do.

The Australian Institute for Progress—sounds very retrograde to me—also said the government had the wrong mindset about royalties and we needed to change our plans for electricity generation. What does that mean? We saw it when the amendments were moved by the member for Nanango in the debate a couple of weeks ago. It means privatisation. That is what 'changing or plans for electricity generation' means.

It also means nuclear power for Queensland. I will give this to Peter Dutton: at least in his budget reply he was honest about wanting to build nuclear reactors up and down the east coast of Queensland. He was honest about that, and every member of the LNP supports that plan and every member of this House supports that plan. It is just that it is secret; it is hidden.

Mr Zanow: Rubbish!

Mr DICK: We know they have polled the electorates. That is what the federal opposition said. They have polled the electorates. I wonder if you have got it, member for Ipswich West. You keep calling out. Why don't you be up-front with the people of Queensland instead of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, please, Treasurer.

Mr DICK: Instead of hiding, Deputy Speaker. Examination of the Australian Institute for Progress website reveals the executive director is a former vice-president and campaign chairman of the Queensland Liberal Party, so doing the dirty work of the LNP by lodging the submission as part of the

bill. One of the board directors of the organisation—wait for it, Deputy Speaker; you cannot make this stuff up—one of the board directors of the Australian Institute of Progress is Campbell Newman. They are running the LNP agenda. That is what happens every single time.

As I said in my introductory speech, we are bringing appropriation of funds forward ahead of the budget so that rebates can be delivered as a single one-off credit on power bills from 1 July 2024. We are doing it to provide immediate relief and we are doing it to prevent any future LNP government from revoking or reducing the rebate, protecting those rebates from any future government hell-bent on reducing taxes, cutting debt and returning royalties to multinational coal companies and taking it away from the hands of hardworking Queenslanders.

Some members of the committee and submitters raised concern that the rebate is not means tested. As detailed by the Under Treasurer during the public hearing, the Queensland government does not hold income details in relation to individuals. The best way we can deliver direct cost-of-living support to a broad range of community members is via their regular power bills, and the current program is already designed to ensure that vulnerable people are better looked after and receive additional support.

As I said previously in addition to cost-of-living rebates for households and small businesses, our government will continue the existing \$372 Queensland electricity rebate to vulnerable households in 2024-25. Those with a Queensland Seniors Card, Services Australia or Department of Veterans Affairs Pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card—and receive the War Widow Pension, War Widower Pension or special rate TPI pension—and asylum seekers are eligible for the extra payment. That means that on top of the \$1,000 rebate from the Miles Labor government and the \$300 from the Albanese federal Labor government, vulnerable households will receive \$1,672 in electricity bill relief during 2024-25. That is a Labor initiative that I am proud of.

The reality is that global and national cost-of-living pressures are stretching household budgets across various income scales. All those Queenslanders have loans. They are keeping their businesses afloat. They are supporting their children. They are supporting elderly parents. Many are struggling to meet their mortgage repayments or weekly rent. For a typical residential customer across Queensland, the \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate may represent around half of their estimated annual household electricity bill in 2024-25, meaning most Queenslanders may not pay anything on their first electricity bill in 2024-25, and many may not pay another bill until 2025.

The recently announced Commonwealth electricity rebates will provide further support. We know from the success of our \$550 electricity rebate that this type of direct action works. Recent data from the Australian Energy Regulator shows that, while every other jurisdiction in the National Electricity Market had an increase in hardship payment plans, Queensland was the only state where the numbers went down.

Critics of our nation-leading cost-of-living rebates believe that they are nothing more than a cash splash that will drive up inflation. Recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that the \$550 cost-of-living rebate we announced in our last budget contributed to Brisbane electricity prices being 9½ per cent lower over the year to the March quarter 2024, contributing to inflation in Queensland being lower than the national average. It is estimated that the proposed \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate to households through electricity rebates could reduce about one percentage point from measured annual inflation based on Brisbane CPI in 2024-25. We are proud to do that. We are proud to take that approach to inflation. The other approach you can take to inflation is to cut government expenditure. We know that the LNP is obsessed with doing that. That will be exactly what happens should they ever succeed in securing the treasury benches again.

Returning to the mechanics of the bill, section 35 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009 provides that, should expenditure from the Consolidated Fund exceed the amount approved by annual appropriation, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Treasurer, may authorise the expenditure. This amount comprises unforeseen expenditure and must be approved by Governor in Council within four weeks of the end of the financial year. As required by the Financial Accountability Act 2009, on 2 May 2024 the Governor in Council authorised additional unforeseen expenditure incurred during the 2023-24 financial year in the sum of \$2,267,000,000. Unforeseen expenditure must also be formally approved by parliament via appropriation bills. Unforeseen expenditure for the purposes of the Financial Accountability Act 2009, as I have said previously, is the expenditure for the Consolidated Fund above the amount approved by the original appropriation acts for the year which are introduced as part of the budget. That is what we are doing as part of these bills today.

Since the 2023-24 budget the government has instigated a change to the previous practice. The 2023-24 annual appropriation act—the appropriation act for 2023 for departments, introduced on budget day in June 2023—included additional appropriation unrelated to unforeseen expenditure for 2022-23 as estimated at the end of April 2023. That is an important transparency measure and that will continue this year. It allows that additional unforeseen expenditure to be examined during estimates as well.


Similarly, the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024 seeks to appropriate amounts for 2023-24 before the financial year has ended. We are presenting this unforeseen expenditure to parliament at this time in a separate supplementary appropriation bill, reflecting our government's commitment to bringing such matters to parliament in a timely fashion. This promotes transparency and accountability before parliament and the people of Queensland. As I have said, this approach locks in this expenditure, preventing it from being revoked, reduced or abolished by any future LNP government that may prioritise lower taxes, debt reduction and the privatisation of government owned energy corporations.

Given the importance of this initiative to Queensland households and small businesses as well as the significant amount of expenditure involved, it was determined to include the amount for the electricity bill rebate in a separate supplementary appropriation bill. The people of Queensland deserve cheaper power bills, and the cheaper power bill will deliver that to the people of our state.

In closing, I would like to share the thoughts of Aimee McVeigh, the CEO of the Queensland Council of Social Service, regarding these cost-of-living rebates. Aimee McVeigh said—

As we head into winter, it will make a practical, positive impact for people struggling to pay their food, electricity and rent bills.

The cheaper power bill is direct Labor action that will ease the cost-of-living pressures on hardworking Queenslanders because the Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queensland. I commend the cheaper power bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.03 pm): On 2 May the Treasurer introduced the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. The bill was referred to the Cost of Living and Economics Committee for consideration. The bill provides that the Treasurer is authorised to pay an additional appropriation in the amount of \$2.267 billion from the Consolidated Fund. This appropriation provides \$1,000 to be automatically credited to customer bills from 1 July 2024. A \$325 credit for small business customer bills will continue. Despite the six-day submission window, the bill received four submissions. The committee recommended that the bill be passed. I confirm that the opposition will be supporting the bill.

Queenslanders are struggling through the worst cost-of-living crisis in living memory. This bill is necessary because Queenslanders have been let down by a decade-old government that has failed to plan, has failed to think beyond their own political prism and is now simply just failing. Instead of a systematic, considered, evidence-based approach to delivering better government through structural cost-of-living solutions and relief, all Queenslanders are seeing from that side of the House is retirements and rebellion from their members of parliament as they do not believe that their government has any long-term solutions to address the cost of living in Queensland.

How can Queenslanders trust that the Palaszczuk-Miles-Dick government has any long-term solutions for the cost-of-living crisis after 10 long years of failure? You see it as they all walk away. First, Annastacia Palaszczuk left. As Kate Jones lines up for a Senate race, we are starting to see what was going on there. It is not just the former premier who has left. Let's look at the members who are now leaving because they do not believe there are any solutions left in this government to deliver long-term cost-of-living relief.

Mr Sullivan interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Stafford.

Mr JANETZKI: There is the member for Sandgate and the Attorney-General. Who else have we got?

An honourable member interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: I am coming to that.

Mr Sullivan interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Stafford, I just said that you will cease your interjections and you interjected straightaway.

Mr Sullivan: I did not hear that, sorry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. Maybe my microphone was not on. There will be no more warnings, member for Stafford.

Mr JANETZKI: There is the member for Rockhampton. We had the member for Maryborough's dalliance with the Katter party. None of them believe that this government is capable of any of the long-term structural solutions necessary to put downward pressure on the cost of living here in Queensland.

The most notable from the past week is the Assistant Minister for Treasury, Trade and Investment. The assistant treasurer has made absolutely clear what she thinks—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer you to standing order 236 and ask you to bring the member back to the bill before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the House, I was listening quite closely to the Treasurer's speech, which was pretty wideranging. I am going to give the member for Toowoomba South a little bit of latitude, but he will come back to the bill.

Mr JANETZKI: It might inform the Leader of the House to know that the Treasurer spent the best part of 20 minutes talking about a government a decade in the wilderness, talking about the federal leader of the National Party, talking about nuclear power, talking about projects on the Sunshine Coast. It might be worth the Leader of the House listening to the contribution of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer's contribution might be relevant, but I really want to know what the assistant treasurer thinks. I think we know what the assistant treasurer thinks of both the bill and the government's long-term plan for a structural solution to the cost-of-living crisis—and in fact the budget preparation—by her actions over the past week. We have seen an admission that the member for Ipswich wants out. The member for Ipswich was brought in as an assistant minister to former premier Palaszczuk, as I recall. She then fell out of the ministry. She was hand-picked by the Premier himself to return to the ministry in this portfolio.

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I know that you have already given some direction to the member to come back to the long title of the bill. He seems to be fascinated with going off on some other tangent. I ask that you call him back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member is responding, as I hear it, to comments that the Treasurer made. Again, member for Toowoomba South, I draw you back to the bill. I have given you a fair bit of latitude, but I draw you back to the bill now please.

Mr JANETZKI: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. After being hand-picked by the Premier to assist the Treasurer in the preparation of this appropriations bill—and the objectives of the bill talk about Queensland families experiencing a higher cost of living due to global pressures, and I will come to that in a moment—presumably the assistant treasurer was tasked with the responsibility of assisting the Treasurer in developing this appropriations bill and preparing for the budget next month, and the assistant treasurer shows her gratitude to the Premier by walking away—and not just walking away but launching a preselection challenge against, as I understand it, her mentor in Ipswich. At a time when the assistant treasurer should be focused on this appropriations bill and the task at hand, we have an assistant treasurer who wants out.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat please. Member, I have been listening to your contribution and I am having difficulty finding the link back to the bill. I would ask you to come back to the bill and stay relevant to the bill, thanks.

Mr JANETZKI: Overnight the Treasurer announced that the Queensland budget will be moving into deficit, and that is another broken promise from the Treasurer. The Treasurer promised in the last budget that the budget would be in surplus, but we are used to the Treasurer breaking promises—26 times a broken tax promise, destroying investor confidence and bringing about regulatory uncertainty, but we are used to that. What has been most troubling about the deficit that has been announced is that this change has been brought about while the Treasurer and the Premier have been busy working their factional numbers and counting the numbers over the last period of time before the bringing down of the budget.

When the Treasurer is busy counting his numbers in caucus, it shows that he is not caring about the cost-of-living pressures facing Queensland. When the assistant treasurer is busy counting numbers for a preselection challenge in Ipswich, it shows that she does not care about the cost-of-living pressures facing Queenslanders. Instead of counting caucus numbers and branch numbers for preselection challenges, this government should be focused on the numbers that matter to Queensland

families around their kitchen tables. The numbers that matter to the families of Queensland around their kitchen tables and as reflected in the very objectives of this appropriations bill where the Treasurer talks about Queensland families experiencing a high cost of living due to global pressures are obvious. The Treasurer himself has pinned the higher cost of living and talked about that as an objective of this bill.

Last year we know that Queensland households faced, in many regards, some of the highest cost-of-living increases in the nation. Power was 19.9 per cent higher last year, which is three times the average of the other states, and I will come back to the issue of power. Our water costs were the highest in the nation last year, rising by 16 per cent; our transport costs were the highest in the nation last year, rising by 4.2 per cent; health care was up by 6.7 per cent; rents were up by 8.4 per cent last year in Queensland; and insurance costs last year in Queensland went up by 18.5 per cent.

These are the numbers that the Queensland government should be focused on. Instead, we have the Treasurer and the Premier worrying about their numbers in caucus and doing factional deals to get the leadership and the deputy leadership while the assistant treasurer, no less, was working numbers for a preselection challenge. These are the cost-of-living numbers that matter to Queensland households, but it is not just those numbers: victims of crime went up by 17 per cent in the last 12 months and criminal offences went up in the state of Queensland by 11 per cent last year. We know that stolen car offences went up by 15.9 per cent last year. These are the numbers—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I bring you back to the bill please.

Mr JANETZKI: Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. These are the numbers that matter to Queenslanders. There are question marks over the government's Energy and Jobs Plan. How much does the foundational battery of the north cost today: is it \$7 billion, is it \$12 billion or is it north of \$18 billion?

Mrs Frecklington: They can't even agree.

Mr JANETZKI: They cannot agree; I take the interjection from the member for Nanango. If those opposite cannot agree, how can anyone have any confidence that this government has any appreciation of what that project costs? Just last year a billion dollars was allocated to operational expenses but there was not a single dollar in a capital statement for that project, and here we are ahead of the budget still not knowing what that project will cost. We are 1,521 police down on what was promised by this government before the last election. Ramping has hit 45½ per cent—the worst ramping ever in Queensland history. Again, this is happening while the health minister was busy doing factional numbers trying to get the leadership in the shortest leadership challenge of all time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am just going to take some advice. Resume your seat please, member for Toowoomba South. Member, I appreciate the general point that you are trying to make, and I have given you some latitude in relation to that, but this bill is clearly about the cost of electricity and you are straying all over the place. I have cautioned you several times to come back to the long title of the bill and I would ask you to remain relevant to the bill.

Mr JANETZKI: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I again return to the policy objectives of the bill and the reasons for them—

Queensland families are experiencing a higher cost of living due to global pressures.

As it says, Queensland families are experiencing a higher cost of living. I have outlined the numbers and, believe me, Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a lot more numbers, but I will move on because they are just numbers.

I want to reflect a little bit on some of the human challenges in terms of what these numbers mean to actual Queensland households and families. As I have travelled around Queensland as the shadow Treasurer and as the shadow minister for cost of living has travelled around Queensland, we continue to meet Queenslanders who are struggling with the bills on the kitchen table. Obviously this appropriations bill is targeted at power bills, but there are also other bills on the kitchen table that are of significant concern to Queensland families. I wanted to share a couple of their stories for the House to put a human face to the cost-of-living challenges facing Queensland, because it is about numbers, yes—and I have a lot more numbers—but it is about Queensland families and Queensland households. I have said to these hardworking Queenslanders that I would raise their circumstances in this House to give the human voice to this challenge facing our state. One person from regional Queensland has said to me—

I personally have been affected by the sharp increase in rental prices ... so speak from experience. I was a model tenant with the home kept immaculately and my rent paid well in advance.

When it came time to renew my lease the rent had increased ... over my budget (even whilst working full time and earning a good wage as a single person with mobility concerns). I am reluctant to complain or implement a breach due to the lack of available and affordable rental properties in my region.

We have spoken about what it will take to increase supply. I also wanted to share another cost-of-living story from a hardworking Queenslander who is doing it tough. It was a very long email, but there was one part of this hardworking Queenslander's story that really resonated with me. It was about a couple desperately trying to get on the housing ladder. This person said—

But I am angry and frustrated. I don't know what to do to bring my family through this. I do my best to work hard and I would have hoped to be able to give my children better than I had.

That is the cost-of-living pressure that so many Queenslanders are facing. The final story I want to share, again from regional Queensland, relates to insurance premiums for Queensland families, as the policies objectives and the reason for them talk about a higher cost of living. This person contrasted two insurance policies, one from a set of units in regional New South Wales and the other from a set of units similarly constructed but located in Cairns. The contrast between the strata title insurance premium ranged between \$3,715 in regional New South Wales to \$31,000 in regional Cairns. I tell those three personal stories of Queenslanders who are living through an enormous cost-of-living struggle because they are all numbers. These stories are often heavy with numbers, but it is important that this House reflects on the human stories, the human challenges of what Queenslanders are facing.


Before I conclude I want to return briefly to the reasons this appropriation bill is necessary. As I have said, we support this appropriation and the support for hardworking Queenslanders. The reason we are here in the first place is that this government has failed to deliver long-term structural solutions to cost-of-living challenges and there has been no greater area of failing than the power supply here in Queensland. Ultimately, that comes down to the failure to properly maintain Callide. It is the government's failure to properly maintain Callide. It has been nearly three years. It is three years this week since Callide came down—a catastrophic explosion at Callide that we know has driven up power prices across Queensland.

It is not just the opposition saying this. We have argued for a very long period for there to be transparency about the reasons Callide went down, and we are still waiting for Dr Brady's report. We will continue to wait because the people of Queensland deserve to know why it has taken so long. What was the cause, but also why has it taken so long for Callide to become fully operational again? We are still waiting. As I said, it has not just been the opposition saying that it has pushed up power prices here in Queensland. It has been the Queensland Competition Authority, it has been the Auditor-General and it has been these independent bodies that have clearly stated the reasons power prices have been higher in Queensland. It is because of this government's failure to properly invest in the maintenance of our power plants to maintain a reliable and affordable energy supply. It is time for the energy minister to deliver that report and to deliver answers to the people of Queensland.

We have made clear the long-term structural solutions we need to put downward pressure on the cost of living here in Queensland. We need to properly maintain our power plants like Callide to ensure that they are delivering that affordable and reliable power. It runs deeper than that when it comes to cost of living, and I refer again to the Queensland families who are experiencing a higher cost of living. It is time for a government in Queensland that delivers a lower cost of living, not a government that introduces a renter's tax in the middle of a housing crisis, driving out investment and pushing up rents. It should not be a government that introduces a patient's tax in the middle of a health crisis that drives up presentations to emergency departments and drives down bulk-billing to the most vulnerable and the elderly.

We do need a government that ensures the release of land—lot approvals are down 30 per cent—to add supply and put downward pressure on housing and rents. That is the kind of government that we need here in Queensland. On this side of the House we will not stop fighting for Queenslanders when it comes to cost of living. We need a government to get on top of the youth crime crisis to put downward pressure on insurance premiums. We need a government to invest in flood mitigation works to put downward pressure on cost of living in Queensland, on insurance premiums here in Queensland.

Across every single one of our portfolios we on this side of the House will continue to argue that this government has failed Queensland not just now but for 10 years into the past and they are failing Queenslanders 10 years into the future because they have no plan. They have no plan to put downward pressure with structural solutions on the cost of living here in Queensland, and nothing will change until such time as Queenslanders change the government in October. It is more than time for Queenslanders to show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (5.26 pm): When I became Premier in December I committed to working hard every day to do what matters for Queensland, because that is what this job is all about: listening and delivering. Wherever I go Queenslanders tell me that the cost of living is their

No. 1 priority. Whether that is at the shops at Mango Hill, doorknocking in Bundaberg or in Rocky for Beef Week, Queenslanders tell me they want help paying their bills. That is why it is my No. 1 priority. It is why the first thing I did was freeze rego and public transport costs. I said the upcoming budget would be absolutely focused on driving down bills and helping Queenslanders make ends meet.


There is one thing that is too urgent to wait for the budget. My government is taking \$1,000 off every Queensland household's energy bill. This is the largest cost-of-living relief measure in Queensland's history and it is the largest ever delivered in Australia. It will be delivered in one lump sum and it will stay on people's energy account until it is used. For most Queensland households, that means they will not pay an energy bill until 2025. I know this measure will make a big difference and put money back in the pockets of Queenslanders.

For our most vulnerable, including seniors, pensioners and concession cardholders, an extra \$372 will be credited. That is a massive \$1,372 off their power bill. We are also supporting small businesses right across Queensland with \$650 off their power bills. This support is only possible because we are making multinational mining companies pay their fair share because their super profits should not go back into the bank accounts of wealthy shareholders. They should come back to Queenslanders through our publicly owned energy assets.

This is all at risk under an LNP government. The progressive coal royalties are at risk because we know the LNP have promised they will be cut. Direct cost-of-living relief is at risk because it relies on the revenue from the royalties the LNP will cut and energy rebates are at risk because power assets will be sold off. The LNP voted against public ownership of Queensland power assets.

The Leader of the Opposition is already on the record saying that he does not support Queensland's progressive coal royalties. He has called them deceitful and dishonest. He has said they are a betrayal of people investing in our state. Given the chance, he will side with his multinational mates over Queenslanders getting their fair share of record coal profits. The shadow Treasurer has said the LNP are already formulating their debt reduction plan to drive down spending, meaning cuts to our energy rebates, free kindy, free TAFE and more.

Now more than ever Queenslanders need certainty that their government will help them. That is why my government has released its plan to drive down costs in a way that is proven to be disinflationary and there will be more to come in the budget which I know the Deputy Premier and Treasurer is working hard on. This \$1,000 rebate is just too important to wait. That is why we brought it forward in this special bill: to make sure it could get to Queenslanders as soon as possible. It might be an extraordinary thing to do, but I am determined to do what matters for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.30 pm): It is a pleasure to follow the Premier. The Premier talked about almost everything but the bill. I am sure Mr Deputy Speaker will allow me some latitude in my contribution. I am not pre-empting your decision.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat. I will take some advice. I found that contribution to be somewhat disrespectful to the chair. I adjudicate this chamber fairly as per the standing orders of this chamber. I will adjudicate your contribution in exactly the same way as I adjudicate the contribution of the Premier and every other member of the House. I would ask you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw and I apologise. It was not meant to offend. I will note in my contribution to this bill that the Premier simply made stuff up. When we are talking about the bill that was before the House last sitting week, it was actually the LNP that moved amendments to keep the current generating assets of the state's fleet in the state's hands. I am pretty sure it was the Miles government that voted against it. One has to ask who has sold assets in Queensland. Labor has sold the assets, whether it was Forestry Plantations or the Cairns Airport. I think they even sold the lotto. The energy minister, who is sitting here in this House, has a little grin on his face because he knows that I am right when it comes to who sold the assets. The only government that has form in Queensland is the Labor government. The former transport minister has been here long enough to know that.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the comments by the member and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw. Each and every Queensland—with the exception of a few—is struggling with the cost of living. That is what brings us here today. As the shadow Treasurer said, and as we have said publicly, unlike what the Premier has said in this chamber today, we support any measure that helps with the cost of living. One must also consider and debate how we got here. We

are talking about a decade of mismanagement and a decade of an incompetent government that has led to the fact that we have soaring cost-of-living pressures on everyday Queenslanders. The Treasurer can pretend that since December all of a sudden it is a new government. I would love to know what the former premier thinks of this new government. I would be very interested to know what the former premier thinks of the new Premier's handling of cost-of-living issues.

This bill is about electricity costs. In the last 12 months Queensland's electricity costs have gone up 19 per cent—three times the national average. One would have to ask why. One of the reasons is the Callide Power Station being offline since 25 May almost three years ago. I am looking at the energy minister. The minister is agreeing with me. He knows it has been offline. Where is the Brady report? Where is the explanation for Queenslanders as to what happened under this energy minister and this Premier, who might like to think he is new but who has actually been here for quite a long time. He was the environment minister, then he was the health minister—that did not go so well—and I think he was the infrastructure minister. Now he is the Premier overseeing all of the failures of the former government and all of the issues that are contributing to the cost of living. This Premier wants us to believe that, miraculously, he is new. It is like the time when he jumped electorates from the inner Brisbane seat to the Murrumba electorate—is it Murrumba?

Ms Leahy: It was Maranoa last night.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will go back to the bill. I was going to mention when he dropped the doctor title, but I am not sure if it is back.

An opposition member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to take that interjection from whoever said, 'Oh my'—and blasphemed.

Mr Harper: This is the worst contribution you have given.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order, member for Thuringowa.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am more than happy to take the member for Thuringowa's interjection. He is a paramedic, of course. We have hospitals in crisis. Paramedics are having to work so hard because this government is not providing the services that are required in our health facilities. We have had failed health minister after failed health minister and it is contributing to the pressures and the cost of living of all Queenslanders.

Let us look at the CPI data from last year, remembering this is a third-term Labor government: a 6.7 per cent increase in health costs—the highest in the nation; a 4.2 increase in transport costs—the highest in the nation; an 8.4 per cent increase in rent costs; an 18.5 per cent increase in insurance costs—and we know insurance is going up because of the crime rate in places like Townsville; and a 7.4 per cent increase in sports participation costs. Labor has focused on bandaid solutions. Where we differ from this government is our focus on driving real reform to lower the underlying costs of electricity prices in Queensland. That is a serious issue that must be addressed. We have already announced a maintenance guarantee. We have already announced we will be up-front and honest with Queenslanders about what is actually happening with Callide. If Callide has not reopened by then it will be heading towards four years since it was shut down. When will the minister direct CS Energy to release the Sean Brady report? It is very important that each and every Queenslanders who is struggling with their electricity bills knows why. Any subsidy will help reduce an electricity bill.

Mr Walker: Are you going to sell it off?

Mr Harper: Are you going to sell it off? Great question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members. The member is not taking interjections.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to take that interjection. I will take the member back to the beginning of my contribution where I said the Premier was misleading the House. It was the LNP that moved an amendment to the bill to ensure our currently owned energy generators remained in our hands. It was the member opposite who voted against that because the member is a Labor member of this House. Who likes to sell our assets? Labor likes to sell the assets! We need only look to Labor government after Labor government that sold assets. We on this side of the House are doing everything we can to ensure the people of Queensland know what a rotten, incompetent government these ministers represent—

An opposition member: A crisis.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They are in crisis. The government is incompetent when it comes to doing everything they can to ensure the cost of living comes down. Cost of living is exceedingly important to not only the people of my electorate but also people all across Queensland. We know that

Queenslanders simply cannot afford another four years of this Labor government. They cannot pay their bills. In many cases there are people living in tents. Every time I drive across the bridge over the Brisbane River at Fernvale—if I go that way—another tent has popped up. One would assume, just by looking at the Fernvale tent index, that there is a major housing crisis, a major cost-of-living crisis and that Labor does not care. We have a bandaid fix. Let's see what this government will do about the electricity prices across Queensland—three times higher than the national average. This government is a national shame when it comes to electricity prices, and they know it. That is why we have to show Labor the door in '24.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Logan, member for Nanango I think you used some unparliamentary language in your speech. I did not interrupt, but I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (5.41 pm): Listening carefully to the contributions of the two opposition members, I heard all sorts of things, but I heard very little about the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. It is only six pages long. It is obviously six pages too complex for them. The deputy chair and I carefully prepared a report on the bill. It is a little bit longer, but it uses simple and clear words so that people can follow it. I urge members opposite who will speak in this debate to speak to the report. They seem desperate to not use the words 'rebates' or 'cheaper power' because they will not deliver either.

I rise to support the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill because, fundamentally, it helps the residents of Logan with household costs. The rebates are \$1,000 for Queensland householders. We know now that Jim Chalmers' Commonwealth Labor budget adds \$300. Of course, there is \$325 for small businesses. As I said, this payment will occur by way of a rebate or a credit on household and small business power bills. To take this action, the Treasurer introduced the supplementary appropriation in accordance with section 35 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

In the Cost of Living and Economics Committee's hearings we heard the desire of some social welfare organisations to means-test this important assistance. In response, Treasury correctly pointed out that household data is not held by Queensland Treasury and that the application process would take an enormous amount of processing time and be high cost—a cost that would not help Queensland households. This would have further delayed payments but, importantly, the application process would have also meant that some of our most vulnerable would have missed out. I understand where they were coming from. They want to help Queenslanders and they endorse the principles of helping out Queenslanders through this time, but the original rebate to all households is very important. We also note that there is an additional \$327 rebate that many Queenslanders can apply for but have not yet applied for. I urge the residents of Logan who have a pensioner card, a Health Care Card, a Services Australia card or a Department of Veterans' Affairs Veteran Gold Card to make that application as that \$327 rebate is additional help that we want to provide.

