



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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## WEDNESDAY, 22 MAY 2024

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Warning List



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, in regards to warnings given to members under the standing orders, in recent years I have directed deputy speakers to restart the warning list after the luncheon adjournment. Given that we have had changes to the sessional orders, I have now directed deputy speakers to restart the warning list after the luncheon adjournment and also after 6 pm each night. There will effectively be three separate warning lists each day. I encourage you not to fill them.

#### National Spinal Health Week



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this week is National Spinal Health Week. Spinal Health Week is dedicated to promoting the importance of maintaining good spinal health and wellbeing for all Australians. Back problems, particularly for those in high-risk groups, can lead to lost social and physical activity and reduced concentration and work capacity, with the World Health Organization labelling back pain as the leading cause of disability worldwide. If you are among the four out of five Australians who has, or will, experience back pain in their lives, you are not alone. I know I am joined by fellow members in this chamber who have experienced the negative effects of back problems, with some of us undergoing surgery to relieve the pain. More than 6.1 million Australians suffer from musculoskeletal disorders, including debilitating back pain, which currently costs the Australian economy over \$55.1 billion annually in direct health costs, low productivity and reduced quality of life. Spinal Health Week is an important initiative aimed at sharing this vital community health message of maintaining good spinal health.

#### 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 Nirimba State Primary School in the electorate of Caloundra and Toowoomba State High School in the electorate of Toowoomba North.

### TABLED PAPERS

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

##### MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs and Leader of the House (Hon. de Brenni)—


[833](#) Letters, undated, from the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs and Leader of the House, Hon. Mick de Brenni, to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, enclosing an overseas travel report: Report on overseas visit to Indonesia for the World Hydropower Congress by the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs and Leader of the House, Hon. Mick de Brenni, 30 October–November 2023

Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development (Hon. McCallum)—


[834](#) Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee: Report No. 1, 57th Parliament—The delivery of VET in regional, rural and remote Queensland, government response

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Reproductive Health Leave


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.33 am): The government is doing what matters for Queensland, and what matters is putting money back in the pockets of families and households. There are many ways we are making that happen, especially for women in the workforce—like introducing the first ever paid reproductive health leave for Queensland's over 200,000 public sector workers. It means 10 days of leave is available for treatments like IVF, cancer screenings, vasectomies, hysterectomy and things like endometriosis, and existing annual and sick leave can continue to be used as intended. This is a nation-leading reform to remove barriers to accessing vital health care. For those who do start a family, we will pay superannuation on all 52 weeks of both paid and unpaid parental leave. We often see women unfairly disadvantaged at retirement because they have been the primary caregiver. The latest data reports the superannuation gap is as high as 19.8 per cent. That is just not right. Economic security at retirement is not simply a 'nice to have', so we are doing something about it.

### Queensland Skills Strategy


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.34 am): It is because of our progressive coal royalties that we can reduce the household bills of Queenslanders. That means money back in their pockets. This year, we have made kindy free for four-year-olds, saving about \$4,800 a year. We have made the flu vaccine free for all eligible Queenslanders and the RSV vaccine free for Queensland bubs. Just this week we were at Acacia Ridge TAFE to announce our new Queensland Skills Strategy. It hinges on one of our biggest initiatives—free TAFE—started here by this government and now a national success. More than 82,000 students have started their training because of it; 14,000 have joined TAFE for free this year alone. That includes 1,300 future nurses who are each saving \$25,000 in fees. That is money back in their family budget during training and an open door to opportunities of the future.

There will be even more of these initiatives in our upcoming budget—to drive down bills, fight inflation and help Queenslanders make ends meet. That is something only a Labor government will deliver. Good governments invest in the initiatives that make a difference, that matter. My government will always do what matters for Queensland.

### Assisted Reproductive Technology Legislation

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.36 am): Today the health minister will introduce the Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill. It is my government's response to advocacy from those with lived experience in the assisted reproductive technologies sector. It will give new compliance and enforcement powers to Queensland Health and establish a central register with information on every child conceived by a donor in the past 50 years. I have heard from too many women that they have been treated poorly by IVF providers—which often comes at enormous expense—and there are kids out there who cannot track their genetic origins, let alone their genetic health history. I want to thank everyone who advocated to make these changes happen. Today we take the next step, together.

### Federal Budget

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.37 am): Our Labor government understands the importance of delivering what matters for Queenslanders. Queensland is Australia's growth state, so we must continue to deliver infrastructure that caters for that growth. We will always fight to get our fair share from Canberra. Last Tuesday, I am pleased to say, the Albanese Labor government delivered for Queensland. There was more power bill cost-of-living relief. Combined with our government's nation-leading electricity rebate, every Queensland household will now receive \$1,300 off their power bill from July. That is Labor governments delivering for Queensland. Vulnerable households will now receive \$1,672 off their power bill, meaning many will pay nothing for electricity for 12 months. Eligible small businesses will now receive \$650 off their power bills as well.


I was so pleased that the federal budget also delivered an income tax cut for every hardworking Queenslanders. There were incentives to deliver more highly skilled Queensland jobs in future industries like green hydrogen and critical minerals. There was more funding for Queensland's important infrastructure projects. Along with the Minister for Housing and member for Gaven, Meaghan Scanlon, I was pleased to join my colleague federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers in the electorate of Broadwater on

the weekend when we announced the Albanese Labor government would commit \$432 million to deliver the Coomera Connector. That means this project is fully funded by the Queensland and federal Labor governments.

In the electorate of Broadwater, this is our Labor government delivering what matters to Queenslanders. Gold Coast residents will see stages start to open by the end of 2025 and, along with the Minister for Transport, the member for Caloundra—in fact, all members of the government—the Premier and I were delighted to see that the federal budget will ensure the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line to Caloundra is fully funded. The \$1.15 billion commitment announced last week by the Albanese Labor government ensures the 20-kilometre line will be completed before the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. No ifs, no buts, no maybes—that will be delivered by our Labor government by the Olympics.

However, sadly, last Thursday night we also got a taste of what we would get under a federal LNP government led by a Queensland, Peter Dutton, and what a bitter taste it was. Peter Dutton said he would cut the jobs of 36,000 Australians. Peter Dutton said he would cut the Albanese government's signature Future Made in Australia policy. This Queensland LNP leader is willing to throw tens of thousands of highly skilled jobs in new industries of the future on the scrap heap. Sacking public servants and blinding themselves to any vision for Queensland's future may be the trademarks of the LNP, but they are a future Queensland cannot afford.

### Public Sector, Entitlements

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.40 am): As the largest employer in Queensland, the Miles government backs our public sector workforce by providing secure employment with fair and decent wages. On Labour Day, together with the Premier, I was proud to announce two new workplace entitlements for Queensland's hardworking public sector workers, benefiting over 200,000 Queenslanders and their families. Once again, the Queensland government is leading the nation by introducing 10 non-cumulative days of reproductive health leave for all public sector workers.

The leave can be used for things like: accessing fertility or IVF treatment; managing chronic symptoms related to endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome and menopause; preventative screening for things like breast and prostate cancer; and other treatments associated with reproductive health like hysterectomies and vasectomies. Work has already begun on the implementation of this new entitlement and it will be in place no later than September this year.

We know the financial challenges that new parents can face, particularly with the national cost-of-living pressures everyone is experiencing at the moment. No mums or dads should look back at their super statements and see big gaps where they had to stop saving for their future retirement dreams because they were taking care of their children, especially women who are disproportionately impacted by this. The 2023 Queensland gender equality report card shows that the average gender superannuation balance gap was 19.8 per cent, and only 13.9 per cent of Queensland women can rely on their superannuation as their main source of retirement income. Therefore, from July this year, superannuation will be paid to Queensland public sector workers for every single week of the entire 52-week period of parental leave, whether the leave is paid or not. This will be in addition to the superannuation changes the Albanese government is making from next year, and builds on other nation-leading policies we have introduced, like the first paid domestic and family violence leave which has since been taken up by other employers around the nation.

These announcements were welcomed. Jess Taylor, CEO of QENDO, said it is 'pivotal in tackling gender imbalances'. Melanie Simpson from Queensland Fertility Group said, 'Paid reproductive health leave will reduce the stress and make it easier for many people to achieve the joy of starting their own families.' Sarah Beaman from QNMU said it is a 'major win for Queensland's largest predominantly female workforce—we applaud the state government for making this groundbreaking announcement to support the state's nurses and midwives.' On a side note, I am so proud of this. I know that when we adopted our child—our adult child who is now 30—there was no adoption leave, so we have come a long way and this takes us to the next step.

The Miles Labor government aims to be the employer of choice in this state and will ensure we do all we can to break down the barriers to achieving pay equity. I hope to see other workplaces follow our lead when it comes to backing Queensland workers as they have done before. It is clear on Labour Day and every day: Queensland workers and their families are better off under a Miles Labor government.

### Assisted Reproductive Technology



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.44 am): The journey to becoming a parent is different for everyone and we know those who struggle to conceive can experience stress, vulnerability and heartache. Thankfully, technological advancements mean that many of the barriers facing people living with fertility issues are no longer insurmountable. Our government has a proven track record when it comes to supporting Queensland families on this issue. That is why we recently invested more than \$42 million to boost fertility services for Queenslanders battling cancer or experiencing complex medical conditions by making IVF free. We have recently seen several troubling reports of failures of the self-regulation of assisted reproductive technology providers here in Queensland. We have heard stories from the donor conceived community about the impact it has on their sense of identity, constantly having to search for answers about their genetic history when the information is not readily available.

On behalf of the Miles Labor government, I want to thank those advocates and families for speaking up and bringing these issues to light. Because of them, today we will be introducing a bill to regulate assisted reproductive technology and create better protections for Queenslanders. These new laws and regulations will mean Queenslanders can have faith in the integrity of assisted reproductive technology service providers and be assured that providers who do the wrong thing will face consequences.

Critically, these new laws will also establish a donor conception information register. Donor conceived people have been clear: the option to know their own genetic origins should be their right. That is why we are investing to establish a central donor conception register that will give families a full history of their donor. Because we know this process can be emotional for many, we are also providing counselling services to support applicants, which was a recommendation of the parliamentary committee inquiry. Although these laws are long overdue, I am so proud to be part of a government that is supporting Queenslanders trying to start their family or expand their family and that is standing up for the rights of donor conceived people.

### Cost of Living



**Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (9.47 am): Last week, we reached the significant milestone of installing our 500th Dignity Vending Machine in a Queensland state school or state education facility. In partnership with Share the Dignity, we are directly addressing period poverty by providing free access to period products with over 166,000 period packs provided to date and more to come through the next round of our \$32 million investment in the machines.

This is, plain and simple, a direct cost-of-living initiative. We know how much cost of living is biting, and we see that playing out in so many different ways. In the case of period poverty, we have girls who are literally not going to school because their families cannot afford period products. When I visited Bremer State High School earlier this year, I spoke to Ella, Cassie and Stephanie about the machine at their school and they said, 'It's a human right; everyone should have them' and, 'With the cost of living at the moment, it's the difference between being hygienic and having a meal.'


This is only one of the many ways the Miles government is working to alleviate cost-of-living pressures for a significant proportion of Queensland families. Of course, the most high-profile of these is our free kindy initiative, our \$2 billion program, that means every four-year-old can attend kindy for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks of the year for free—an initiative that will impact 64,000 families and save \$4,800 per child. There is our \$11.36 million GPs in Schools program currently operating in 50 schools, providing a free primary healthcare service to school students, knocking down barriers to accessing health care like the cost of a GP visit, transportation challenges and dependence on others to help make appointments. I am proud to say that over 15,000 GP appointments have been attended by students as a result.

There is our Student Wellbeing Package, providing \$106.7 million for state school students to access free mental health support from psychologists or similar wellbeing professionals, which is already available in almost 1,000 schools; our Textbook and Resource Allowance of \$155 per student for students in years 7 to 9 and \$337 for students in years 11 and 12; access to free and subsidised digital devices for learning, with over 42,000 provided and nearly \$30 million invested since 2020; assistance with transport for eligible students through the School Transport Assistance Scheme; learn to swim funding totalling almost \$4 million this year; and \$10.2 million to support families whose homes are geographically isolated through the Living Away From Home Allowances Scheme.



The wellbeing of our teachers and education staff is so important. They are doing important work and they deserve our support. While we work to address some of the overarching issues that are impacting our school staff, like workforce shortages and occupational violence, I am delighted that we can also do the small day-to-day things that show our staff that we value them—like the Fitness Passport I announced last week that will enable staff and their families access to health and fitness facilities across the state. Commencing early in term 3, it will allow discounted access to fitness facilities close to people's homes and work. We recognise that the cost of living continues to be the No. 1 issue for many Queenslanders. We will, in turn, continue to do all we can to support them.

## Housing

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (9.51 am): I take this opportunity to acknowledge the mayors in the gallery this morning and the work that our government is doing alongside them. As part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan we are boosting our big housing build to deliver even more public homes. We are delivering even more publicly owned energy assets. Queensland tradies are on the tools rolling out social homes right across this state. In fact, over the last 10 years, Queensland has been the only state in the country that has increased both public and community housing and we have a plan to grow that further, by building 53,500 more social homes. To help us do that we are growing our public builder, QBuild—the people who build and maintain homes in this state. We have already recruited 300 tradies, with another 500 to join their ranks.

Whether it is QBuild jobs, or our hardworking staff in housing service centres, it is only a Labor government that will protect good, stable Public Service jobs. It means if tenants need maintenance, repairs or upgrades QBuild tradies can do the job. It is why we have some of the best performance data when it comes to vacancy management and tenancy satisfaction in the country. This includes the greatest tenancy satisfaction rates in the country—26 percentage points higher than New South Wales and 17.2 per cent greater than Victoria.


On this side of the House we are focused on growing both public and community housing. There has never been more money available to the community housing sector than there is now under a Labor government. We are establishing a single, modernised housing master agreement to reduce red tape. We are introducing 20-year management leases on new social housing to help the sector invest and grow, and we are stepping in to buy National Rental Affordability Scheme homes with the community housing sector—something we have to do because the LNP scrapped that program. We are focused on growing both community and public housing.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Apologies, Minister. The level of conversation in general is too high. I would ask you to take your conversations outside so that we can hear the ministerial statement. I call the minister.

**Ms SCANLON:** While we are proud of public ownership, we hear nothing but crickets from those opposite. You will not hear the LNP say the words 'public housing' because they do not believe in it. While we are taking on multinational mining companies to give money back to Queensland households and to deliver more public homes, all we hear from those opposite is crickets when it comes to delivering a housing plan. Rather than building public homes, those opposite want to hand billions back to mining companies and make cuts to rebates, health, education and housing. Only a Miles Labor government will deliver the social housing big build that this state needs.


## DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** As mentioned by the minister, I wish to advise members today that we are visited in the gallery by the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors as part of a delegation to the Queensland parliament. I welcome and acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner, Mayor Peter Flannery, Mayor Tom Sharp, Mayor Teresa Harding, Mayor Tanya Milligan, Mayor Jon Raven, Mayor Frank Wilkie, Mayor Jos Mitchell, Mayor Rosanna Natoli, Mayor Geoff McDonald and Mayor Jason Wendt.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### TAFE

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.54 am): TAFE has a proud history in our great state of training generations of Queenslanders for more than 140 years. Now with Labor's Big Build upon us, its vital role in ensuring aspiring Queenslanders can get into highly skilled jobs quicker will be even more important. That is why Labor is proudly supporting the backbone of our skilled workforce. Today I am proud to announce that as part of our landmark Queensland Skills Strategy, the new Miles Labor government will invest a further \$203 million in TAFE Queensland. This funding boost will mean an even stronger publicly owned accessible TAFE Queensland that is focused on the skills and training needs of all Queenslanders.

Over the course of our new strategy we will deliver up to 70,000 free TAFE places, easing cost-of-living pressures and opening doors to good jobs for all Queenslanders. This \$203 million uplift will: support a sustainable, responsive and vibrant TAFE at the heart of Queensland's strong training system; invest in new and upgraded TAFE facilities as part of the management, development, investment and transformation of our publicly owned TAFE assets; support TAFE to ensure training is available in specialised fields and priority industries and in our communities right across Queensland; and kickstart our delivery on the National Skills Agreement priorities, including TAFE Centres of Excellence and the TAFE leadership network. TAFE Queensland is more than an educational institution; it is a pillar of empowerment for Queenslanders right across our state.


Every dollar that is spent on public education is an investment in our future and it ensures education remains a right, not a privilege. Unfortunately, that is not a belief that is shared by those opposite. The LNP would rob our young people of the chance to pursue their career dreams and aspirations by jacking up course fees, closing campuses, sacking teachers and bringing free TAFE to a dead end.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

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

**Mr McCALLUM:** An alternative government would gut TAFE like a fish, denying countless Queenslanders who simply want a fair chance at a better future. Only Labor will invest in publicly owned TAFE because only Labor will put people before profits.

### Wear Orange Wednesday

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.57 am): Good morning, Mr Speaker. Today is Wear Orange Wednesday, and it is great to see you got the memo.


**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** He wears it every day. I take the interjection. It is a day where we recognise the amazing volunteers who wear the SES uniform while they help and support Queenslanders in their time of need. SES volunteers are an essential part of our response to natural disasters in Queensland. We saw that during the most recent summer, where 5,200 SES volunteers worked from Coolangatta to the cape to help people impacted by cyclones, floods and storms. In Degarra, in the electorate of Cook, I saw SES volunteers working in the mud to help residents like Bill clean up their homes after they were inundated. In the northern beaches of Cairns I met Russel from Caloundra who had been a volunteer for 48 years after volunteering in the 1974 floods. In the electorates of Scenic Rim and Logan, I saw SES volunteers chainsawing through fallen trees so that residents could access their homes. On Australia Day, I met volunteers from the south-west who had flown into Townsville to assist in the post Cyclone Kirrily recovery.

I am advised that in the past financial year our incredible SES volunteers have contributed more than 400,000 hours to support communities across the state through response and training. The Miles government is committed to supporting SES volunteers to continue to do what they do best: helping Queenslanders. That is why today I am so pleased to announce that the Miles government will provide more than \$3.7 million in funding for 60 SES groups across the state. These grants under the annual SES Support Grant program ensure volunteers have the equipment and facilities they need to continue their vital work in our communities. This is great news for groups like Kenilworth SES in the electorate of Nicklin, which will benefit from an upgraded vehicle with a contribution of \$300,000 awarded to the Sunshine Coast Council.

I take a moment to acknowledge our mayors in the gallery today and the partnership that the Miles government has with them and the wonderful partnership they have with our SES as well. Wujal Wujal in the electorate of Cook will receive a new SES facility valued at more than \$200,000. When disaster strikes it is good to know that SES volunteers are there and ready to help in whatever way they can because the Miles government will continue to stand with them—with our SES—and support them every step of the way.

### Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (10.00 am): The Miles Labor government is delivering for Queensland. We are the first government to put real money on the table for what will be the biggest ever investment in public transport on the Sunshine Coast, the Sunshine Coast direct rail line. I warmly welcomed the Albanese government's announcement last week, as part of the federal budget, that it will invest a further \$1.1 billion in the project. That takes the Commonwealth's investment to \$2.75 billion and the total investment to \$5.5 billion, ensuring that stage 1 of this vital project can be delivered. The project will bust congestion in the south-east, reducing travel times by around 45 minutes each way during peak hours and connecting the community to jobs, study, services and Queensland's most famous tourist attractions.

**Mr Mickelberg:** It'll turn Caloundra into a car park.

**Mr MELLISH:** I note the interjection from the member for Buderim, who believed we did not need to do a business case. There would have been no business case if it were up to the member for Buderim.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Buderim and Minister.

**Mr MELLISH:** Essentially, the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line will extend the South-East Queensland rail network from the north coast line at Beerwah to the Sunshine Coast. The first stage will see a 19-kilometre dual track built from Beerwah to Caloundra—

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Maroochydore.

**Mr MELLISH:**—making it the longest spur line in the south-east passenger network.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

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

**Mr MELLISH:** It will also include the protection of the updated rail alignment to Birtinya and Maroochydore. This project is about providing faster, more reliable and environmentally sustainable connections between the Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay and Brisbane. I know the members for Caloundra and Nicklin are very excited for this project. I know members opposite do not want to see public transport investment in their electorates. This project will also unlock housing supply, enabling the construction of at least 3,000 additional homes by 2032 alone. Advice from the department is that staging the delivery of this megaproject is the best way to ensure it is up and running by the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are getting on with delivering it with a \$5 million early works package that includes geotechnical investigations and environmental surveys. We are also undertaking market sounding for stage 2 to Birtinya and protecting the rail corridor all the way to Maroochydore, meaning that stages 2 and 3 are futureproofed.

I will always advocate for more funding from the federal government for our road and transport projects. We do welcome the continued support of the Albanese government for our transport big build. As well as the direct Sunshine Coast rail project, our key projects including the Beerburum to Nambour heavy rail project in the member for Nicklin's electorate, the Coomera Connector and the Bruce Highway have all benefited from funding boosts.


**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, I am having a difficult time hearing the minister. Your interjections are not helping.

**Mr MELLISH:** Other projects that those opposite do not want to hear about include the Bremer River bridge upgrade, Mount Crosby Road interchange and Mount Lindesay Highway upgrade; all received additional funding from the federal government. It was also pleasing to see the previous federal announcement of funding for the Bruce Highway upgrades locked in.

Despite these positive announcements, we remain committed to changing the Australian government's position on 80-20 funding for regional roads and we will continue to campaign for this to be reinstated in future budgets. We will have more to say on these great investments on our key projects when our state budget is delivered.

### Resources Industries

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals) (10.04 am): Queensland's resources industry is one of the key backbones of our economy. Almost 77,000 people are employed directly by the industry not to mention the tens of thousands of indirect jobs it supports. As a government, we support the entirety of the resources industry for the jobs it supports and the billions of dollars in royalties it generates.

Since 2015 the Labor government has facilitated at least \$83.5 billion in private sector investment in Queensland's mining industry and average employment in the resources sector increased by more than 10,000 jobs. During that time, 18 new major projects have been announced and constructed, and a further 17 projects announced during that time now have investment committed to them to proceed. One of the projects that has been built is the \$1 billion Olive Downs steelmaking coal project, which I officially opened last month. We are also seeing companies like Coronado Global Resources investing in Queensland right now with their new project, Mammoth Underground. That project will be subject to approvals, of course, but it will target 48 million tonnes of high-quality steelmaking coal. Projects like these help support thousands of jobs and support Queenslanders thanks to our progressive coal royalties, which ensure everyone receives their fair share of the resources that belong to all of us.

I can inform the House that our progressive coal royalties are projected to earn Queenslanders billions of dollars in the first five years of their implementation. That is a staggering amount and it will mean we can directly assist people with the cost of living. The Miles government is doing this by delivering a \$1,000 cost-of-living rebate to all Queenslanders and a \$325 cost-of-living rebate to small businesses. It will be the biggest cost-of-living relief package in Queensland's history, equating to more than \$2.5 billion in cost-of-living relief through our electricity rebates. This rebate means people are able to use that money for other day-to-day uses.

According to average fuel prices in Townsville today, that \$1,000 could go towards paying for more than 500 litres of petrol to help families get their kids to and from school. It could help pay for more than 18 school uniforms. It could help pay for nine pairs of footy boots to get kids playing sport. We also know people are struggling with the cost of groceries, which is why we have launched a parliamentary inquiry into this issue. A Townsville butcher called Let's Meat—


**Ms Boyd:** M-E-A-T?

**Mr STEWART:** That is not my call.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order. Minister, please do not steal Minister Furner's thunder!

**Mr STEWART:** At the Let's Meat butcher in Townsville, the money someone will save on their power bill could equate to more than of 66 kilograms of mince. That is a lot of mince. It will mean people will be able to get fresh fruit and veggies as well. Staggeringly, this rebate would equate to 1,041 navel oranges. This is direct cost-of-living relief for people throughout Queensland and it is a direct result of our strong resources industry and this government's decision to introduce progressive coal royalties. It is the Miles Labor government that will always ensure Queenslanders get their fair share of the resources that belong to them.

### Renewable Energy

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs) (10.07 am): The Miles government is delivering stronger regions by decarbonising industry and protecting existing jobs. Together with the Albanese government, our government is maximising the economic and industrial benefits of the international move to net zero and we are securing Queensland's place in a changing global economic and strategic landscape.

Last week the Premier took the cabinet to Bundaberg where I met with Duncan from Bundaberg Rum and Wilhelm from Superior Pak, a hydrogen truck manufacturer. We discussed how important it was that the Miles government's Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, with its renewable energy targets and its legislated commitment to public ownership, will help protect the 300 existing jobs in their enterprises. They told me how much they value the work of the member for Bundaberg, who is taking action on clean energy to help decarbonise and protect local jobs. I can advise the House that Bundaberg Rum is not the only iconic Aussie brand taking big steps to decarbonise.

Across Queensland companies like XXXX, Arnott's and Orrcon Steel—companies producing everything from beer to steel—are banking their continued Queensland operations on clean energy. The European Union will impose a carbon border adjustment mechanism from 2026 and the United Kingdom is implementing theirs from 2027, with potential impacts on Queensland exports—everything from aluminium and fertilisers to our agricultural exports. That is why this Labor government is taking action to support businesses in Bundaberg and across the state. Without action on renewables, businesses will suffer, some would close and there would be job losses. The Miles government will ensure that does not happen. It is a sobering read, but I can advise the House that a recent report by Deloitte warns delaying or slowing the clean economic transition could cost Queensland \$350 billion of exports by 2050. They say that failing on the transition will cost Queenslanders \$430 billion in economic opportunity and 145,000 jobs in 2050. Queensland industry and workers in regional Queensland cannot afford the literally no-plan approach. Only Labor has a clear and clean economic plan for Bundaberg's and Queensland's future.

## ABSENCE OF MINISTERS



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.10 am): I advise the House that Minister Linard will act for Minister Mullen today as Minister Mullen is absent due to illness. I also advise that the Premier will act for Minister Enoch today as Minister Enoch is also unwell.

## NOTICES OF MOTION

### Transport Infrastructure



**Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (10.11 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes:

1. the overwhelming feedback provided to LNP MPs and candidates across the northern suburbs of Brisbane acknowledging the failure of this third-term Labor government to provide congestion reduction solutions for the area.
2. the overwhelming support for a tunnel to be built between Kedron and Carseldine that would:
  - get people home to their families sooner
  - reduce time stuck in traffic on Gympie Road
  - improve productivity of small businesses and their staff
  - reduce time taken to get to the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay regions
  - provide jobs to the construction industry

And calls on the Miles government to:

1. publicly release the findings of the \$35 million study into the proposed toll tunnel this week from Kedron to Carseldine including the:
  - route alignment and portal locations,
  - construction cost and timeframes,
  - amount of any government contribution,
  - benefit cost ratio,
  - toll prices,
  - expected traffic volumes,
  - changes to existing surface roads, and
  - any public transport benefits.
2. allocate funding in the upcoming budget to finally progress the project.

## North Queensland, Secession




**Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (10.12 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House supports taking the necessary steps to form a separate state of North Queensland in accordance with section 124 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude today at 11.13 am.

### Maternity Services

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.13 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. In 2019 the government convened a maternity taskforce and in 2023 held maternity round tables and announced \$42 million for maternity services. Since the taskforce and round tables, is the maternity crisis worse for Queensland mums?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am so proud of the work that we are doing right across Queensland with key stakeholders, like our nurses and midwives and the Rural Doctors Association, to make sure that we can provide safe birthing services closer to home for women. I have to tell members what an absolute pleasure it was to stand with the member for Cook, Cynthia Lui; the new chair of the Torres and Cape HHS, Renee Williams; and the dedicated doctors and midwives who are bringing birthing back to Weipa after 25 years. According to the Rural Doctors Association, they are not aware of any rural birthing services in the country, other than Beaudesert and now Weipa, that have come back online after being closed. There has been an enormous amount of work done by hardworking doctors, nurses and midwives and Queensland Health clinical experts to make sure that birthing comes back to these communities when it is safe to do so.

As part of that \$42 million, \$16 million is going to Midwifery Group Practice. This is exactly the sort of service that women tell me they want. When we had our maternity round table shortly after I became the health minister, women told me they wanted three things: they wanted choice, they wanted continuity of care and they wanted it close to home. That is exactly what Midwifery Group Practice in rural and regional Queensland gives mums. It was a pleasure to be in Bundaberg at the town hall and talk to a local mum about her challenges. She had experienced a stillbirth, which we know can be a devastating thing for women and families. She now has seven children, so she is a very busy woman. She wanted to say thank you so much because she had the opportunity to have the same midwife throughout her whole pregnancy and she knew what a game changer that was. She wanted to make sure that other women right across Queensland were getting access to that service, and that is what we are delivering.

We are not sacking midwives; we are investing in Midwifery Group Practice. We have midwife-to-patient ratios on the way and we are counting the babies as patients. We are the first state in the nation to count the babies as patients. Those opposite never supported nurse-to-patient ratios. We are building on our success of nurse-to-patient ratios with midwifery-to-patient ratios, including counting the babies, and the nation's first Chief Midwife Officer.

### Maternity Services

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Have any other Queensland hospitals joined Weipa, Biloela, Cooktown and Chinchilla in scaling down or bypassing maternity services since July last year?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am not sure whether he caught my answer to the previous question: from this week Weipa has birthing back. The Leader of the Opposition's question is completely misleading. Weipa is not on bypass. Birthing is back on the cape in Weipa thanks to the work of our government. I acknowledge that there is still a lot of work to do to bring birthing back to Cooktown, Biloela and Chinchilla, but it has to be done safely. Very occasionally, if there is unexpected leave or sick leave in some smaller remote communities, there may be a few days where birthing does go on bypass. That is published on the Queensland Health website and the local hospital and health service will do a lot of communication with communities where that occurs. We do everything we can to make sure that those staff and unexpected absences are filled using the locum workforce and we continue to do what we can to strengthen Midwifery Group Practice in those areas that do not have birthing. We are absolutely focused on making sure, no matter where you live in this state, you get access to wonderful care.

The other initiative that I am incredibly proud of is that for the first time in Queensland's history we have home birthing happening in Queensland, with a brand new trial on the Sunshine Coast. Recently I was delighted to be at the Sunshine Coast with the member for Caloundra and the member for Nicklin to meet the amazing midwives and obstetricians who are putting in place Queensland's first trial for homebirth. This means more choice for families who, where it is safe to do so, can give birth in

their own home. It will also mean, I am very hopeful, as is the Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council, that it will reduce the incidence of women free birthing, which is where women make the choice to birth at home with no medical support which is incredibly dangerous. It is very often not safe and can have devastating consequences.