More disturbingly, there were submitters who support the LNP position. There were LNP connected organisations such as the Australian Institute for Progress which we have heard is run by a former vice-president of the Liberal Party as well as has as a board member no less than their hero, Campbell Newman. Of course, the LNP's favourite economist, Adept Economics, advanced the LNP position that a share of returns from progressive coal royalties from publicly owned assets should not be returned to Queenslanders. That is the LNP position. We know they are quietly sneaking around with multinational corporations and the Resources Council and making promises that will be paid for by ordinary Queenslanders.

I have heard LNP members behind me say that returning these royalties to households through a rebate is a terrible idea. They describe it as a 'sugar hit'. We heard another member describe it as a 'cash splash'. They want to run it down as much as possible. They do not want to speak about it, in the case of the member for Toowoomba South, or run it down, which is the case for those on the backbench, because they are preparing to cut it. Our committee report states—

... 'Funding for this initiative is supported by the new progressive coal royalties, ensuring Queenslanders receive a fair and reasonable return for the ... state's valuable and limited resources'.


That is absolutely right. In a time of need, this government gets it. Household budgets are under pressure. We have kept the assets and the resources in public hands. That means we can take this action to help Queenslanders.

I was in a line at the shops and asked people if they appreciated the cost-of-living rebates. A woman said that it was her husband who paid the electricity bill. He had heard about it on the radio that morning and his response was, 'Hallelujah.' No doubt, that response is on the lips of thousands of

residents in Logan. I have advocated hard for cost-of-living relief. This Miles government gets it. The Treasurer gets it. We are doing what we can do to help Queenslanders and we are doing it now. We are voting for it today.

The other question Logan residents are asking is: are these payments at risk? That is a very serious and dangerous question, because the answer is yes. The LNP has consistency railed against this help. These types of payments have been consistently railed against by LNP members in this House. We have heard them say that they were not the thing to do. We know that these types of payments are at risk. This morning we heard the shadow Treasurer set the groundwork for cuts. These will be one of the first measures to be chopped if the LNP ever attains government.

We saw the LNP increase costs as part of its strategy to fatten up assets for sale. Electricity assets are also at risk because they have history. To quote the member for Toowoomba South, 'Look at their past performance and you will see what will they do in the future.' These assets are ours. We get a return on them. We can deliver to Queenslanders in a time of need. We know that they are at risk from the LNP because its members refuse to use the words 'cheaper power' or 'rebates' and will talk about anything else. I am for helping Queenslanders with the cost of living at a household level.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.49 pm): I rise to speak on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. This appropriation bill has been brought on for debate in a hurry because of one thing and one thing only: it is what we used to call a pork barrel before the election in October. We are four weeks away from a budget when this rebate could have been considered in the overall financial position of Queensland, but we had to have this appropriation bill so that we could get the rebate out quickly before the election in October.

I fail to see how adding \$2.2 billion on to the credit card of the taxpayers of Queensland will help, and the Treasurer told us today that he is going to run a \$3 billion deficit. He is happy to see the ratings agencies downgrade us again, so we will be paying higher interest rates on the higher debt that Labor has run up. It sounds to me like the Treasurer does not care what will happen in the future because it will not be his problem! That is the wrong attitude for a responsible treasurer to take on behalf of Queenslanders. That downgrade, which he said will probably happen, will no doubt lead to a bigger cost on Queensland taxpayers.

As far as the \$1,000 pork barrel is concerned, Mr Albanese threw another \$300 pork barrel on top of it. All the pollsters said that that had no effect in terms of his ratings in the federal sphere, so we will see what effect the \$1,000 pork barrel that this government is rushing through without any regard to debt or to the future of Queensland will have in terms of this government's electoral prospects. In my view, this \$1,000 will be taken with glee by Queenslanders.

I can tell the House one Queenslanders who will take it with glee—and we raised at the committee level the fact that this rebate is not means tested—and that is our good friend Clive Palmer. He has around 20-odd houses at last count on the Sovereign Islands, so he will get about \$20,000 that he really needs! When we raised at the committee the fact that it was not going to be means tested, they said, 'Oh, we have no capacity to do that.' They did not have the capacity to do it because it is being rushed out in an appropriation bill as a pork barrel for the election coming up in four months. They could have means tested it if they had spent the time and effort to utilise all the statistics from around Queensland. That way only the needy and the people who deserve this \$1,000 would be getting it, but no. We have the Clive Palmers of the world with his 20 houses—it could even be more; I am not sure—getting \$1,000 a lot. He will be very happy to get that on top of the \$15 million a week he gets in royalties.

What the government did not do is care for small businesses. Yes, small businesses will get \$325 as opposed to the \$1,000 that every voter will get. Oh, did I say 'every person'? I meant to say that every voter will get \$1,000. The limited support for small business is indicative of how Labor treats small business. They are the biggest users of power. They are the ones that employ the people and need a cost-of-living break of \$1,000 because they will be the ones that will be out of a job if small business does not survive due to the rapidly rising electricity prices under this Labor government, yet the government saw fit only to give \$325 to small business and \$1,000 to every voter. It is business power costs that will add to the cost of living. Those costs are passed on to every consumer. The price consumers pay for products covers the retailers' costs to sell it. Included in those costs will be their labour costs, their rent costs and their power costs. Only giving them \$325 is another smack in the face for small business.

In terms of the quest for renewables, we heard on this morning's news, 'Stand by for the winter: blackouts in South Australia and Victoria'. That is because they have gone down the same track as this mob up here. They hate coal. That is the problem. They have not bothered to fix the Callide power

facility which would have added to having a cheaper supply of power throughout Queensland. As the shadow minister mentioned earlier, they have left Callide for nearly three years without fixing it because it is a coal-fired power station. Those down south are facing blackouts because they do not have the capacity for coal generation to support their renewables, which they say are still not in place and are still costly. They are still not the cheapest power that they keep saying it is.

Yes, we are happy to take coal royalties. I think we took about \$7 billion in the last budget in coal royalties. We ship it off to China for China to burn it into the atmosphere, but we cannot burn it at Callide because it is coal and that is a nasty thing for the left wing of the Labor Party. They hate coal. They cannot even say the word 'coal' because it is an absolute anathema to their left-wing ideology.


This bill is to help alleviate the highest problem for people out there in the community, and that is the cost of living. We know it. Their polling is showing it. It is just in front of youth crime, I might add. Cost-of-living pressures will continue with these inflationary injections by the government, particularly by the federal government through the just announced federal budget. The Reserve Bank, which I trust a lot more than the Labor Party's statistics, are saying that there may even be another rate rise this year. Inflation may go up because of the federal government spending in their budget. Another rate rise will send a lot of people to the wall in terms of their mortgages. A lot of people are coming off fixed terms. One of my tradies was talking to me about it. He said that in another month he is coming off a fixed 1.9 per cent interest rate and will be going to six per cent which is now on offer through the banks. We are going to see a lot of difficulties out there in the community.

This \$1,000 pork barrel is a one-off sugar hit which everybody will be happy to take, including Clive, as I mentioned before. The reality of the matter is that it is not going to help with the cost of living. It is not going to solve youth crime. It is not going to fix the health system. It is not going to fix the housing problem in terms of building new homes or renting homes. It is not going to fix the public housing problem that we have had under this third-term Labor government, which four months to the close of parliament is trying to pork barrel its way back into power.

If Queenslanders do not get the message that this Labor government is at the heart of their major issues, particularly when it comes to the cost of living—with their power bills climbing exponentially due to the bad organisation of the government in relation to the power stations—and if Queenslanders are taken for a ride on this particular road again with this pork-barrelling, I do not believe it is going to happen. The people of Queensland are smarter than that. They will take the \$1,000 gladly, as we all will in terms of our power bills.

Government members interjected.

Mr STEVENS: It is going to everybody. Everybody in this parliament is going to get this \$1,000. Those opposite are all cheering for their \$1,000. I am not sure which members on that side are going to cash it out, as I am told you can. The bottom line is that Queenslanders will take the money, but in October 2024 they are going to show this Labor government the door.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (5.57 pm): After that meandering journey through the mind of the member for Mermaid Beach, I rise to speak in support of the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. We all know the pressures that are facing household budgets across the country. I can advise members that it is acutely felt in my electorate, as it is anywhere else.

Over the last few weeks I have had the opportunity to speak to families at Edens Landing and Beenleigh and pensioners at Eagleby. All are eagerly awaiting the effect of this bill—the \$1,000 electricity rebate for households and the \$1,372 rebate for seniors and pensioners. Treasury estimates that, given the average householder's electricity bill, many Queenslanders may not pay anything on their first electricity bill in the financial year 2024-25 and may not pay another electricity bill until 2025. That was before the federal budget allocated an additional \$300 over the next year in electricity bill relief. This bill provides the biggest cost-of-living relief of any Australian jurisdiction. This is real relief. Queenslanders are going to look at their electricity bill in the third quarter this year and many are going to see it in credit. There is nothing quite like that initial feeling of dread when a bill arrives in your letterbox, or inbox as the case may be, and then that palpable feeling of relief when you look at the bottom line and you realise you do not have to pay it because there is no outstanding amount.

I know there has been considerable talk about whether this measure should be means tested and that this is not targeted sufficiently, but the issue was addressed during committee hearings. Treasury advised that the Queensland government 'does not hold, nor will the federal government provide, income details in relation to individuals', and therefore the 'government does not have access to the income data needed for further rebate targeting'. As mentioned by the member for Mermaid Beach, it is not that we need to spend more time or that we have the capacity; that information is just

not available here in Queensland. Is the member inferring that all Queenslanders should provide the state government with their income data and that we should provide their income data straight to electricity providers? That is not feasible; it is not manageable. The bureaucracy involved in doing that and making sure income data is correct is too unwieldy and would take away from the money that is needed to be delivered into the hands of Queensland householders. The reality is that it is a great idea in theory but it is not able to be practically applied in a timely manner and without the bureaucracy needed to verify and check the veracity of income data in order to ensure it was appropriately targeted. Besides, we all know that those with means and money are more than capable of appearing to have a low taxable income when it is of financial benefit to them.


This is a tried and tested measure of delivering cost-of-living relief. The fact that pensioners and healthcare cardholders receive an additional \$372 rebate means that vulnerable Queenslanders are going to get more support under this bill than Clive Palmer. On top of that, the small business electricity rebate of \$325 will continue for around 205,000 eligible small businesses. This has now been matched by the federal government in this year's federal budget, taking the small business rebate to \$750 for eligible small businesses. I would like to point out to the member for Mermaid Beach that those small business owners generally also have homes and receive electricity bills at home, so it is not just the small business relief they are receiving. They are receiving other relief as well.

This is not just for voters. It is for households, including households of people who are not voters. This is for all Queenslanders regardless of whether you vote or not, regardless of whom you vote for. Passing this bill now gives certainty and allows businesses and families to plan their next financial year. This bill will provide much needed relief for everyday Queenslanders. We know they are doing it tough. We know that, while billions of dollars are being made from Queensland resources and those profits are largely going offshore, measures like our coal royalties are ensuring that largesse can make its way down to Queensland mums and dads and pensioners. That is what Labor governments do.

If the member for Mermaid Beach is so ashamed of this 'pork-barrelling' and 'sugar hit' and is of the opinion that this is not going to help with the cost of living, then I assume he will be voting against it. Either that or he does not have the principles to stand behind what he says in this House and is just here to waste time, grandstand and not impact those who need it. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mrs McMahon, adjourned.

ORDER OF BUSINESS


 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.03 pm): I advise the House that the automatic adjournment this evening will commence at 10.30 pm.

CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION) BILL

Second Reading

Resumed on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.03 pm): As a member of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, I rise to make my contribution to the cheaper power bill. As already outlined by my colleagues, the shadow Treasurer and the shadow minister for energy and cost of living, this was very straightforward. We will not be opposing this bill. I would remind government members of the committee that we did not include a statement of reservation in the report. As committee members, we tried to achieve an understanding of how this cost-of-living rebate was going to be allocated to small businesses. Many, particularly in my electorate of Whitsundays, are dealing with hikes of several hundred per cent. Anyone who operates a large freezer service or is a high user of power has seen astronomical blowouts in their costs. Whilst we note there has been a contribution back to small business and households, there is a large discrepancy that many committee members questioned.

I want to draw the attention of the Minister for Energy to a major issue that I have written to him about and asked questions on notice. When we see the government provide cost-of-living relief by way of an electricity rebate, it is pertinent to note that we do not have reliable electricity in North Queensland. The government can talk up their investment in state assets, but we know it is a failure because the Callide Power Station has now been offline for almost three years. In one of my rural communities, Midge Point, we have had 14 unplanned outages since Christmas, including Christmas Day and Easter. During this cost-of-living crisis how is it acceptable to the government that on 29 December, in the

hottest part of summer, parts of my community lost power for up to three hours? That happened consistently over several days in the peak holiday season. There is a lack of maintenance and reliability being experienced in the energy framework across Airlie Beach, which is a major tourism centre. We have seen outages for several hours that are disrupting not just the tourism experience but also the everyday living experience. This amount of funding means nothing and is a smack in the face to those people who have to throw out valuable groceries and produce because this government cannot deliver a reliable power service to parts of regional and rural Queensland, including Midge Point, Calen, Bloomsbury, Airlie Beach and Proserpine.

Coalminers who live in my community go to work to mine those very wealthy royalties back into state coffers, yet we do not see that level of investment into energy infrastructure assets and reliability of power. Needless to say, we also do not see any competition in Far North Queensland. We sit here and debate power prices, but in Far North Queensland we have one retail provider, Ergon Energy, that at this point in time is perplexed at the lack of investment they have seen in maintenance by this government. The government can go out and spruik this in their retail politics style, but Queenslanders know this is just a short-term sugar hit that is not going to the root cause of the issue. When we look at cheaper power, the government has everything centred on the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project that the member for Mackay proudly touts in our community. This project has been rejected by the mayor of Mackay, the council of Mackay and the Yuwi people, the traditional owners, and the government has not been able to demonstrate how it will deliver cheaper power not just to residents of Mackay and the Whitsundays but to any resident in Queensland without any business case, without any costing and without any return on investment.


Once again this is cheap politics from a Labor government that is out of ideas and desperate to get a sugar hit to the voters of Queensland. Their Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is flawed because of a lack of planning and a lack of consultation with the community. When the employees of Queensland Hydro are leaving in droves it should send the clear message to Minister de Brenni that there is no confidence in that project across the Mackay community. The opposition will not be opposing the bill because we know that hardworking Queenslanders deserve every opportunity to reduce power bills and put more money back into their own hip pockets to spend on the necessities they are struggling to afford right now. That is only as a result of this failing Labor government.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (6.09 pm): I am proud to rise in support of the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. We know that right across Queensland families are struggling with mounting costs. Whether it is fuel, groceries or rent, every household is feeling the pinch of rising prices. When families are struggling, governments have a responsibility to take action and that is exactly what this cheaper power bill does.

This bill will deliver a \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate to every Queensland household's electricity account from 1 July. This is the largest ever cost-of-living package in our state's history and it is only possible because of a Labor government—a Labor government that has taken on the multinational mining companies and fought to keep our energy assets in public hands. This government has also extended the \$372 electricity rebate for seniors, pensioners and veterans, meaning vulnerable households will receive over \$1,300 in power bill relief, and that is even before we get to the Albanese Labor government's recent announcement of a further \$300 electricity rebate for every Australian household. This is what Labor governments do. When times are tough, Labor governments are there to support families.

It is such an honour to represent the hardworking people of Waterford. I have loved every minute of talking to them about the cost-of-living relief that Labor is delivering. I have spoken to locals such as Roy, who said he was stoked to hear we are putting \$1,000 towards his energy bill. Teresita, who has lived in Bethania for 20 years, told me what a difference this would make to her household budget. Shanace from Logan Reserve said much the same, as did Irma and her husband, Camilo, who are waiting with excitement for 1 July.

I am also very proud to be a member of the Miles Labor government that is delivering this relief. It is only possible because of our progressive coal royalties—the same coal royalties that the LNP have refused to support time and time again, and we know they will slash them if they ever win government. Fundamentally, the LNP care more about the pockets of their mates in the mining industry than they care about the pockets of Roy and Teresita. The LNP fundamentally do not believe that Irma and Camilo deserve to benefit from the natural resources of their state. The LNP do not care about the families of Waterford and the families right across Queensland who are doing it tough. Only Labor will stand up for Queensland families when they need it most, and that is exactly what the cheaper power bill is doing.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise to address the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill. After the Treasurer's contribution, we have heard it all. If ever I have heard a contribution that was about softening up Queenslanders for a coming ratings downgrade, it was the Treasurer's contribution to this bill. It is all about taking out the rubbish. It is all about softening people up: 'We'll wear the hurt so you don't wear the hurt in your budget.' The reality is that this government cannot manage the economy, cannot manage the budget and, as a consequence, Queenslanders are paying the price.

The temperature is dropping. This morning, I put on a jumper for the first time. Winter is coming and right now too many Queenslanders are struggling. Single parents and pensioners are sitting in their dark homes because it costs too much money to turn on the lights. People like those the health minister just mentioned are doing it tough because it costs too much to turn on the lights, it costs too much to turn on a heater and they are battling. We acknowledge that. All members of this House acknowledge that Queenslanders are doing it tough. The cost-of-living crisis is hurting Queenslanders and those scenarios are a reality for many people, not just in Waterford and Brisbane but right across the state, including on the Sunshine Coast. The LNP and every single member who has stood to address this bill has said from the outset that we will not stand in the way of cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders, but these rebates are not the answer to addressing the issues that are fundamentally causing that cost-of-living crisis.

The rebate that this bill seeks to establish will help because every little bit helps when bills start piling up, but it will only go so far. The cost of electricity in Queensland has increased by 19.9 per cent, which is the highest in the country. That is not something that Queensland should be proud of. In fact, the Labor government should be ashamed of that result. The cost of electricity is one of the top issues that I hear about when I am talking to members of my community, along with the health and crime crises, of course.

During summer, residents in my community in Palmview and Sippy Downs had to live with brownouts, which were even more frustrating. Never mind the fact that they are paying through the nose for electricity; they could not even turn on the light switch and get power because this government cannot manage an electricity grid. All the rebates in the world are not going to help if you cannot turn on the lights. Labor have got Queenslanders into this mess and Queenslanders need to be very clear that this crisis is of Labor's making. When Callide went offline nearly three years ago, Labor set Queenslanders on a path to higher electricity prices. Incredibly, the Labor government is taking the line that it has not yet seen the report into what happened at Callide and why it is not yet up and running. Three years on and still they do not know what happened at a power plant that they own half of. If that is the case, then potentially Queensland and the state government have even bigger problems than we might have expected on first glance.

Despite the fact that the Labor state government do not know what happened at Callide, they now want to buy back the half share of Callide that they flogged off many years ago. We have no information with respect to how much that will cost. How much extra will Queenslanders have to pay to buy back the Callide Power Station that was privatised by Labor? Despite the hollow rhetoric that we often hear from those opposite, the reality is that only Labor have sold assets in Queensland. In fact, Labor have sold billions of dollars worth of public assets. Queensland Motorways, Abbot Point, QR National, Port of Brisbane, forestry plantations, Brisbane Airport, Golden Casket, SunGas, Sun Retail and Allgas were all sold by Labor. The Treasurer has the hide to come in here and accuse the LNP of having an agenda to sell off assets. That is complete and utter rubbish. Queenslanders deserve better from this current Labor state government than those pathetic games and scare campaigns.

Every second of the day that Callide is not up and running costs Queenslanders money. Fixing Callide should be the priority in this cost-of-living crisis. It will bring more supply into the electricity market and drive down power prices. That is not my view; that is the view of energy experts. The fact that it is still offline is a total failure by this government and no amount of rebate will change that.

While those opposite are focused on bandaid solutions that will offer them a good headline on the nightly news or in the paper the next day, my LNP colleagues and I are focused on real solutions. We have said that we will implement a maintenance guarantee on all of the state owned power generators to prevent the Callide disaster from ever happening again. If our power plants were properly maintained then we would not need to bail out Queenslanders because they cannot afford to turn on the lights. Under the LNP, electricity will be more affordable for families, pensioners and small businesses because we will actually maintain our electricity assets, unlike the current Labor state government.

While families are struggling to keep the lights on right across Queensland, let's also spare a thought for the small and family businesses that are barely keeping their heads above water. I was in Bundaberg last week and I can tell you that businesses—

A government member: So were we.

Mr MICKELBERG: I know that the entire cabinet was in Bundaberg—blew in, blew out; flew in late, flew out early. I was there for a little bit longer and I met with some small businesses. A local real estate agent told me his power bill has increased from \$700 a quarter to \$700 a month. A small business owner has had his power bill double to a whopping \$8,000 a month. Another business owner is now paying \$12,000 a month for electricity, which is more than twice what it was two years ago even though they are using less. I note that months ago the Chamber of Commerce wrote to the Premier raising their concerns. I acknowledge that the Leader of the House did meet with the chamber last week but it took an awfully long time, I have to say. Those businesses still have not had any response to address their concerns. A rebate of \$325 is not going to save a small business when they are facing those sorts of price rises.


The doubling or even tripling of power bills means small businesses need to decide what they will cut and what they will save. Small businesses are closing their doors and Queenslanders are losing their jobs because they are not coping right now. That is the truth. Queensland's small and family businesses employ about a million people. A million people have a job because of a small business. A million people can put food on the table and pay for schoolbooks because of small businesses. They must be at the forefront of every single government's decision-making process but, unfortunately, under this Labor state government, they are always an afterthought. Small business deserve a voice at the table and they deserve to be front and centre of every government's decision-making.

The cost of running a business has become far too high, and it is one of the many reasons there are so many empty shopfronts not only here in the city but right across Queensland in our regional and rural communities. Queensland has the highest number of business liquidations in Australia because bills are becoming too much. I will say it again: the LNP will not stand in the way of cost-of-living relief in any form, but a \$325 rebate for eligible small businesses would hardly cover the cost of running a shop's power for a day.

I know those opposite will say, 'What about the Albanese government's \$325 too?' All right, let us double it to \$650, but it is still a drop in the ocean for a small business paying \$12,000 a month for electricity. The Bundaberg Chamber of Commerce president said to the media last week that \$325 for a small business is an insult. They are his words, not mine. He said that \$325 for a small business is an insult, and I am sure he said the same thing to the Leader of the House when he met with him last week.

It is a disgrace to hear from whistleblowers that chronic maintenance underfunding caused Callide to explode. It is a miracle that no-one was hurt but we simply cannot afford for it to happen again. Our maintenance guarantee will ensure it does not happen and we will be focused on driving down the cost of living for every Queenslander. Along with having functioning power plants—which is a good start—we will offer \$3,500 grants to subsidise solar panels on rental properties which will save renters up to \$700 on their power bills. That is how you deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable electricity—not with power plant explosions and bandaid solutions.

This bill is evidence that Labor will say and do anything to cling to power. Labor will say and do anything to buy a vote because they cannot and they will not deal with the cause of the problems that they now want to bandaid over. If we needed any more evidence, check out the Premier's brief contribution to this debate—no substance, no solutions, just political rhetoric. It is only the LNP that is listening to Queenslanders, and it is only the LNP that has the right priorities for Queensland's future. For the member for Gladstone, that is why Queenslanders need to show Labor the door in '24.


 **Ms NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (6.21 pm): I rise today in support of the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. I am proud to be a part of the Miles government that has recognised the need for such a bill—a bill that will provide much needed relief for Queenslanders. People in my community of Inala are doing it tough. They have told me that cost-of-living issues are their biggest concern at the moment. I am listening and the Miles Labor government is listening, and we are prioritising people over balance sheets—people like 85-year-old Dulcie from Durack in my electorate.

Dulcie was so excited to hear that, as a pension concession card holder, she will continue to receive the Queensland electricity rebate of \$372 along with the additional \$1,000 that all households will receive. That means that from July Dulcie and the many other vulnerable households across Inala

will receive a total rebate of \$1,372 credited to their energy bills. When I asked Dulcie what she was going to do with the money she will be saving, she told me that she would start by buying the tea she likes. The tea Dulcie likes is not a fancy boutique tea blend. Dulcie explained that for her last grocery shop she could not afford to buy any tea, so this rebate means that Dulcie can now start her mornings with a cuppa and she does not have to worry about the energy she is using to boil the kettle because, with the additional \$300 from the federal Labor government, Dulcie is unlikely to pay an electricity bill until 2026. This matters to Dulcie and to other Queenslanders. The Miles government knows that every dollar counts and we are doing everything we can to keep costs down for Queenslanders.

That is what progressive coal royalties do. While the Miles government is focused on delivering big wins for Queenslanders, those opposite are only focused on winning the election. We know this because we see the Leader of the Opposition trying to be the smallest target he can. That is where his effort is going—not focusing on big ideas but focusing on staying small. Those opposite do not support progressive coal royalties and the benefits they allow. That is why we are bringing this cost-of-living relief through a supplementary appropriation bill, because we want to protect this rebate from any future government revoking or reducing the rebate. Those in opposition do not have a plan to ease the cost of living—or, even worse, they have a plan but it is a secret plan to cut. I remember what that was like and the people of Inala remember because it is my residents who are most likely to feel the pain of the cuts and chaos that an LNP government will bring.

As the newest member of this government, I had expectations that this place would be a place for the lively interrogation of ideas. I had expectations that the opposition would take an interest in the many issues that are important to Queenslanders. I had expectations that they would ask questions of, let us say, for instance, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—questions that might signal their own policy plans. However, on this, they have fallen short. Instead, I have witnessed them waste question time and as a Queenslander I am left disappointed in them. If the opposition is unable to do the job they have now, how can Queenslanders trust them to do the job of government? The answer is that Queenslanders cannot trust the LNP. The Leader of the Opposition is not telling us what he stands for. He is not standing up for the people of Queensland and he is certainly not standing up for the people of Inala. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill because, like all members on this side of the House, I am committed to cheaper and cleaner energy for Queenslanders. This government's commitment—indeed, my commitment to the electorate and community that I represent—is to deliver cheaper, cleaner power for all Queenslanders. This appropriation bill will make a big difference to the lives of all Queenslanders and it is a measure that should be supported by every member of this House.

The Miles government has risen to the challenge of delivering cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders time and time again. These \$1,000 energy rebates for households will have a huge impact on my constituents in Springwood. Ruth and Steve and their daughters Chloe and Kaylee in my electorate said it would help pay for the basics, netball uniforms and shoes for their girls. When combined with the federal government's additional \$300, it means many Queensland households in the electorate I represent and right across the state are already saying that they will not need to pay another power bill this year and many of them are saying they will not need to pay one next year or the year after. This is reaffirming Labor's commitment to supporting households with cost-of-living relief. This government is going even further and ensuring the 620,000 vulnerable households receive an additional \$372 in energy rebates.

The Miles government can provide the most generous rebates in the nation because of our commitment to public ownership. We can do this because we are making coal companies pay their fair share. Thanks to our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan and its supporting acts of this parliament, we have put our targets into law, including those for continued public ownership of Queensland's energy assets. We have put into law clear targets that have attracted billions in investment to Queensland already. The Miles government is taking action on the quickest and most affordable basis to support Queenslanders, to support jobs and at the same time to enable decarbonisation. We have a clear plan for achieving Queensland's renewable energy transition.

I want to take the opportunity to point out that the LNP have come into this House and repeatedly misled it, including tonight and on many other occasions, as to the status of Queensland's energy system. I will address two matters relevant to the bill so that those opposite can end their campaign of misleading Queenslanders.

On the first matter, the truth of the matter is that those opposite, the LNP, voted against enshrining public ownership of Queensland's energy system, and they did that when they voted no to the second reading, when they voted no to the third reading, and when they voted no to the long title of the Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Act 2024. That is a fact. It is a matter of record.