That is why we are investing in home birthing for the first time in Queensland. It is why we will continue to invest in midwifery group practice. It is why we will continue to do the hard work to bring birthing services back to the cape. It was wonderful to be in the Far North to announce that birthing was back at Weipa. I met a local mum, Liz, who talked about having to go to Atherton to have her babies and how happy she was that now she can give birth in her home town of Weipa, which she loves, and where she can have her family and supports with her.

### Integrity Framework

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Premier. Can the Premier advise the House on how the Miles Labor government is continuing to strengthen the integrity framework in Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Cook for her question. Thanks to the actions of our government, Queensland has amongst the toughest lobbying laws in the country. We have acted to make them even stronger, including through our recent prohibition on the practice of dual hatting. Let me be clear: lobbyists have a legitimate role in our democracy, but it is important that they are properly regulated. It is important that the public has information that there is transparency about lobbying activities. It is important that that transparency does not apply just to lobbying of the government. Lobbyists and their clients have interests in lobbying oppositions, too. During the last sitting week, we discovered that the LNP had been exploiting a loophole in our lobbying laws in order to secretly meet with lobbyists. For three years now, they have been using a loophole to meet lobbyists in a way—

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Everton, please withdraw that language.

**Mr MANDER:** I withdraw.

**Mr MILES:** For three years now, shadow ministers have been exploiting a loophole to deny the public knowledge about them being lobbied. If those opposite have nothing to hide in those activities, I can advise the House I have written to the Leader of the Opposition and asked him to support retrospective changes to our lobbying laws so that the public can know exactly what secret lobbying has occurred through the LNP exploiting this loophole. This is not something I take lightly. Retrospectively legislating is a serious matter and that is why I have asked the Leader of the Opposition for his support before I do this. I am sure that, after all of the statements the Leader of the Opposition has made about integrity and about lobbyists, he will support my request to introduce retrospective legislation so that the public can be aware of any secret lobbying that has occurred over those three years. The fact is that if you want to call yourself the premier-elect and if you want to talk about integrity, you have to put your money where your mouth is and you have to act with integrity, too. He cannot just demand it from others. I look forward to advising the House of the Leader of the Opposition's response.

### Maternity Services

**Mr KRAUSE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the Minister confirm that Beaudesert Hospital's maternity unit was bypassed almost every week across December, January and February, with patients being referred to Logan Hospital? Why didn't the Minister tell the mums of Beaudesert about the bypass happening on her watch?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. It is very pleasing that we do have birthing services back at Beaudesert, as I said. Particularly over the Christmas period, there are very small amounts of time where sometimes staff absences mean—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Over the Christmas period there are times when staff take leave, but we work with the patients. The hardworking staff do deserve a break at Christmas time and we work with local mothers to make sure they are supported.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** If I can get a word in, Mr Speaker, can I say that all of those mums—

**Ms Bates:** Cross your legs!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders. I ask you to withdraw that comment.

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for McConnel. We do not need any assistance.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Rather than creating unnecessary fear in the community, what happens is that we work with any expectant mums—

**Mrs Gerber:** Cover it up.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I absolutely reject that assertion from the member for Currumbin that we are covering anything up. This is made public. The HHS works with local families—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Kawana! Pause the clock. Minister, you have one minute and 23 seconds remaining; do you have anything further to add?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I do, Mr Speaker. It is absolutely outrageous for those opposite to come in here and create fear for expectant mums in the community. I want to be very clear that hospital and health services work with expectant mums and the community. Sometimes they may be on bypass for 24 hours and no patients are impacted. Sometimes, if birthing services are required from Beaudesert, we will work with a small number of women who, with their midwives, go to Logan Hospital. We work with the Rural Doctors Association, the AMA and our nurses and midwives to make sure those women are supported. As members opposite well know—because when in government they did a lot of work with the Rural Doctors Association to bring birthing back to Beaudesert—it has to be safe. We work very hard with the obstetricians and midwives to ensure birthing services remain at Beaudesert. Information around what happens from time to time, for short periods, is always publicly available and it is well communicated to the community and to families. I reject that wholeheartedly and ask those opposite to stop causing fear in the community.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Premier will please stop interjecting at one another across the chamber.

### Frontline Services

**Ms McMILLAN:** My question is of the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the Miles Labor government is delivering the services Queenslanders deserve for our growing state, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any risky alternatives?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Mansfield her question. The member for Mansfield was a distinguished educator in the public education system in Queensland before her entry to this place. The member for Mansfield knows, as all members of our government know, that our government is committed to ensuring Queensland's frontline keeps up with the pace of growth in our state's population. That means having the nurses, teachers and police officers to staff the hospitals, the schools and the police stations our growing state needs. The member for Mansfield also understands that, when the LNP whinges about public sector growth—the growth in wages, the cost of public servants—we know that means one thing: the LNP is really complaining about the number of teachers, nurses and police officers and whether they should get a decent wage for the work they do.

We saw it last week in the LNP's federal budget reply speech. Peter Dutton has the jobs of 36,000 public servants in his sights. He compared that number to the Australian Defence Force. Let's talk about how the LNP treats the Defence Force. This week, in nine newspapers Shane Wright laid bare how frontline Public Service job cuts hurt those very defence personnel. Under the federal LNP government, the processing time for defence veteran support claims blew out on average by 435 days, that is, one year and two months. Queenslanders remember that Peter Dutton was a defence minister in that government. That processing time blew out. Why? It blew out because they outsourced that work to labour hire companies. That is what the LNP does.

I say this about all the bleating from the Leader of the Opposition and all the members of the LNP: that was an absolutely disgusting way to treat the veterans who served this country with such distinction and honour. It was an absolutely disgusting way to treat them. I can assure members of this:



not one member of the federal coalition and not one member of the LNP opposite will apologise, because, like the Leader of the Opposition, they never apologise. They never apologised for the cuts that rained down.

This leader wants to cut debt and he wants to cut taxes. That leads him down one road, and that is the road to cuts, because that is the sort of bloke he is. That is the sort of man he is. He did it when he was in government. He is now priding himself on cutting debt and revenue. That means for everyone in Queensland—the mayors across all local government areas and every Queenslander who lives in Logan, Brisbane, Mansfield and everywhere else—that the LNP cuts are coming, and Labor will protect Queensland from LNP cuts.

### Maternity Services

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the minister confirm that Ingham Hospital had its maternity services bypassed for two weeks in September, three times in October and a further three times in February and that Ayr Hospital was bypassed on three occasions between September and February? Why didn't the minister tell the mums of North Queensland about bypassing happening on her watch?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** We did tell the mums. Absolutely we told the mums and we told the community. At Ayr there were upgrades to operating theatres. The HHS put out proactive media releases and spoke with families. There was a maternity bypass that occurred from Tuesday, 26 March until Friday, 26 April. Appropriate referral pathways were in place for all planned birthing. That was for upgrades to make sure that our birthing suites were modern and up to date for families.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members to my right!

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Of course those opposite would not know about spending on infrastructure for maternity services because when they were in government they did not spend one dollar upgrading maternity services.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members to my left—in particular, the member for Glass House and the member for Kawana—have been consistently interjecting, not just then. Hold it. It is okay. The minister is being responsive to the question as asked. I need to hear the answer and so does Hansard. I will ask for these interjections to cease.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I am happy to update the House that during this time there were seven women supported to birth at Townsville University Hospital. Post-delivery these women and neonates were either discharged from the Townsville University Hospital to their home or transferred to Ayr to receive routine postnatal care. During 2 and 7 May, Ayr also reduced its maternity service to support general practitioner obstetrics and the general practitioner anaesthetics staff planned leave. Two women were supported to be transferred from the Ayr Health Service to Townsville University Hospital during this period. Again, that was communicated publicly to the community—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left!

**Mr Miles** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier. I need no assistance.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** As I have said—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition—

**Ms King:** You're a grub.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Which member said that?

**Ms King:** I said that.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Pumicestone, you are warned under the standing orders. Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders. I give you fair wideranging opportunities in your position. You are warned.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** We also briefed the member who asked the question on the fact that there would be a pause in birthing services.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members to my right. What is your point of order?

**Mr POWELL:** It is on relevance under standing order 118(b).

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my right! I need to hear the member's point of order. Show some respect.

**Mr POWELL:** The months of March and May were not mentioned in the question. The months of September, October and February were. I ask that the minister come back to the specifics of the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, there are specific timeframes that are mentioned. I understand that you have been building in terms of some history, but we need you to come back to the question as asked.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am also happy to say that between 4 and 5 September there was a temporary reduction. There were no women impacted. From 25 to 27, again, there were two days where the service was reduced. No women were impacted. Midwives were rostered to transfer any emergent birthing. I have addressed the most recent impacts in Ayr. Again, from 23 to 24—less than 24 hours—no women were impacted.

I am again very happy to make it very clear to the opposition that these decisions are made by doctors and midwives because if someone is sick or does have to attend to a sick child there is a small window when birthing may not be safe. We listen to the doctors and the midwives. The Leader of the Opposition says he wants to put them back in charge. Well this is what it means. Often there are no impacts to women but, where there are, they are supported by midwives and it is safe, so stop causing fear in the community.

### Cost of Living

**Mrs McMAHON:** My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is supporting Queenslanders with cost of living, and is the minister aware of any uncosted and risky alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. As a former police officer, she understands how important it is to support our public sector workers. Cost-of-living relief comes in many ways. It can come in the way in which you support people at work, because having a job is the best cost-of-living support you can have in this state. This Labor government is delivering those jobs in spades. It is a pleasure to have the mayors in the gallery at the moment. What great jobs creation we are having when it comes to delivering infrastructure—and I see Mayor Natoli in the gallery—such as the Olympic and Paralympic games stadium and indoor sporting venue that we announced last week. It is great to see that we continue to deliver for public sector workers.

I am thrilled that we are introducing—the first in Australia—10 days, non-cumulative, paid reproductive health leave for our public sector workers. It is terrific. We are also going to add to that superannuation payments for any leave taken in the 52 weeks, whether it is a combination of paid and unpaid leave. This complements the Albanese government's approach with their announcement of \$1.1 billion over four years to pay superannuation on Commonwealth government paid parental leave for births and adoptions from 1 July 2025. These are great policies delivered by a Labor government.

I was very pleased to read in the media that the Leader of the Opposition supported the position and that he wanted to see that public servants were valued and respected. They are great words. It is a great way to act, and it is bit of a change of heart. I was a bit surprised really. I went back to the record. I went back to when the Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table in Campbell Newman's government. At that time there was not much value of public sector workers. There was not much respect. If he is trying to send the message again that they have nothing to fear, can I inform the House that that is exactly what they said last time. Last time they were affected greatly—thousands of public servants were sacked under that government.

They come in here and ask questions about our hardworking public servants—the nurses and the doctors who are in charge of the hospitals and safe clinical delivery. All we constantly hear is the whingeing and whining with respect to service delivery. They even whinge when maternity services cannot continue in their area because the maternity area is being upgraded. When the theatres are being upgraded, they want them to operate while they are being upgraded! What absolute nonsense. Get it right. Public servants are there to deliver safe services, and we are there to support them every step of the way. Beware the Leader of the Opposition.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the next questioner, I wish to advise members that we have here in the gallery the principal and student leaders from Caningeraba in the electorate of Burleigh. Welcome to the parliament.

### Maternity Services

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Was the Gold Coast University Hospital forced to downgrade its maternity services for complex births on four occasions in January and February on the minister's watch?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for the question. I am advised that, at the Gold Coast University Hospital, for periods shorter than 24 hours, on 11 and 12 January and 18 and 19 January there was a shortage of medical practitioners with credentials in anaesthetics and scope of practice for very complicated neonatal complex births. The Gold Coast University Hospital reduced its CSCF level from level 6 to level 5. I am advised there were no impacts to patients. Further, from 20 to 24 January again there was a service reduction. I am advised there was absolutely no impact to any expectant mums, which is good news.

These decisions are made by clinicians. If there is a shortage of particularly anaesthetics, GP obstetricians, obstetricians or midwives which is unexpected, they will slightly reduce the service that can be offered at that hospital where it is safe to do so. For the most part, I am pleased to say that it has not impacted any of our mums. This is always communicated to consumers, our wonderful Queenslanders, our expectant mums and their families. It has also ensured we communicate to all of our clinical staff. It is really important that we listen to midwives and doctors to make birthing safe. The Leader of the Opposition has said time and time again that they want to put doctors and nurses back in charge as they are the ones who make these decisions.

We have taken the opportunity to upgrade all of our beautiful birthing suites. As I have travelled around Queensland, it has been wonderful to see that the huge Big Build in health means modern, new birthing suites wherever we go. Because we are upgrading maternity services, sometimes it does mean a slight reduction in services while we do those upgrades. We do everything we can to make sure we have the appropriate level of staff and that we take the advice of doctors and midwives.

I also want to make sure the opposition understands that, where there is a slight reduction in services in regional areas, those women are supported by their local midwives. Their local midwives travel with them and then they come back and receive wonderful care at their local hospital by the same group of midwives because we have invested in Midwifery Group Practice. We understand that maternity services are a huge priority, particularly for rural and regional Queensland. We will continue to invest in the resources and people that we need. I have already today listed off the huge advances we are taking in maternity care by counting the babies, midwife-to-patient ratios, homebirth and Midwifery Group Practice. We will continue to support the families, women and bubs of Queensland.

### Health System

**Ms KING:** My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister advise how the Miles Labor government is supporting a strong healthcare system for Queenslanders, and is minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Pumicestone for her question. She is a tremendous advocate for the soon-to-be-opened Bribie Island Satellite Hospital. What a wonderful advocate she has been to make sure her constituents are getting wonderful health care close to home. We know that our satellite hospitals are making a big difference, with a 12 per cent reduction for those emergency departments located near a satellite hospital in non-urgent presentations, which is fantastic news. That is how you tackle the pressures facing our health system: with more staff, more beds and more world-class health infrastructure.

Everyone in this House has heard me ask time and time again what the Leader of the Opposition's plans are for health. How are they going to tackle the huge demand we are seeing? Time and time again the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mudgeeraba rattle off their empty slogans with no substance, no plans, no initiatives and no funding proposals. Just this week we saw the member for Mudgeeraba getting grilled by journalists about what she would do to tackle ambulance ramping. She could not point to a single thing—not one initiative.

Everybody wants to know. We want to know what their plans are and journalists want to know what their plans are, and now it would seem somebody else wants to know what their plans are. Somebody this week was on the Leader of the Opposition's Twitter page asking how he would back up his empty promises on ramping. He was asked, 'How will you do this—magic wand? Mystic incantations?' Who was that? It was none other than the Leader of the Opposition's mentor, Campbell Newman. But Campbell Newman was not done there: Campbell Newman demanded to know if the LNP would implement the same policies they put in place from 2012 to 2015, and Queenslanders have a right to know. I might be entering the twilight zone here because I cannot believe I am about to say this—

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

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

**Ms FENTIMAN:**—but I agree with Campbell Newman! Is he going to choose between a magic wand or sacking 4,000 health workers? Is he going to choose between a magic wand or closing down youth mental health facilities? Is it going to be a magic wand or privatising health assets just like they did with our aged-care facilities? The Leader of the Opposition has paraded around the state for far too long with his tiny target strategy. For too long he has undermined and attacked our health workers. It is time he took the advice of his mentor Campbell Newman and told us exactly what his plans are for health.

### Maternity Services

**Mr HEAD:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The state government has consistently said that maternity services at Biloela Hospital have not permanently closed despite being on bypass since August 2022. Can the minister confirm that the hospital's theatres no longer meet safety standards, meaning surgical birthing options like C-sections cannot occur at Biloela Hospital?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. He well knows that we are doing everything we can to attract the specialist staff we need to Biloela to make sure we can recommence birthing. As part of that program, we are again looking at upgrading the birthing suites at Biloela to attract clinicians. Once again the Queensland government is spending money to upgrade services in the member's community to attract the best and brightest clinicians to finally get birthing back open in Biloela. We know it is not just about providing incentives and making sure staff have enough work to continue their skills; it is about making sure we attract staff by having world-class facilities. That is why we are doing work right now, member for Callide, to upgrade your beautiful birthing suites.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Through the chair, Minister.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Part of bringing birthing back to Biloela, Chinchilla and Cooktown is about training our GP obstetricians. That is why I am so pleased that this government, in partnership with our Rural Doctors Association, is paying for scholarships for our GPs to undertake advanced obstetric training. I have had the pleasure of travelling the state and meeting wonderful GPs, including one at Rockhampton who I think might be attracted to go to Biloela to do their obstetric training through RANZCOG. If we can fund and train GPs who are willing to work in regional communities as GP obstetricians, we can safely bring birthing services back. That is what has happened at Weipa, and we hope to use that experience to bring clinicians to towns like Biloela, Chinchilla and Cooktown and that is why we are funding GPs to do advanced obstetric training. I again want to thank our partners in the Rural Doctors Association and—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I acknowledge there was a preamble, but the question was this: does the theatre fail safety standards now?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Glass House. I am glad you acknowledged that there was a preamble, because the minister is being directly relevant to that preamble.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I will repeat again for the benefit of the member for Glass House: we are doing that work now to upgrade the birthing suites in Biloela.

**Mr Head:** So it's not compliant then? How about you just say it.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Actually, member for Callide, that is not exactly what I said. What I said was we know that if we are going to attract clinicians we need to upgrade the birthing suites. I have never had a local member complain about getting upgrades to a birthing suite before except the member for Callide. I do not know why they do not want us to make sure that women in their communities in regional Queensland get first-class facilities. I guess it is because they never did it when they were in government, but that is what Labor governments do. We invest in regional infrastructure, and we will continue to do so because we believe that no matter where you are in Queensland you deserve to have quality health care closer to home.

### **Miles Labor Government, Emergency Services**

**Mr KING:** My question is of the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister update the House on the government's reforms and investments in emergency services capability for supporting Queenslanders, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

**Mr RYAN:** What an outstanding question from a great member. I have known a lot of members for Kawana—Kurwongbah.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr RYAN:** I have known a lot of members for Kawana too, and this member for Kawana will not be getting a compliment from me. I have known a lot of members for Kurwongbah and this is the best member for Kurwongbah that the Queensland parliament has ever seen. However, there is one person better than this member for Kurwongbah, and that is his wife, Angie, who is an emergency services volunteer and I want to acknowledge her contribution in the context of this answer. We are investing in the front line; we are investing in people like Angie who dedicate their lives by contributing to community safety. Angie volunteers for the Rural Fire Service. Today we are acknowledging State Emergency Service volunteers through Wear Orange Wednesday, and it is great to see so many members of this House participating in that tradition.

Our investment in the front line through supporting emergency services reforms is making a difference. It is laying the foundation for the next generation of fire and emergency services responders. Huge budget increases are seeing more staff deployed to those agencies to support volunteers in the work that they do, more resources for the front line, more vehicles and more facilities. It is making a real difference. It also continues this government's proud tradition of investing in the front line and investing in community safety.

I was asked about alternatives. Past behaviour is an indicator of future behaviour. Who could forget that in 2013 when the LNP was in government it commissioned the Keelty review, which led to the decimation of community safety agencies in Queensland? It established the PSBA and ripped public servants out of those agencies, led to the sacking of police personnel and led to the dismantling of a number of important emergency service frameworks. We recall a lot of the mean-spirited things that those opposite did. As a result of those reforms when they were in government, the SES cadet program for young people was abolished. A cadet program for young people was abolished. They sacked rural fire support staff.

One thing that has emerged since we started delivering our emergency reform work is the realisation that sometimes the little, mean-spirited things have the deepest impact. Under those opposite, SES members could not keep their own email address. The email address [ses.qld.gov.au](mailto:ses.qld.gov.au) was taken off them. As part of our reforms, we have given it back. We have also given them their identity back, with their badges having their SES logo. Those opposite cut, but they are also mean spirited.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Before calling the member for Kawana, I wish to advise members that in the gallery today is the YMCA youth member for Buderim, Charlotte Stronach. I also need to issue a general warning to all members. Today there have been far too many instances of members not directing comments through the chair, mainly via interjections. Members, that will cease or I will start sending members out without warning.

### **Health Workforce, Safety**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. A health worker survey has found that 70 per cent of hospital staff have been assaulted or witnessed violence at work, and patients are also being put at risk. Given the state government set up a taskforce in 2016 to make the safety of health workers a priority, are these damning figures proof this third-term Labor government has once again failed to follow through on an announcement?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Kawana for his question. I say at the outset that there is never, ever any excuse for abuse of our hardworking health staff. They go to work every day to take care of Queenslanders and they should never have to tolerate violence or abuse in their workplace. We take a zero-tolerance approach to that kind of behaviour, and the minister has been working with Queensland Health to provide additional supports and safety to our staff in health workplaces.

We established the Queensland Occupational Violence Strategy Unit. It is the first in Australia to be permanently funded in that form. The unit works with frontline clinicians and executives to implement a range of strategies and to encourage staff to report every single incident. They have been working hard to deliver de-escalation training to healthcare security officers in conjunction with the Queensland Police Service as well as occupational violence incident response kits to guide staff on how to support their colleagues when incidents happen. We also significantly increased the amount of CCTV in our hospitals, again to keep our staff safe. They are particularly focused on high-traffic areas of the hospital and they are used alongside the body worn cameras that our security staff now use as well. There are a range of initiatives in place now to keep our staff safe at work. Clearly, with—

**Mr Bleijie:** They're obviously not working because 70 per cent say no—70 per cent disagree with you.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will cease his interjections.

**Ms Fentiman:** They're not getting sacked.

**Mr MILES:** I take that interjection from the health minister because we on this side of the House genuinely care about the wellbeing of health staff.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Mr MILES:** Those on the opposite side of the House are only interested in sacking them. They are only interested in calling them 'grubs'. They are only interested in coming in here and talking down our health services. Queenslanders are blessed with one of the best universal healthcare systems in the world and those hardworking staff do not deserve to be denigrated every single day by those opposite. We have heard question after question which the minister has well answered, often by saying that we are upgrading those facilities. We are often upgrading those facilities because those opposite never did—never upgraded a single facility, never went to an election committing to upgrade a single facility. All they do is bag our healthcare workers, and I am sick of it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, there was a term used there. You may have been paraphrasing, but I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr MILES:** I withdraw.

### Miles Labor Government

**Mr SULLIVAN:** My question is of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government's priorities are supporting Queenslanders, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches and, in particular, risks which may re-emerge?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for Stafford for the second question this week.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, please resume your seat. What is your point of order?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I ask that you rule the question out of order. 'A risk that may emerge' is completely a hypothetical, and I ask that under the standing orders you rule the question a hypothetical question. 'A risk that may emerge' is a hypothetical question.

**Mr SULLIVAN:** I am happy to reword the question, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, it is not going to be about that, member. Member, I am going to allow the question. Whenever we use the word 'risk' in this place, it is always about what may occur under those circumstances, but otherwise 'risk' would be hypothetical as well. I appreciate your point of order. I will allow the question.

**Ms SCANLON:** I understand why the opposition does not want to hear about the risks to Queensland. The member for Stafford is a big advocate for our Homes for Queenslanders plan—a plan that is building more public housing, providing direct cost-of-living support, and additional protection for

the 30 per cent of Queenslanders who rent in this state. It is an ambitious plan—one that we know the LNP have suggested is too much. They have repeatedly failed to come clean on their plans for housing, so all we have to go by is what they did last time, and they have even brought back the same guy who was there last time. You cannot teach an old dog new tricks, but the member for Everton is of course trying on social media at least.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** It is a real—

**Mr Mander:** I've got feelings!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, I've got ears! You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms SCANLON:** It is a real highlight of my day to see what the member for Everton is up to on Twitter. On a busy Monday when he was yearning for his past, his most recent tweet said, 'Oh, for the old days.'

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Glass House, direct your comments through the chair.

**Ms SCANLON:** I will not profess to be a scholar of the member for Everton's refereeing career, but it did make me wonder what other trips down memory lane the member for Everton has been reminiscing about. Was it the old days when he gutted social housing in this state? Was he dreaming of the old days when he sent social housing backwards by 428 homes? Was it the old days when the member for Everton was around the cabinet table with all of his mates over there such as the Leader of the Opposition when they slashed funding for Indigenous councils in this state, or was it the old days when all of those—

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the member for Bonney's interjection. The only thing the member for Everton did was send social housing in this state backwards. If that is the position of the member for Bonney, that is an indication that they are going to do it all over again. Of course, we know that the member for Bonney does not like housing in his own electorate. We also heard from the member for Burleigh that he does not support housing in his own electorate. They talk about working with councils to unlock more supply and then when it is in their own backyard they oppose it.

You cannot risk the LNP in October. They do not have a plan on housing. Their only plan is to cut, and they did that last time. Our government will deliver social homes, protection for renters and support for homelessness organisations, because that is what Labor governments do.

### **Far North Queensland, Road Infrastructure**

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. State roads in the Far North and my electorate require urgent upgrades, with thousands of potholes throughout causing significant damage to vehicles. Will the minister urgently address this issue and compensate motorists for damage to their vehicles as a direct result of failed state owned road infrastructure?

**Mr MELLISH:** I thank the member for the question. We know that roads are the lifeblood of many rural and regional communities and that we need safe, reliable roads to help these communities. That is why we are delivering record investment in our regions. We support these regional communities and the industries that are there. I know that the member was a very strong advocate after the recent flooding events in Far North Queensland. The Palmerston Highway had some very significant damage. I was happy to work closely with the member to get the temporary access to the Palmerston fixed. The member was a really strong advocate for his local area.

In terms of his specific question about potholes and damage to vehicles, I am advised that on TMR infrastructure people can apply for compensation from TMR. I am happy to talk specifics with the member about that. There is a process that motorists can go through where roads have caused damage to vehicles. I am further advised that to make a claim motorists can contact the North Queensland Transport and Main Roads office or go to the TMR website. I am happy to talk about specific claims and provide information directly to the member for Hill.

More broadly, we have some great investments across Queensland and across North Queensland in particular. We have a lot of Bruce Highway projects underway. To the north of Cairns we have Captain Cook Highway works underway. We have the Palmerston repairs underway. That is

quite a significant project. On the Kuranda range we are doing a number of projects in conjunction with the federal government. I am really keen to see us get more of these projects out the door and to see us work with our delivery partners, whether it is local governments or the federal government, on those highways. I am keen to keep the positive discussions going with the member, who is a strong advocate for transport solutions and roads in his area.

### Education Infrastructure

**Mr MARTIN:** My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Can the minister outline the importance of public owned education assets in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives to Queensland's training and skills sector?

**Mr McCALLUM:** I thank the member for Stretton for the question. He is a proud member of the new Miles Labor government—a government that is dedicated to public ownership of our training system, a government that puts people before profits so they can access a high-quality education.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Gregory will cease his interjections.

**Mr McCALLUM:** It is a proud Labor government that is training homegrown heroes—

**Mr Millar** interjected.

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

**Mr McCALLUM:**—at TAFEs including the Acacia Ridge TAFE in the member's electorate. It is the biggest trade training centre in the Southern Hemisphere. It is a blue-collar jobs factory for thousands of Queenslanders, getting them the skills and training they need for good jobs. That is just one of the many state-of-the-art TAFE campuses we have right across Queensland. We have been proud to invest in them.

It is the Miles Labor government that is investing in affordable public vocational education and training, which means there are courses available in automotive, building and construction, electrotechnology, engineering, manufacturing and design, resources and mining, and transport and utilities, just to name a few. We are delivering cost-of-living relief through initiatives like free TAFE and free apprenticeships. We heard from the Premier this morning that over 80,000 Queenslanders have accessed our free TAFE—getting skilled up and saving money. All of this is at risk under the LNP, who would put shareholders before students through their privatisation plans which would mean there would be fewer Queenslanders trained at a much greater cost.

When we compare the training outcomes of today with when the LNP was last in power in 2013 and 2014, we see that there are 1,800 fewer Queenslanders with a cert III in electrotechnology—the trades we need for the transition; 1,000 fewer cert III in carpentry—that is a thousand fewer chippies; and 1,000 fewer cert III in plumbing,

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

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

**Mr McCALLUM:** These are the people we need to build more homes. When in government, many of the same people I see across the aisle sat around the cabinet table and gutted TAFE. They have form in cutting courses. They sacked over 2,100 workers and they had plans to close or sell off 30 TAFEs. We know that they would do it again, because their leader recently said that TAFE needs to meet the market. We know what means.

*(Time expired)*

### Housing

**Ms BOLTON:** My question is to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works. Consultation on the draft amendments to the Planning Regulation 2017 was opened with no notification to communities and closed yesterday. Will the minister commit to extending the consultation period for at least another two weeks, as requested and needed, and give assurances regarding the concerns already raised?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for Noosa for the question. Our government is focused on building more homes faster. To do that, we have passed a bill in this parliament to reduce red tape and to make sure we can unlock more affordable housing supply. I appreciate the community's interest in



the consultation process on the proposed amendments. I am advised that that consultation process commenced on Friday, 19 April and concluded yesterday. It was open for a month. I will not be extending that consultation because my priority is making sure we get more homes up off the ground quickly. That is what these reforms were all about. I appreciate that might not be the position of the member for Noosa or some members of her community, but, as the housing minister in this state, I need to make sure we are delivering the homes Queenslanders need. While I have said that the formal consultation process has closed—submissions received after 21 May will not meet the statutory requirements—my department will still consider late submissions through that process. It will not be, as I said, part of that statutory process.

In terms of the amendment criteria, I remind the House that that criteria were for the new state facilitated development pathway, which provides the ability to impose development conditions for affordable housing, and the introduction of a build-to-rent definition, amongst others. Delaying the consultation would slow down these critical changes and, as I said, we need to make sure we are delivering more homes faster—the right homes in the right locations. That is what this bill was all about.

From the outset, my department has actively encouraged feedback from all stakeholders, including broad awareness and engagement through letters to key stakeholders—local government—social media, weekly electronic alerts and briefing sessions. Additionally, prior to the public consultation my department engaged with peak bodies including the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Planning Institute of Australia, the Property Council of Australia, the Housing Supply Expert Panel and the Urban Development Institute of Australia to discuss the draft amendments.