The second matter I will address is in relation to comments we have heard this evening. I want to make it clear that continued attempts to mislead this House by those opposite will be—can only be—henceforth considered to be deliberate. The truth of the matter is that the Callide Power Station is generating electricity. It has been for years and, as a whole, it has not stopped. It has not stopped. For the benefit of those opposite, there are four generating units at Callide. Two of those units, B1 and B2—100 per cent state owned assets—have been almost continuously operational—

Mr Butcher: My son is out there working on it.

Mr de BRENNI: I take the interjection from the member for Gladstone. He comments that his son has been out there working on it. There are hundreds of dedicated power station operators that have been there day and night, 24/7, doing their job, delivering reliable power to Queenslanders. There are thousands of dedicated tradies who have been involved in the rebuild of the damaged units. It is not the case, as the LNP would have Queenslanders or this House believe, that Callide Power Station has been offline.

Mr Millar: So it is running at 100 per cent capacity, is it?

Mr de BRENNI: I take the interjection from the member for Gregory. That is not what those opposite, that is not what the shadow minister and that is not what the opposition leader—

Mr Millar: Is it at 100 per cent capacity?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat, Minister. Member for Gregory, you will cease your interjections. I see you moved back to your chair so you could make them, but you will cease them from here in. The minister is not being provocative. He is making a statement that is responding to issues that have been raised. I think he is trying to answer those questions. I would ask you to listen in silence. Minister, you have the call.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. It is important that you provide that guidance to the member and all members opposite because they have been deliberate in their approach to this matter, in this House and outside of House, and they have continued that deliberate approach to misleading this House in this debate tonight. I am taking the opportunity to clarify the record so that henceforth that ceases.

I can inform the House that Callide C3 returned to service on 1 April 2024, less than a year—less than 365 days—after work began on its reconstruction. CS Energy released the root cause analysis of the incident pertaining to C4, and they did that in February 2024, yet those opposite come in here and allege that no explanation has been provided and that Callide Power Station is offline. It is not the case.


I put the LNP on notice tonight, and I do so because Queenslanders have a right to expect that their public officials, their elected members—those opposite—engage in discourse, especially in this House. That it is accurate and that it is fulsome. I implore them, through you, Deputy Speaker, to be honest with Queenslanders. I implore them to be honest with Queenslanders, through you, Deputy Speaker, about their intention to privatise, their deception about power bills, their choice of multinationals over Queenslanders, their refusal to support us ensuring those multinational coal companies pay their fair share and their ignorance as to the operation of our energy infrastructure.

I will conclude. The Australian Energy Market Operator's report released today says that Queensland's energy system 'is the most reliable and secure of any mainland state in Australia'. The report says that our reliability rating is 'due to the on-time delivery—

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Callide is warned.

Mr de BRENNI:—of all included generation storage projects, and since May 2021, over 3,400 megawatts of renewable energy capacity in storage has come online in Queensland.' I want to make it clear to those opposite that that is more than double the total output of Callide. More than double has been put into the system. Close to another 2,000 megawatts of large-scale renewable energy is under construction, including 966 megawatts coming online this year. Our plan delivers rebates that Queenslanders need right now—renewable energy in the medium term to bring down prices and public ownership permanently. When this bill is passed, Queenslanders will have the lowest power bills in the nation by a country mile.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.35 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. I will start with a scenario that happened across North Queensland only a month or so ago where people were opening their Ergon bills with absolute shock and disgust to see that what they thought was going to be a bill, for some households, between \$1,000 and \$1,500, was a \$2,500 power bill. There are a number of reasons that is happening, and I will get to that in a second, but the fact of the matter is Queenslanders are paying too much for electricity and that is causing angst for consumers, all the way from households through to the small businesses, and large businesses, I must add, that just cannot afford electricity in the current market. There are a number of things that are affecting that, and I will get to those in a second. Right now we have a piece of legislation before the House—the supplementary appropriation bill—to basically give some relief to those households, to those people who are opening up their high power bills.

We have been told there will be a \$1,000 credit on the next bill. That is fantastic. There are a lot of people out there in Queensland who are hurting right now. They were not expecting the high power bills in North Queensland of a month and a half ago. The household budget is so tight at the moment, no-one can afford \$500 or \$1,000 extra. People are literally budgeting right now, with the cost-of-living crisis that we are dealing with, down to the last \$50 or \$20 for the month. This rebate will give some relief to those people.

I have heard some contributions from the opposition saying this is just buying votes. Do you know what? It might be, but it does take me back to the last state election when LNP members were calling out that the rego rebate was how they were going to get people over the line. It is great to call it out, but it has to be said that the LNP has tried that as well.

What the KAP wants, though, is for power bills to come down across the board. If you are going to bring this in as a way of reducing people's power bills, then just adjust the equalisation tariff across North Queensland for the Ergon Energy customers. Make sure that money is there long term. Legislate it. Do not just give us a little bit of relief coming into an election. Make sure that Queenslanders, in particular North Queenslanders, are looked after into the future, not just a scenario which allows people to have some reprieve for a short amount of time. We have to address the cost of electricity long term.

There are a number of things which have come to my attention. I love watching the National Electricity Market. I think it is a beautiful way for people to get a more in-depth understanding of why we pay such high electricity bills across Queensland right now—across Australia, to be honest. If you have a look at the NEM during the day, people are paying for wholesale electricity between \$35, \$45 and \$65 a megawatt hour. That is great. In some cases—

Mr de Brenni interjected.


Mr DAMETTO: I will take the minister's interjection with his finger pointing down. That is perfect. That has given me an indicator there. It has lowered to the point that there is so much electricity generation in the market during the middle of the day, when solar and wind are operating at its optimum, you have to work in a reverse market where you are paying to export some of that generation. The problem, though, happens when you have those peak load times in the morning when people are having breakfast, or in the afternoon when people are cooking dinner and turning their air conditioning on. There are these huge spikes in the market. I have seen it go from operating in a negative market at lunchtime, all the way through to \$10,000-plus a megawatt hour during those peak load times.

The reason that is happening is that renewables are not producing at those times. The wind has died down for the afternoon or the sun has gone down—that is inevitable with solar panels—but the reality is that we need rotating generators that have the ability to ramp up and down. The best thing we can do is have rotating generators with dispatchable base load power that operate off gas and sometimes coal and other producers that can ramp up quickly to chase the market. Because there is so much solar and wind during the day, it is not viable for a lot of those producers to enter the market unless they are chasing those spikes. I get the idea of running batteries and hydroplant batteries, but the fact is that we need to find a way to stabilise the market. The reason we are having these jumps in the market around those peak load times is that there are not enough people producing from that dispatchable base load power.

How do we fix that? The KAP has been pushing for small nuclear reactors. The member for Traeger took the initiative to set up a nuclear forum in Mount Isa. It was well supported by not only nuclear experts and people who were interested in the proposal of some day having nuclear energy available to Queenslanders but also people in the Mount Isa community who were very supportive of having the ability to produce cheaper electricity in the north-west and maybe one day—and we acknowledge the minister in the House—having the opportunity to export that power back into the national electricity grid through CopperString. CopperString is a project that the KAP has pushed for

since its very inception. This is the second version of CopperString—that is, 2.0—and people might remember that before it was called 2032 CopperString. The member for Traeger and the KAP have pushed that project from the very start and it is great to see that the government has come on board.

The point is that we need to find long-term strategies to bring down the cost of electricity. Renewables will play their part, but none of us in this House can be so naive as to think that renewables will solve all of our problems. We need to transition in a way that does not send the rest of the state and the rest of country broke. Both sides of the House have locked in emissions targets, and that happened a couple of sitting weeks ago. Queenslanders have said what they think about that. Some people are happy but some are not very impressed, and they are the people from regional areas and North Queensland in particular. We want to make sure that power bills and power prices come down. Queenslanders deserve cheaper electricity. They would love to see this as a long-term strategy. If we cannot find strategies to bring down the price of electricity, then perhaps we should just bolster the equalisation tariff for Ergon customers in North Queensland long term. That would be something that I would support. Queenslanders should not be lumped with the cost of this energy transition, yet that is what most people right now believe is going on.


 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.42 pm): I rise to speak to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill. The Cost of Living and Economics Committee in its report No. 5 tabled in the Assembly on 17 May recommended that the bill be passed. The purpose of the bill is to help Queensland families. Queensland families are experiencing a higher cost of living not due to anything that we have done but due to global pressures and the unrest that is going on in the world. The government has resolved to provide urgent cost-of-living relief through rebates applying to power bills. The government has decided to make these payments within the 2023-24 financial year as an unforeseen expenditure to provide urgent relief and to ensure that rebates cannot be revoked or reduced by a future government.

The energy rebates will provide \$1,000 to Queensland homes—and there will be a further \$300 from the federal government—and \$325 to small businesses that will be applied automatically to eligible electricity accounts. The rebates will be targeted as a lump sum credit from 1 July 2024. The existing \$372.20 in electricity rebates provided to pensioners and seniors will continue and will be paid to eligible households on top of the \$1,000, meaning that there are some households that will get a total rebate of \$1,372. Additional decisions can be made through the year that give rise to additional funding being required from the Consolidated Fund. Pursuant to section 35 of the Financial Accountability Act, these additional payments comprise unforeseen expenditure which then need to be appropriated through legislation.

Cost-of-living support is a key Queensland government priority. The government recognises the increased national cost-of-living pressures on household budgets which result from growing everyday expenses like mortgage repayments, rent, groceries and fuel. All stakeholders who made submissions to the inquiry raised the issue of targeting the payment to assist those who most need the help. The Queensland Council of Social Service welcomed the intent of the bill and submitted that low-income households are currently more likely to experience energy vulnerability and disadvantage and spend double the amount of their disposable income on energy than middle-income households. While welcoming the intent of the bill, the St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland recommended consideration of additional measures to address energy inequality, fuel, food and education costs. Adept Economics stated that the appropriation should be much smaller and that the government should target the assistance better because it is not means tested. The department responded to this by saying—

The delivery of cost-of-living support to Queensland residents via electricity bill relief is a longstanding policy initiative that multiple governments have utilised to deliver support to the Queensland community. It is a very effective and well-understood mechanism.

I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.46 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. According to the explanatory notes, the objective of the bill is to seek supplementary appropriation of \$2.267 billion for the 2023-24 financial year for unforeseen expenditure to provide funding for rebates applying to power bills to support cost-of-living relief for Queensland households. The bill allows for energy rebates of up to \$1,000 to be provided to an estimated 2.2 million Queensland households. The rebate is to be applied automatically to the electricity accounts of eligible residential customers and targeted as a lump sum credit from 1 July 2024.

The LNP will not be opposing this bill as we are all too aware of the cost-of-living pressures that families are under as a result of the failed policies of the Palaszczuk and now Miles governments. We have heard government members tell Queenslanders that they will deliver cheap, clean electricity, only

to see prices rising at the fastest rate in the country. The fact that they now have to come into this House and pass a bill to access another \$2.267 billion to distribute this rebate is clear proof that this Miles government has lost control of electricity prices in this state. The only option that they can come up with is a cash splash even though most of the large generators in this state are state owned.

One thing we have to give this government credit for is that it never runs out of excuses for failure. We heard that power prices went up due to the war in Ukraine which led to increased coal prices. I have stated many times that this is nonsense as the government owned generators have long-term contracts with the mines that deliver that coal. A number of these mines operate solely to deliver coal to nearby power stations and are bound by long-term contracts. Neither Minister de Brenni nor Treasurer Dick would ever answer that question when asked or disclose what those contracts are.


On 13 May this year the Auditor-General appeared at a public hearing before the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee regarding Audit Office report No. 5 of 2023-24 titled *Energy 2023*. In response to a question regarding coal price impacts on the cost of our generators, the Auditor-General stated that the generators were immune to the impact of rising coal prices as the coal price that they use is fixed. That is clear evidence that this Labor government has been misleading Queenslanders over the increase in their electricity costs.

Contributing to the increase in electricity prices has been the debacle we have witnessed at Callide. This week marks three years since the explosion at Callide C4 and that generator has been offline ever since. The water cooling tower at C3 also collapsed, taking it offline for an extended period. Generators B1 and B2 were not immune as both went offline for a period during that time. At one stage at Callide, all four generators were offline at the same time. That is mismanagement and incompetence on a grand scale. I doubt there is another energy minister who would be able to match that record: all four generators off at once. I am even willing to go out on a limb and predict that he would be the only minister in the world who could claim such a record. It is absolutely unbelievable.

The minister has claimed that this outage has not impacted power prices, but both the Auditor-General and the Queensland Competition Authority have declared the prices have been impacted by these outages. We still do not know what happened at C4. Soon after the event, Dr Sean Brady was appointed to write an independent report, which will be publicly released, on the cause of this event. We are still waiting to see that report. What do they have to hide? Indeed, the failure to release the report is now the subject of Federal Court action. Despite never-ending promises, this government seems to have no ability to reduce electricity prices apart from cash handouts. The government repeatedly state that their renewable plan will deliver cheaper electricity but it is only the most ardent Labor supporter who would continue to believe this.

At the public hearing I mentioned earlier, the Auditor-General cast serious doubt on the capacity of this Miles government to deliver on its Energy and Jobs Plan in the timeframe and with the costs as promised. The Auditor expressed concern as to the financial viability of large-scale projects, particularly the two large pumped hydro projects. Neither of those projects has a business case that is publicly available, there are no approvals and there are no environmental approvals, state or federal, so how could anyone believe that this will do anything except drive up power prices? According to government figures, it has been estimated that Borumba hydro will cost \$14 billion and Pioneer-Burdekin will cost \$12 billion. There is no way this Labor government will deliver either of those projects for anywhere near those prices given their record for blowouts or in the timeframe promised. Indeed, there are predictions that Pioneer-Burdekin will not come in at less than \$20 billion.

Queenslanders are struggling with the cost of living and any help will be welcome, but more needs to be done to address the underlying causes of it. This government is currently holding an inquiry into supermarket prices but have excluded any of the issues that the government has direct control over as they do not want Queenslanders to know how much government failures have contributed to the cost-of-living crisis. As I stated, the \$1,000 will be welcome, but a cash splash just before a state election will be seen by most as being more about political survival than genuine concern over the struggles of everyday Queenslanders. This government will do and say anything to survive the next election.

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.53 pm): What a pleasure it is this evening to rise and speak to the debate on the cheaper power bill. I am already on the record talking about the fantastic difference this will make in my community with each and every household getting a thousand dollars off their energy bill. For seniors, that is \$1,372 and for our small businesses that is \$325. We are doing this now so people can get a lump sum payment from 1 July, which is absolutely tremendous. I talk to locals in my community

and across the state all the time about what a difference this will make and it has been very warmly received. We can do this for two reasons: we are getting our fair share back from progressive coal royalties and we own our energy assets. Because of public ownership, through years of government, we have been able to give back to Queensland households. We have been doing that with really generous rebates to Queensland households and small businesses. Because of this we continue to pay amongst the lowest prices for energy in the country here in Queensland.

Given that I am already on the public record talking about this, in this contribution I really want to focus on the position of the LNP when it comes to renewable power and some of the things they are feeding into the argument that, quite frankly, are just not true. The first one which is really interesting to me is the claim that Callide has been offline for 1,000 days. I got trolled about this the other day so I thought I would do some research. I did a quick Google search, and has it been offline for a thousand days? No, it has not. Publicly owned B1 and B2 have continued to generate since the incident and Callide C3 returned to service on 1 April 2024. That was a little while ago now, certainly not a thousand days. In fact, it took just 350 days since the joint venture agreed to cooperate on the rebuild. The joint venture was created when the LNP sold off Queensland's share to the private sector.

I commend the workers who have been rebuilding Callide and getting the infrastructure back online. Almost half a million hours have gone into restoring that service. They are slogging it out through hot summers and dangerous storms and they are working day and night. While I am on the subject, I want to especially commend our Ergon and Energex workers who have been restoring power generation in the wake of natural disasters across the state. I have seen that right across the state of Queensland. Again, we can do this only because we own our energy assets, which is very different from the LNP.

What do the LNP stand for? The member for Whitsunday comes in here and says that she does not support the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro scheme in her electorate. How on earth can they meet the emissions targets that the LNP have voted for in this House and that have been committed to? They are not popular with their base, I might add. How can they achieve those emissions targets if they do not have the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro scheme? I wonder. Maybe with nuclear energy? Just last week I was really interested to read that Nuclear for Climate Australia, a big donor to the LNP, has put out their plan for nuclear power. Peter Dutton is our local MP. He loves nuclear; he is green about it. Peter Dutton, Amanda Stoker and a bunch of folks in the LNP here love nuclear. Where would they put the nuclear power plants? Where is the road map for Nuclear for Climate Australia? Where do they want to put them? They want to put one in my community. They want to put one in Samsonvale, right in Peter Dutton's backyard. They want to truck nuclear waste through my streets and through my community.

That is not something that I will ever stand for because nuclear is the most expensive form of power. It takes decades to get it up off the ground. At least the KAP are on the record in this place saying they support it. Where do the LNP sit with it? The member for Condamine wants to know about when the power goes out and what kind of record that is for energy ministers. I could not help but think maybe Fukushima was one of those instances because the nuclear story always ends so well! The LNP have absolutely no credibility when it comes to Queenslanders' electricity bills. Under them power prices went up 43 per cent.


Mr Mander: Five more months.

Ms BOYD: That is the record of the member for Everton. Here is something for generosity—

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Maryborough, you are warned under the standing orders. You can return to your correct seat as well. All members need to be in their own seat if they are going to interject.


Ms BOYD: After they jacked up the prices by 43 per cent, the member for Nanango was advocating to close down three power turbines because power prices were too low. After that they went to the polls and promised \$120 back for Queenslanders—and they have the audacity to come in here and tell us that this is a sugar hit. Only Labor will deliver what Queenslanders need: cost-of-living relief and the transition that we need into renewable energy. The LNP simply cannot be trusted with this. I welcome this reform that will in many cases mean that Queenslanders do not have to pay a power bill until well into 2025. This is good, progressive Labor reform.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.00 pm): We know Queensland families are feeling the pressure of increased household bills, and the Miles government is here to help. The Miles Labor government is committed to taking pressure off Queenslanders—our families, our seniors, our young

people and everybody in between. That is why we are delivering the biggest cost-of-living relief package in Queensland history, including more than \$2.5 billion in cost-of-living relief through electricity rebates, that is, \$1,000 off every household bill and a further \$300 thanks to the Albanese government, and \$325 for small business matched by the federal government bringing that rebate to \$650. We are also extending the \$372 Queensland electricity rebate for vulnerable households, which will mean that they see up to \$1,672 off their electricity bill. For many of those households it means they will not see an electricity bill until well into 2025, if at all that financial year. These rebates will apply to electricity bills from 1 July 2024. Our budget will prioritise cost-of-living relief to help lower Queensland household bills. This can only be delivered by a Labor government because of our government's commitment to progressive coalmining royalties and because we own our assets.

What can families and Queenslanders do with that extra money? In my community it means that families will be able to keep their kids in team sports. Fees for a lot of clubs in my community are around the \$500 mark. If you are a family of two, this money could be the difference between your kids getting to play soccer this winter or not. In my community, at the local state schools families will be able to afford to send their kids on school camp to Canberra or to Cairns, instead of saying, 'Sorry, mate, we can't afford it this year.' People may be able to afford a big down payment to get solar or a battery installed, if they do not have it already, to ensure that they continue to drive their electricity prices down once this rebate is finished.

As I said earlier, this fantastic rebate sits alongside other fantastic cost-of-living measures like free kindy, free TAFE, free apprenticeships and FairPlay vouchers for Queensland kids to participate in sport or the many seniors rebates that are available. I encourage people to check those out on the cost-of-living website because all Queenslanders should know what is available to them. This rebate will be a game changer for many Queensland families and I commend it to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (7.02 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. It has been long said that under Labor Queenslanders will always pay more and that Queenslanders can simply not afford to trust the Labor government. Local residents of the electorate of Moggill, and all Queenslanders, are hurting. They are suffering under this state Labor government which has presided over some of the largest cost-of-living pressures in the country—cost-of-living pressures that the Labor state government has created. Over the last year under Labor, Queenslanders have had to endure significant cost-of-living increases, including a 19.9 per cent increase in the cost of electricity, the highest in Australia; a 18.5 per cent increase in insurance costs; as well as an almost seven per cent increase in health costs, again the highest in the nation. Queenslanders have also had to deal with an 8.4 per cent increase in rental costs, which is also the highest in Australia, as well as a 4.2 per cent increase in transport costs. These are the figures which truly underscore the state Labor government's absolute and long-term failure to comprehensively address Queensland's cost-of-living crisis.

As the Liberal National Party state opposition has made clear, the specific measures and temporary cost-of-living support measures contained within this legislation will not be opposed by the Liberal National Party. Right now Queenslanders, including local residents in the electorate of Moggill, need all the support they can get as they struggle with the daily cost-of-living pressures caused by this state Labor government. It is important to remember that this support, whilst welcome, is only temporary. In fact, it is little more than a bandaid solution to address what are significant and long-term structural issues under this state Labor government. What is more, these issues have only been further exacerbated by Labor.

If we specifically look at electricity prices, it is evident that Queenslanders are enduring skyrocketing retail electricity prices due to the mismanagement and chaos of this state Labor government. As I noted earlier, in 2023 retail electricity prices in Queensland rose by almost 20 per cent, which was the highest increase in the nation and three times the national average. Even more shocking, in the two years following the failure of the Callide power plant, from June 2021 to June 2023, underlying power prices increased by 135 per cent in Queensland. The fact of the matter is that we are here because of the shocking mismanagement of the Callide Power Station by this state Labor government. There have been problems with multiple generators at the power station. If skyrocketing power prices are the symptom of Labor's cost-of-living crisis, then undoubtedly one of the main causes has been Labor's long-term failure to adequately invest in critical network infrastructure and maintenance. Whistleblowers have told the Liberal National Party that the state Labor government's chronic mismanagement and maintenance underfunding caused the failure of the Callide C power


plant. It was an horrific incident and a catastrophic failure, and we are all thankful that no-one was hurt. This week marks three years since the Callide power plant failure. For three years Queenslanders have had to pay the price, quite literally, for Labor's failure.

As if imposing higher electricity prices during a cost-of-living crisis was not enough, this state Labor government has further insulted Queenslanders not only by failing multiple deadlines to restore the critical Callide C power plant but also through its shameful failure to release its secret report into the catastrophic failure. Queenslanders were promised an independent report by industry expert Dr Sean Brady into what happened and yet the Labor energy minister is refusing to release that independent report and tell Queenslanders the truth about what really happened. Labor is never open, transparent and accountable.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for energy and cost of living made clear during her matter of public interest contribution earlier today, this state Labor government is running a protection racket around what truly happened at the Callide power plant. Not only do Queenslanders deserve transparency on Labor's catastrophic Callide failure; they also deserve accountability. Openness and transparency on this matter are critical to Queensland families because we know that with the Callide power plant being out of service there has been a reduction in available electricity supply, further pushing up the electricity bills of Queensland families and businesses. That is not posturing by the Liberal National Party; that comes from both the Queensland Auditor-General and the Queensland Competition Authority.

Last weekend in the electorate of Moggill, the terrific annual Brookfield Show was held. Across three days, from Friday to Sunday, I engaged with thousands of local residents as well as visitors from across South-East Queensland at my dedicated Brookfield Show stall where we talked about the issues and priorities that matter most to them. Both cost of living and Labor's youth crime crisis were raised as major issues. Local residents continue to raise with me their alarm at their increasing power bills. I have had residents share with me the great lengths to which they are going to consume as little electricity as possible in an effort to drive their bills down. In one incident at the Brookfield Show, an elderly resident told me they had made the decision to forego additional heating this winter because they simply can no longer afford additional increases to their power bills.

Queenslanders have had enough. Saving Queenslanders from paying for Labor's failures is a priority for the Liberal National Party because it is the priority for Queenslanders. When it comes to driving down cost-of-living pressures, the Liberal National Party will reduce Labor government waste and stop project cost blowouts rather than hitting Queenslanders with higher taxes and fees. We will deliver better services and infrastructure for every taxpayer dollar invested and we will also identify opportunities to reduce fees and charges. Importantly, we will drive down electricity costs by properly maintaining our power plants. The Liberal National Party will drive down insurance costs by reducing the impact of crime on premiums, as well as by investing in natural disaster mitigation. The Liberal National Party will drive down transport costs by reducing traffic congestion. All of this is important to reducing the cost of living for all Queenslanders. However, we know that under Labor Queenslanders will always pay more. Local residents in the electorate of Moggill simply cannot afford another term of this Labor government. That is why in October of 2024 Queenslanders need to show Labor the door because Labor does not have long-term solutions to address the cost-of-living crisis here in Queensland.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (7.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Miles government's Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. We know that Queenslanders are struggling with national and global cost-of-living pressures. While this House cannot exactly influence global supply chains or intervene in overseas conflicts, we can absolutely pull every lever available to us as a state government to help with the cost of living. Our cheaper power bill will do exactly what it says on the tin—make power cheaper for all Queenslanders. It delivers a \$1,000 credit to every household in the state with an electricity account. These are the biggest power bill savings Queensland families have ever seen and make up part of our upcoming budget which will be the biggest cost-of-living budget in Queensland's history. These savings have been made even bigger after the Albanese government's recent budget announcement, meaning that every household in Queensland will receive \$1,300 off their bill. If you are a senior or a concession card holder, you are eligible for a further \$372.20. This means that most vulnerable households will get a total of \$1,672 off their electricity bill. This means that the majority of households in Queensland will not be paying for electricity until at least next year.


Along with the cost-of-living help for households, our cheaper power bill will deliver a \$325 rebate to all small business accounts in the state, with an additional \$325 from the federal government. Broadly speaking, one would be hard-pressed to find any genuine critics of this policy. It is sensible cost-of-living relief funded by taxing the big coal companies.

On this side of the House we are in agreement that Queenslanders should reap the benefits of their resources, but, unfortunately, even on such an uncontroversial point we find no agreement from those opposite. Let us take a look at their record on coal royalties. It is a tale in three headlines. We will start from June 2023 when the member for Broadwater backed progressive coal royalties. In last year's budget reply speech the Leader of the Opposition made a half-baked non-committal to retaining coal royalties. He called coal royalties a betrayal of Queensland families but still supported them. Even this was a bridge too far for some of the member's colleagues.

This brings us to the second story. Just over a month later, the member for Burleigh was asked in estimates if he supports coal royalties. His answer—one that our federal colleagues have become intimately familiar with in following opposition leader Dutton—no. The member for Burdekin took it a step further in saying—

We have given a commitment that we will sit down with the Queensland Resources Council ... these mining companies and we will genuinely consult with them before we make any decision on coal royalty hikes and changes.


Is it any wonder that this story concludes with the LNP leaving the door open to changes? It took barely three months for those opposite to go from a half-baked commitment to keeping coal royalties to promising that will they will consult with the coal companies about them—not with households, families, businesses or the Queenslanders that these royalties benefit but the companies being made to pay for them. We will be hearing a lot of noise from those opposite, a lot of vague posturing on the economy and waffling about honesty, but Queenslanders know what this is really about: the LNP sucking up to the resources industry in the hopes that it can buy the next election. As long as this government remains a Labor government, we will always back coal royalties and will always be there for Queenslanders. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (7.12 pm): Talking and listening to locals in my community, I want them to know that cost-of-living relief is my No. 1 priority. Locals in my community have told me over and over again that times are tough. I have advocated for help with household bills. We know that mortgage payments, rents, groceries, insurance and bills are going up. It is true to say, members, that times are tough, but, if you think times are tough now, they will be tougher under the LNP. People cannot pay their bills if they have been sacked or made redundant. If our energy assets are privatised, prices will go up and we will have no ability to provide rebates. If health services are privatised, it means worse services and higher prices. It means a longer wait in the ED under the LNP.