I am more than happy to provide a briefing for the member for Noosa about those proposed changes, but as I said our government is focused on delivering more homes faster. We are doing that through this new pathway. We are also doing it through our new infill fund. The opposition want to talk a lot about working with local councils, but when they were in government they axed funding to local councils. The Premier recently announced the Works for Queensland funding, which is millions and millions of dollars going to local governments to support them to deliver critical infrastructure. I am hopeful that some of them will use that to unlock more housing. We have an infill fund where we know there is a lot of underutilised land that we can use for housing. We are doing everything we can to speed up approvals and make sure we get homes off the ground.

### Resources Industries

**Mr WHITING:** My question is to the Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals. Can the minister advise how the resource industry is supporting jobs and infrastructure in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr STEWART:** I thank the member for Bancroft for his question. I know how much he values the resource industry. There are almost 77,000 people employed directly in the resource industry, plus thousands more employed indirectly. Not only does the resource industry provide huge employment opportunities right throughout Queensland, but it also generates billions of dollars in royalties every year for every Queenslanders in this great state.

Our critical minerals sector continues to go from strength to strength and will be our next big boom for the industry. Just this month I approved two new mining leases: North West Phosphate's Paradise South project and AIC Mines's Jericho project. They are both in the north-west of our state. We are also seeing continued investment and confidence in our steelmaking coal industry, despite what those opposite are saying—they always talk it down.

The facts do not lie. The latest ABS statistics show coal exploration expenditure was up by 41.9 per cent year on year to \$239.3 million, reaching its highest level ever since 2014. Increasing exploration shows that there is absolute confidence for the future of this industry. We are seeing companies like Coronado resources investing in Queensland right now with their new project, Mammoth Underground. This project will be subject to approvals but will target 48 million tonnes of high-quality steelmaking coal. This means long-term jobs and royalties for Queenslanders. It is these royalties that mean we can invest in infrastructure. It means we can employ more police officers, more nurses, more teachers and more doctors. It also means we can directly help people with cost-of-living relief.

We know people are doing it tough because of high mortgage repayments and increasing grocery prices. The fact that we own our public assets and introduced progressive coal royalties to make sure Queenslanders are given a fair share of the resources that belong to them means we can give people \$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 those opposite do not back them. They want to hand back billions of dollars to multinational mining companies. That can only mean one thing—that is, a budget black hole—and it will be Queenslanders who will suffer because of it. This means no cost-of-living rebate, no CopperString and cuts to police and teacher numbers. That is what will happen under the LNP. It means our public assets will also be sold off. In parliament last month the LNP voted to sell the assets Queensland owns, and they have tried to do it before.


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

## CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION) BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 21 May (see p. 1694), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.13 am), in reply: I thank all members of the House who have provided their support for the cheaper power bill. Thanks to the cheaper power bill before the House, Queenslanders will get a cheaper power bill, with at least \$1,000 off their bill from 1 July. Every dollar will be funded by progressive coal royalties. Progressive coal royalties are the right thing to do for Queensland, and our Labor government will fight to keep them every single day until the October election.

The cheaper power bill is cost-of-living relief that Queenslanders need and deserve, and it is coming from money that multinational coal companies owe the people of Queensland. I fully expect that in a few moments the LNP will not cast a vote against the cheaper power bill. They will let it go through on the voices, and in doing so the LNP will not show the courage of their convictions—just like they did not cast a vote against progressive coal royalties when they were introduced nearly two years ago. We know from every single thing they have done since and from their conduct and words in the debate last night that cost-of-living relief will be the first thing that the LNP cuts. Similarly, progressive coal royalties will be cut. The LNP tried to cut rebates when they were in government last time, and we can be sure that if they get half a chance they will do exactly that again.

Just listen to what the LNP called cost-of-living relief in the debate last night: a 'pork barrel' and a 'sugar hit', by the member for Mermaid Beach; 'a short-term sugar hit', by the member for Whitsunday; 'softening up Queenslanders', by the member for Buderim; 'a bribe to Queensland voters' and they are 'trying to buy the next election', by the member for Gregory; a 'bandaid' fix, by the member for Nanango and the member for Warrego; 'a temporary measure', by the member for Callide; and 'a cash splash just before a state election' which is 'more about political survival' and they 'will do and say anything', by the member for Condamine. If you supported genuine cost-of-living relief for Queensland families, you would never say those words. Those words demonstrate what the LNP will do. They will cut hard, and they will cut cost-of-living relief and electricity rebates for Queensland families. It is absolutely abundantly clear from these comments that the LNP do not support cost-of-living rebates and they would cut them. That absolutely vindicates our Labor government's decision to protect these rebates via this supplementary appropriation bill and pay them up-front before the LNP gets a chance to take them away.

It is worth reflecting on how and why we can afford these rebates. One of the key reasons is that we have seen higher than expected coal prices through this financial year. The Leader of the Opposition is already on the record speaking against Queensland's progressive coal royalties. He has called them 'deceitful' and 'dishonest'. The leader of the LNP has said they are a betrayal of people investing in our state. That reveals the true intent of the Leader of the Opposition. Just two weeks ago it was reported in the *Australian* newspaper that a lobbying firm took the Queensland Resources Council to secretly meet with the shadow LNP Treasurer at parliament. I ask a simple question: how many secret meetings has the LNP had with the coal lobby? Why did the leader of the LNP promise the coal lobby that he would give them a royalties policy that they could 'take to the bank'? I heard the member for Kawana speak about progressive coal royalties in the debate, but what he did not say, and what all members of the LNP refuse to say, are these simple words: 'The LNP will not cut progressive coal royalties.' 'The LNP will keep progressive coal royalties permanently.' 'The LNP rules out any changes to progressive coal royalties.'

We know the LNP can say these words because the member for Toowoomba South said it immediately after the foreign land tax surcharge was introduced. The member for Toowoomba South, the shadow Treasurer, fell over himself to rule out any changes to that revenue measure when the Labor government introduced it, so why can't the LNP say the same thing about progressive coal royalties? Every Queenslander knows the answer: it is because the LNP want to cut them.

We heard a lot of bluster from the LNP about electricity prices during the debate. Didn't they go on and on about that. There were so many falsehoods that I do not have time to detail them all, but let us get some facts on the table. Electricity prices increased under the LNP when they were in government by 43 per cent. Under our government—

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** No wonder the member for Chatsworth is interjecting; he was an assistant minister in that government and he was absolutely proud—proud to see electricity prices go up. That is what he presided over. Do not listen to what they say; look to what the member for Chatsworth did when he was in government.

Under our government, the latest CPI data shows that electricity costs have decreased by almost 10 per cent—9.5 per cent—in the year to the March quarter 2024. You do not have to take my word for it, you do not have to take the Australian Bureau of Statistics' word for it; there are others the LNP can ask. Canstar Blue in December 2023 found Queensland had the lowest average power bills in the National Electricity Market. The Australian Energy Regulator and the Queensland Competition Authority found that, in 2023-24, Queensland recorded the lowest cost retail electricity on a cents-per-kilowatt hour in the country. Australian Energy Market Operator wholesale volume weighted average spot price market data shows that, since 1 April 2024, Queensland is recording the lowest average wholesale electricity spot price of all jurisdictions in the National Electricity Market at an average of \$86 per megawatt hour as of 19 May 2024.

I call on the Leader of the Opposition—I call on 'The Leader'—to stop misleading Queenslanders. I call on the Leader of the Opposition to stop being dishonest with the people of Queensland. I call on all of those members opposite to stop frightening and misleading Queenslanders about power prices in this state. I call on the Leader of the Opposition to come into this House and to correct the record. I call on him to correct what he has said and what his party continues to say, and I call on him to correct it in public. I wonder if he will stand up today before a camera. I do wonder if he will stand up today, have the courage of his convictions and say that.

During the debate, multiple members of the LNP made false claims about maintenance of electricity generators in Queensland, in particular the Callide Power Station. Again, more falsehood layered on falsehood, layered on falsehood. Our government owned generators continue to invest in asset overhauls and maintenance to support security and reliability through Queensland's energy transition.

In 2023-24—I say this for the public record, for the record of the parliament, and for the record of all those who are willing to listen—Queensland's three publicly owned generators are together investing \$384 million for upgrades and maintenance of existing power stations. That is \$384 million in power generation upgrades. That is a \$384 million power guarantee that you can take to the bank. Those investments are, of course, delivering. The Australian Energy Market Operator reported yesterday that Queensland will enjoy the most reliable grid of any major state on the east coast, not this year, not next year, but across the decade, so I am calling on the LNP to stop misleading the parliament. If anyone were to contend otherwise about energy prices, about power prices and about the maintenance of energy generators, they would be deliberately misleading the House. These issues are conclusive, not from our government, but from independent, third-party regulators who have informed the people of Queensland and the LNP of these facts, and I would call on the LNP to stop misleading Queensland.

Of course, we all heard about the LNP's fake maintenance gimmick. This is coming from the LNP, the LNP who directed CS Energy to cut back on maintenance spending when they were in government. The LNP wrote to the board of CS Energy, directing them to 'reduce expenditure by at least \$74 million'. That letter dated 6 September 2012 was signed by the then energy minister Mark McArdle and, of course, the member for Clayfield, Campbell Newman's hand-picked Treasurer.

I would also like to address the claims made by the member for Mermaid Beach regarding means-testing. The member for Mermaid Beach said the government did not means-test these rebates because the bill was rushed. The member said, 'They could have means-tested it if they spent the time and effort.' For the benefit of the House, I will again direct the member to the statements made by the

Under Treasurer during the consideration of the bill by the Cost of Living and Economics Committee. The member said he was there. The member claims to be a member of the committee, but for his benefit I will summarise the evidence given by the Under Treasurer to the member for Mermaid Beach's own committee. The Queensland government does not hold income details in relation to individuals.

The best way to deliver cost-of-living relief in a fast, efficient and effective way and to put downward pressure on inflation is via the broad Cost of Living Rebate on consumer electricity bills. We know this works. Our rebates, broad-based as they are, are delivering results. The Australian Energy Regulator's latest quarterly retail performance report shows that while every other jurisdiction in the National Electricity Market had an increase in hardship payment plans, Queensland is the only state where the numbers went down. In Queensland, there was almost a 40 per cent decrease in customers on hardship electricity payment plans over the last six months, while the number went up in every other jurisdiction.

I know there are many families affected by global and national cost-of-living pressures. All members of the government hear this almost every day from their constituents. I hear it in the streets and suburbs of Woodridge—people doing their very best to get by, to pay the bills as they come in. Many of those pressures our government cannot control. I heard the claim from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition last night when he was going on about fuel prices and interest rates. All of those things our government cannot control, but, of course, he dishonestly blamed the Labor government for them.

I will tell you this: every member of the government knows the pressure that is on families in their community, and that is why we brought the cheaper power bill to this House. It is exactly why the Miles Labor government brought forward the cheaper power bill to deliver at least \$1,000 off Queensland household electricity bills from 1 July 2024 and, at the same time, to help drive down inflation. It is the type of cost-of-living measure the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP could never deliver because the LNP do not support public ownership of our energy generation assets and they do not support progressive coal royalties. The LNP have also made it clear they want to lower debt and lower taxes. That is the promise the Leader of the Opposition has made to the people of Queensland which is why we know they will do whatever they have to, to deliver on those promises, even if the people of Queensland suffer.

Through this bill, we send a very clear message. Through this bill, we send a very clear message to the people of Queensland. I have laid out the LNP's dishonesty, their trickery, in this debate. We say this very clearly to the people of Queensland: on 26 October, do not fall for the LNP's tricks. We will be reminding the people of Queensland every day, from now to 26 October, of the dishonesty and the trickery of the LNP. We say to the people: on 26 October, do not fall for the LNP's tricks. Do not fall for what they want to do to Queensland. From the Cost of Living Rebate to frontline service jobs, community services, free kindy, free TAFE—nothing will be off the table under the LNP, hell-bent on reducing debt and cutting taxes for coal companies. Our Labor government is bringing this cost-of-living relief through a supplementary appropriation bill because we want to protect those electricity rebates from people who know nothing else but to cut, to sack and to sell.

Through the passage of the cheaper power bill, the Miles Labor government is delivering not just the biggest single electricity rebate in Queensland's history but the biggest ever delivered by a government in Australian history. I commend the cheaper power bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.29 am): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.29 am): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Before calling the minister, the Speaker has asked me to remind members who are under a warning. They are the members for Southern Downs—I will be watching him!—Maroochydore, Mudgeeraba, Pumicestone, Toowoomba South, Kawana, Everton, Gregory and Buderim.

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.30 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Electrical Safety Act 2002, Electrical Safety Regulation 2013, the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [\[835\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[836\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[837\]](#).

I am proud to introduce the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The Miles government takes the safety of Queenslanders—whether it be in the home or in the workplace or in the community—incredibly seriously. This bill continues our proud record of strengthening and improving safety laws. The bill modernises and enhances our electrical safety framework by giving effect to the *Review of Queensland's Electrical Safety Act 2002*. It also complements the important work health and safety improvements that were made earlier this year in the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024.

These changes implement recommendations from the 2018 *Review of the model work health and safety laws*; the 2022 *Review of Queensland's Work Health and Safety Act 2011*; and the subsequent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor's 2024 review to examine the scope and application of the industrial manslaughter provisions in the Work Health and Safety Act.

Queensland's first standalone Electrical Safety Act was introduced in 2002. In the decades since, the way we produce and consume electricity in Queensland has changed dramatically, and we are using technologies we could not have imagined two decades ago. Who in 2002 could have predicted our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, with its huge investment in renewable energy which will decarbonise our economy and transform our electricity supply. That is why I appointed Mr Dick Williams to conduct an independent review of Queensland's Electrical Safety Act 2002 in order to ensure our electrical safety framework is responsive to risks posed by both new and emerging technologies now and into the future. Mr Williams was eminently qualified to lead the independent review with decades of knowledge and experience and I thank him. The independent review involved extensive consultation through the establishment of an industry reference group and two working groups. Mr Williams's final report contained 83 recommendations which compromised 150 sub recommendations. I again thank Mr Williams for his extensive work on the review and I extend my thanks to all the stakeholders who have participated in consultation during the review of the act and the development of this bill.

The independent review's recommendations are broad ranging, complex and often highly technical. They touch on aspects across the whole electrical safety framework. The government undertook two concurrent consultation processes to ensure the government's response to the recommendations was appropriate and proportionate. First, in May 2023, a discussion paper was established for consultation on the key definitions within the act and on emerging technologies. Over the six-week consultation period, 78 submissions were received.

The second consultation process, which also commenced in May 2023, invited feedback on all the remaining recommendations of the Electrical Safety Act 2002 review final report. Over the three-month consultation period, 88 submissions were received. I want to thank each and every person who took the time to take part in this important process.

I now turn to amendments to the Electrical Safety Act 2002 that are contained in the bill. The need for the Electrical Safety Act's key definitions to remain contemporary and to respond to emerging risks from new technology was a key finding of the review. The consultation process revealed broad support for amending the definition of electrical equipment to address the risks posed by new and emerging technologies. As a result, the bill amends the definition of 'electrical equipment' to include a new category of equipment known as 'prescribed electrical equipment'. Prescribed electrical equipment is extra low voltage equipment that is placing or may place a person or property at electrical risk and is prescribed by regulation.