If the LNP gets a chance to build nuclear reactors in your suburb, it means more expensive power. That is why I support the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill—a bill that will deliver cheaper power bills to Queenslanders by providing \$1,000 to every Queensland household on 1 July. It will assist Queensland families struggling with global inflation and cost-of-living pressures. Cost-of-living relief is a top priority for the Miles government. Our rebates are only possible because we are making multinational mining companies pay their fair share. Our energy rebates are funded through progressive coal royalties, because on this side of the House we believe that Queenslanders deserve to share in the wealth of our state. Those opposite have refused to support coal royalties, making it clear that they do not support cheaper power bills or investment in roads, police, schools or hospitals for that matter.

These \$1,000 energy rebates belong to Queenslanders, which is why they are targeted as a single one-off credit on power bills from 1 July. I welcome the recent announcement from the federal Albanese Labor government and Treasurer Jim Chalmers that provides Queenslanders a further \$300 on top of our rebate, which means that every Queensland household will get \$1,300 off their energy bill. Even more than that, seniors, pensioners and eligible households will receive a \$1,672 rebate. Many households will not have to pay a cent on their power bills for the rest of the year. These are the biggest power savings Queensland families have ever seen.

We are also providing support for small business with a \$650 rebate next financial year. As a result of our rebates, Queensland households and small businesses continue to pay amongst the lowest prices for electricity in the country. Only the Miles Labor government has a plan to ease pressure for families and hardworking small businesses. Whether it is the resources below the ground or our publicly owned energy assets, we believe that all Queenslanders deserve their fair share.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.16 pm): I rise to address the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill and say at the outset that the Greens will absolutely be supporting this bill. Cost-of-living relief is needed now more than ever in Queensland. Every Queenslander should have access to cheap or even, I would argue, free electricity as an essential service for our community. To be honest, it is a shame that the government's proposal is just a temporary solution. It is a bandaid on a semi-privatised, inflated energy market with no long-term answers for struggling Queenslanders. It is a shame. I do not want us to forget also that, despite being a theoretically universal payment, not every Queenslander will benefit from this rebate. For the people sleeping rough, living in tents and living in cars there is no relief. For anyone who is having to sleep on the couch at their friend's house or their parents' house because they cannot afford increasingly expensive, exorbitant rentals, there is no relief. For the students and the other low-income folks renting rooms with bills included because they cannot afford a place of their own, there is no relief. For everyone dealing with record-high transport costs, grocery prices, rents, mortgages, school fees and health care—everything other than our power bills—there is no relief to help with these expenses.

No doubt, for many households this will mean there is some temporary relief on at least their power costs. Where is it coming from? One would think from the way countless Labor members are speaking that we were finally in fact making multinational mining corporations pay their fair share. Sadly, one would be wrong because that is the Greens policy—not Labor's. In 2020—four years ago now—we released our Fair Share Plan to raise mining royalties so we could properly fund public services and infrastructure. Of course, I was absolutely thrilled when I heard the minister talking about implementing it. That is of course until we realised that they were not doing anything of the sort. Over the last 10 years, big mining corporations have exported \$634 billion worth of Queenslanders' resources but paid only nine per cent of that back to us in royalties. Queenslanders pay more GST on a cup of coffee than what miners are paying on resources that belong to us all—nine per cent returned on royalties compared to the 10 per cent GST we pay on pretty much everything.

It is instructive though that, when Labor partly implemented the Greens' policy to raise royalties, coal royalties specifically, it worked. Queenslanders got a better share of our enormous mineral wealth which meant they could fund things like this rebate. Sadly the rug is about to be pulled out from underneath us. Under Labor, and no doubt under the LNP, we will see the amount coalmining companies pay in royalties for Queensland resources fall by around three-quarters over a two-year period. That is a drop from \$15.4 billion in the 2022-23 financial year to in the order of \$4.3 billion in 2024-25. Make no mistake: big coalmining companies are still making record profits, but Labor's plan relied on those abnormally high coal prices which are, predictably enough, now declining.

Labor's royalty changes will stop collecting any significant additional revenue as prices return to their long-term averages, as they could always have been predicted to do. They never even touched the big gas companies. I guess we should not be surprised though. Queensland's multinational gas exporters are huge donors to the Labor Party in Australia. They mingle with major party MPs at cocktail parties and were even able to convince the federal Labor government that they deserve government support to 2050 and beyond. Meanwhile, big gas companies are the worst offenders when it comes to ripping off Queenslanders. Over 10 years they have sold \$120 billion worth of our gas but paid only around four per cent of that in royalties. LNG export revenue in Queensland has doubled from \$11 billion in 2022 up to \$22 billion in 2023.

When Labor MPs, such as the Treasurer and the resources minister, say that Queenslanders 'own the resources under the ground' and 'deserve their fair share', that does not include gas for some reason, nor does it include mineral and other resources, and nor does it actually include coal when you read the fine print. The fact is that no matter what rhetoric we hear from the government it never really did include coal. Labor's little play fight with the Queensland Resources Council is cute to watch. It might have been entertaining for a while, but it was really all just for show. They will always kiss and make up in the end. The only party in here that would actually be willing to genuinely raise mining royalties, to genuinely make coal and gas companies pay their fair share, is the Greens. We have proposed it before and we will propose it again.

Mr Sullivan: You want to tax something and shut down the industry at the same time.

Mr BERKMAN: Here we have the member for Stafford trotting out the coalmining industry's lines: if we raise royalties, we will shut down the industry. That is precisely the nonsense that the Treasurer has been actively fighting to shut down in recent years.

Mr SULLIVAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is not what I said. I take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Stafford, I did not catch what you said. Did you rise on a point of order?

Mr SULLIVAN: I did rise to a point of order. I said that that is not what I said. I take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maiwar, the member for Stafford has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

Mr BERKMAN: Of course I will withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker. The fact is that power would not be this expensive if Labor had not privatised electricity retail across South-East Queensland in 2006. We have heard since then from the architect, or the premier at least at the time of that change, that it was a bad move, yet they have done nothing to reverse that change. Since the privatisation of electricity retail, retailers have wasted money on marketing costs and executive bonuses. They have pocketed huge profits and they have billed us for it.


There is something deeply ironic about the fact that this rebate is the state government handing over more of our shared wealth—public money—to private electricity retailers because they sold off the ability to directly reduce power bills. We could have cheap, abundant, publicly owned electricity, but instead we have a one-off sugar hit that could in fact mean that bills are even higher once the rebate runs out.

While it is true that Queenslanders have benefited from public ownership of some parts of our energy system during the cost-of-living and inflation crisis, it looks like retailers might be taking advantage of that to bump up their profits under the cover of temporary bill rebates. The ACCC's December 2023 report on the NEM, the National Electricity Market, showed that, while retail margins fell nationwide, in Queensland they actually grew. Nationally, in 2022-23 retail margins averaged 2.3 per cent; in Queensland it was a whole two per cent higher at 4.3 per cent. Private energy retailers are price gouging more from Queensland customers, and the state it seems is happy to fund their extra profits.

On top of their margins, around 10 per cent of energy costs in Queensland went to 'retail and other costs', which includes debt collection, advertising and customer retention marketing costs. What hogwash! Why are we paying for that when we do not have to? Meanwhile, Labor still supports the national competition policy that forces even our publicly owned generators and networks to run like private corporations. They support this system whereby our publicly owned entities pay fees to artificially increase their operating costs so they do not outcompete providers. Recent research shows that our networks are ripping off customers by overestimating their operating costs and making off with billions in supernormal profits—around \$2.5 billion in Queensland since 2014. These are all things that only happen when you are running an electricity provider as a private, for-profit venture rather than as an essential service.

By actually raising mining royalties across the board, as the Greens have proposed, we could make cost-of-living relief the permanent right of every Queenslander instead of a lottery style handout before an election that you are planning to lose. By reversing the privatisation of electricity retail and bringing our whole system under a single public authority, we could permanently cut Queenslanders' energy bills instead of having to rely on temporary rebates. For the Labor Party it is more acceptable to watch private energy companies and mining companies make off with huge profits while 46,000 Queenslanders languish on the social housing waiting list and while Queenslanders skip meals and live pay cheque to pay cheque. That is more acceptable than it is to actually challenge the grip that corporations and billionaires have on our economy.

(Time expired)


 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (7.26 pm): I rise to support this great cost-of-living initiative for the people of Queensland—the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. This cheaper power bill will have an immediate impact on the cost of living from 1 July 2024. By providing a \$1,000 rebate for every Hervey Bay household, the people of Hervey Bay will have an extra \$1,000 to put towards everyday living expenses. If you are a concession card holder in Hervey Bay, you will receive not only the \$1,000 rebate but also the Queensland government subsidy of \$372. Senior and concession card holders in Hervey Bay will get a total rebate of \$1,372 off their power bill, and that is for every household. Following the Albanese Labor government energy bill relief announcement last week, a further \$300 over the course of the new financial year will bring extra relief. That is great for everyone. This is great news for families struggling with cost-of-living and everyday expenses—another \$1,300 off their power bills next year.

For the average household, this \$1,000 power rebate, plus the \$300 extra from the Albanese Labor government—or \$1,672 for concession holders—will mean that some households will not pay a cent on their power bills until 2025. There is no denying that this is real cost-of-living relief that will make a big difference to Queenslanders and to the people of Hervey Bay. This has only come about because the Miles government backs our progressive coal royalties, which give back to each and every household in Hervey Bay their fair share from owning the coal that the big mining companies dig out of the ground that we all own. It comes about because we on this side have kept our energy assets in public hands. Our small business will also receive a rebate, with \$325 being given to around 205,000 eligible small businesses. Added to this will be a further \$325 from the Albanese Labor government for a total of \$650 off their energy consumption for the next financial year.

This comes with a warning. Make no mistake: if an LNP government is elected at the next state election, none of these cost-of-living measures will be continued. The LNP has already indicated that progressive coal royalties will be axed and the money that belongs to every Hervey Bay household will be returned to the multinational mining companies, because that is what the LNP does. The LNP is only here to profit their big business mates over the mums and dads of Hervey Bay. When every cent counts, it is only Labor and the Miles government that will deliver cheap power and real cost-of-living relief to all of us. Do not trust the LNP. They will do everything in their power to return coal royalties back to their big business donors.

Putting this into context, for the last financial year and this financial year combined households in Hervey Bay will have received a combined total of \$1,850 off their power bills. For pensioners and concession card holders, this comes to a total of \$2,744 off their power bills. This is what a Labor government does. An LNP government will do nothing more than return your money back to big business and make you pay more for your power.

I thank the Miles government for this initiative. Only a Miles government has a real desire to assist the mums and dads, the pensioners and the people doing it tough in a national cost-of-living crisis. It is this Miles government that knows the importance of providing around 2.2 million Queensland households with relief from cost-of-living pressures. It is only Labor governments that will deliver real relief for the people of Hervey Bay in Queensland. I support the bill.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (7.30 pm): Thanks to the Miles Labor government, the Premier and the Treasurer, Christmas has come early. It is Christmas in July across this great state because the Treasurer has done something the LNP only dream about: he has taken on the coal barons. They are all there with their cigars and Bentleys, and the Treasurer has taken them on and put the money back into the pockets of Queenslanders. He is a grinch to the coal barons; he will not get a Christmas card this year. He will get a lot of Christmas cards from the residents of Queensland, particularly Maryborough, who are very happy with this \$1,000. We heard the other side. What did the member for Gympie say about a cash splash? The people of Maryborough are very happy with this money. I have been on the streets talking to the people of Maryborough. I have been out working on the streets, and they have been telling me how they are excited to get this \$1,000 because it will be a bonus to them. They will be able to do things they thought they would not be able to do because now they will not have an electricity bill until 2025. How great is that! Do we now call the Treasurer 'Santa Claus'? He has really made a lot of people in Maryborough excited about this.

Then we have another \$300 from Treasurer Jim Chalmers and the federal government. How great is that! All we hear is whingeing from the other side about progressive coal royalties. We know what will happen. If they are elected the risk for Queenslanders is that that money will go back into the pockets of overseas shareholders. That money will go to Bentleys, cigars, eggnog and wonderful Christmas gifts. The Miles Labor government puts the money back into Queenslanders' pockets. We are putting it back. Our people—not overseas companies, not overseas people—can maybe go and have a cup of coffee and dinner. That is what they can do because of the savings they are getting from the Miles Labor government. I was reading before about the big risk from over there. What did we hear?

Mr Walker: I don't know. You've got a rabble over there.

Mr SAUNDERS: A bit of rabble alright! There is more than rabble; they are rattling the can now for the mining gurus. That is all they are going to be doing to make sure they are being looked after. Do not worry about ordinary Queenslanders.

Mr Walker: They're paying their legal bills.

Mr SAUNDERS: No, we cannot do that. What about the member for Clayfield?

Mr Walker: What about him?


Mr SAUNDERS: You can see him now at the Queensland Club with all the mining barons walking around in their three-piece suits with cigars hanging out of their mouths. He said the government could not afford to pay all consumers an electricity rebate when household electricity prices rose by 22.6 per cent. The member for Clayfield tried to cut electricity concessions to 435,000 seniors and pensioners. How is that? Do not forget that he was the treasurer. He is the man who sat around that table with Campbell Newman. He was the man who tried to cut concessions to 435,000 people.

Mr Walker: He's Santoro's man.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection; he is definitely his man. The big risk for this state is the LNP. When they say 'show them the door', the biggest threat for this state economically and moving forward with the Big Build and development is the LNP. I heard some of the comments here tonight. You would think the world is going to collapse and fall in because we are giving ordinary Queenslanders—we are talking about mums and dads and pensioners—a fair go. We are giving them \$1,000 back plus the rebate, so all up about \$1,600. All we have heard from those opposite is, 'We can't do it.' I ask everyone to close their eyes: can you imagine what they would do if they got into government? I can tell you that the LNP as it is now would make Campbell Newman look like a great premier because the cuts they have in place and ready to go are going to hurt Queenslanders.

Mr Walker: That's a big call.

Mr SAUNDERS: It is a big call. We had the member for Chatsworth talking about pruning and tough love. I do not want his tough love. The people of Maryborough do not want his pruning or his tough love. He can keep that in his own garden. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (7.35 pm): I was very interested to hear that the member for Maryborough is a streetwalker. I wonder if he saw the Mary Poppins statue. As we have heard from those opposite, we are all speaking on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. We know the failures of the Miles Labor government. They are hitting Queenslanders where it hurts—in their hip pockets—and as a result Queensland has faced the steepest cost-of-living pressures in the nation.

Let us look at the numbers. Under Labor, electricity prices in Queensland rose 19.9 per cent in 2023, the highest in the nation; from June 2021 to June 2023 following the explosion at Callide, Queensland experienced a 23.6 per cent increase in electricity prices; and since Labor's election in 2015 underlying power prices have surged by 176 per cent. As we have heard from our shadow spokesperson, the member for Nanango, when the government neglects to properly maintain our power plants, causing them to go offline for years, it is households and businesses in Queensland that bear the burden of high electricity costs. I was interested to hear the Leader of the House very stridently talking about misrepresentation from this side about Callide. We heard that A and B and C apparently came back on at Easter. I refer to a column by Madura McCormack dated 24 April 2024 which states—

Callide C3 came back online over the Easter long weekend for the first time since its cooling towers partially collapsed in October 2022.

Callide C4 is set to remain offline until July.

Callide C4 is not back online, and this is part of the issue that we have been raising on this side. We would like to see the report that has either not been finalised or certainly is not going to be released even though the government said they were going to release it. The Leader of the House is trying to say to us on this side that anyone who misrepresents the issue of Callide is clearly misleading the House. We are just saying that Callide is not up and running the way it was. It is clearly not running the way it was, and that is confirmed by the fact that C4 is not up and running and will not be for some time. Callide C came back into operation last month just shy of three years, so if those opposite want to hold it up as some sort of badge of honour that they have been able to get it running in three years then they are kidding themselves.

The sharp increase in electricity costs can be largely attributed to Labor's mismanagement of the Callide power plant, with whistleblowers telling us that chronic maintenance underfunding by the state government caused the explosion. Reports from both the Queensland Competition Authority and the Auditor-General have confirmed that the failure to maintain Callide and bring it back online in a timely manner has directly driven up power prices and paints a clear picture of the neglect and mismanagement of this critical piece of infrastructure under the Miles Labor government. I have already referred to an article in the *Courier-Mail* dated 24 April 2024 titled 'Power prices Qld: wholesale charges

highest in the nation'. This article highlights that energy costs in Queensland were the most expensive on average across Australia over the summer. In the article Dr Dylan McConnell, an energy expert from the University of New South Wales, was quoted as saying—


... the absence of CS Energy's Callide C coal-fired power station was a factor in Queensland's prices as an increase in supply would have brought down costs.

I table a copy of that article.

Tabled paper: Media article, 24 April 2024, titled 'Power prices Qld: Wholesale charges highest in the nation' [831].

Three years after the explosion at Callide, which left nearly half a million people without power, a lack of transparency and accountability continues to remain, with the minister refusing to release the promised industry expert report by Dr Sean Brady. As we said, the opposition is not opposing this bill. We recognise the immediate relief Queenslanders need to keep up with the cost-of-living crisis, and I want to acknowledge feedback from both QCROSS and St Vincent de Paul which welcome the additional appropriation to assist low-income Queenslanders. I am interested to note from tonight's media coverage that the Premier was not aware that this particular appropriation is coming from this year's budget. That is something that I am sure we will hear more of—a Premier who is not across the figures.

The opposition is committed to implementing structural solutions to address the cost-of-living crisis. We believe in maintaining our state owned power generators to prevent disasters like Callide from recurring. This is not just about temporary rebates; it is about long-term strategies to ensure affordable, reliable power for all Queenslanders. We in the LNP know that Queenslanders are hurting, which is why we have committed to providing up to \$3,500 to subsidise solar panels on rental properties through our supercharged solar for renters policy, potentially saving renters up to \$700 on electricity bills, and to guaranteeing maintenance for government owned power plants, ensuring Queensland does not have a repeat catastrophic failure like Callide.

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (7.41 pm): I rise to speak in strong support of the cheaper power bill. This critical piece of legislation by the new Miles Labor government will deliver real and tangible relief on electricity bills—real relief right now for Bundamba households, for our families, workers, seniors and small businesses. We are acutely aware of the national cost-of-living pressures that are being faced by Queenslanders right now. Rising costs of living are a significant burden, impacting the daily lives of hardworking Queenslanders. We know that every dollar counts, whether it is spent keeping your home warm in winter and cool in summer or keeping your business thriving.


Labor's cheaper power bill addresses this head-on by providing substantial rebates on electricity bills. Our rebates are the largest in the nation: \$1,000 off every household bill, with a further \$300 thanks to the Albanese government. The \$325 rebate for small businesses—and there are over 200,000 of them across Queensland—will be matched by the federal government, bringing that rebate to \$650. We are also extending the \$372 Queensland electricity rebate for vulnerable and senior households, which will mean \$1,672 off their electricity bill. For families and households in Bundamba, cheaper power bills mean more disposable income to cover essential needs. We are talking about real savings that can make a difference in the daily lives of households. Whether it is for school supplies for children, groceries or savings for unforeseen expenses, these rebates represent direct and meaningful financial relief, helping to ease the stress on household budgets.

To our dedicated workers, a cheaper power bill acknowledges your contributions and the long hours you commit to building our state's prosperity. Lower electricity bills mean more manageable living costs, enabling you to focus on your work and family without the worry of rising utility expenses. Our seniors, pensioners and concession cardholders, many of whom are on fixed incomes, will greatly benefit. The cheaper power bill will ensure that our elderly citizens can maintain their living standards without the strain of exorbitant electricity costs. This is about dignity and ensuring that those who have contributed so much to our society can enjoy their retirement years with peace of mind. I am proud to be part of a Labor government that backs the backbone of our local economy. The cheaper power bill will mean reduced energy costs for over 200,000 Queensland small businesses, allowing those businesses to reinvest in their operations, create more jobs and further stimulate our local economy. It is a win-win for business owners and the communities that they serve.

While the Liberal National Party claims to support the cheaper power bill, their stance on coal royalties leaves them compromised in the eyes of Queenslanders. The rebates provided by this bill are funded by progressive coal royalties. By committing to keep our publicly owned assets in public hands, we will ensure that the benefits of public ownership and our natural resources are shared with all Queenslanders. By opposing both the coal royalties and the public ownership that finance the crucial

relief that is contained in this bill, the LNP reveal not only a glaring inconsistency in their position but also a multibillion-dollar budget black hole. This contradiction not only jeopardises the financial relief promised by the cheaper power bill but also highlights the LNP's unwillingness to put people before profits.

The new Miles government has taken action to provide urgent cost-of-living relief through the rebates that will be applied to power bills. These payments will be made from 1 July to provide that urgent relief and ensure that the rebates cannot be revoked or reduced by a future government. I commend the bill to the house.

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (7.46 pm): I am pleased to speak to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. I wish to commend the Premier as well as the Deputy Premier and Treasurer for this important commitment to provide a tangible and responsible cost-of-living measure for all of our communities. These days it is rare to speak with anyone who is not affected by rising costs of living—utilities, groceries and everyday essentials. In growing communities like the one I represent, increased interest rates have also had a real impact, with the average household budget becoming more stretched and more families seeking cost-of-living relief.


Some of these things may seem quite subtle. I speak with my local butcher Mal and he tells me that customers have been buying a lot more mince, sausages and cheaper cuts of meat, like chuck steak. Local cafe owner Shay tells me that, whilst they are still getting customers, they are seeing people sharing breakfasts or only purchasing less expensive items on the menu. Some things are more pronounced, with our local community centres reporting more people coming through their doors seeking emergency relief funding or referrals to support organisations. That is why our cost-of-living rebate is so important at this particular time and why this bill will realise an important policy decision of our government.

We have listened to the people of Queensland. We have heard them on the doorstep. We have been speaking with them at our mobile offices and at community events. When they call our offices, they have been telling us that they need assistance. The \$1,000 that every household will receive from our Miles government will make a meaningful difference to many families and individuals. For seniors, pensioners and concession card holders, we also know that, with the additional Queensland electricity rebate, the \$1,372 will mean that those recipients will not pay an electricity bill for the entire financial year, which is welcome relief indeed.

As has been clearly articulated, this cost-of-living rebate is only possible because of our progressive coal royalties. They are critical to our state's revenue mix and our fiscal capacity that enables our state to do things that other states cannot do: to make our natural resources go further to deliver for the people of our state. Our record investment is only possible because of the financial capacity created by progressive coal royalties. If you cut progressive coal royalties then you cut this investment; you cut the capacity to invest in new and productive infrastructure and to ensure the current infrastructure is contemporary and fit for purpose; and you cut the record investments in our health system—investment that means that increasing numbers of Queenslanders in our state can receive the health care they need earlier and closer to home.

It is not just current infrastructure that will get cut. You might reasonably ask: where does the profit go if not to Queenslanders? If it is not going to important cost-of-living measures, to our hospitals, to our schools, to our community centres, to our roads or to the frontline jobs that deliver our services then where does it go? It goes offshore.

The LNP would rather see Queensland's slice of progressive royalties go offshore. They would rather see that money go out of the pockets of their own constituents and out of infrastructure in their own electorates. They would rather make agreements with the resources lobby than make the right decision to ensure Queenslanders get their fair share. We have seen progressive coal royalties work for the people of Queensland since we introduced them. We are seeing them now go into direct cost-of-living relief for all Queenslanders. What we are not seeing is a commitment from those opposite to keep progressive coal royalties into the future. Our communities have warmly welcomed the \$1,000 that will reduce their electricity bills. Along with the Albanese government's \$300 additional rebate, Queenslanders know who they can trust to support them when times are tough—Labor governments. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.49 pm): I rise to speak on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. As I understand it, this bill is set to cost taxpayers. We will get our own money back to the tune of \$2.27 billion.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr Martin interjected.

Mr KATTER: It is still our money. It is still taxpayers' money. Royalties are still taxpayers' money, so taxpayers' money is coming back. I will take those interjections and they can keep listening because they will get some more argument here that they can yell out about. The money that has come in becomes the taxpayers' money. Wherever it comes from, it all goes into the same bucket and that is the taxpayers' money coming back to us.

Mr Martin interjected.

Mr KATTER: Let's just wait and listen. Good things come—slowly, slowly, catchee monkey.

Government members interjected.

Mr KATTER: Treasury announced a \$3 billion deficit coming up, so we have got \$2.27 billion. I always enjoy the government laughing at me on these sorts of things because the funny thing is that the further away from Brisbane I get the more I hear people laughing at the government for coming up with these things. It is all captured on video so that is fine. Laugh all you want here.

Mr Dick: We're laughing with you.

Mr KATTER: I will take that interjection. This is about making power bills cheaper. You cannot remove this debate, in my view, from the climate change debate. I am not a person who will stand up in here and debate climate change for 10 hours because it is a very involved and complicated science. I have said this before in the House and I will say it again now because it is highly relevant: we are told, 'It's a consensus. Just listen to everyone. They're all saying it.' Well, everyone was saying that we needed vegetation management laws because we have got so much rate of clearing, then when a discerning person asked, 'How much regrowth do we have in trees?' they were told, 'We don't know. We don't count that. We don't measure that.' How do we know we have a problem then? Everyone was saying, 'It's a general consensus. We need this and we've got to act on tree clearing.'

Then we heard that the Great Barrier Reef was dying. We were told that David Attenborough himself was saying that the Great Barrier Reef was dying, but the Australian Institute of Marine Science is putting out data that shows there have been two years of record growth. The general consensus again has failed me because it does not marry up with the science. Now we are being told, 'This is the big social imperative. Everything we have to do now is to pursue these renewables that will impact on the power price.' That is something we are going to argue because I know you are saying it is not, but we will get to that. This is all based on an ideological pursuit to address climate change. We can take that debate further and say that, until China and India embrace that, we are a drop in the ocean.

This empirical data is only from the last year, but it says that the cost of power bills in Queensland in 2023 was \$315 per quarter and today in 2024 a year later it is \$458 per quarter. I fall off my chair when I get my own household power bills now. I think it is \$8,000 a year in our house in Mount Isa with the pool pump, the pressure pump for the town water and whatever. We all know it is bad and that is why this bill is here. We get it, but what has driven the price so high? The price has gone way beyond CPI. The Ergon workers are not getting paid that much more and the depots have not been renewed—certainly not in my area anyway. What has been the big change in the electricity industry over the last 10 years that has driven these prices so high?

We are told that renewables are not responsible for it, but I draw on my other personal experience. I saw a big wind farm built in Queensland and it was sitting there for about two years before it was connected to the grid. I thought, 'My goodness me. That's \$200 million or maybe \$300 million spent on an electricity generator and they haven't gone broke but they haven't put any energy into the system.' If that is not subsidised in some way, there is no way that business survived through that period, but I am told, 'No, these things make money. It's cheap.' On top of that, you build these networks and you build the pumped hydro and everything to build capacity, but that all comes at a cost. We know that; that is indisputable. I draw back again that this becomes a thing about climate change and those targets and that is what we are dealing with here. If we give money back to people, that is great—we all appreciate it—but this makes the power bills cheaper in the short term; it does not make power cheaper.

The member for Hinchinbrook went into some detail about the grid and these alternative supplies on the grid. Then you get the gaming of the system and people take advantage of those dispatchable base load systems that still come in there. It is an enormous disruption to the grid, forcing prices up. That has been a huge factor in all of this.


This idea has been suggested in many meetings I have had with ministers and the government. If you want to go on this charge towards renewables and it is all about saving the environment, I stand to be corrected but I would have thought the starting point would have been the remote areas, the towns

that are disconnected from the grid, where there would have been the most benefit and surely the most buy-in from people. Instead of putting rooftop solar to compete with all the coal-fired base load that we have along the east coast, why didn't we start out west? There would be hundreds of thousands of stock watering facilities in remote Queensland that are burning diesel and petrol to pump water right now. Wouldn't that have been a great place to start? The cow cockies themselves would have paid 90 per cent of that price. They love solar out there on their houses and that might have been the best place to start. Instead, we were subsidising at a much greater rate to get people to put it on their roofs in the suburbs. That did not make any sense to me.

I want to talk about nuclear. That is another one where everyone says, 'It's too expensive.' There is a good reason it is too expensive, if anybody bothered to listen to the other side of the argument. They had a regulatory body in the US when the last one was built there. The regulatory body had all the antinuclear people on it who said they did not want it and they put in all these regulations so that you would never build one to that standard, but nor do you need all the regulatory burdens that they put on that.

Here is the interesting argument with nuclear. Everyone says, 'You wouldn't build it because it's too expensive,' but that is not a reason to ban something. You do not ban something because it is too expensive. Let the market make that decision. Everyone is a free marketeer in here. Let the market decide that. That is not a reason to keep it banned. We can have a debate about its safety or the location—and we have a great location out in Mount Isa where it could be built—but let the market decide that. There are all sorts of experts, but I have spoken to engineers who have said, 'I can guarantee this because I did my PhD on this.' This is a very complicated topic and it is pretty hard to distil it down to a lineal response to say it is cheaper, but they said it is the most efficient provider of long-term energy but we are not even talking about it. We are jumping straight onto chasing rainbows around the place and putting wind farms and solar farms everywhere. Some of this is ridiculous.

Doug Scouller in Normanton was one of the very early guys in this. He had a very practical application of solar and it was actually a good thing for the government to support. Doug Scouller was at the end of the line at Karumba. That follows the Kidston line, so it basically used base load coming as far from Gladstone pumping through the line up to Normanton. It is very unreliable because it is at the end of the line, so that is an unreliable supply. He saw an advantage there because it is expensive to pump electricity or there are transmission losses. He built a significant solar farm out there—I am going to say it is a five-megawatt system—and he is now being told he is not going to get that price anymore. I think he is being offered close to zero to sell back into the grid in the future. That is one that did make sense. The seller out there is offering a product where you can provide a reliable generator supply at the end of it, but it is so incompetent the way this has been managed to provide cheaper prices. Poor old Doug Scouller was pushing it out there and was offering something to bring prices down. It is unreasonable.


 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.59 pm): I support the cheaper power bill because the people of Greenslopes support cheaper power. After the LNP's performance in question time today, I wanted to come in here and congratulate them on tonight's debate as they are actually debating the bill's substance. However, I think what they demonstrated in question time today is that there is not a name they could not have an argument about. They want to come in and argue about the name of this and the name of that. I thought they would be in here arguing about the name of the bill, rather than the substance of the bill. I want to draw a line in the sand. I am going to draw a line in the sand in Norman Creek at the O'Keefe Street roundabout. Do not come across that line and touch the Doll and Teddy Hospital in Stones Corner. That is one hospital that will remain a hospital, I can tell you that.

I had to listen to the shadow Treasurer give his contribution tonight. He spent his entire time focused on politics and preferences and talking about political numbers. He wanted to talk about anything but what matters to the people of Queensland, and that is the cost of living. I can tell you who cares about the cost of living and that is the people who own and run the Doll and Teddy Hospital in Stones Corner. He did have one very interesting thing to say that I think is worth bringing to the attention of the House. I will quote him verbatim: 'This government has failed Queensland for 10 years in the past and this government will continue to fail Queensland for 10 years into the future.' There you have it, members: he has declared that we will win the next election. Well done, member for Toowoomba South!

We do not take the election for granted. We take nothing for granted. That is why every single member on this side of the House has been in their community talking to people about the cost of living and the rebates. This morning I was at the Greenslopes busway talking to people about cost of living. Last night I was at the Cavendish Road State High School P&C meeting talking about the cost of living

and the rebates. On Sunday morning I was at the Coorparoo community markets talking about the cost of living and the rebates. On Friday and Saturday I was at Mount Gravatt and Holland Park, doorknocking and talking to people about the cost of living. Guess what? It absolutely means a lot to the people in my community.

We know that if we put \$1,000 into everybody's pockets right now, they would go and spend it and that would push up inflation. However, these are sensible macroeconomic reforms that are putting downward pressure on inflation. When you put downward pressure on inflation, you put downward pressure on interest rates. That is what this government is all about. It is about helping Queenslanders with their cost of living. Why can we do that? We can do that for two very simple reasons: we own the electricity-generating assets and because of our progressive coal royalties. Every member on this side of the House never takes any election for granted. We are out there talking to our constituents about those two very important things, and all of our great candidates are out there doing the exact same thing. They will also be reminding people that the LNP members on that side of the House do not support progressive coal royalties and they do not support the ownership of assets. I commend this bill to the House. I support the cheaper power bill.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (8.03 pm): I rise to speak on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. This bill shows the values of the Miles Labor government. We do care and we listen. We know Queensland families are doing it tough. Because we made the right decision to keep electricity assets in public hands instead of flogging them off like those opposite sought to and because we made the decision to make multinational mining companies pay for the extra coal they are moving on from our state, we can help make life a bit easier for Queensland families by giving them this cost-of-living relief measure.

With every family who has an electricity account getting \$1,000 as a credit on their bill and now an extra \$300 from the Albanese federal Labor government, things should become a bit easier. After 1 July, when the next power bill arrives, for most of us there will not be a cent to pay and any leftover credit will be held over until it is used. Pensioners and seniors will still get the existing \$372 in electricity rebates provided and this will be paid to all eligible households on top of the \$1,000. Vulnerable households will get a rebate of \$1,372 from the state and, with another \$300 in a staged payment from the Albanese federal government, the total will be \$1,672.


Small business does not miss out either. We know small businesses are also doing it tough. To support those businesses right across the state, the cheaper power bill will deliver a \$325 electricity rebate provided through a single payment in 2024-25, which is the same amount the state funded in the current financial year. This will be matched by the Albanese Labor government to make a total of \$650. It is hard to argue that this will not help our families and businesses, but I am sure some—and I have heard some—will still try to bag these measures, but then they bag everything.

If those opposite talk to their communities like I do, they would know how much this will help and how appreciated it is. I spent the last few weeks talking to my community, walking the streets like my colleague from Maryborough, and explaining details about how this will work with embedded networks, and talking to those who seek to get some of the credit from their provider to help pay other bills such as water and other things they need in their lives. I do not think the LNP talk to the community about these things; I think they talk at the community. They never mention how under their watch power prices rose by 43 per cent. They promised to lower them by \$120 but it never happened. They bang on about wholesale prices—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr KING:—but once again they went up. All they do is bag and whinge. I do not pay wholesale prices at my place. Wholesale prices are influenced by many things. Certain overseas conflicts have influenced the price of gas and coal, as do demand and weather. They all influence changes in wholesale spot prices. To jump on a high spot price and say that has increased the kilowatt hour price at my house is a long bow to draw. We are a government that listens and cares about Queenslanders. I am sure the Treasurer will have some other cost-of-living measures tucked away in the budget. This rebate is very well received and appreciated. I commend the bill to the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Before I call the member for Gregory, I will remind the House of those members who are warnings. They are the members for Oodgeroo, Theodore, Broadwater, Logan, Callide and Maryborough.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (8.07 pm): I rise to speak in support of this bill because of the cruel cost-of-living impacts on my constituents, not only in the electricity charges but also in fuel, transport, air travel, sports participation and on and on it goes under this government. Queenslanders know they

are footing the bill for this incompetence out of their household budgets. Consider for a moment, if you live in Emerald it is not unusual to face a charge of \$900 for a one-way airlift to Brisbane. I would love the Miles government to consider how unfair that is and add Emerald to the government travel subsidies for rural and remote residents.

The transport tax in Gregory has a huge impact on residents. Everything we use has to be trucked in, from bedding and bricks to knives and forks. Everything we eat has to be trucked in. Year on year, more government regulations and charges and less government investment in our roads and bridges inflates what we call locally the transport tax. Gregory's harsh climate means we rely on electricity not only for comfort—we have 40 to 45 degree days—but also for health and everyday functionality. Our quarterly electricity charges by the state government have been high compared to the south-east corner. A quick scan on Facebook community forums show it is a topic of discussion. Quarterly bills well in excess of \$1,200 are the norm, not the exception. In fact, we have had quarterly bills around \$1,600 and \$1,700 in western Queensland.

On 25 May 2021, when the news broke of a major explosion at the Callide Power Station, I knew immediately there would be some trouble; I just did not expect the trouble to go on for so long. The three onsite firefighters and the 25 Queensland Fire and Emergency Services people who responded to the explosion deserve our highest praise. The plant's cooling towers use hydrogen so fire poses a major risk of further explosions. The first responders showed great courage and skill and they deserve our thanks and gratitude. The Energex and Ergon crews who worked long hours to restore power to the grid all deserve our thanks and praise. On a side note, what might have happened with the power going down in Gladstone, a major industrial area, could have been catastrophic, and I know the minister knows about that.

Australia's modern electricity grid is such that issues in one part create a domino effect in others. When a key generator like Callide C drops out, it forces other generators to shut down in self-defence. The Callide C explosion resulted in widespread blackouts in parts of Queensland and northern New South Wales, but this was only the initial paragraph of a long and sorry saga. The Callide C plant is Queensland's newest coal-fired power turbine. Built in 2001, it should have had years of service left in it. Almost immediately in Central Queensland, those in the know were blaming the underfunding of maintenance. This put a slant on the ministerial statements in the House the following day, 26 May 2021, when the then premier told the House that Queensland was confronted with something that had never happened before in history—an explosion and a major fire in a Queensland power station. What an achievement from Labor but one we could have done without. Minister de Brenni assured the House that work was already underway to investigate the cause but that the No. 4 turbine would probably have to be replaced. The Treasurer had a tear in his eye as he told the House—

The ability to be agile, to adapt and adjust is built into the design of our publically owned energy companies from generation to transmission and distribution ... ensuring the reliability of our energy supply.

Then the cooling towers collapsed. Ironically this week marks three years from the explosion on 25 May 2021, and we can still cannot get an explanation of what happened and when it will be put right. One thing is for sure: the locals nailed it on the day it happened. Whistleblowers have since come forward to explain how chronic underfunding of maintenance by our state government caused the explosion. It also emerged that, while the publicly owned CS Energy held a major share of the plant and operated the site, there were actually two other major shareholders—namely one from China and a Czech billionaire. Two of the shareholders wanted to see the professional report by Dr Sean Brady which the Miles Labor government has buried. Those other shareholders may be due for some compensation if the lack of maintenance was a contributing cause. They have gone to court in a stunning indictment of the Queensland Labor government's culture of cover-ups and secrecy. The legal fallout is likely to run for years. The Federal Court has ordered a fresh investigation. Yesterday the *Australian* newspaper headlined its report 'Secrecy over Callide C explosion turns to farce'. Some four hours of testimony from engineer Dr Sean Brady yielded few answers, not through any fault of Dr Brady but because he was prevented by CS Energy's lawyers from answering many of the questions put to him. Journalist Nick Evans wrote—

If there was ever any doubt that CS Energy is desperate to prevent the causes of the incident from being made public, Monday's farce in front of federal court registrar ... made it pretty clear.

There is also action being taken by the Australian Energy Regulator alleging the failure of the Queensland Labor government to comply with the performance standards of the Callide C power plant. As the saga has gone on, the recommissioning date has continued to be pushed back. Locals say that the replacement for the No. 4 turbine was secured but languished in the Port of Gladstone because poor bridge and road maintenance meant transporting it to the plant was a real problem. I know the


shadow minister for transport has been highlighting that issue, and it has been a real problem. We cannot get critical infrastructure to power our state because of poor road maintenance and bridges that cannot continue to take heavy loads. We have to wake up to ourselves: we are Queensland; we are not a Third World country.

In the meantime, the latest report from the Australian Energy Regulator showed that Queensland is producing less electricity at a higher price than other states. There you have it: the \$1,000 subsidy is a bribe to Queensland voters to ignore the fact that electricity bills are as a result of Labor's policies and Labor's incompetence. Under Labor, Queenslanders are not only facing power bill pain; they are being mugged by the steepest cost-of-living rises in the country: 19.9 per cent for electricity; 6.7 per cent for health costs; 18.5 per cent for insurance costs; 7.4 per cent for sports participation; and 4.2 per cent for transport costs—again, these are the highest in the nation. This affects little Sally and Billy who want to go to a sports carnival and want to be part of a camp. We are facing massive increases in sports participation costs of 7.4 per cent. They are not going to netball anymore; they are not going to the Rugby League camps anymore. People are struggling to give their kids this opportunity because of the increased costs under this government.

On top of this, Queensland is facing a rental crisis and a housing crisis which government policies have also contributed to. While the LNP will not oppose this subsidy because we recognise Queenslanders are suffering, we also trust that they will see this as just a bandaid. It is like finding money in the washing machine: it is not new money; it came out of your pocket. That is what has happened! This is not new money; it has come out of Queenslanders' pockets. You know that, Treasurer; you know that very well.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Through the chair.

Mr MILLAR: Through you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Treasurer knows that it is coming out of our pockets, and he knows that very well. It is not coming out of his pocket. This subsidy is the same and I hope that, while Queenslanders will take the short-term relief, they will know it does not resolve the underlying causes of Labor's incompetent government. Labor is trying to buy the next election. We are four or five months away from the next election and Labor are just trying to buy the election with \$1,000 in everybody's pocket and then Albanese gives \$300 as well: 'Let's try and buy the election. Let's not be competent, responsible governments understanding the budget.' I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (8.16 pm): I rise to support the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill. Of course we know that Queenslanders are struggling with national cost-of-living pressures. It is one of the biggest issues that constituents talk to me about, whether it is when they drop into my electorate office, when I am out doorknocking or holding mobile offices or at community events—conversations with people on the door like Darryl, a pensioner in Wavell Heights; or Hayley, a small business owner and mum in Northgate; Steve, a construction worker in Boondall; and all of the locals who recently completed my cost-of-living survey across the Nudgee electorate. All have said that cost-of-living, particularly groceries, is putting pressure on their families and our local community. While we do not regulate the price of food, I do acknowledge the hard work of our current supermarket inquiry and the work that it is doing around pricing practices for consumers and our farmers. We have listened to Queenslanders' call for cost-of-living relief and we are acting.


Through the cheaper power bill, we will provide a \$1,000 rebate to every single Queensland household to reduce their electricity bill. That is something we can do and, as I said, we listened to those calls. Queenslanders want this support—the people in my electorate certainly want this support—and now we are acting. Importantly, the rebate will be on top of the existing \$372 rebate available to pensioners and seniors who need it most, meaning these households will receive a total rebate of \$1,372—that is a huge assistance—and this is further extended by \$300 with the recently announced federal government electricity rebate. However, we know that it is not only members across our communities who are feeling the national cost-of-living pressures; it is also our small businesses that are doing it tough. That is why this bill also delivers a \$325 electricity rebate for small business—the same amount that we previously provided. Importantly, it is not only what immediately comes to mind when we think of small businesses but also microbusinesses, social enterprises and our much loved community organisations and sporting clubs. It will also make a huge difference to them.

The Labor government can provide this substantial cost-of-living measure because we have maintained public ownership of our electricity assets. History tells us that the LNP, the party of cut, sack and sell, wants to sell off these electricity assets to the highest bidder, but that is not our position. This

is another clear point of difference between our government and those opposite and just another point of clear difference between how our government is providing for Queenslanders and the plans of those opposite.

We will also provide this relief because our Labor government is making multinational mining companies pay their fair share through our progressive coal royalties. Queenslanders own the coal in the ground—Queenslanders—and they should also benefit when coal prices are high. The LNP has already given a wink and a nod to the coalmining companies that should they be elected in October, they will repeal our progressive coal royalties regime. That would mean only one thing for our government's generous electricity rebates: they would cut them; money would be ripped out of the pockets of Queenslanders.

It is only a Labor government that will prioritise cost-of-living relief to help every Queensland household—for Darryl, for Hayley and Steve, for all Nudgee locals and for every Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (8.20 pm): The excitement in my community among the residents who are getting a \$1,000 rebate on their next electricity bill is overwhelming. They are so excited. Families in my region work very hard and my region is quite often able to boast the lowest rates of unemployment across the state. Although there is a high rate of employment, people are experiencing rate hikes, affecting the cost of their house payments; their rents are high and their grocery prices are increasing. They are finding it harder to make ends meet. They need cost-of-living relief and that is what we are doing. Already we are providing free kindy and free TAFE and we are also increasing the number of free courses at TAFE. We are helping out wherever we can.

Whether I am on the phones or out at a street stall, people are telling me that the electricity rebate is coming at the right time. Some people are so pleased that they are close to tears.


Mrs Frecklington: What's going to happen next year?

Mrs GILBERT: The member opposite should get out and talk to them. They are really happy about it.

It is Labor governments that have their finger on the pulse and their ear to the ground. We are picking up on the important issues of those mums and dads and the average people out there. We know that households need a break. Lyn is 67. She said, 'You've got no idea how important and timely this \$1,000 is for my family. This has just saved us.' Karina is a single mum. She works part-time and she is also a part-time uni student. She said, 'This will make it easier to make sure that my kids do not miss out.' Importantly, the existing \$372 in electricity rebates provided to pensioners and concession card holders will also continue to be paid to those eligible households on top of the \$1,000. That means that our vulnerable households will get a total rebate of \$1,372, and that is not all. Our federal Labor government is supporting Queenslanders now the federal budget has been delivered by Treasurer Chalmers. The state's \$1,000 energy payment with the federal Labor government's rebate of \$300 is giving families breathing space, and our pensioners and concession card holders will get a grand total of \$1,672. Some households will not pay any electricity bills for a whole year.

Some people are fearful that the energy support payments will mean increased taxes. No. When I explain to them where they are coming from, they just do a bigger and bolder happy dance. How great it is that the benefits of the resources that are being mined out of the ground in Queensland are able to go back to Queensland households because of the Labor government's progressive coal royalties. Money that would have gone into the hands of multinational shareholders is flowing right back into the household budgets of Queenslanders.

Some people out there are saying that the payment should be means tested or only go to low income families or families on welfare. I have found that there are families out there from all walks of life who normally would never turn up to charities asking for help and those charities are telling me that these people are turning up with their hand out. They are in jobs, but they have overcommitted financially and they are doing it tough. This is the right thing to do to make sure that this money goes to every household. How great is it that this money is coming from our share of our minerals. I support the bill.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (8.24 pm): One thing I know very well from spending a lot of time across my electorate recently is fortunately Queenslanders can see through the rot that is this Labor government. They know that this is just a temporary measure that is not going to address the

fundamentals in the electricity system that have sent electricity prices skyrocketing thanks to the Labor government. Thankfully, Queenslanders are smart. Queenslanders are smart enough to know this is another government that has given up on fixing the fundamental prices of the electricity grid.

The member for Gregory mentioned electricity insecurity in Queensland, and many of the LNP members have also spoken about the blackouts we have had, about the air conditioners that had to be wound down at the start of the year because there was not enough electricity in the grid to power every home and every industry in Queensland. That is how much this Labor government has mismanaged the electricity grid in Queensland and it is an absolute disgrace. Ultimately, because of this and because of the flow-on effects of expensive electricity that is beyond not just the household but also business, the commercial entities and the agriculture sector, Queenslanders are struggling to pay their bills. We are in a cost-of-living crisis thanks to this Labor government.

We know that the cost of irrigation has gone up for a lot of people. I talk to farmers who say it is tough to justify turning their pumps on to grow food to feed the country and we wonder why the price of produce has gone up in this state. The cost of running a farm in general has increased as has the cost of logistics, of keeping fresh fruit and veg cold and keeping the freezers running. For industry and for logistics chains the prices have skyrocketed and then there is heavy industry. We have next to no heavy industry left in this country thanks to too much red tape and ridiculous electricity prices and, ultimately, Australians are paying the price.

This was even apparent at Beef Week, and people may think that a beef enterprise does not have too much electricity to worry about. However, even our beef producers are feeling the pinch of increased electricity prices in Queensland. Beef Week was a great event. I have a Beef Week tie on. If honourable members missed Beef Week there will be another one in three years. They should make sure they get up and enjoy it because it is a fantastic event showcasing the beef industry in Central Queensland.

Of course the Treasurer will happily get up and say that this rebate can only be paid thanks to coal royalties and it is not costing Queenslanders anything.

Government members interjected.

Mr HEAD: The funny thing is why is debt increasing in Queensland and what are the interest repayments on that debt? Those opposite can laugh and carry on and make out that it is not coming from the back pocket of Queenslanders, but ultimately debt is increasing in this state once again under this Treasurer. That means there is not enough money to go around at the minute, but they are blowing far too much money on mismanaging projects and ultimately Queenslanders are paying for it. Once again in typical Labor form they are taking cash out of our back pocket and giving it to us on an electricity bill and trying to say that it is free money that has magically appeared.

I turn to some of the comments of the Minister for Energy. He spoke a lot about Callide Power Station and how it is operational. In his contribution one thing that I found quite intriguing was the fact that he did not make much mention of the C4 generator at Callide. He was saying that we are misleading the House and Callide is operational. We very explicitly talk about Callide C4 and we have also been talking about Callide C3, which only came online very recently; it was only a matter of weeks ago.

From the minister's contribution one would think that the Callide C4 generator is operational and is pumping plenty of electricity into the grid, but what was its capacity at 1 pm or at any time in the last few years? Zero per cent! I do not know what world the Minister for Energy lives in, but a generator operating at zero per cent is absolutely not operating. I table a chart outlining that evidence.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Callide C' [832].

As far as his contribution is concerned, perhaps the energy minister should not mislead this House and Queenslanders. There is plenty to talk about in relation to Callide. I would happily talk all day and night about it.

Mr Bennett: You should!

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection. I would love to, but of course the Labor government does not like us talking for very long in this House. Typically they guillotine debate very quickly. There are a lot of bills that I would like to speak on but I do not get the opportunity because they simply do not care about democracy. This week in the *Australian* there was a great article by Nick Evans titled 'Callide C explosion secrecy beyond a farce as forensic engineer blocked from answering questions'. Who is this forensic engineer? It is Sean Brady. There is a difference in the information from CS Energy and from the government as to whether he was employed by the government to conduct that review. On 11 June 2021 the CS Energy website says 'Forensic engineer Dr Sean Brady has been engaged to lead an

external, independent investigation and review on the incident on unit C4 at CS Energy's Callide Power Station last month.' If CS Energy put out that information then why, all of a sudden, are they stopping Sean Brady from releasing the report?


Mr Bennett: It's a cover-up!

Mr HEAD: It is a complete cover-up. It is the Callide cover-up. Ultimately it is the C4 explosion and mismanagement of the grid that has led to higher electricity prices in this state. It is an absolute disgrace. There was plenty more in that article, but unfortunately I will not have time to go into it. It is in the *Australian*. I gave the title so members can find it and have a read and they will see the dodgy behaviour of this Labor government.

I want to talk about electricity prices in the electorate of Callide. In the electorate of Callide we only have one electricity provider, Ergon Energy. The government is making out that there is cheap electricity in Queensland. On 30 June 2023, price per kilowatt hour was 22.135 cents. As the minute hand ticked past midnight and we hit 1 July 2023, the price per kilowatt hour was 30.227 cents. That is a 40 per cent increase in a matter of minutes under this Labor government. There was a 20 per cent increase in the service fee as well. That is the fundamental retail price of electricity in Queensland.

The Labor government is taking money out of your back pocket and giving it back to you to subsidise that increase and hide their failures in electricity in Queensland. Under their own policy in the bill that we are currently debating, the rebate will run out very quickly for many Queenslanders. When Queenslanders get their bill in about March of next year, when that \$1,000 and the \$300 from the feds runs out, what will their electricity bill be? It will be the most expensive electricity bill Queenslanders have ever paid. The government is going on about how cheap electricity is. Between 1 July and the election, Queenslanders will not pay much on their electricity bill. Right after the election it will be the highest electricity bill Queenslanders have ever paid thanks to the failures of the Miles Labor government.

In amongst all of this, as the electricity grid has shifted dramatically, the government is talking about a job security guarantee for workers. Ultimately, that job security guarantee will include relocation packages. At the end of the day, all the Labor government wants to do is get the workers at Callide and Kogan Creek power stations to pack their bags and move somewhere else. Where does that leave those communities? It leaves them behind. It goes to show that, once again, Labor does not care about rural Queensland, it does not care about regional Queensland and it does not care about fixing the fundamental failures in the electricity grid in Queensland. The LNP is committed to getting Queensland back on track. If Queenslanders want to see Queensland back on track, the best thing they can do is show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (8.34 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. We know that families are feeling the demands of increased household bills as national cost-of-living pressures impact households. When I speak with staff and volunteers at any of our 128 government funded neighbourhood centres across the state, the story is all too familiar. More and more people are turning to support services to help make ends meet. Whether that be for extra food support, financial literacy and resilience services, emergency relief or the many other services available, the number of Queenslanders presenting for assistance has been increasing dramatically since the pandemic and often it is individuals and families that have never turned to support services for help before.


The new Miles Labor government is committed to taking the pressure off families, which is why we are delivering the biggest cost-of-living package in Queensland's history, including more than \$2.5 billion in cost-of-living relief through electricity rebates. From 1 July this year, every eligible residential Queensland household will see a \$1,000 lump sum credit on their next electricity bill which will be applied automatically. For typical residential customers across Queensland, the \$1,000 rebate may represent around half of their estimated annual electricity bill in 2024-25, meaning most Queenslanders may not pay anything on their first electricity bill after 1 July 2024 and may not pay another bill until 2025. On top of this record energy rebate, the recently announced federal government \$300 electricity rebate means that eligible residential Queensland households will receive \$1,300 off their annual electricity bill in 2024-25. This combined rebate will be welcome relief to many Queenslanders wherever they live.

Whilst I was in Winton just last week, I spoke with Helen and Shannon from the Winton Neighbourhood Centre and I heard firsthand, as I have from people in my own electorate of Algeria and beyond, that this energy rebate will make a huge difference to families and help relieve some of

the pressures so many are experiencing. In addition to the \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate, vulnerable households—those, for instance, with a Queensland Seniors Card, Services Australia or Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card—are eligible for an extra rebate of \$372.20, meaning vulnerable households will receive a combined \$1,672.20 in cost-of-living relief from the Miles Labor government and the federal Labor government, something that I know will help many seniors across the Algester electorate, including 82-year-old Wendy from Acacia Ridge who was close to tears when we spoke about the electricity rebates coming her way from the Miles government.

An estimated 205,000 small businesses may be eligible for the \$325 small business rebate in Queensland. This includes sporting clubs, community organisation, microbusinesses, social enterprises and charities. Combined with the recently announced federal government small business rebate, eligible small businesses will receive \$650 off their power bills in 2024-25. The Miles Labor government is able to put more money back in the pockets of Queenslanders because we are taking on multinational mining companies and keeping our energy assets in public hands.

All of this is at risk if the LNP ever get their way. That is why we are bringing this cost-of-living relief through a supplementary appropriation bill. We want to protect this rebate from any future government revoking or reducing the rebate. We know that the LNP want to cut progressive coal royalties and the direct cost-of-living relief they provide. The Leader of the Opposition is already on the record saying he does not support Queensland's progressive coal royalties. Given the chance, he will side with his multinational mates over Queenslanders getting their fair share of record coal profits. Under the LNP, electricity prices increased by 43 per cent. That was after it had promised to reduce electricity bills by \$120. The LNP's record speaks for itself. It cannot be trusted with Queenslanders' electricity bills and that is why only the Miles Labor government will put Queenslanders first. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (8.39 pm): I rise to support the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. In my conversations with Redlanders last weekend, at the shopping centre or at the markets, or last week while doorknocking and calling locals to make sure that particularly our seniors are getting the right level of rebate, nobody is not excited to be receiving at a minimum \$1,000 off their electricity bill from 1 July. I do not think—


Ms King: Very happy in Pumicestone.