This expansion of the electrical equipment definition provides a risk-based approach to new and emerging technology. It allows Queensland's electrical safety framework to capture prescribed items of extra low voltage equipment for the first time. In practice, this means that the government can be responsive to the electrical risks posed by new and emerging technology. This may include assessing the risk of particular lithium ion batteries such as those in e-scooters. When an item of electrical equipment becomes 'prescribed electrical equipment' it is brought into Queensland's electrical safety framework. This means it will be subject to supply chain duties as well as to ministerial recall powers. Supply chain duties are imposed on designers, manufacturers, importers, suppliers and installers. They ensure electrical equipment that enters the community is safe and is supplied with information about how it must be used to ensure it remains electrically safe.

Ministerial recall powers ensure when a particular piece of prescribed electrical equipment is exposing the community to risk, a recall can be promptly initiated. This will save lives. The change will also require the businesses to notify the electrical safety regulator of serious electrical incidents and dangerous electrical events involving prescribed electrical equipment. This will give the regulator better visibility of emerging risks to the community. Fires started by extra low voltage electrical equipment like e-bike batteries or e-scooters are sadly a regular item on news reports. This change will provide government with improved tools to respond to these risks.

The Electrical Safety Act currently contains exclusions which allow members of the community to perform certain tasks which do not require specialised electrical knowledge such as plugging appliances into a socket outlet. The bill introduces new exclusions which ensure tasks relating to prescribed electrical equipment do not inadvertently require a licence and can continue to be safely undertaken by members of the community without specialised electrical knowledge. Another key change in the bill is an amendment to the definition of 'electrical installation'. This change clarifies an electrical installation includes a group of permanently connected electrical equipment that is powered not only by main's power but also by a battery or other storage technology. This change provides much needed clarity to industry. It reflects the current and emerging technological environment where there is an increased reliance on battery systems.

The bill also clarifies an 'electrical installation' includes a group of permanently connected electrical equipment that generates electricity. This will ensure, for example, smaller solar farms which do not meet the power generation requirements to be 'generation entities' are captured as 'electrical installations'. Smaller generating technology like this was not technologically possible and, therefore, not contemplated when the definition of electrical installation was drafted in 2022. This change ensures the definition is fit for purpose and recognises our increasingly decentralised energy production.

The review found that ambiguity exists about whether the replacement of similar appliances such as a hot-water system or a stove is 'electrical installation work' and therefore must be completed by an electrical mechanic licence holder. The bill amends the act to clarify that this type of work is not electrical installation work and therefore may be completed by licensed electrical fitters and, in particular circumstances, restricted electrical licence holders. This is in line with industry and community expectations.

The bill clarifies the disciplinary powers of the Electrical Licensing Committee. This ensures proportionate disciplinary action can be taken in response to matters before the committee, allowing them flexibility in their actions. This flexibility includes the ability to impose a condition or restriction on a licence as part of a disciplinary action and to also change or discharge a condition or restriction. Importantly, the changes empower the committee to change a condition or restriction in a way that is

beneficial to the person. This could include examples such as extending the amount of time for the licence holder to comply with a condition if there have been extenuating circumstances which have meant the condition could not be complied with in the original timeframe.

The Electrical Equipment Safety System is a regulatory framework aimed at increasing consumer safety when interacting with household electrical equipment. The bill gives effect to areas of reform for Queensland's implementation of the EESS framework identified in the review. It makes the definition of in-scope electrical equipment more flexible to allow it to respond to technological changes by prescribing a voltage range. It clarifies the definition of 'corresponding laws' to clearly identify in the regulations which jurisdiction's laws are recognised. It also removes a redundant database requirement for the EESS which was reflective of old and outdated record management systems.

The bill aligns the Electrical Safety Act with some of the key changes made to the WHS Act. The bill aligns the powers of inspectors with those under the Work Health and Safety Act in respect of the production of documents and answers to questions. The bill amends the Electrical Safety Act to more accurately reflect the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor's existing standing to bring prosecutions under the Electrical Safety Act. The changes align with provisions in other Queensland safety legislation and increase the operational efficiency of the Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. As I said earlier, Mr Williams provided a comprehensive suite of recommendations. The legislative changes contained in this bill are just the beginning of the process of considering and implementing review recommendations.

The bill will be complemented by a future regulatory package. In addition, I intend to establish a working group in the coming months to focus on the definition of 'electrical work'. It will comprise representatives from industry, registered unions, technical experts, electricity entities and government departments. I recognise the potential impact which changes to this definition could have on workers and industry. This working group will have the expert knowledge to provide me with appropriate recommendations for change which are proportionate and justified.

This bill also makes important changes to continue to strengthen and modernise the Work Health and Safety Act and the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act. Any work related death is a terrible tragedy that causes unimaginable pain and grief to the person's loved ones. As I have said before in this House, workers sell their labour, not their health. In October 2023, acting on a recommendation from the Work Health and Safety Act review, I asked the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor to undertake a review of the industrial manslaughter offence. The industrial manslaughter review was informed by a substantial consultation process with confidential submissions sought from 28 organisations. The bill implements all three recommendations from this review. First, the bill will expand the scope of industrial manslaughter to capture work related deaths of bystanders—for example, a member of the public is killed by scaffolding collapsing onto a public area from a worksite. The bill ensures that the death of any person who is owed a health and safety duty is treated with the same level of seriousness.

Secondly, the bill implements the recommendation to introduce alternative verdicts to industrial manslaughter and also implements alternative verdicts for category 1 offences. Currently, there is no provision for alternative verdicts in the Work Health and Safety Act. The bill amends the act to provide for an alternative verdict of a category 1 or category 2 offence for industrial manslaughter. It also provides an alternative verdict of a category 2 offence for category 1 offences. This change will support the Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor in seeking the highest penalties available under the Work Health and Safety Act. Prosecutions can be commenced with the knowledge that, where the jury is not satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty of the offence they have been charged with, the offender can be found guilty, where the evidence supports it, of an alternative lesser offence rather than being acquitted.

Finally, the bill implements the recommendation to clarify beyond doubt that multiple parties in a contractual chain can be charged with industrial manslaughter. The bill also continues the delivery of an election commitment to implement recommendations of the review of the model work health and safety laws by Marie Boland. The bill introduces the element of negligence to the category 1 offence in addition to the existing element of reckless conduct. This means that, where the duty holder's negligent conduct leads to a high risk of serious harm, they can be subject to the same significant penalties as the reckless conduct category 1 offence. The bill replicates these amendments in both the Work Health and Safety Act and the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act.

The bill implements further recommendations from the independent review of the Work Health and Safety Act relating to the powers of health and safety representatives and entry permit holders. In recognition of the important role of health and safety representatives and entry permit holders to

workplace safety, the reviewers recommended the introduction of powers for health and safety representatives and entry permit holders to take photos, videos, measurements and conduct tests. Photos and videos can be taken when inquiring into a suspected contravention to record a risk or hazard to the health and safety of relevant workers at the workplace. Importantly, photos and videos may only capture workers directly related to the suspected contraventions.

The bill also notes that other laws may apply to the taking of photos or videos at workplaces. This includes laws that restrict the capturing of images in sensitive workplaces such as correctional facilities, as well as privacy and human rights laws. The power for health and safety representatives and entry permit holders to take measurements and conduct tests at the workplace will also support their roles in identifying health and safety issues and monitoring controls. This may include measuring noise and dust levels or workplace temperatures.

The bill introduces changes to support the establishment of a regulatory approval framework, allowing the regulator to prescribe minimum training standards and enforce compliance for registered training organisations delivering training. This will assist the government's future implementation of recommendations from the 2017 best practice review of workplace health and safety Queensland.

From 2022 to 2025 this government has partnered with the Wiggles to promote electrical safety. By all accounts it has been a smash hit, delivering great value for money. Although it might be unorthodox, I would like to quote from the hit song *Electricity* which has come from that partnership and which has had nearly five million views on YouTube alone. To quote from the chorus of the song—I will save everyone by not singing it—'Electricity, although it can't be seen; it's very dangerous to touch.' The Wiggles have done an amazing job in promoting this message.

Recently we were at the Carina C&K, which had entered a competition and won, where the Wiggles performed live. The Minister for Education and I were there, representatives from the Electrical Safety Office were there and our Commissioner of Electrical Safety was there. The kids had a ball. The message was about electricity safety as well as, of course, singing along to Wiggles songs. They are one of the biggest bands in Australia. They have done an amazing job of spreading the electrical safety message amongst the community. I thank them for doing that and I look forward to catching up with them. They are a really amazing bunch of people. They are so friendly and great with the kids. Every parent and child was standing up and singing away with the Wiggles.

Electricity is dangerous. It is everywhere in our modern lives. This bill and our ongoing work to overhaul our electrical safety framework are based on that reality. Our work health and safety reforms will make people safer at work and ensure that employers take safety seriously. This bill continues the Miles government's proud record of making people safer at home, at work and in the community. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.51 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee

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

## ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY BILL

### Message from Governor



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (11.52 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.



**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): The message from Her Excellency recommends the Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY BILL 2024

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

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


A Bill for an Act to provide for the regulation of the use of technology to assist human reproduction and for a donor conception information register, and to amend this Act, the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 22 May 2024

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 22 May 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill 2024 [\[838\]](#).

## Introduction

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (11.52 am): I present a bill for an act to provide for the regulation of the use of technology to assist human reproduction and for a donor conception information register, and to amend this act, the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee to consider the bill. I also table a summary report into the investigation of assisted reproductive technology providers in Queensland by the Office of the Health Ombudsman.

*Tabled paper:* Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill 2024 [\[839\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[840\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[841\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Office of the Health Ombudsman report, undated, titled 'Section 81—Investigation of ART providers in QLD—Summary report: Phases 1 and 2' [\[842\]](#).

Today I am proud, as the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women, to introduce the Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill 2024 into this House. The bill will establish a robust framework to regulate assisted reproductive technology providers and services and will establish a donor conception information register in Queensland. This legislation will ensure that the wellbeing and interests of people receiving fertility treatments are central to the delivery of assisted reproductive technology services and that the welfare and interests of people born as a result of these services are of paramount importance.

The journey to becoming a parent is different for everyone. Those who struggle to conceive can experience stress and heartache. Assisted reproductive technology includes treatments such as artificial insemination, IVF and gamete intra fallopian transfers that can help those with fertility issues, genetic risks, and diverse genders and sexualities become parents. This is an increasingly common part of people's fertility journey. However, recently there have been concerning reports of failures involving providers in Queensland.

I would like to thank the families and individuals who have spoken up and brought these issues to light, many of whom are with us in the gallery today. I want to thank these advocates for their bravery, their resilience and their tenacity in sharing their stories and highlighting the need for this industry to improve its practices and provide more person-centred care. We have heard the heartbreaking stories of alleged donor mix-ups resulting in lifelong impacts for the families involved. We heard from many donor-conceived people and recipient parents that some clinics used sperm from the same donor many more times than what the community would consider appropriate, resulting in some donor-conceived people having potentially hundreds of genetic siblings. We have heard from the donor-conceived community about the ripple effects the search for answers and secrecy has throughout their lives: the questions about their medical history and ancestry, the yearning to understand that unknown part of themselves.

After hearing these concerning stories and noting the serious questions that were raised about the conduct of the fertility industry in Queensland, I asked Queensland's Health Ombudsman to undertake a systemic investigation into the health services offered by providers in Queensland. The investigation has focused on identified areas of concern, such as the handling of gametes and embryos, the use of donor material, screening techniques and record keeping. As one person identified to the Health Ombudsman, there needs to be more communication between clinics to prevent donors from donating to multiple clinics and to prevent donors who donate under an alias. The Health Ombudsman has made a number of preliminary recommendations that have informed the development of the bill. I thank the Health Ombudsman and her team for their extensive work on the investigation to date and I look forward to receiving the final report in June.

This bill creates a strong state-based framework to ensure appropriate oversight of the industry. It ensures there are proper enforcement powers to deal with noncompliance and adverse events and appropriate record keeping. I want to take this opportunity to thank the ongoing work of the Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation System Policy Branch at Queensland Health. I will now outline some of the key features of the bill.

The bill adopts a key preliminary recommendation from the Health Ombudsman by establishing a licensing framework to ensure robust oversight of providers. Under the bill, providers will be required to obtain a licence to be able to operate in Queensland. It will be an offence to provide services without one. Where it is necessary for a provider to rectify a particular matter to prevent or minimise a risk to the health, safety or welfare of patients or people born as a result of those services, Queensland Health will have the ability to issue an improvement notice. They will also have the power to suspend or cancel a provider's licence. To ensure transparency of services, the bill requires licensed providers to give written notice of certain events within prescribed timeframes. Noncompliance of this requirement will be an offence. Inspectors will be appointed under the bill to investigate, monitor and enforce compliance with the act and will have a range of powers, including to enter premises, inspect and seize things and require production of information.

The bill includes requirements that providers must meet before providing treatment and will ensure that clinics are enabling the patient to make an informed decision about their treatment. Providers must make counselling available to people seeking treatment using their own gametes or embryos and ensure mandatory counselling has been undertaken by people involved in donor conception programs. People will be able to choose their own counsellor, given many people will have an existing relationship with a particular counsellor.

The bill introduces safeguards against the misuse of gametes and embryos by prohibiting or restricting uses that are considered unacceptable. Sex selection procedures, which seek to produce a child of a particular sex, are also banned, except where it is necessary to reduce the risk of transmitting a genetic abnormality or disease. To prevent donated gametes being used across many decades, the bill prohibits the use of donated gametes and embryos that were obtained more than 15 years before the procedure. The bill does not impose any time limit on the use of a person's own gametes, which must be used only in accordance with their consent. The bill also prohibits the use of a gamete or embryo after the gamete provider has died, unless specific exceptions apply.

In response to the concerns raised regarding large numbers of families being created using the same donor, the bill makes it an offence for a provider to use donor material if they know it would result in more than 10 families within the country. Providers will be required to exercise appropriate due diligence to check this. The 10-family limit includes the donor's raised family as well as families who use donated gametes to conceive. This reflects the Health Ombudsman's preliminary recommendation. The bill ensures this limit is clear and enforceable, and will safeguard the rights of donor-conceived people against the psychological impacts of having many genetic siblings. The limit of 10 families seeks to find a balance between reducing the impacts on donor-conceived people and ensuring that regulation does not unduly restrict the supply of donors.

One of the key themes of the Health Ombudsman's investigation has been on the quality of record keeping and the provision of information to people accessing services and to donor-conceived people. One person told the Health Ombudsman that no meaningful improvements will be possible until records are fully and reliably maintained. The bill requires providers to collect and keep information about gamete providers, including donors, and people who undergo procedures for at least 99 years. The bill also makes it an offence to destroy records. This offence will carry a maximum penalty of 400 penalty units. This reflects the enormous impact on donor-conceived people of having records about their genetic origins destroyed and the importance of ensuring providers take their role as custodians of this information very seriously.

The bill also includes information-sharing provisions, which also support the establishment of the donor conception information register by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The bill will establish the donor conception information register in the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The establishment of the register was considered by the then parliamentary Legal Affairs and Safety Committee following its inquiry into matters relating to donor conception information. As part of its inquiry, the committee heard from donor-conceived people and their families that access to information about a donor can be fundamental in informing their identity and a sense of self and can help them, importantly, to manage their health and wellbeing.