Ms RICHARDS: Queenslanders are very excited about receiving that \$1,000, because it will make a huge difference in what are really challenging times, whether talking about grocery prices or the mortgage interest rates of the big banks that are putting pressure on households. This \$1,000 will make a huge difference. For my seniors community and those on concessions, the extra \$372 is massive. I thank the Treasurer for coming out to the Redlands and hosting a cost-of-living summit with me. He heard firsthand some of the challenges for people in the Redlands and what they look like. I am really pleased that this \$1,000 is coming and that we can ensure we can as quickly as we can put that money back into the budgets of our families and our seniors. That is good news.

I do not think anybody can step away from the fact that we can only do this because of our progressive coal royalties. They are Queenslanders' resources. Queenslanders rightly deserve to benefit and not see those profits of the big mining companies sent overseas. We should be using our resources to support Queenslanders and Queensland families. On this side of the House we will never step away from that. We will never shy away from making sure that Queenslanders benefit from Queensland resources and not overseas parties. I do not think there is a Redlander in my patch who does not 100 per cent agree that Queenslanders should be benefiting from Queensland's resources and that we should be the beneficiaries of great coal prices. I say to the Treasurer again; 'Thank you very much for coming out to the Redlands.'

When we talk about electricity prices and about risks, I want to talk about nuclear power. The candidate for Oodgeroo is clearly on the public record in terms of her burning desire for nuclear and what that looks like. Every piece of science backs in the fact that nuclear is the most expensive form of energy. There is no doubt about that. When we talk about catastrophic events—and we have heard a number of contributors talk about the Callide event—imagine if that catastrophic event involved a nuclear power plant? That is the real risk that the LNP poses. As I said, Amanda Stoker is clearly on the record around her support of nuclear power. We know that nuclear needs water. We know that Redlands has probably one of the biggest coastlines in the state of Queensland when we take into account our islands. The real threat to energy prices is the LNP and its members' passion for nuclear. Dutton is clearly on the record in terms of where his support is.

I am really proud of this bill. I support it 100 per cent. It is the Miles Labor government that is doing the right thing by Queenslanders to make sure we put money back in our families' pockets. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (8.43 pm): I rise to speak on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill. I do not oppose giving relief for the cost-of-living crisis. However, we need to be honest. This subsidy is the direct result of the government mismanaging electricity prices in Queensland. Under Labor, Queenslanders are experiencing the sharpest cost-of-living increases in the nation. In 2023 electricity went up 19.9 per cent—the highest in the nation. Health costs were up 6.7 per cent—the highest in the nation. Transport costs were up 4.2 per cent—the highest in the nation. Rent was up 8.4 per cent, insurance was up 18.5 per cent and sports participation costs were up 7.4 per cent. Queenslanders are being slugged by exorbitant prices being made worse by Labor. It is Labor which allowed prices to get out of control.

The bill is a temporary bandaid solution for a problem which has been exacerbated by Labor policies, mismanagement, cover-ups and incompetence. The government is now using taxpayers' funds to fix a political problem. Some \$2.5 billion of taxpayers' dollars is being redirected to help ease the pain caused by Labor's policies. That \$2.5 billion could have gone towards many desperately needed projects and upgrades in Gympie which have been delayed, ignored or pushed into the too-hard basket. That \$2.5 billion could have gone towards Gympie's desperately needed new hospital, upgraded and delivered new police stations at Rainbow Beach and Imbil, delivered on time our fire and rescue station, fixed our deteriorating state roads, delivered overtaking lanes on the Tin Can Bay Road, upgraded the Rainbow Beach Road and Mary Valley Highway and provided a new and much needed multipurpose sport and entertainment facility.


The fact that the government has introduced this relief measure proves it has created an untenable situation for many Queenslanders. Last year, Queenslanders had significantly greater power price increases than any other state or territory. Queenslanders paid nearly 20 per cent more in their power bills—triple the national average. The complete inability to properly maintain our state owned power assets has made these rebates necessary. The failure at Callide power plant and bringing it back online is directly contributing to our increased prices. The Australian Energy Regulator found that in the two years since the Callide explosion underlying wholesale power prices increased 135 per cent. For more than 1,000 days the government has done everything possible to cover-up what happened.

Whistleblowers have said that chronic underfunding in maintenance caused the explosion. It is not surprising. For years the government has failed to adequately maintain and upgrade the network, with Curra residents weekly experiencing the fallout from an unreliable system. The government claims the proposed Borumba pumped hydro project will put downward pressure on electricity prices. There is a lot of spin and self-congratulations about the project. This week the minister said in an answer to my question that Borumba will not be putting any power into the grid until 2030—that is another six years and assumes the project will run on time. No-one knows how much the taxpayer will pay for what is claimed to be the largest infrastructure project in the history of the state. The government arrogantly says 'Trust us'. It stubbornly refuses to release the business case. Residents of the Gympie region and the state need to see the business case to get a better understanding of the cost of the project. It does not account for anything.

Earlier this month the National Energy Regulator found that our electricity costs are soaring while they are falling in the rest of the country. It said that our energy costs have soared 75 per cent to \$118 per megawatt hour in the first three months of this year. The rest of Australia had an eight per cent decrease to \$76. The subsidy does nothing about fixing the problem of high retail power prices. Canstar Blue reveals our average energy plan offers of \$1,969 are significantly more expensive than New South Wales at \$1,827 or Victoria at \$1,571. The consumer price index data shows our electricity costs skyrocketed 19.9 per cent compared to a 6.6 per cent increase in New South Wales, 8.6 per cent in Victoria and a national average of 6.9 per cent.

The government has refused to investigate its direct role and culpability in pushing up the cost of living of Queenslanders. It has refused to investigate its role in increasing electricity, transport, insurance and water costs. Traffic congestion from a lack of road maintenance and failure to deliver the road network we need has increased our fuel bills, not enough housing has driven up rent, and housing prices and government fees and charges such as car registrations are increasing higher than inflation.

I welcome any relief to address Labor's cost-of-living crisis. However, this is a blatantly cynical move by a desperate government which refuses to address its role in increasing our cost of living. I do not oppose the bill.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (8.49 pm): Labor's cheaper power bill does what it says on the tin: it will deliver cheaper power right across Queensland. Our Miles Labor government is taking a huge \$1,000 off families' power bills, the federal Albanese Labor government tipped in an extra \$300 to take that support to \$1,300, and senior and concession card holders will get a massive total of \$1,672 off their power bills, with our hardworking small businesses benefiting too with \$650 off their power bills. In Pumicestone our power bill rebates mean that most families will not pay a power bill until 2025, if then. I have spoken to seniors who have told me that they are expecting the rebate to last them until 2026.

We all know that the cost of living is tough at the moment, so this \$1,000 will make a big, big difference. From pensioners stretching to cover groceries to working mums scrimping to pay for winter uniforms, this rebate will help every household in our community when they need it the most. We can only deliver this rebate because Labor kept our power generators in public hands and because Labor made multinational resource companies share their record profits with Queenslanders. As a Labor MP, I believe that all Queenslanders should share in the wealth of Queensland resources. Unlike the LNP, Labor will put households' bottom lines ahead of multinational mining companies' bottom lines every day of the week.


The LNP's leader will not come clean with Queenslanders, but in a performance that was mealy-mouthed, even by LNP standards, the member for Broadwater promised the resources sector that they could 'take the LNP's policy to the bank'. That is the LNP's right-wing priorities at work: more money in the bank for multinational mining companies, less money off the power bills of everyday Queenslanders. That is what Queenslanders can bank on from the LNP if they are ever elected—a big fat zero off their power bills.

Queenslanders though can bank on our Miles Labor government keeping our energy assets publicly owned—always. Queenslanders can bank on our Miles Labor government making big mining companies pay their fair share of their record profits. Queenslanders can bank on Labor's record-breaking investments to support households with cost of living when they need it the most, but all of this is at risk.

Who can forget that the LNP sat in this House and voted against public ownership of Queensland's energy assets? It is in their DNA. If the LNP are elected in October, they will sell off our power generators, they will send our state into energy poverty and they will rule out all future power rebates into the future. Over and over the LNP have shown that they are the biggest risks to Queenslanders' budgets, particularly in my electorate of Pumicestone, but cutting cost-of-living support is not the only risk that the LNP pose to Queenslanders and the people of Pumicestone. The last time the LNP took power they really did take power: Queenslanders' energy bills went up by 43 per cent. They wanted to turn off generators to keep power prices high because they wanted to sell off those generators to the highest bidder.

Right now the LNP should be focused on the cost-of-living pressures that Queenslanders are facing, but they are not. We have seen it play out time and time again in the media lately. The LNP are focused on fighting their culture war to mothball our cleaner, cheaper renewable power sources and spend billions building the most expensive, the slowest, the least proven and the most dangerous form of energy—nuclear energy.

The LNP have a long history of touting nuclear power around my electorate of Pumicestone. We have seen their plan spelled out in detail to put nuclear power generators around Moreton Bay. That is a shame and a disgrace. Bribie locals know that the biggest risk to their slice of paradise is the LNP building a nuclear power plant in Moreton Bay. I can tell the LNP this: the people of Pumicestone are absolutely united in their resistance to any nuclear power plants in Moreton Bay, just as they are absolutely united in their support for our cheaper power bill. I am proud to commend Labor's cheaper power bill to Queenslanders and to this House.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (8.54 pm): I am pleased to be supporting the cheaper power bill in this House tonight. I want to congratulate the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer for this initiative to make sure that this important cost-of-living measure is locked in—baked in—for people right across the state of Queensland.


I know that the issues of cost of living are highly important to the people of Sandgate. I have been hearing that firsthand from people right across the electorate, as I also know Bisma Asif, the Labor candidate for Sandgate, has been hearing these issues right across the electorate. As we have been out knocking on doors, as we have been out at mobile offices, as we have been out attending local community events, we have been hearing firsthand from many people how important cost of living is.

That is why it was particularly lovely that last Wednesday week Bisma and I were able to attend the Sandgate senior citizens and we took great pleasure in announcing to that group the announcement made by the Miles Labor government and by the Treasurer of that important cost-of-living rebate—\$1,000 for every household and, most importantly, and most particularly for that group, the extra \$372 for pensioners. Before some other announcements were made, the rebate came to a total of \$1,372 for most of the people whom we were talking to at the Sandgate senior citizens. They welcomed that absolutely. It was welcomed by a spontaneous round of applause and acknowledgement of how important this measure will be to those people in our community who are doing it tough.

Since then Jim Chalmers, the federal Treasurer, announced in his budget the additional \$300 rebate in the form of the energy bill relief coming from the Commonwealth government. That will mean that so many people across our community will not be paying electricity bills not just through to 2025 but perhaps through to 2026 for some people who have lower bills. This is a really successful measure. I want to acknowledge how it would not happen without our progressive coal royalties. The Miles government commitment to progressive coal royalties has made this measure possible. It has made this opportunity to provide this cost-of-living relief possible. It is going to be delivered to an estimated 2.2 million households that could be eligible for that cost-of-living rebate in 2024-25.

I also want to particularly acknowledge—and this legislation provides for—the 205,000 small businesses that might be eligible for the small business rebate. I particularly want to acknowledge that that includes not-for-profit community organisations like the Sandgate RSL Sub Branch, which when these announcements were made were really keen to talk to Bisma Asif and I just to clarify whether this applied to them. I was very pleased we could provide that information to assure them that it does apply to them.

Finally, I want to reassure those people who might express some concerns around the inflationary impact of such a measure. That is the beauty of the way this is being delivered. ABS data shows that the government's cost-of-living rebate last year of \$550 actually contributed to electricity prices being 9.5 per cent lower over the year to the March quarter in 2024. As a consequence, Queensland Treasury estimates that the \$1,000 rebate alone could detract one percentage point from measured annual inflation. This is deflationary, and that is just what our economy needs at this point in time. I absolutely commend the bill and congratulate the Treasurer and the whole of the Miles government for bringing this cost-of-living measure forward.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (8.58 pm): I rise to speak on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. The purpose of the bill is to provide almost \$2.3 billion in additional appropriation from consolidated revenue to provide funding for rebates for power bills to support the cost-of-living relief in Queensland households and businesses. The energy rebate provides \$1,000 to Queensland households and \$325 to small businesses, all of which will be applied automatically to eligible electricity accounts. I sincerely hope that 'eligible small businesses' include sole traders as well. Also, why small business was not given the full \$1,000 rebate is anyone's guess.

The bill's documentation states, 'Queensland families are experiencing a higher cost of living due to global pressures.' I have talked to people in my electorate. They are going backwards \$300 to \$400 a week. I do not know how far this is going to go for some of them. According to Queensland Treasury, cost-of-living support is a key priority for the Miles government, all of which is good to know given Foodbank Queensland's announcements earlier this year that more Queenslanders than ever now reaching out for support and access to food relief.

The charity said it is finding people in secure rental accommodation, dual-income families and mortgage holders who are experiencing food insecurity sometimes going hungry, missing a meal or going whole days without eating. One lady in my electorate said she had not eaten for three days. The soaring cost of electricity is putting an extra burden on families and small businesses in my own area, most of whom were already doing it tough. This is a small sugar hit to the community. If the government were doing its job we would have an affordable cost of living so we would have this all the time.

I remember that for two years at least farmers in my area were telling me they had been forced to dip into their super to pay their soaring electricity bills and had to change what they eat and how they cook to keep bills down. Other people I have spoken to recently have taken to eating cold food so they do not have to use electricity or gas to heat it up. They are sitting in the dark at night-time and do not watch television. Having grown up in the Queensland of the 1980s and 1990s, it reminded me of the South Sea Island communities—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Members, there is too much noise going on in the chamber.

Mr ANDREW: Reasonably priced electricity is an expectation. That is what should be provided. Let's not pretend it is just electricity costs that are skyrocketing. Rents and interest rates have skyrocketed and insurance costs have increased up to 30 per cent per year. Water costs, fuel costs—the lot, they are all skyrocketing. The fact is that Queenslanders now pay some of the highest electricity costs in the world. Thanks to the Queensland Labor government and its fast-tracked green energy policies, like some of the hydro they are putting in our area, electricity prices are not going down any time soon. If the Queensland government was serious about sorting out the cost-of-living crisis—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, can I please ask you to take your chitchat outside the chamber.

Mr ANDREW:—they would have been fighting harder on these issues every single day for the past four years, but we have not seen any of that. After all, these cost-of-living pressures did not arise overnight. Labor has had many opportunities to address the issue and has consistently failed to do so. It is a sugar hit before an election. With regard to electricity, it is about getting suppliers to deliver lower prices quickly. The critical short-term key element is to get an increased supply of wind power working towards cutting prices—not, as is the case today, cutting the supply of base load power, which then forces prices higher.

The stakes of this rebate are high, not only for the households benefiting from new policies but also politically for the Queensland government. The prospect of power outages during a cost-of-living crisis is not what you want when you are facing an already unhappy electorate. Stakeholders raised issues in relation to the broad nature of the payment, recommending that the payment be more targeted to assist vulnerable households and those facing financial hardship. That would be difficult, as firstly the government would have to identify who is and who is not facing financial hardship. That is something that could prove highly embarrassing, since I am quite sure there are far more Queenslanders in dire straits financially than anyone in the government will admit.


Stakeholders also raised concerns that the payments would worsen inflation. As a cost-push influence, this is very doubtful. The amount will hardly be noticed by most middle to high income earners, and I consider it unlikely to have an impact on their spending or inflation. Besides, the inflationary impact can only really be judged by how it was financed, and amid the massive overall increase in spending we are seeing in Queensland that is impossible to dissect. Paradoxically, the government claims its universal rebate payments will reduce inflation. To say that more spending reduces inflation seems a bit absurd to me.

Meanwhile, the Queensland government is no closer to fixing the worsening price of electricity, which just keeps pushing interest rates, rents and energy costs higher. This is all courtesy of Labor's vision for transitioning Queensland into a renewable energy superpower while pouring billions of taxpayer funds into new economy industries. According to the Treasurer, the rebates will be funded by our coal royalties, which last year amounted to some \$19 billion. Queensland is fortunate indeed to have a coal industry that allows it to be so generous to its population. It does, however, beg the question: what will future Queensland governments do?

According to a working paper by the ANU's Tax and Policy Transfer Institute, royalty revenue from coal will never be replaced by royalties from renewable energy. What would be the point of extracting royalty payments from an industry that would not even exist if it were not for massive subsidies from the government? The paper lists alternative options for other revenue-raising options which include: carbon pricing, electronic road user pricing, wider use of progressive royalties, the use of industry levies as applied to Australia's agricultural sector and the generation of revenue from government co-investments. There is a lot to unpack in all of that, but let's just say it is highly unlikely that any future state government will be nearly so willing or able to dish out billions of dollars in electricity cost rebates to future struggling Queenslanders.

Treasury also advised that the bill was introduced on 2 May 2024 to ensure funding for this cost-of-living initiative can be appropriated in a timely manner, promoting transparency for this significant expenditure. It is strange they make such a feature of promoting transparency for this significant expenditure. It is almost an admission that transparency has been missing in action when it comes to all the other billions of dollars of significant expenditure the government has taken on in recent years. The phrase 'timely manner' also raises questions.

There are two questions every Queenslander needs to ask themselves (1) what and who has caused Queensland's electricity prices to skyrocket; and (2) would the Miles Labor government be handing out \$2.2 billion worth of electricity rebates if it were not up for re-election in a few months? Apart from all that, I have no doubt Queenslanders will gladly accept the help they can get from the government at this time. Far be it from me to begrudge them receiving a helping hand, so I do not oppose the bill. I think the government can do better across the board. This is going to really hurt people in the future when it all comes home to roost. Good governance all of the time makes everything affordable, right across the board. It needs to be targeted in that respect as well.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (9.06 pm): I will respond to the member for Mirani with regard to what is happening with the global economy, because what happens to the global economy impacts us in Queensland. There is a war on the European continent. There are conflicts across the world. There are emerging nations seeking Australian coal and coal is being sold at a higher price on the international market. It is a more competitive market. Because coal is being sold at a higher price, we know that multinationals are making more money and that more money is going overseas to foreign investors.

This side of the chamber does not support multinational foreign investors raking in billions and billions; we support everyday Queenslanders. We support the mums, the dads, the battlers and the workers. We support the vulnerable, we support the pensioners and we support those who need a good Labor government on their side. We also understand there are factors outside of our control, and we need to ensure we deliver what is best for those Queenslanders. One of the best ways we can help is by ensuring that those progressive coal royalties are going back into the pockets of everyday Queenslanders so they can better budget for their households.

When I am out doorknocking, at the markets, in my mobile office or in the shopping centre, people tell me that when groceries are more expensive they will put less fuel in the car. When petrol is more expensive they think about what appliances they will run at home because of the electricity. This \$1,000 off the power bills of everyday Queenslanders will allow them to better budget and provide for their families. Pensioners who go to the big supermarkets will not have to buy that little bit extra for their neighbour who cannot afford the outrageous prices at the supermarkets. This is about addressing a whole range of factors that are putting pressure on everyday Queenslanders.

This is what the Queensland Labor government is doing because we back in Queenslanders. We are very proud to be the only government in Australia, at a state or territory level, that is putting this sort of record investment back into Queensland households. It is exactly what we do. What do we know the threat is? We know the threat is the LNP! It is a threat to everything. Whether it is health care, jobs or education, the LNP is a threat to every single thing that Queenslanders need to move forward.

Mr Zanow interjected.

Mr SMITH: I notice that someone in the back corner is being very chirpy, but he does not have the courage or the confidence to get on the speaking list. He has been chirping away from the back, yet I do not see him on the speaking list. I do not see him on the speaking list, but I welcome him to speak. I reckon it would be pretty fun. If they let Callide speak but do not let that bloke speak, how bad is he?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Bundaberg.

Mr SMITH: Brother, come on. Get to your feet.


Mr ZANOW: Madam Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence at that comment.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, the member has taken personal offence. Do you withdraw?

Mr SMITH: I withdraw and I apologise.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, I ask you to please refer to members by their correct title.

Mr SMITH: I will, and I apologise for inferring that the member for Ipswich West is in any way like the member for Callide. We are building a new hospital in Bundaberg, making sure the big multinationals pay their fair share and ensuring that teachers and nurses still have a job after October, but the greatest threat to every single Queenslander is the LNP. The government that is there for the people—that will fight every single day for them, their family and their household budget—is, of course, the Labor Miles government.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (9.10 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cheaper power bill. I commend not only the Premier but also the Treasurer for making sure that the cost of living


is on the agenda and for their leadership in the matter that we are debating this evening. It does not matter where I go throughout Ferny Grove, addressing the cost of living is at the forefront of the minds of my constituents. Once again, it is a matter that only Labor governments address and it is in times like these that Queenslanders and Australians rely upon Labor governments.

This is very simple: households are facing cost-of-living pressures. While the causes may be complex, the Miles government's approach is very simple. To support Queenslanders financially, we are directly applying a \$1,000 rebate to every household power bill. It is great to see the Albanese government applying an additional \$300 to the \$1,000 from the Miles government to assist people with cost-of-living expenses. These rebates will help to ease financial pressures on hardworking families amid national cost-of-living pressures.

The reason we can provide this financial support is very simple. It is because we have taken on the multinational mining companies and that allows us to provide direct financial relief to Queensland households. Those opposite would never have had the appetite for this fight. They would have waved the white flag on the cost of living and that has been demonstrated in the past. The LNP would have allowed super profits to be sent offshore instead of into the pockets of Queensland families, where they are needed the most. Only Labor governments truly understand what it takes to support households that are doing it tough.

When I was in the Senate, the federal Labor government supported millions of Australians through direct financial assistance during the global financial crisis. This is identical on this occasion. That targeted support not only helped those doing it tough; it helped Australians avoid a recession, unlike much of the developed world. The Miles government is carrying on this proud tradition by helping those whom the LNP turn their back on. The Miles government will forever make sure that these measures are met.

We know that, because of the Miles government's generous rebates, Queensland households and small businesses continue to pay amongst the lowest prices for electricity in this country. Make no mistake: we are determined to keep putting downward pressure on Queenslanders' energy bills. We are determined to safeguard energy bill rebates from changes under a future LNP government. A future LNP government would target our energy rebates to claw back money from households, which is why we are legislating it now. We know that, deep down, the LNP is not really committed to the public ownership of our energy-producing assets. Cutting, sacking and selling are completely in their DNA. We know what happened when the LNP was last in power in Queensland: energy bills went up 43 per cent. The Miles Labor government understands the pressures that Queensland households are facing. It is why we are delivering unprecedented cost-of-living support for Queenslanders now and into the future. We believe that Queenslanders own the natural resources and that the revenue they generate should benefit all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (9.14 pm): As we have heard, this bill provides some welcome cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders, but let's look at this carefully. In this financial year, some \$2.27 billion is being appropriated for a cost-of-living payment delivered through electricity bills, rolled out to Queensland households from 1 July 2024, with each receiving \$1,000. All Queensland customers classified as residential under the National Energy Retail Law who are individually metered with an energy retailer or embedded network electricity supplier will be eligible. This means those not in hardship will also receive the rebate. Happily, the \$372 payment that was provided as a supplement to last year's electricity rebate will continue for those on concessions, such as those with seniors cards and healthcare cards. As well, eligible Queensland small businesses will receive a \$325 small business rebate. I have spoken to people in my community and they are deeply appreciative of this.

Queenslanders who were already under hardship pre-COVID have borne the brunt of its ongoing fallout, including the outrageous prices of basics such as food and inflation higher than it has been for years. Rents continue to climb and interest rates are pushing up mortgage repayments. The stress is felt every day of every month by those Queenslanders. Our residents are facing enormous financial and emotional difficulties, leading to a decrease in physical and mental health.

The growth in GDP per person for Queensland was zero last year, which was lower than all other states except the Northern Territory. Yes, some relief is better than none. However, the \$1,000 payment is a blunt instrument. Those who have no need for the rebate, such as all of us MPs in this chamber, get as much as those in dire need. If an analysis were done of that \$2 billion-plus cost, how much more may have been available for those in genuine need? As I have done before, I will be putting my \$1,000 directly towards assisting my residents who are in hardship but are not eligible via fuel vouchers or otherwise.


QCOSS and St Vincent de Paul welcome the intent of the bill. However, they also raised the equity impact of a flat payment and of using the electricity mechanism to identify eligible households. Why? Because it does not flow to Queenslanders whose premises are not separately metered or who do not receive a separate electricity bill, as many have power included as part of their rent. Further, those in desperate need, including Queenslanders experiencing homelessness or living in supported accommodation, will not benefit from the rebate.

Queensland Treasury said that it cannot target as required because the Queensland government does not hold, nor will the federal government provide, income details in relation to individuals and that the current method is the best available. If this were the first time using this approach, that excuse may make sense. However, Treasury said that delivering cost-of-living support via electricity bill relief is a long-standing policy initiative that multiple governments have utilised. Surely over all those years, and maybe decades, improvements could have been made. We have all kinds of data on Queensland residents and we cooperate with the Commonwealth in incredible detail in all kinds of policy areas. Surely we should have been able to figure this out by now.

Despite the support provided by state and federal governments through the various energy cost rebate schemes, St Vincent de Paul found that these are difficult for low-income families to navigate and assistance to do so would be helpful. They also identified other areas for much needed support. This included the rollout of household clean technology such as small-scale solar storage and energy-efficiency upgrades. Every year the demand for additional support grows, including for medium-income families, in back-to-school expenses, financial counselling services and access to no-interest loans.

Cost-of-living relief through rebates and subsidisation appears to be our new norm and we need to ask why. I thank the member for Maiwar and other members who have been unpacking some of this for us. We have to ask ourselves: at what point will Queenslanders and Australians not be reliant on these measures in order to sustain them? Where are the investigations that go beyond supermarket prices? What about the outrageous cost of fuel and insurance? The fact that neither side of this House raised fuel during a motion regarding the cost of living, especially when it is a leading contributor to household stress, not only raises more questions but also raises eyebrows in the community.

Finally, I thank the minister, the department, the committee and the secretariat for their work on this bill and to all who participated in the inquiry. Before I finish, I want to thank the Leader of the House for the extended time, on top of our extensions today, which has actually allowed many more of us to speak on this bill.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (9.19 pm): 'I could cry with gratitude for the power bill support from the government. It helps us so much.' 'Thank you, so much appreciated.' 'This will help my family. Our home loan repayments have just gone up so much. This will help so much.' 'Well done, Miles government. This will help so many households.' 'I can afford to use my heater this winter.' 'It will really help me and my neighbours.' 'This means that I can afford to buy my grandkids a birthday present.' 'The rebate has really helped me pay my rent.' These are just a small sample of the comments I have received from constituents and business owners either face to face, in text messages or on Facebook.


I am absolutely thrilled to be standing here in support of the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. This bill might be small in pages but it is a mighty bill and is extremely well received by baysiders. This bill is providing urgent cost-of-living relief through rebates applied to power bills and is a direct result of the new Miles government's progressive coal royalties. We as a government want to provide this relief urgently to ensure that the rebates cannot be revoked or reduced.

This means that eligible households will now receive \$1,300, thanks to the Albanese government's \$300 energy bill relief. The Miles government has a longstanding policy of providing additional support for vulnerable Queensland households, which means a further \$372.20 for pensioners and Health Care Card holders. The rebate will automatically be applied in a lump sum from 1 July 2024. Embedded network customers, such as manufactured homes and caravan parks—which I have in my electorate—are eligible for the cost-of-living rebates, with the operator simply notifying the retailers of the number of households in their network. There is further support for small businesses, with a further \$325 for eligible businesses. The great news is that this includes sporting clubs, community organisations, microbusinesses, social enterprises and charities.

What this means to baysiders is that we are all going to benefit. For example, a small business operator, if eligible, will likely receive the rebate at their business and then at their home and then at the sporting club where their kids play sport. Again I say what a mighty bill this is. All of this just reinforces that we as a government are committed to taking pressure off families, like those families from the bayside, my neighbours and my friends.