Donor-conceived people shared their stories of being refused access to donor records and information by providers and what this meant for their sense of identity. One person stated, 'Not having knowledge of one's genetic origins is like having the first chapter missing from one's life story.' Having access to information about their donor, such as ethnicity, medical history and family history, can resolve unanswered questions and help donor-conceived people develop a deeper understanding of who they are. Having access to the medical history of donors is also important. Enabling this sharing of medical information can be lifesaving.

It is for these reasons that the committee recommended the establishment of a retrospective register so that all donor-conceived people can be legislatively provided with the right to access identifying information about a donor regardless of when they were born. Whilst it is acknowledged that the establishment of a retrospective register will impact on the right to privacy of donors, the right of donor-conceived people to know their genetic origins outweighs the competing right to privacy. Making the register operate retrospectively creates information access equality for all donor-conceived people regardless of when a donor-conceived person was born and ensures all donor-conceived people are treated equally before the law.

The bill establishes a register that will hold available information about all donor conception procedures carried out in Queensland that resulted in the birth of a donor-conceived person. The bill will require providers or other people who carried out fertility treatments in the past to provide all historical donor conception information in their possession or control to the register within six months. From commencement of the bill, providers will be required to collect and provide relevant information about donors, donor-conceived people and their parents to the register within three months. Information on the register will be held by the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in perpetuity.

The bill establishes an access to information framework that will allow donor-conceived people, their parents, donors and other individuals to apply to access information held on the register. All donor-conceived people will be provided with the right to access identifying and non-identifying information about donors when the donor-conceived person turns 16. All applicants to the register will be provided with access to counselling support services. To provide an independent avenue for donor-conceived people to become aware of the fact that they are a donor-conceived person, the bill provides for the addition of an addendum to birth certificates of donor-conceived people that outlines that further information about them is held by the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

By regulating providers and establishing a donor conception register, the Queensland government is demonstrating a commitment to protecting the welfare and interests of people who use assisted reproductive technology and those born as a result of such treatments. This bill demonstrates that the Queensland government's commitment to improving health care for families and for women forms part of our landmark Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032.

I thank the Attorney-General and her department for their support in making this bill possible. I again take the opportunity to thank the many individuals, organisations and groups who advocated for this historic reform. This bill balances an appropriate level of regulation on providers with robust protections for Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (12.05 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

**Referral to Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee**

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

**RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****MANUFACTURED HOMES (RESIDENTIAL PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 21 March (see p. 852) and Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill resumed from 21 March (see p. 854).

**Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

**Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (12.06 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

Following introduction, the bills were referred to the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee for consideration. I take this opportunity to thank the committee, and particularly the member for Bancroft, for their dedicated consideration of both bills. I would also like to thank the organisations and individuals who made submissions, participated in the public hearings and participated in extensive consultation processes that informed development of the bill, particularly individual Queensland renters and manufactured home owners who shared their experiences and views.

In our Homes for Queenslanders plan, the Miles government committed to modernising the housing legislative framework. These bills continue our government's efforts to protect consumers while making sure we maintain diversity in housing supply. The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 delivers on our commitment in our Homes for Queenslanders plan to strengthen renters' rights and stabilise rents and also meets Queensland's commitment under National Cabinet's A Better Deal for Renters. We have heard and are responding to community concerns about the impact of the current rental market conditions and cost-of-living pressures on Queensland's renting households. The Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee made a single recommendation: that the bill be passed.

I propose to move some amendments to the bill during consideration in detail to address the committee's recommendation and respond to feedback received through submissions to the committee's inquiry into the bill. I propose to move some amendments to clarify aspects of the bill, including clarifying the responsibilities of body corporates when a renter has requested to make a change to the rental property, clarifying that a renter can only be asked to pay reletting costs when they end a tenancy agreement in a way that is not allowed under the act, and clarifying the offence for a person to solicit, invite or accept an offer of more rent in advance than is allowed under the act at the rental application stage or when starting a new tenancy.

I also note concerns raised in some submissions that the proposed amendments to require lessors and their agents to send tenants bills for water consumption charges that they are responsible for paying under the tenancy agreement promptly did not account for circumstances where the supply authority's billing cycle did not align with the start or end of the tenancy. I will move amendments during consideration in detail to address this concern by allowing lessors or their agents to issue an invoice to the tenant for water consumption based on the tenant's usage during a partial billing period if the rental premises is individually metered and water efficient, the tenancy agreement is in effect for only part of a water supply authority's billing period, a meter reading for the premises is taken at the start or end of the tenancy and recorded in a condition report, the amount of water the tenant is charged for is based on a reasonable estimate of the water supplied to the premises and the rate used to calculate the amount the tenant is charged is consistent with the water supply authority's most recent bill.

The committee considered there was merit in further consideration of the 'exempt lessor' definition to ensure there were no unintentional omissions from the definition. I can confirm that this matter has been carefully considered to ensure appropriate exemptions are in place while protecting the rights and interests of renters. However, this consideration did identify the need for amendments that I will move during consideration in detail to ensure there is a consistent definition of 'exempt lessor'

across amendments proposed in the bill and that the exemption is applied to rooming accommodation agreements; if a rental property has been sold within 12 months of the requirement to provide a renter with information about the day of the last rent increase commencing and the new owner does not hold this information, they will not be in breach of the requirement; and exempt lessors are explicitly exempted from the requirement to provide evidence of the day of the last rent increase for the property.

The department's response to issues raised in submissions to the committee indicated further consideration would be given to some elements of the amendments in the bill. Through this process some improvements to these provisions in the bill have been identified, and I will move amendments in consideration in detail to align the retention period for personal information after a tenancy ends with obligations under other legislation; if a provider such as a specialist disability accommodation and student accommodation provider maintains a waitlist, allow a renter to agree to the provider keeping personal information collected from an unsuccessful rental applicant for a longer period; enable personal information to be collected for the purposes of managing the tenancy agreement; and allow renters to request the Residential Tenancies Authority refund them any excess amount of a continuing bond and provide transitional arrangements for the maximum rental bond limit to ensure existing bonds held continue to be compliant with the act.

The statement of reservation included in the committee report raised concerns that the annual rent increase frequency limit implemented from 1 July 2023 was ill thought out. We make no apology for taking this action to help stabilise rents in the private rental market in response to rental affordability and cost-of-living pressures being experienced by the over 600,000 households that rent in Queensland. The bill will apply the annual rent increase frequency limit to the rental property instead of the tenancy so that property owners and agents cannot end tenancies with existing renters and enter shorter leases with new renters at a higher rent to avoid the annual limit.

Finally, the committee encouraged consultation be undertaken by the department in the development of the portable bond scheme and rental sector code of conduct, including with other Australian states and territories. I am pleased to confirm for the House that the design and implementation of these matters and the modifications framework is informed by consultation with stakeholders and that engagement with other jurisdictions has already commenced.

I turn now to the detail of the bill. The bill progresses reforms that strengthen renters' rights and further stabilise rents across several reform priorities, including to ban all forms of rent bidding and applying the 12-month limit on rent increases to the rental property, not the tenancy. It improves the process for renters and rental property owners to agree to changes to the rental property. It better balances renters' rights to privacy and property owners' need for access and information to inform decision-making about their investment. It improves the rental bond process. It ensures all utility bills are passed on to renters in a timely manner. It eases cost-of-living pressures by making fees and charges fairer, and it creates heads of power to allow for the establishment of a rental sector code of conduct and portable bond scheme in consultation with stakeholders.

The bill also ensures appropriate processes are in place to manage tenancies that are impacted by the termination of a community title scheme for economic reasons; introduces a mandatory continuing professional development scheme for property agents in Queensland; and removes the requirement for mandatory employee contributions, other than for defined benefit members, in the local government superannuation scheme and changes the name of the trustee and the scheme to reflect a change in the business name of the default fund.

Further, I will move minor amendments during consideration in detail to the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017 to ensure the continued effectiveness of the adjudication system.

The bill also amends the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 to provide more notification and certainty about the timing for the ending of leases when a community titles scheme is terminated for economic reasons under the act and to clarify applications that can be made to the District Court about tenancy related issues arising in relation to the termination of a scheme. The bill will also amend the Property Occupations Act 2014 and the Fair Trading Inspectors Act 2014 to establish a legislative scheme for mandatory continuing professional development, or CPD, for property agents and to require individual licensees and certificate holders to complete annual CPD requirements.

Finally, the bill amends the local government superannuation scheme set out in the Local Government Act 2009 by providing local government employees the flexibility to decide for themselves if they would like to lower their employee contributions in response to cost-of-living pressures. The Miles government is proud to deliver on our election commitments to reform the rental bond process and

extend entry notice periods and make continuing professional development mandatory for property agents. Only a Labor government will make it fairer, safer and easier for Queenslanders to find, get and keep a rental.

I now turn to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. The Queensland government understands older Queenslanders, particularly those relying on fixed incomes like the age pension, are doing it tough and are less able to adjust their spending in response to higher housing costs and other cost-of-living pressures.

Many older Queenslanders value the sense of community and lifestyle benefits offered by becoming a manufactured home owner in residential parks. I have heard from home owners who invest their savings in a manufactured home with the expectation of a secure and affordable retirement lifestyle who instead feel trapped and vulnerable to high site rent increases and unfair business practices. The modern residential park sector is no longer one where it is practical or affordable for home owners to relocate their manufactured home to take advantage of more favourable rents elsewhere.

The Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee noted in its report that the bill contains the most comprehensive reforms brought to the residential park sector in the last 20 years and delivers long-awaited improvements to the rights and protections of many Queenslanders who rely on residential parks to provide safe, affordable and secure housing. I thank the committee for these words, and it is my privilege to be delivering these long-awaited changes to the manufactured home owners who need them. The committee made a single recommendation—that the bill be passed. I propose to move some amendments to the bill during consideration in detail to address the committee's recommendations and respond to feedback received through submissions to the committee's inquiry into the bill.

Following review and the consideration of stakeholder and community feedback, minor clarifications and improvements have been identified. I propose to move some amendments during consideration in detail such as explicitly including direct debit as an approved way of paying site rent and the ability for additional approved payment methods to be specified in regulation; clarifying the requirement to carry over specified terms of an existing site agreement into a buyer's new site agreement will be subject to changes to utility charges under the existing provisions of the act; and explicitly exempting a park owner from committing an offence for failing to buy back the home where there is an unresolved dispute about removing the home from the buyback and rent reduction scheme.

It will also ensure prospective buyers of a pre-owned manufactured home who exercise their cooling-off rights are not liable under either the sales contract or site agreement. It will clarify that, where a CPI increase is to replace a prohibited market rent review as there is no alternative basis included in the site agreement, site rent may increase by CPI on an annual basis. It will extend the timeframes for parties to agree on a resale value from seven days to 14 days to address concerns that the original timeframe was impractical while minimising delays that could disadvantage either party.

The committee commented on additional improvements to the efficiency of dispute resolution. In particular, the committee encouraged the department to consider whether applications to the tribunal seeking extension to the buyback scheme for financial hardship should be exempt from the staged dispute resolution process. Consistent with the department's response to issues raised in submissions, this issue has been considered and I will move an amendment during consideration in detail to include sections 62ZC and 62ZD in the list of matters that are exempt from the staged dispute resolution process under section 116 of the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003.

Some manufactured home owners have expressed concerns about how the limit on site rent increases will operate and its effect on more favourable bases that may be included in home owners existing site agreements. I want to assure manufactured home owners that the amendments in this bill will not override more favourable bases for increasing rent in existing site agreements. It will act as a ceiling to ensure no home owner will experience an increase in site rent that is more than CPI or 3.5 per cent, whichever is higher. The cap does not prevent lower increases occurring and signals the government's view that a stronger regulatory response is necessary to protect manufactured home owners from being taken advantage of.

Through the consultation process leading to this bill, the experiences of home owners have established a clear and compelling case for reform. The bill rebalances the relationship between park operators and home owners, including providing for a more equitable share of financial risk between the two parties. The bill achieves this objective through three broad reform categories.

Ninety-six per cent of manufactured home owners receive some form of government payment. Over 53 per cent receive a full aged pension. Of these households, over 60 per cent are on incomes under \$40,000 per annum. Common methods of increasing site rent, particularly market rent reviews, have driven increases that have significantly exceeded growth in home owner incomes. Home owners told us of their rents increasing by up to 30 per cent as a result of a market rent review. These issues are symptoms of a sector in which home owners carry a disproportionate share of financial risk in their relationship with park owners. To provide immediate relief to home owners experiencing significant cost-of-living pressures and to provide future home owners with much greater certainty and the ability to predict their expenses when they purchase a manufactured home in a residential park, this bill will ban market rent reviews and limit site rent increases to CPI or 3.5 per cent, whichever is greater.

Home owners raised concerns about issues with the sales process for manufactured homes, including delays in securing a sale, and issues with the efforts of park operators in facilitating sales. Delayed sales can cause further financial stress for home owners if they need to move out of a park because of affordability or where they need access to capital to secure alternative accommodation. As a retirement focused industry, it is common for manufactured home owners to need to transition into aged care, which itself imposes significant financial challenges.

While a manufactured home remains on the market, park operators are guaranteed payment of site rent regardless of whether they have maintained the park's amenities to a standard likely to attract buyers. There are currently few safeguards for home owners in this situation and limited incentives for park operators to assist people to sell their home, either directly through the sales process or indirectly through maintaining their park, especially once all the homes within a development are sold. To improve the sales process, this bill prevents delays in the sales process, provides much needed additional rights for consumers and incentivises park operators to encourage and facilitate sales.


Home owners also told us they have been attracted to purchase a manufactured home by discounted site rents and other inducements while a park is under development, only to later experience steep site rent increases through market rent reviews while standards, services and amenities in the park decline once all the homes are sold. We also heard about conflicts of interest that arise where park operators are acting as sales agents for a home but are incentivised to sell new developments, as the site rent for existing homes are guaranteed. There have also been issues with assigning rent agreements and home owners being given 'take it or leave it' site agreements with no capacity to negotiate. The bill includes measures to enhance consumer protections and increase transparency, including stronger requirements regarding precontractual disclosure for prospective residents, more options for paying site rent, greater transparency regarding operating costs for existing home owners and a robust set of considerations and options for QCAT to consider when determining whether to terminate a site agreement.

Through this bill, the Miles government is improving fairness and transparency for the 38,000 Queenslanders who already call residential parks home and the thousands more seniors who will consider parks as a retirement living option in the years ahead. I would like to acknowledge the advocacy of manufactured home owners along with many members of parliament on this side who have raised their concerns with me and the government to ensure we are here debating these laws today. The reforms proposed in these bills include strong regulatory intervention to protect manufactured home owners and make renting in Queensland fairer.

Additionally, the bill amends the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017 to ensure the continued effectiveness of the adjudication system. Adjudication provides a cost-effective and efficient alternative to court for resolving payment disputes in the building industry. A recent Supreme Court decision called into question the technical validity of an electronic form used by the building industry in these disputes. We have listened to the building industry and are moving swiftly to resolve this issue. These technical legal amendments ensure stability and certainty for the construction industry by ensuring previous adjudication applications remain valid.