We have taken on the multinational mining companies to take \$1,000 off the power bills of all Queenslanders. We now have, as I said, further support from the federal government. In addition to this immediate relief, we have a long-term vision to give Queenslanders the skills they need for the jobs that they want. We know and we have heard that the LNP will sell our power assets. They will sell our TAFEs, as they have tried to do in the past. Those opposite have yet to commit to progressive coal royalties. The leader of the LNP will hand billions back to mining companies and make cuts to our rebates as well as health and education. We know that the LNP cannot be trusted with Queensland's future.

On behalf of the many people I have spoken to, I want to absolutely support this mighty bill because I want to ensure that that birthday present can be bought. I thank the Treasurer and the Premier because that is what baysiders have asked me to do. I wholeheartedly support this bill because this is the Labor way.


 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (9.23 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the largest cost-of-living relief measure in Australia delivered by the Miles government. We are putting money back into Queensland households. We are helping ease the cost of living for Queenslanders. That is all at risk if there were ever an LNP government back in this state. It is very clear that the LNP does not support rebates. We have heard the member for Gympie describe it as a cash splash, as a waste of money. In 2013 the member for Clayfield said the LNP government could not afford to pay all Queensland households a rebate. As the Treasurer said this morning, they were saying, 'You get nothing. No rebates for you.' This was at a time when electricity prices were going up, yet what did they want to do when electricity prices were 'too low' in their opinion? According to the member for Nanango, the answer is you close down electricity turbines to raise the price. There is no doubt that if the LNP were ever in government they would push up power prices. They would rip away rebates.

Labor provides these rebates because we own the assets. We own the coal that is supplying the coal royalties. These are the same coal royalties that the LNP would doubtlessly roll back, and they told the multinational coal companies that they could take that promise to the bank. We also own the electricity assets—the poles, the wires, the major generators. These are the same assets the LNP wanted to sell in 2014. Let us not forget that they actually voted against the public ownership of these assets. Let us focus on the rebates from the Miles government. There is \$1,000 to each Queensland household. Add to that \$300 from the Albanese government.

A government member: Thanks, Albo!

Mr WHITING: Thank you, Albo; I take that interjection. On top of that, there is \$372 for vulnerable Queensland households. As we have heard many times today, many Queenslanders will not pay an electricity bill until 2025. Let us not forget the \$325 for small businesses. Once again, thanks go to the federal government for doubling that to \$650.

We know these rebates are working. We heard the Treasurer say this morning that we are the only state where the number of hardship payment plans is going down. That is a great achievement by this government. I want to finish by saying that Queenslanders deserve cheaper energy bills, and only the Miles government will deliver that. We are working hard to do the right thing for Queenslanders, and cost-of-living relief is our No. 1 priority. We are delivering the largest cost-of-living relief package in Australia, and that is why I commend this appropriation bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (9.26 pm): I rise to contribute to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. The bill provides that the Treasurer is authorised to pay an additional appropriation in the amount of \$2.2 billion from the Consolidated Fund. We heard in the media that the Treasurer said, 'If we have to borrow to deliver our cost-of-living measures, then that's what we'll do.' There you have it—cost-of-living relief from this Labor government is now on the credit card, and it will cost a lot more than \$2.2 billion because of the interest that will be accrued on this credit card. Labor is using the credit card to try to address their political problems.

This appropriation bill provides \$1,000 to be automatically credited to customer bills from 1 July 2024. That is nearly double last year's rebate. A \$325 credit for small business customers will continue, and I will come to that later. The LNP supports measures that provide cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders, but this is a bandaid solution to the cost-of-living crisis created and brought about by this tired, third-term Labor government. The LNP condemns the Labor government for their complete inability to properly maintain our state owned power assets which has made these rebates necessary.

Why did this government have to bring in this bill? It is because, under Labor, Queenslanders are experiencing the highest electricity price rises in the nation. Cost-of-living increases are out of control under this Labor government. In 2023, retail electricity prices in Queensland rose 19 per cent—

the highest in the nation, three times the national average. Why did this happen? One of the reasons is that this Labor government have failed to bring Callide C back online. There is not a better example of Queenslanders paying for Labor's failures than Labor's Callide catastrophe, which has unfolded under Premier Steven Miles' watch.

This week marks three years since the explosion occurred at Callide Power Station on 25 May 2021, yet Labor is still ducking and weaving from telling Queenslanders the truth. Thank goodness no-one was hurt on that site at that time. Whistleblowers have told the LNP opposition the chronic maintenance underfunding by the state government certainly contributed extensively to this explosion. Queenslanders deserve to know what went horribly wrong back in May 2021 at this power plant—


Dr Rowan interjected.

Ms LEAHY: I take the interjection from the member of Moggill, there is certainly a lack of accountability from this Labor state government. Queenslanders were promised an independent report by industry expert, Dr Sean Brady, into what happened. However, the energy minister is refusing to release this independent report and to tell Queenslanders the truth about what really happened. There really is a lack of accountability. It is so important to Queensland families because we know that Callide being out of service has reduced the available electricity supply and pushed up the electricity bills of Queensland families and businesses. It is in black and white from both the Auditor-General and the Queensland Competition Authority. In fact, the Federal Court had to order a fresh investigation into the explosion at Callide C, and that is a stunning indictment on the Labor government's culture of secrecy and cover-up. There is also action being taken by the Australian Energy Regulator alleging failures of the Labor government to comply with the performance standards of the Callide C Power Station.

When it comes to cost-of-living increases, this Labor government have a terrible, an absolutely shocking track record. Under Labor, Queenslanders are facing the steepest cost-of-living pressures in the country and it is harder than ever for families in Queensland to make ends meet. In 2023, Queensland copped huge living increases with: a 19 per cent increase in electricity, the highest in the nation; a six per cent increase in health costs, the highest in the nation; a four per cent increase in transport costs, the highest in the nation; an eight per cent increase in rent costs; and an 18 per cent increase in insurance costs. When we speak of that increase in insurance costs, that 18 per cent is particularly conservative.

I spoke to Anna on the weekend. She is a business owner in Charleville. Last year the insurance policy for her business cost her \$25,000 per annum—\$25,000 a year for one small business. This year, her insurance rose to \$35,000 in just 12 months. That is a 30 per cent increase. She could only get two quotes. She could barely get insurance at all on her small business. That sort of increase is something that no small business can sustain. Anna is looking down the barrel of having no insurance for her business. The \$325 credit on her electricity account falls well short of the \$10,000 insurance increase she is facing.

What is clear with this bill is that the Labor government's complete inability to properly maintain our state owned power assets has made these rebates necessary. For that reason, Queenslanders need to show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals) (9.33 pm): I rise to speak to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. I am proud to be part of the Miles government that is directly helping Queenslanders with their power bills. This bill will do exactly what it says on the cover: it will provide cheaper power bills to Queenslanders, meaning every single household will receive \$1,000 off their bill. Things like grocery prices and interest rates are putting pressure on people, so it is important that we help relieve that pressure, and that is exactly what this bill will do. The direct \$1,000 rebate coming from this government is complemented by the federal government's \$300 electricity rebate. This helps build on our nation-leading cost-of-living relief.


We can support all Queenslanders in this way for two reasons, which I am very happy and very proud to talk about. This rebate from the Miles Labor government is being paid for through our progressive coal royalties. Our progressive coal royalties make sure Queenslanders are given a fair share of the resources which belong to them, which means this government can give people that \$1,000 off their power bills.

We know people across Queensland are doing it tough, and the Miles government is there to support them with cost-of-living measures like this rebate. The only way we can do that is because of our progressive coal royalties. We know that the LNP do not back them and want to hand back billions of dollars to the multinational mining companies. That means there will be a budget black hole and it is Queenslanders who will suffer.

We also know that the LNP want to sell off our public assets. It is only this government that backs keeping our assets in public hands and we know those opposite certainly want to sell those. We know for a fact that those opposite wanted to sell Ergon. We know that under the LNP, power prices went up by 43 per cent and bills in regions went up by \$600 in just three years. By keeping our energy assets in public hands, we are able to help all Queenslanders with their power bills through the cost-of-living rebate. We are committed to keeping energy assets in the state's hands so that we can return dividends to Queenslanders to help them with their cost-of-living relief. The fact that we keep Ergon Energy in public hands also means that we can help regional Queenslanders.

Under the Community Service Obligation, in 2023-24 this government provided \$540 million to regional Queenslanders to help ensure people in the regions pay prices comparable to those in South-East Queensland. I will say that again: under the Community Service Obligation, we provide regional Queenslanders with funds to the tune of \$540 million annually to ensure people in the regions pay prices comparable to those in South-East Queensland. This is another way that we are helping with direct cost-of-living relief. If Ergon was sold off, as the LNP want to do, and have tried to do before, regional customers in places like Townsville could be slugged with bills 20 per cent higher than those in the south-east corner. It is this government that is backing all Queenslanders, including those in regions, with lower power bills, and we can only do that because of our progressive coal royalties, along with the fact that we will not sell our public assets to the highest bidder, unlike those opposite.

This bill locks in expenditure of our \$1,000 rebates to help people who are struggling, and I am proud to be part of the Miles Labor government entrenching this through Queensland's parliament. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (9.37 pm): I rise to support the cheaper power bill 2024 and to add how proud I am to be in this Miles Labor government to deliver this real change for households across the beautiful electorate of Stafford and, indeed, right across the state. This bill represents the commitment, indeed the values, of a Labor government that fundamentally cares about the daily lives of Queenslanders, particularly the most vulnerable. We are only able to do it because we have our energy assets in public hands. For those opposite, Queenslanders remember two words: Strong Choices. Some opposite have spoken about the \$1,000 rebate that the government is delivering with absolute disdain. They do not get it. They did not get it when they were in power, and they do not get it now. They have learnt nothing.

The \$1,000 is not alone. That does not include the \$300-plus for pensioners, the \$300 that the Albanese federal government is delivering—thanks, Albo—and the \$375 for eligible small businesses. These important payments, along with other crucial investments in our community, are being funded by a progressive coal royalties regime. Instead of sending profits to the multinational companies, we are putting the money back into the pockets of everyday Queenslanders, and I am proud to be part of that team. The opposition leader could actually show some leadership. He could just commit to the people of Queensland to continue the progressive coal royalty regime.

The people in my community know what is at stake, because without those royalties we are not going to get the 93 beds at the Prince Charles Hospital; we are not going to get new infrastructure in my local schools; we can say goodbye to free TAFE and say goodbye to free kindy for our kids. When those opposite talk about 'pruning' or 'having cuts, just not savage cuts', we in Stafford know what that means. It is sacking public servants, it is cutting local services and it is selling off our assets. Those opposite cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work and then took it to the election that they would do so again. They set up TAFE for privatisation under the QTAMA regime—legislation where TAFE, in some cases, were kicked out of their own property. That is the history of the LNP, and they have not changed. In fact, they promoted the opposition leader and the deputy opposition leader—two people who sat around the cabinet table when they sacked 14,000 Queenslanders—and then there was the flow-on effect for jobs when they made that move by taking an axe to the Queensland economy, including in our regional cities. Some 1,400 health workers in Metro North alone were sacked, 700 of them nurses—

Government members interjected.

Mr SULLIVAN: And the NGOs as well. That is their history and that is why we are really proud to be providing this really important payment to families in Stafford and right across the state who are doing it tough. I thank the Premier and Deputy Premier and Treasurer for bringing forward this significant measure and commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.41 pm): I have been listening intently to this debate as it has unfolded during the day and I wanted to put a couple of facts on the table, particularly for the member for Stafford. If he wants to talk about asset sales, the only party in

Queensland that has sold assets in this state is the Labor Party. Anna Bligh through her cabinet, of which there are still members in parliament, sold assets in the state of Queensland and they are trying to rewrite history. The fact is that those opposite are trying to put fear into the 2024 Queensland election campaign. Every speech by members of the Labor Party were all about instilling fear into Queenslanders. When a government gets desperate, fear is all they have—desperation is all they have—and we have seen it in their speeches today.

The member for Stafford talks about progressive coal royalties and how we did not support it. We voted for it in two budgets, and guess what, member for Stafford? Put it in the budget in a few weeks time and we will vote for it again. How many times does he want us on record supporting those initiatives and the payments and the infrastructure being built and tied to those taxation regime elements in the budget? Put it in the budget again and we will vote for it for a third time just in case he missed it in the last two years. Put the mental health levy in again and we will vote for it again, just like we did in the last budget.

This week I heard a member opposite say that we opposed the mental health levy. Rubbish! They are misleading Queenslanders because of their desperate attempts to instil fear into Queenslanders' minds and hearts, and that is disgraceful. Queenslanders are struggling. They are struggling with the costs of living caused by the Labor government. Let us look at the cost-of-living pressures in Queensland that our constituents are facing—electricity, groceries, fuel, mortgages, insurance, costs to do business in this state, the cost for small business. This is not just in my electorate of Kawana. I was speaking to small business owners in the member for Pine River's electorate in the last two weeks and they were talking to me about the cost of doing business in Queensland. Unfortunately, they say that, under a Labor government, it is becoming too expensive to keep their doors open in Queensland because of this Labor government.

If those opposite want to talk about history, let's talk about the history that the Labor Party sold the assets. If they want to talk about history, the LNP voted for progressive coal royalties regimes in the last two budgets and will do it again. We support the bill that we are debating today in terms of the \$1,000 rebate for Queenslanders because we know how tough Queenslanders are doing it because of the cost-of-living crisis caused by the Labor Party. A few weeks ago we saw a campaign launched by the union movement, and remember that they were surveying Queenslanders about the cost of living. Remember the big campaign on behalf of left-wing Labor members? They were surveying and data harvesting—'Tell us about the cost of living'—and then, all of a sudden, there was a cost-of-living announcement with a \$1,000 rebate rushed into the parliament. It just so happens that the union had done a survey and collected all of Queensland's database for that particular survey. I wonder why. We now know why: because the union movement data harvested to get this announcement out. The Labor Party will put fear into Queenslanders and say, 'The LNP are not going to support this. They're going to take it away.' No, we are not. That is why we have spoken in support of this rebate because we know the challenges facing Queenslanders. We know how tough Queenslanders are doing it right now because of the cost-of-living pressures and they need every bit of help they can get.

What is disappointing in the advertisements by the union movement and the Labor Party is that in those ads they have said—I have seen some Labor MPs do them—'Queensland—the cheapest electricity in the country', and I know that is not true. If you then go to the fine print it says 'after our rebates'. The reason the Labor Party is having to put huge rebates into Queenslanders' bank accounts is that, under the Labor Party, Queenslanders have suffered the highest growth in electricity prices and the highest cost of electricity in the country. Last year we saw a 19.9 per cent increase in electricity prices—three times the national average. That is why Queenslanders have been calling for more help and are desperate for more help. It is not just because the Labor Party thinks it is a great government that it is giving these rebates; it is absolutely needed across Queensland.

Under the Labor Party, the Callide Power Station has not been fully operational for over three years. The Auditor-General said that, if the Callide Power Station were fully operational, electricity prices would be cheaper in Queensland today. Imagine how much further this rebate would have gone had real electricity prices been even lower. There would have been a huge difference, but the Labor Party will not admit that under its policies, under its nine-year-old tired Labor government, Queenslanders are paying the highest electricity prices in the country. Last year there was a 19.9 per cent increase—three times the national average. The member for Stafford is shaking his head. Why is he doing that? Is someone misleading the House? We know that they are the statistics. We know that the national regulator has said that they are the statistics, but the Labor Party wants to rely on a statistic

with fine print and the fine print says 'after rebates'. I bet those opposite will even change their little brochure now and include the federal government's \$300 rebate so it says 'after the state and federal government rebates'.

Why do we have the highest electricity prices in the country? It is because we have a bad Labor government that has caused the cost-of-living crisis, has caused insurance prices to increase, has caused the cost of doing small business in Queensland to increase, has caused the cost of fuel across the country to increase and grocery prices to increase. All of these costs of living are higher under a nine-year-old Labor government. We absolutely support the rebates because Queenslanders are desperate. Every person living on the river here outside of parliament in the park, under the bridge, in their tents, in the cars across all of our electorates are owed this rebate by the Labor Party, because the Labor Party should apologise to those people for causing them grief in the first place. The Labor Party owe the people of Queensland an apology for causing the high cost-of-living pressures faced by all Queenslanders.

Mr Skelton interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Nicklin, you are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr BLEIJIE: I guarantee one thing to the member for Nicklin: the Kawana community is not going to the member for Nicklin for advice any time soon.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, please direct all comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: I can assure the member for Nicklin that I receive copious emails in my electorate office about the member for Nicklin. We do not have to get the emails because all one needs to do is look at the member's Facebook page as he leaves his comments up after 9 pm each night, but then takes them down after he attacks his own community, his own business community and his own constituents. He is forced to retract his own comments on his social media. If the member wants to make interjections or to have a crack at other members of parliament—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, direct your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: If the member for Nicklin wants to have a crack, I will debate the member for Nicklin on any of these issues any day of the week. I will debate the member for Nicklin on any of his social media posts any day of the week. Here is the protection racket.

Ms PEASE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask that you direct the member to come back to the title of the bill, please.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I remind you to stay within the long title of the bill.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Nicklin should apologise to his constituents for the huge—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana—

Ms PEASE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is the same point of order that I rose to previously. I point out that you did direct the member to go back to the long title of the bill and then—

Mr Bleijie: You did not let me finish what I was going to say.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, order! I will take some advice. Member for Kawana, you have 48 seconds left on the clock.

Mr Whiting interjected.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, order! I remind the member for Kawana to stay within the long title of the bill.

Mr BLEIJIE: On electricity prices the member for Nicklin should apologise to his constituents for being part of a bad Labor government that has increased electricity prices across Queensland and his electorate by 19.9 per cent in the last year—three times the national average. That is what he should apologise for. The member for Stafford talked about a black hole. Let's talk about a black hole in the budget, like a \$20 billion pumped hydro scheme in the Pioneer Valley that is unbudgeted, has no business case—

Mr SULLIVAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is not what I said. I did not say 'black hole'. I said 'Operation Boring'. The member's comments are personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw. I specifically said 'Operation Boring'.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, the member for Stafford takes offence at your comments. Will you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. There is a huge black hole coming for the Labor Party in the budget and that is the uncosted, no business case \$20 billion Pioneer Valley pumped hydro scheme. It is a hydro hoax. This Labor government does not deserve another term in office. The best thing that Queenslanders can do for the cost of living is to turf this Labor government out in 2024.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (9.52 pm): I do not know about the members opposite, but every single person in my electorate to whom I have spoken is really grateful for the \$1,000 they are going to get from this government. In my electorate, which would seem from the outside to be a fairly affluent electorate, some people are living on the poverty line. There are many people who, by most people's interpretation of living comfortably, would seem on the outside to be that way. Many are the people to whom a number of members have referred in this House as the people who have never known the welfare system before but they know it now. They are people who are struggling to pay their bills. I am knocking on doors and meeting parents with a double income who are going without meals so they can give their children meals. When I knock on their door and say they have \$1,000 from this government, not a single one of them says, 'I don't want it.'

Members opposite say they support this bill and then decry and demean every single person who is grateful for it. That shows the sort of people they are. I was in this parliament before the 2012 election when those opposite promised people who were struggling—pensioners and people who were on the breadline—that they were going to cut electricity bills by \$120. I was there. I spoke to people who said, 'I'm going to vote for them because of that.' Do honourable members know what happened then? When they were in government, energy bills went up by 43 per cent and now they demean the efforts of this government to assist people who are trying to make ends meet. They still have nothing to offer. They still have nothing to say about the real action they are going to take to address the problems that are facing so many Queenslanders. It is absolute hypocrisy for these people to come in here and make it sound like they are saving the day.

We hear about the wink and the nod, but we are yet to hear whether they are going to support coalmining royalties to not only fund these things that are making a difference to Queenslanders—cost of living is the biggest issue by far—but also support hospitals, schools and roads. We have had enough of this carry-on, enough of this demeaning and enough of this angst directed at us. We want to know what they are actually going to do for the people of Queensland. If they want to be the leaders, what are they actually going to do for people on the breadline? What are they going to tell people in my electorate? It is time.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (9.55 pm): I rise to contribute to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024. Like the Minister for Education and member for Bulimba, I too have been moving around my community in recent months speaking to thousands of residents. The No. 1 issue they raise with me is the national cost-of-living increases. Whether it be water, electricity, groceries, sporting goods, their rent or increased house repayments due to rising interest rates, the cost of living is hurting local families in my electorate of Mansfield. They understand that these factors, many of which are global, are impacting on their local cost-of-living issues every day.

Our local community centre has been inundated with requests for food and fuel support. That is why local families were thrilled with the news by the Miles Labor government pre budget of the \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate to be paid to every local household from 1 July. This is only possible because we own our electricity assets and infrastructure and we have been taxing the big mining companies a coal royalty tax, a methodology wholly supported by my community. In fact, many local residents have suggested to me that we should be taxing them more. They know who owns this asset and they understand its worth.

On Tuesday night, the news that the federal Labor government will add \$300 to the electricity rebate for every household further delighted many locals as a large number of households will not pay a cent for electricity well into 2025. This means the local families can pay some money off their credit card, buy their youngest a new pair of football boots or celebrate their child's birthday at the movies. The news was a welcome relief to many in my community such as Paul of Wishart, who is keen to fix a few things around the house that he had been putting off; John, who is keen to invest a little more money into his beekeeping hobby; or Ashley and Joel, who are raising a young family on 1½ incomes. The amount of \$1,300 will help immensely with the general daily costs of running their households. We are also extending the \$372 Queensland electricity rebate, meaning vulnerable households will see up

to \$1,672 off their electricity bill. There is also \$325 for small businesses, matched by the federal government, bringing the rebate to \$650. That is very much appreciated by the local businesses in my community.


The LNP cannot support rebates because they do not support coal royalties. They will cut direct cost-of-living support and take money away from Mansfield families. The Leader of the Opposition and the LNP will sell our power assets, our TAFEs as they have done in the past and our satellite hospitals. He will hand billions back to his mining company mates and make cuts to our rebates as well as to health and education. He cannot be trusted with Queensland's future. The LNP say they support this bill, but they fundamentally do not like rebates. In 2013 the LNP's treasurer, the member for Clayfield, said the government could not afford to pay all consumers an electricity rebate when household electricity prices rose by 22.6 per cent that year. The member for Clayfield tried to cut electricity concessions to 435,000 seniors and pensioners and had to backtrack after community outrage. As the local principal at the time I remember the community outrage in my electorate of Mansfield.

Only Labor truly understands the needs of our local families. The Miles Labor government is committed to taking pressure off our local families. Only Labor will deliver for the hardworking people of my electorate of Mansfield and my community knows it. I commend this bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms McMillan, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Comments by Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice, Apology


 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.00 pm): On 22 March 2024, the member for Glass House raised a matter of privilege regarding a statement I made on 20 March 2024. I wish to clarify my statements. The legislation passed on the voices without division and the Leader of the Opposition did not oppose progressive coal royalties during the debate. If I have inadvertently or unintentionally misled the House, I apologise.

CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION) BILL

Second Reading

Resumed on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (10.01 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill. As my colleagues in the LNP opposition have said, we will be supporting this bill. I acknowledge the need for cost-of-living support for people in my electorate of Southern Downs. I know many speakers before me on both sides of the House have spoken about the challenges that people are facing in terms of making ends meet. We all know that households are experiencing greater fuel costs, rent is up, as are interest rates, and groceries are more expensive. In country areas it is more so. We have to transport our groceries and our goods further, our services are more expensive, and that compounds the high expense of fuel. Along with childcare costs and education, the family income has been under pressure. That is something that I appreciate. People raise it with me and people in small business raise it with me when they talk about reduced demand and tough times for them as people with less money in their pocket are unable to spend as much as they would. I know that people will be pleased to receive the money that they will get.


I also acknowledge that there will be some support for small businesses. One of the difficulties for businesses in my electorate of Southern Downs is that they experience all of the extra costs that families and households do such as high electricity costs, high fuel costs, the cost of transportation and so forth. There is a baker in my electorate who has been experiencing very intermittent power supply. When you are a baker and you get up at 2 am to bake your pies, pastries and bread you need uninterrupted electricity. He invested in a 100 KVA generator for his bakery business at a cost of \$30,000. With the price of diesel as it is and the price of electricity as it is, it is much for muchness whether he runs his business on a diesel generator or off the electricity supply. I think that crystallises the difficulty that businesses are facing.

The member for Kawana made the point that these rebates may make electricity appear cheaper. With the quantities that are used by businesses such as farming operations and bakeries in my electorate the state simply would not be able to give rebates sufficient to compensate them for the extreme rise in electricity prices in recent years. If running a generator on diesel to run your business gets to be the same cost as running it off the electricity grid there really has to be something wrong.

Another difficulty in terms of cost for small and large businesses in my electorate is water. I am sorry to say that a very important business in my electorate of Southern Downs, Sweets Strawberry Runners, who produce a third of the strawberry runners for the strawberry industry in Australia—an incredibly important business—is closing down due to a combination of the high cost and unavailability of water—it is a business that would have been saved by the advent of Emu Swamp Dam—and the cost of electricity that they pay for refrigeration. That is a business that employed hundreds of people. I have been there and seen hundreds of people working on the strawberry runners in the paddocks. Because of the high costs that we are experiencing, that business is no more; those jobs are no more; and Australia has less food security as a result. If the cost of power rises we have seen in recent times was taken away—which cannot be compensated for by rebates in the amounts we are talking about with commercial use—that business would still be able to trade. We are losing a sawmiller in my electorate. I will be discussing this with my honourable friend the member for Condamine. The costs simply got too high: an environmental levy, the cost of electricity and the cost of transportation and diesel.


I understand that many people in my electorate of Southern Downs are doing it very tough. People are struggling to make ends meet with the family budget. People are struggling to pay their rent. Businesses are struggling to make enough to keep their staff on to pay their bills. It is a fact that parts of Southern Downs have some of the worst rental vacancies and rent rises in the state of Queensland. In the case of Warwick, that is largely, in my view, as a result of the MacIntyre Wind Farm project which has seen a flow of many workers into Warwick. Unfortunately, many people who have rented for many years without problem have been displaced and are now homeless.

I appreciate the difficulties my electorate faces. I am supporting this bill and the relief that it will provide to people who are struggling to pay their electricity bills and their household costs, but I say to the government that there needs to be a broader look at why electricity prices have risen so much—almost 20 per cent last year; which is three times the national average. There are not too many businesses that employ lots of people in my electorate who are celebrating the electricity landscape that they are facing at the moment.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (10.07 pm): The residents in my community are just so excited about our government's cost-of-living energy rebate. A \$1,000 credit onto every Queensland household's energy bill means that many households in my electorate will not pay a power bill until this time next year. It could not come at a better time. I have spoken with many residents in my electorate who have told me that they, like many Queenslanders, are struggling with cost-of-living pressures at the moment—people like Nicole from The Gap who recently pulled back some of her hours at work to focus on being at home a bit more for her teenage daughters, but with her mortgage going up 13 times in two years and needing to feed and provide for a family of five it has been incredibly stressful; or Mike in Bardon who told me that not having to even think about an energy bill now for a year means he can focus his attention more on building his small business; or Cat in The Gap who I doorknocked recently. Cat has a son in kindergarten and so is a beneficiary of both the \$1,000 energy rebate and the Miles government's free kindy. She was almost in tears when I turned up at her door.

Of course, you cannot please everybody all of the time. I did speak to a gentleman on the phone who did not think the \$1,000 credit was necessary, until I offered to connect him to some local charities who would welcome his \$1,000 donation. He then remembered a few extra things that he would like to purchase and thanked me for my advocacy with the Premier on delivering this important cost-of-living relief.


This \$1,000 credit on all Queensland household energy bills is only possible because we have made multinationals and resource companies pay their fair share of royalties after record profits delivering a projected additional \$9.4 billion over the first five years of implementation and, secondly, because, unlike those opposite, we have kept our energy assets in public hands so we can deliver this dividend directly to 5.5 million Queenslanders. This is all at risk under the LNP government because we know that the Leader of the Opposition does not support our position on progressive coal royalties or public ownership of energy assets. Only a Miles Labor government is willing to take up the fight with foreign multinationals and only a Miles Labor government is prepared to invest in all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (10.09 pm): I rise to speak about the groundbreaking cost-of-living measures announced by the Miles Labor government. The LNP might not be able to comprehend the cost-of-living challenges facing Australians at the moment—and they certainly do not seem to understand that rebates provide real relief for families—but this government certainly does. From Tina we hear, ‘Thank you so much. My next bill will be really high because we had family staying with us for three months.’ From Clodagh we hear, ‘So pleased that miners are made to pay appropriate taxes.’

When Minister Glenn Butcher was in Caloundra recently, we met Glenn and Betty, a lovely married couple on the pension, living in Nirimba. Glenn from Nirimba was a former fitter-and-turner from Gladstone. When he met Minister Glenn, also a former fitter-and-turner from Gladstone, they had much to chat about. Glenn and Betty invited us into their home and offered us a cup of tea. We ended up standing in the garage of the family home while the two Glenns examined the very large lathe lying up against one wall and I pretended to follow the conversation like I had even the slightest idea about metalwork—which I do not. Glenn and Betty showed us a few of their household bills and they were absolutely delighted at the idea that they would not have to be concerned about power bills for the next financial year. For families of all ages, but particularly our older Queenslanders, relief from financial pressures is a visible and palpable load off their minds. Sometimes we can quite literally see worry disappearing from their faces.

Labor is offering help that the LNP can never commit to, because it does not support the budget measures that underpin the relief. No progressive coal royalties equals no cost-of-living help. Perhaps the most obvious sign of relief was the chat I had with Les. Les is a single-income pensioner living on the Sunshine Coast. Les waited patiently to chat with me while I was at a community event the week before last. He asked if he could speak with me privately. I thought I was about to get a lecture on something he was unhappy about. He started out by saying, ‘I just want to thank you for the electricity rebates.’ He said, ‘It is just me and I am tired.’ Les started that sentence three times. ‘I am tired,’ he said over and over again. He kept choking up with raw and genuine emotion every time. When he finally got it out he said, ‘I am tired of just making it over the line every single week.’ He went on to say, ‘This will mean I can just breathe a little. I can live like a real person every now and again.’ To Les I say, ‘Les, you are a real person and we have listened to you and tens of thousands like you.’

Cost-of-living relief is not just a monetary windfall; it is about giving our most vulnerable Queenslanders a chance to enjoy moments of humanity that some of us take for granted. It is not a rebate; it is a ladder from life as it is to life as it should be.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (10.13 pm): I rise to contribute to the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill. If ever we wanted an example of ‘fly by the seat of your pants’ policy, then we need look no further than this \$1,000 rebate announced by this government. We talk about giving with one hand but there is plenty of take with the other. We know that a 20 per cent increase in power prices over the last 12 months will be gobbled up pretty quickly with this \$1,000 rebate. We have heard a lot from those opposite tonight about the cost-of-living crisis. I say to those opposite: if they want to know what the cost-of-living crisis is and how it is really biting then get out of Brisbane and come to the bush. Come out to regional and rural Queensland and see what the cost-of-living crisis is doing in those areas. We talk about fuel, insurance costs and grocery prices. Come and drive on the roads out there and see what it does to vehicles and see what people are putting up with. What we could have done with \$2.2 billion across this state.

Mr Dick: Well, we could have.

Mr LAST: I am pleased the minister made that comment, because the minister was with me in Mount Isa two weeks ago at a critical minerals conference. He was there and he heard from the miners who presented at that conference. What were the two big issues facing those miners? They were water and energy costs. They are trying to get their mines up and going.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Members for Whitsunday and Thuringowa, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

Mr LAST: They are trying to get some production going, but energy costs are stymieing that development. The Treasurer is quick to put his hand out to get his hands on those progressive coal royalties. The Treasurer is not so keen to put some of that money back into the areas generating that wealth. I have often stood in this place and said, ‘Give some of the royalties back to the bush where it is generated.’ They are not so keen to do that, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Apologies, member. Please resume your seat. Member for Thuringowa, you are warned.

Mr LAST: It is not too much to ask for some of the royalties to be invested in the areas that are generating the wealth. If they want to continue taking those royalties from the mining sector, then put some money back into the mining sector to allow these miners to develop their projects because they have dreams and aspirations. We heard at the conference how they want to get these mines up and running, create jobs and develop the west, but they are being held back because of issues such as energy prices.

Members opposite talk about power prices coming down, but I do not know anyone whose power bill has come down. In fact, it has gone the opposite way. When I have farmers coming in and telling me that they are going back to diesel pumps because they cannot afford to run electric pumps, we have a fundamental a problem in this state.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr LAST: I take that interjection. It is not good for the environment. Those opposite talk about emissions, net zero and offsets. If farmers are buying diesel pumps then it is there in black and white, isn't it, what power prices are doing in this state. They have power bills in the tens of thousands of dollars—not just the thousands but the tens of thousands of dollars. We wonder why our grocery prices are going through the roof.

We come back to that age-old question: where is our baseload power in this state coming from in the future? When Callide Power Station has been operating at reduced capacity for three years, is it any wonder that our power prices are going up year on year? They do not want to admit to that.

Mr Walker: What is your policy?

Mr LAST: Our policy is pretty simple: to provide affordable power and energy to Queensland.

Mr Dick: Our policy is Labor for Burdekin.

Mr LAST: I welcome that fight every day of the week.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, we are almost at the end of a very long day. I know there is a lot of passion in this debate, but I ask that we take it down.

Mr LAST: I would like to remind the Treasurer that by far the greatest percentage of royalties in this state come from my electorate—the mighty Burdekin electorate.

Ms Camm interjected.

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Whitsunday and member for Ninderry, you both are warned under the standing orders. Member for Ninderry, I remind you that you need to be in your own seat if you want to participate in the debate.

Mr LAST: It would not be so bad if we did not constantly have power outages. Certainly, in the area where I live just south of Townsville, around Cungulla and Alligator Creek, I know of the constant power outages.

Ms Camm interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Whitsunday, you are under a warning. You can leave the chamber.

Whereupon the honourable member for Whitsunday withdrew from the chamber at 10.18 pm.

Ms Richards interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Redlands, I do not need your assistance. You are warned as well.

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, if you think it is a joke, you can join her as well.

Mr LAST: It is a bitter pill to swallow when those opposite talk about energy supply in Queensland, yet we have these constant disruptions, constant outages and constant maintenance issues in areas south of Townsville. Those residents are in despair. Those business owners are in despair because it is costing them money. Is it too much to ask that, if they are paying these exorbitant

power prices, they should have a reliable power supply? All they want is a reliable power supply, which is something that we take for granted here. I can assure the House that in a lot of places in Queensland that is not the case. It is a big state. We hear that statement often in this place. I often like to say that just because you live in the bush should not mean that you put up with substandard services. I am going to continue advocating for those services while ever I am in this place.

There is no better example of that than the announcement today that again we are losing the doctor from Clermont. Clermont Country Practice is closing its doors. It took us five years to get a permanent doctor in that community—five long years of battling and here we go again. We are back on that bandwagon. Wouldn't it be nice if we were putting some of this money into providing basic medical services in communities such as Clermont and providing teachers at Dysart, Moranbah and Middlemount? Wouldn't that be nice? I am going to continue fighting for that equality in education, in health, for our roads and for our telecommunications out there which are absolutely disgraceful. Those people who live in the bush deserve the same as those in the city.

Debate, on motion of Mr Last, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.21 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Southern Downs Electorate, Wind Farms



Mr LISTER (Southern Downs—LNP) (10.21 pm): I would like to advise the House of some concerns in my electorate of Southern Downs about wind turbines and wind farms. I have attended a meeting at Allora and one more recently at Greymare, where individual landholders have been advised by their neighbours that potential proponents of wind farm projects have been going around touting money to have wind turbines installed on their properties. Anybody who knows these communities will know that they are comprised to a large extent of relatively small blocks—less than a thousand acres and in many cases less than 500 acres or even smaller. In such areas, if a wind farm were to go in, the great majority would suffer the loss of amenity, the loss of views, the disadvantages associated with property value decline and, during construction, biosecurity threats, dust, noise and so forth.

Mr Andrew: It's shocking—terrible.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Mirani. Yes, it is terrible. These things may have their place, but in my electorate of Southern Downs I cannot see too many places left that do not have wind turbines now that should have them in the future. One of the difficulties is that communities find out through the grapevine, through the bush telegraph, that people are touting these wind turbines. They do not find out from the government. The renewable energy zones, which are coming in, effectively take away from communities and from local government the opportunity to object and participate in decisions in the way you would if, for instance, people were putting a feedlot or a dam on their property or some sort of farming structure.

Much of my electorate of Southern Downs is an inappropriate place to build wind turbines. I have listened to the communities at Allora and Greymare. I understand that there are always two sides to the story. There are those who would stand to benefit from having these pieces of infrastructure in their communities. The general thing is that community discord is fostered by the way in which these things are happening. Good people should be able to live without these wind turbines around their places. Move them way out west. Stick them on one landholder's land so no-one else can see them and then that landholder gets the advantages and disadvantages equally.

I know that I am speaking for the majority of the people in my electorate of Southern Downs. I ask that the state government reconsider the renewable energy zones and include communities and local government more closely in consultation about these things.

Redcliffe Electorate



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.24 pm): Today I rise to share with the parliament some great news from the beautiful electorate of Redcliffe. Firstly, I would like to shine some light, if you will, on the new upgrades at the Redcliffe Paceway. The paceway is an iconic part of the Redcliffe community. The shining lights illuminating the track with the lingering evening glow of the sun are as synonymous to Redcliffe as the Bee Gees.

Being one of the premier harness-racing tracks in Queensland, the \$6 million upgrade to the lighting system and other electrical works will be vital to the continuation of racing on the peninsula—all thanks to the Miles Labor government and the Racing Infrastructure Fund. It will ensure that racing in Redcliffe will be not just a better viewing experience but also safer for the horses and the jockeys who race at our track. The investment into the Redcliffe Paceway means that the track's future shines figuratively and literally brighter than ever before.


Our second piece of news in Redcliffe comes from one of the biggest social hubs on the peninsula, the Redcliffe PCYC. The residents of the peninsula and the surrounding areas have enjoyed the services and activities on offer from the PCYC for nearly 60 years. It has been a hub for young people to get involved in sport with its courts and gyms, as well as leadership programs through Youth Parliament and many others.

The Miles Labor government is focused on building strong and connected communities, so the \$2 million investment into upgrading facilities of the PCYC, which has seen so many locals come through its doors, just makes sense. We want to get young people involved in the community and build healthy relationships with their peers and their families, and the Redcliffe PCYC does just that.

I would also like to give a big shout-out to the Redcliffe Hospital which recently celebrated International Nurses Day and International Day of Midwives. It was a pleasure to go there a week ago and put on a morning tea for the staff and take cupcakes around to the wards to thank them personally for the incredible work that they do each and every day. We know that they have done it tough through COVID. They continue to see very large numbers coming through our hospitals and they do an exceptional job. It was great to drop into the maternity ward where there were plenty of babies arriving and the staff were doing such an incredible job.

As it is nearing the end of May, I also want to acknowledge all of the organisations that have been hosting events for Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. It was a pleasure to go to the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation's Light Up the Night Gala last Friday night. It was a great event, lifting awareness and, importantly, raising funds for a very important cause. Of course, we have Challenge DV's Darkness to Daylight coming up and the Moreton Bay Says No 2 Violence Walk, which I encourage everyone to get involved in.

Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (10.27 pm): When it comes to light rail on the southern Gold Coast, Labor are hell-bent on railroading our community, but my community knows that the LNP is listening and that we are genuine about consultation. If there is a change in government in October, the LNP will send light rail stage 4 back to the drawing board for proper consultation so that all groups and all modes can be considered—including heavy rail, electric buses and the east-west connections—so that the southern Gold Coast can finally get the transport solutions that stack up and that are supported by the community.

While this tired, third-term Labor government has given up on listening to our community, the LNP will give residents a say on all options. The LNP will release the details of work done to date, and the LNP will deliver a solution that is affordable and that serves the needs of the local community.


Under this Labor government, light rail stage 3 cost blowouts have increased an eye-watering 72 per cent. The member for Burleigh, the fantastic candidate for Burleigh, Hermann Vorster, and I have been fighting for our community to be heard on light rail for years. This is in stark contrast to this Labor government, who is all talk when it comes to transparency and consultation.

Under Labor, for years our community has had to bear the brunt of insufficient transport, inadequate infrastructure and the total car park that is the M1. Even the M1 upgrade that was meant to be delivered by 2023 has now blown out to some time in 2024. This tired, stale, third-term Labor government cannot be trusted to deliver those transport solutions. I have a very simple message for our community. If you want a say on all transport options, if you want transparency and the details of the report released and made public, and if you want a transport solution that is affordable and delivers for our community then there is only one option: our community must show Labor the door in 2024. If we do not then we will end up with the same old tired solutions that railroad our community, that do not consult with our community and that will not deliver for our community.

The LNP will ensure that consultation is genuine. We will ensure that it is sent back to the drawing board and that all routes and all modes are considered. This state Labor government needs to be shown the door in 2024.

(Time expired)

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.30 pm): The month of May is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month—a month-long campaign aimed at raising awareness, providing support and fostering collaborations against domestic and family violence in our communities. This year's theme, 'It's in our control to end coercive control', recognises the important and historic changes to our Queensland laws that have seen coercive control made a criminal offence in our state.

I have been honoured to host the Domestic Violence Night of Remembrance and Candlelight Ceremony in my electorate of Jordan over the last three years. This year I was so pleased to partner with Multicultural Australia for the event to ensure that our diverse and multicultural communities in Jordan can also be part of these important conversations. I give a huge thanks to CEO Christine Castley and her team for their support and assistance.


Multicultural Australia has a hub established at Brighton Homes Arena, the home of the Brisbane Lions women's team and administration base for the club. I give a massive shout-out to the Brisbane Lions, who generously offered Brighton Homes Arena for our night of remembrance and were there to support the event. This included allowing a message of community support to be placed on the massive electronic billboard and lighting up the stadium in purple, which is the traditional colour for Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month.

The event was also supported, as it is every year, by the incredible team from the Domestic Violence Action Centre. The Domestic Violence Action Centre has a long history of providing high-quality services to women, children, young people and individuals who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence in Ipswich, Toowoomba and the surrounding regions. DVAC plays a critical role in my community, especially around Greater Springfield, and I am deeply grateful for the support they are providing each and every day to those impacted by domestic and family violence. I want to acknowledge CEO Aime Carrington, who gave an incredible address on the night, for her continued advocacy for domestic and family violence services in our region.

Despite some shocking rain and cold weather, I was absolutely heartened by the number of people who showed up, women and men, to remember those we have tragically lost to domestic and family violence and to say we want to see an end to domestic and family violence in our community. I want to thank the many individuals who turned up, including the federal member for Blair, Shayne Neumann MP, and the state member for Bundamba, Lance McCallum MP. I want to thank our community organisations, our schools, our sporting clubs, our multicultural community, our churches and faith-based organisations, our local businesses and our police and health services.

To be honest, I was a little bit despondent heading into this year's event. One woman killed every four days at the hands of a man in Australia feels like the end of domestic and family violence is so far away. My community braved the rain and faced the cold, and they turned up to say domestic and family violence must end in our community and our country. That gives me hope that perhaps the end is closer than we think.

Gympie Show

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (10.33 pm): Last weekend Gympie celebrated our region's produce, businesses, industry and activities with its 135th show. It is one of the largest shows in regional Queensland. Across the three days, 20,171 people turned up to enjoy the wide variety of displays, exhibits, entries and events representing our region. This year's organisers knew that increased cost-of-living pressures would be a challenge. The show committee did not increase prices and absorbed costs even though its own expenses have risen—some by 30 per cent.

On Thursday, 404 aged-care and special needs attendees and 2,361 school students and their teachers came through the gates. Everyone was there, including: machinery alley displays, fire and rescue displays, fireworks, rodeo, stud and prime cattle, dairy cattle, showjumping, dog high jump, woodchop, led and ridden horse classes, harness racing, pig races, poultry, birds, fruit and vegetables, animal nursery, miniature ponies, Rooftop Express, Airtime FMX and racing lawnmowers. My own stand was visited by thousands who collected material and stopped for a chat. It was a great opportunity to interact with my community.


A show only exists because of long, unpaid hours from many volunteers. This year's show was a testament to the work and commitment of the organising committee, the 532 members and volunteers, and the 35 James Nash State High School work experience students who set up and worked at the

show. They all helped run gates and events, man stands, clean areas, serve people and organised before, during and after the show. In a tribute to volunteer Bill Fallon, the main entrance has been named Bill Fallon Way. Bill started setting up the show almost half a century ago and volunteered 150 hours every show for 48 years.

The show was supported by more than 120 sponsors and the fundraising efforts of showgirls and rural ambassadors. They raised almost \$130,000 to help host the event. A special thanks to Showgirl Shanika Tappert and Rural Ambassador James Smith, together with entrants Laura Burnett, Hannah Johnston, Payton Rozynski, Alexa Ritchie, Charlotte Sippel, Larney Steggal and Amy Wheeler. The show also provides an opportunity for many schools and P&Cs, kindergartens, sporting groups, community organisations and service clubs to raise thousands from manning gates, parking, traffic control, cleaning facilities, running bars and food stalls.

Last year also brought some sadness with the loss of three long-time supporters: Bill McIntyre, Bernard Ramsey and Frank Boyd. Collectively, they had contributed for decades. It was fitting that a minute's silence was held in recognition of them. The Gympie Show was a fitting start to National Volunteer Week.

Nakba Day


 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (10.36 pm): 'Nakba' is an Arabic word meaning catastrophe. For the Palestinian people, Nakba Day is a time of pain and resistance. Nakba Day recognises the anniversary of the 'catastrophe'. On 15 May each year, Nakba Day, Palestinians have continued to call for the right to return to their homes—the homes they were displaced from in 1948.

The Nakba saw between 750,000 and one million Palestinians driven from their homes and land. Depopulated villages and towns were destroyed, ensuring Palestinians could not return. For the Palestinian people Nakba has never ended. Instead, they believe it is still in motion, as killing Palestinians and displacing them from their homes, their communities and their land continues. Just as Australia was built on the myth of terra nullius, so too is the myth that the land of the Palestine was 'a land without a people for a people without a land'. The anniversary of Nakba is a reminder of not only the tragic events of 1948 but also the ongoing suffering of the Palestinians. The Nakba has had a profound impact on the Palestinian people, who lost their homes, their land and their way of life. It remains a deeply traumatic event in their collective memory and continues to shape their struggle for justice and their right to return to their homes.

Civil society and the majority of the international community have joined with the Palestinian people in their struggle to demand justice and freedom. Over the decades since 1948, Palestinian refugees have faced waves of displacement, some losing their homes several times. In 1967 some 300,000 Palestinians were displaced. Since then, tens of thousands of others in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have been made homeless or forcibly displaced. Currently, there are more than seven million Palestinian refugees worldwide. Palestinians are one of the world's largest refugee populations. In many countries they face poverty and systematic human rights violations. Most do not have access to resettlement which would alleviate their plight, particularly in places where their situation is precarious.

For some, the Nakba has meant that basically they are stateless, with nothing to go back to. This would be very difficult to put into words. I stand in solidarity with the Palestinian community, which bears the burden of grief, while they continue to advocate for the rights of their people with courage and strength. I have stood beside members of the Palestinian community to commemorate Nakba. I stand beside the Palestinian people.

E-Bike and E-Scooter Safety

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (10.39 pm): With the population in South-East Queensland increasing, ongoing difficulties in managing tourism numbers as well as the upcoming Olympics, it is imperative that we have the infrastructure, services and policies to deal with issues. One of the most urgent relates to e-bikes and e-scooters. This issue is filling our inboxes and is prevalent on social media and on the streets. Reports of dangerous riding, including children weaving between traffic, and statistics on the volume of accidents on our footpaths involving riders and pedestrians alike are growing.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons reported that data from 20 emergency departments across Queensland shows there are around 100 emergency department presentations from e-scooter injuries each month. Governments do not appear to track statistics on e-bike and e-scooter deaths on our roads and pathways, and we could not find anything on the TMR website or the Australian Road


Deaths Database. However, when you google, you will tragically find a fatal e-scooter death in Townsville; one in Bundaberg, who was 14 years old; and another in Highgate Hill—all in this year alone.

Australian design rules are meant to limit the speed and power of e-bikes, but who checks the design rules are met? Who checks the batteries are under 200 watts? Who is monitoring the shops and eBay sellers? Who is educating riders and parents on what is legal and what is not? With ineffective design rules, police are unable to enforce the new laws introduced, but, in reality, what can they do? Chase them through the traffic?

Jurisdictions across Australia and the world are utilising various ways to prevent injuries and deaths, and we need to quickly determine what Queensland will do. Some states ban them from footpaths and others categorise varieties of them as motorbikes because, literally, that is what they have become, requiring both licensing and registration. Other states have age constraints and some ban them all together from footpaths and roads.

None of us want a nanny state but the reality is that we have to make provision here. Given that e-bikes and e-scooters were very much part of the modal shift to reduce car use and congestion, which is a very good thing, it is understandable that Transport and Main Roads have acknowledged the need for separate, dedicated lanes. That sounds wonderful, but the reality is that for many communities this has not been possible. A lack of funding and urgency, as well as a lack of space to accommodate those lanes, has left us again being reactive instead of proactive. We do not have much time. The question is: what will governments commit to now, including how much will be available for the infrastructure required for communities already impacted, and when will this be made available?

Inala Electorate, Fall of Saigon Commemoration


 **Ms NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (10.42 pm): On 30 April, I had the honour of attending an important event in my community of Inala. On that day, we came together with solemn hearts to observe a day of mourning. On 30 April 1975, the city of Saigon fell into the hands of communist Vietnamese forces. Almost half a century later, that day continues to leave marks on our hearts and our minds.

We gathered at Freedom Place in Inala, a memorial erected to commemorate those who lost their lives as they fled Vietnam on boats to find refuge in countries like Australia. I thank Dr Bui, the President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia, Queensland Chapter, which is the peak organisation representing the Vietnamese community in Inala and across the state, and the members of the committee who supported him in organising the event. Testament to the importance of this day was that the event was attended by many dignitaries, including members of the Australian Defence Force and members of the Queensland police force, who together paid tribute to the countless individuals who have suffered and perished in the pursuit of freedom, justice and independence for Vietnam.

An estimated 224,000 South Vietnamese soldiers lost their lives, alongside 603,000 who were wounded. That is on top of the 415,000 South Vietnamese civilians who also died and as many as over one million who were wounded. A further 521 Australians died as a result of service in the Vietnam War, fighting for freedom and democracy. As the member for Inala, I am driven by a desire for our society to be inclusive and one where diversity is celebrated and the voices of all citizens are heard and respected. That is a democracy I value every day. Through the struggles against communism, the Vietnamese people have endured unimaginable hardships with remarkable resilience and courage.

I acknowledge that many of my constituents are feeling the impacts of the loss. My understanding of this was strengthened through the book written by Father Le. He tells of his journey through the communist concentration camps and to eventual freedom, and he speaks with hope. I was inspired by the hope he spoke of and I continue to be inspired by his demonstrated strength and community spirit, which is mirrored by the Vietnamese people who reside in my electorate. Here in this place, I remember those who have given so much to fight for this freedom and pledge that we will keep fighting for human rights in their name and in their honour.

Fernvale State School, 150th Anniversary

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (10.45 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, imagine, if you will, people travelling up the Brisbane Valley and the Brisbane River 150 years ago to experience a new world. It was 150 years ago that the Fernvale State School was erected. A couple of weeks ago I was fortunate

to attend the 150-year celebration of the Fernvale school. I want to pay tribute to the principal, David Raine, his team including the P&C, with Emily as the chair, the teachers at the school and the school students.

It occurred to me that, when the community turned out to celebrate the 150th anniversary, they were former students and parents who entrusted their kids to the school and its teachers. That 150-year celebration was a wonderful opportunity for them to get together. There were thousands there. It was a really great opportunity. If you get the chance, go to Fernvale on a Saturday morning and enjoy the wonderful markets that they still hold out there.

David Raine, who has been the principal for 25 years, welcomed back to the school the principal of 20-odd years Bruce Peel to address the crowd and tell some wonderful stories of the growth of the school. Together, they shared stories from almost 50 years of enjoyment of Fernvale and its growing community, as well as acknowledged the development of the students and the future leaders in our community.

It was a great opportunity to be there and to hear the wonderful stories that they shared on the day, including stories of the Smith family who lived next door for many decades and sent their kids through that school. We can imagine the kids going to school back then, probably on the back of a horse. They would not have been allowed to wear their best shoes, which were saved for Sunday. Some would have gone to school in bare feet, which is a long way from the risk aversion that we see today.

I would also like to welcome all of our community to the Lowood Show, the Gatton Show and the Laidley Show, which are on over the next few weeks. We have the Lowood Show on 14 and 15 June. We have the Laidley Show on 5, 6 and 7 July. The Gatton Show will be on 19 and 20 July. Those shows are wonderful opportunities for our communities to get together. I thank all of the volunteers and the organisers. Our communities have faced so much sadness from droughts, floods and storms, but the shows give our community a chance to get together, tell stories, compare notes and catch up with neighbours whom they have not seen for a long time.

Beenleigh Cane Festival; Beenleigh Hawks Baseball Club; Curtis, Mr V



Mrs McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (10.48 pm): With May coming to a close, I get to reflect on the Beenleigh cane festival, which occurs when the cane harvest season commences next month. The Beenleigh Cane Parade is an opportunity for community groups, schools and local businesses to parade their Beenleigh pride through the streets of Beenleigh—down George Street and Main Street en route to the Beenleigh Showgrounds. There are over 50 entrants in the parade this year, and I commend Beenleigh State School for winning the best school entrant, the Windaroo Valley State High School Drum Line for winning the best band, and a big mention to local dance troupe Step Right Dance studios who managed to dance their way through the whole 1.5 kilometre route. It was a big effort. The parade ended in a community event at the showgrounds with food trucks, rides and entertainment, finishing with a laser light show that entertained all ages.

The cane festival concluded last weekend with the Beenleigh Cane Gala Ball raising funds for our local chappies. The whole Beenleigh cane festival is thanks to Rotary Beenleigh, which is a fantastic group of volunteers—as we note Volunteer Week—led ably by the 2024 president, Rachelle Mulraney. I would like to thank all of her executive and volunteers for all of the work that went into the festival which occurred over the space of more than a week.

I would also like to congratulate the mighty Beenleigh Hawks Baseball Club, specifically their masters team but also, more importantly from my perspective, their women's team. They won the women's Brisbane grand final, after winning the souths championship, when we proceeded up to Pine Rivers. Throughout the season we were undefeated, after beating those Redlands Rays and Western Dogs along the way. In the grand final we took on the Redcliffe Padres and smashed them in the final innings to become the north and south Brisbane champions. It was pointed out to me at the presentation night that I had not yet mentioned this in the House, so I thought I would do that tonight.

On a last note, a couple of weeks ago in an adjournment speech I made special mention of a wonderful couple who had celebrated 70 years of marriage earlier this year. I am so glad that we got to attend that event because, unfortunately, Val Curtis passed away about two weeks ago—two days shy of his 95th birthday. A 70th wedding anniversary does not happen very much and I am so glad they got to reach it.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.51 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, Hunt, 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