Through these bills, the Miles government is protecting vulnerable consumers and acting to slow the rapid increase of rents in the private rental market and site rent increases in residential parks. Those opposite have suggested that consumer protections that promote secure, affordable housing for Queenslanders are inconsistent with the objective of housing supply. In reality, we know it is quite the opposite. Consumer protections and fairness in the private rental market and residential parks sector will provide investors, seniors and operators with the confidence to invest in these forms of housing. All parties in the private rental market and residential parks sector can and will adjust to a fairer, better functioning market, which is exactly what these bills will help create.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with stakeholders across the private rental market and residential parks sector to develop the regulations needed to support the implementation of the reforms progressed in these bills. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.25 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I have to agree with the minister when she said these reforms are long-awaited. If you think about anything in the housing space, this government's policies have been long-awaited. I wonder whether, when you say something has been long-awaited, you are inferring that someone has been tardy, somebody has not been listening or somebody has not been responding. The way I see it, this government has now been in power for over nine years. We have had three ministers in this space and now, 5½ months before an election, these long-awaited reforms have finally come to parliament. These long-awaited reforms did not go through a process that was thorough enough and would have prevented some of the many amendments the minister has brought today, some of which are quite significant in both bills. I agree with the minister that these reforms are long-awaited. I would ask the minister to look in the mirror and, on behalf of her predecessors and herself, ask why it has taken so long to address these very important issues.

Queensland is in a housing crisis. What we are seeing on our streets, parks and hotels is devastating. It is like nothing that has ever been seen before in this state. That fact cannot be overstated and it cannot be forgotten in this debate in the chamber today. The backdrop and the context to this whole debate revolves around the fact that there are simply not enough houses or homes in Queensland.

**Mr Stevens:** No planning, no commitment.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach: no planning, no commitment. There is a chronic supply issue. Whether you want to rent, whether you want to buy your first home, whether you are looking to upsize due to a growing family, whether you are downsizing in retirement or whether you are vulnerable and desperately in need of subsidised housing—apartments, units, townhouses, attached homes, even public housing—it does not matter the type of property, they are all in short supply in Queensland. That has not happened by accident. The environment the government creates through its policy settings, words and actions has a direct impact on housing supply.


New housing lot approvals have declined by 30 per cent since 2015. Year on year building approvals are down by 34 per cent under the Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government, and this has had a direct impact on household and investor confidence. It has also had a direct impact on people's lives and livelihoods. I will further address those points in my contribution, and I know that my colleagues will as well. It is important to note that the government has opted to debate these two bills in cognate, which is typical of a government that is trying to rush through legislation without giving the appropriate attention that each bill deserves. This is a government that is constantly in chaos and in crisis. The changes in these bills are not insignificant, yet the government would have us debate both of them as one. It diminishes the importance of each bill and truncates debate on the important issues at hand across each piece of legislation.

I will address particular issues in the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The government has announced a series of residential rental reforms across the last two terms of government. There have been legislative changes in some way, shape or form over the past three calendar years.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mander, adjourned.

## CROCODILE CONTROL AND CONSERVATION BILL

### Introduction

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (12.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to establish the Queensland Crocodile Authority and for related matters. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2024 [843].

*Tabled paper:* Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2024, explanatory notes [844].

*Tabled paper:* Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [845].



The Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill is necessary because North Queenslanders have had a gutful of losing more and more of their populated waterways to the increasing crocodile population.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Hill, I ask you to please withdraw that unparliamentary language.

**Mr KNUTH:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Hill. Continue.

**Mr KNUTH:** We are sick and tired of the threat of attacks, the recent deaths and the near-death encounters just from trying to enjoy our outdoor lifestyle. We have never had to worry about the threat of crocodiles in our recreational waterways and beaches until the last 15 years. According to data from the Queensland Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, there were 1,216 saltwater and estuarine crocodile sightings reported in 2023 compared to just 176 sightings in 2010. There is no denying that the crocodile population has exploded and is encroaching more and more into populated waterways, creating an unacceptable risk to human life. Communities across North Queensland are consistently reporting significant increases in crocodile numbers. Waterways in which people previously regularly swam are now infested with crocodiles. Many rowing and skiing clubs have closed their doors because of crocodiles. Tourism businesses are feeling the effects of an increase in the numbers which in turn increases the risk of operating their businesses. Our tourism industry is trying to promote our beautiful beaches and waterways, but I am saddened that when tourists arrive all they see are beach closures and croc signs basically warning that, if they swim there, they are potentially going to be ripped to pieces.

For too long we have had to endure a Brisbane-centric lazy attitude towards crocodiles and the threat they pose to North Queenslanders. In the north of our state, we wonder what the reaction would be if a few man-eating crocodiles were dropped into the Brisbane River. It is an insult to every North Queenslander when we hear the same old line from Brisbane politicians and bureaucrats that we have to be croc wise. It does not matter how croc wise you are when you are threatened by crocs when trying to launch your boat at a ramp, paddling your kayak or canoe, or swimming at the beach or in a lake or river that your parents swam in all their lives without fear. The government's solution to fixing the problem is putting up warning signs or closing a beach or swimming hole. That is unacceptable.

The bill achieves the policy objectives outlined by creating the Queensland Crocodile Authority. With almost 80 per cent of the Queensland crocodile population located in Far North Queensland, it makes sense to decentralise the management of crocodiles from Brisbane to Far North Queensland. The bill ensures that the Queensland Crocodile Authority will be based in Cairns, with all staff sourced regionally. The bill also creates an advisory committee to provide recommendations to the Queensland Crocodile Authority. It is important to ensure that Queensland has the best possible advice on managing its crocodile population while protecting Queensland and creating a crocodile industry that will financially benefit traditional owners.

Under the bill, the Queensland Crocodile Authority would be solely responsible for all aspects of crocodile management in Queensland, including conducting a complete review of the current management zones under the Queensland Crocodile Management Plan to implement a zero-tolerance zone to remove all crocodiles reported in areas deemed as populated waterways by killing them or moving them to an approved crocodile farm or sanctuary. It is ridiculous that the current practice dictates that crocodiles will be observed for any dangerous behaviour before being removed. Any crocodile in any waterway used by humans is a direct danger to human life and should be removed immediately.

The bill will also provide for the development of flexible policies on crocodile management through consultation with different individual Indigenous communities to deliver a specifically designed management program considering cultural sensitivities; increased current allowable egg-harvesting limits which would be reviewed annually; overseeing egg-harvesting permits, with incentives specific to Indigenous communities to set up egg-harvesting enterprises; allowing private landowners to contact the QCA to have crocodiles removed from their property; and conducting controlled annual crocodile removal programs along Queensland's populated east coast to constrain population growth and reduce crocodile numbers in populated regions.

Other views were expressed that the policy objective of keeping humans safe from crocodiles could be achieved by relocating any problem crocodiles to other locations. However, a joint Department of Environment, Science and Innovation study recently found that Queensland crocodiles like to stay close to home, with most remaining within 50 kilometres of where they hatched. In fact, most crocodile

parents and offspring in Queensland are found within 10 kilometres of each other. While crocodiles are capable of moving anywhere along the Queensland coastline, the study also showed that most of the 20,000 to 30,000-strong population were in Far North Queensland.

Consultation with experts also suggested that crocodiles may become more dangerous once they have been relocated. Therefore, crocodiles should only be relocated to crocodile farms, sanctuaries or properly managed reserves. The consultation also revealed that, because there are so many crocodiles that require removal to keep people safe, it is very unlikely that there would be a desire from existing crocodile farms or sanctuaries to house all of these crocodiles. Based on extensive consultation and recent studies, it is clear that the combination of killing and relocating to farms or sanctuaries is the best way to achieve the policy objective. The Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2024 would ensure that all crocodiles located in populated waterways are immediately removed by an authorised person.

I note that, in deciding to declare a populated waterway, the Queensland Crocodile Authority must have regard to the public's recreation or commercial use and enjoyment of the waterway. This removal may involve killing or relocating the crocodile to an authorised crocodile farm or crocodile sanctuary. It would involve the removal of crocodiles immediately from urban or public areas commonly used by humans for recreation. In unpopulated waterways, landowners who have waterways running through their properties will also be able to apply to the QCA to request for immediate removal of crocodiles by rangers or approved qualified persons. If managed responsibly, crocodiles have the potential to be a great asset for Queensland rather than just a danger to people.

As well as protecting human lives, the Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2024 aims to create a significant and sustainable crocodile industry in Queensland. Currently only 5,000 eggs are allowed to be harvested in Queensland under a 10-year pilot program, which ceases in 2028, as compared to 90,000 annually in the Northern Territory. Evidence suggests that egg harvesting can help sustain crocodile populations rather than diminish them and creates a huge economic opportunity which is currently untapped in Queensland.

Indigenous landowners will likely see the value in crocodile eggs and the income they can generate. If there are crocodile eggs on the land, they can choose to leave the eggs, harvest the eggs and sell them or have someone else pay to come onto their land and harvest them. Significantly, the Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2024 will also give power to Indigenous landowners to apply to manage crocodiles on their land. Indigenous landowners have a connection with and understanding of the land and should be empowered to manage that land as they see fit. Indigenous landowners will be empowered with regard to all aspects of crocodile management. If a crocodile is on their land, they may choose to have it relocated to a farm or crocodile sanctuary; let it remain on their property; choose for it to be euthanised by shooting, harpooning or using traditional methods; or accept payment from a quota of high-end clients who wish to live-harvest the crocodiles.

This bill provides real opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by providing jobs and economic development from the fast-growing crocodile industry, which is estimated to be worth more than \$100 million a year in the Northern Territory. Recently we saw calls from Indigenous landowners in the Northern Territory to be at the forefront of the new developments in crocodile management including allowing a quota of high-end clients into Arnhem Land to hunt for saltwater crocodiles. An article states—

"People do want to live and prosper on their own homelands," ...

"And what better way to be able to do that than as part of their land management and conservation efforts?"

...

"We are seeking the support and approval towards the sustainable use of saltwater crocodile live harvest commercially," ...

"You have the potential to bring in high-paying clients to live harvest saltwater crocodiles around our community areas ... the opportunities there will be very rewarding."

...

"We are reframing it to be more of a sustainable management system, [as] part of our land management and conservation efforts."

The Northern Territory environment minister, Kate Worden, said that the Northern Territory government is 'open to those ideas', further stating—

Whether it's trophy hunting or it's starting a small enterprise in a remote community, what we do want is to get Aboriginal people across the Northern Territory working.

What a refreshing attitude and one the state government department should take notice of.

I want to stress that the KAP's policy has never been about wiping out the crocodile population. It is about restoring the balance between managing the crocodile population and protecting human life. Most importantly, the bill places greater value on human life by responsibly reducing the risk of crocodile attacks as much as possible. It aims to eliminate from our waterways any crocodile that poses a threat to human life while continuing to protect crocodiles from becoming extinct as a species.

Ultimately, the people who live in North Queensland are best placed to manage crocodiles. Until crocodiles are removed from all populated waterways that are used for recreational, leisure and commercial activities, we will be no closer to taking back our waterways. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (12.43 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee

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


## RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### MANUFACTURED HOMES (RESIDENTIAL PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1736, on motion of Ms Scanlon—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.43 pm), continuing: First I want to apologise to the school captains of Everton Park State High School and Albany Creek State High School, who are in the dining room enjoying a wonderful lunch, which I thought I might be able to join them for. I apologise that I cannot.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** They are eagerly awaiting my return. They are in awe of the wisdom that comes out of my mouth.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** I recommend the scallops for entree!

I will continue to address the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As I said, there have been many changes over the past three calendar years. In fact, it is quite hard to keep up with this. That fact alone is a significant problem that causes concern for people who are renting and people in industry groups trying to make sure they understand the lay of the land. The LNP will not oppose this bill. It is far from perfect and there are elements that we have significant reservations with. I will outline those throughout my contribution.

I want to start by saying that we are very supportive of all Queenslanders having the freedom to decide their housing tenure. It is critical that there is a healthy mix of options that exist right across the housing market for Queenslanders to secure safe and stable accommodation. For the market to be healthy, there needs to be a respectful coexistence between lessors and tenants. It has been difficult to watch at times as the government has sought to blame different groups and people for problems of its own making. This does not help. In fact, it makes matters worse. Pitting people against each other or demonising one group at the expense of another will not fix the crisis we have in Queensland—and it is a crisis.

It is important to note that private property owners—over 1.5 million people—own approximately 95 per cent of the rental properties in Queensland. The LNP acknowledges that the overwhelming majority of rental properties are owned by mum-and-dad investors. These people are not evil. In fact, we should celebrate them. If the wrong balance is struck, those mum-and-dad investors will invest elsewhere, and that means fewer places to rent. By demonising some in the housing market, the effect can be to the extreme detriment of others.

Over the course of this term I believe that the balance has not always been struck properly because of the government's willingness to attribute blame to others rather than address the problems itself. There is a very real possibility that this bill as proposed will lead to steeper rent increases for those renting, see a reduction in the pool of rental properties by hurting investor confidence and limit choice for how tenants might want to structure their rent payments, although I think there will now be an amendment to address what we saw as a major weakness with regard to being able to pay rent in advance, if that is what a tenant would like to do.

The minister rightly points out in the explanatory notes—

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Consumer Price Index, in the December 2023 quarter, Brisbane's annual increase in rental prices was 8.4 per cent, outpacing the national average of 7.3 per cent.

Let's be clear on this point: Queensland has the worst rental increases in the nation. It is not some conspiracy that every landlord in Queensland has worked together to raise rents more than any other state. The unprecedented competition in the housing market means Queensland does not have enough homes. It is not the fault of the landlords or renters or industry; it is the fault of the government.

I think it is fair to say that the most significant point of contention in the bill is the amendments to control rent increases. The government plans to address this by applying the 12-month limit on rent increase frequency to rental properties rather than the tenancy. It is important to note that, with no consultation and little notice, the government chose to amend this provision of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act in early 2023. The changes, which bypassed the parliamentary committee process, inadvertently led to negative outcomes for renters. That decision was ill thought out. The minister owned it in her speech by saying, 'We make no apologies for this. We mucked it up.'

**Ms Scanlon:** You voted for it.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection. The minister is the government. The minister has all the resources of government, all the advisers and all the time, and they mucked it up. Who are the people who are disadvantaged by this? It is the tenants. It was very detrimental to the people they claimed they were protecting.

This bill tries to make amends for the mess the government made the last time it changed these laws. The changes in 2023 followed comments made by then premier Palaszczuk—and this is really interesting to remember—who came out and said that rental caps could be introduced in Queensland. That was on day one. Industry and economists all came out very strongly and reminded people of the detrimental effect that would have on the market and on renters themselves. Then the current Premier, who was the then deputy premier, tried to rescue it. He said, 'There might be caps but we're going to cap it at CPI.' Again, the same people blew up and said that that would have a damaging impact. The Premier then came out and said, 'No. You misunderstood me. I didn't mean that at all.' That is why this was rushed through. The damage to consumer confidence had already occurred because people were wondering what the heck this government was going to do.

A shrinking pool of people willing to invest in Queensland's residential property market will only result in a shrinking pool of available rental properties. The end result is renters paying more each week for their rent, and that is exactly what is happening at the moment. As I said, we are not going to oppose this bill but these never-ending changes that renters and lessors face have to come to an end because it has been damaging for all parties.

At the Housing Summit in October 2022 the Deputy Premier was miffed that 20,000 rental properties had disappeared from the private rental market. He might like to consider his own actions and the actions of the government he has been a part of as to why investors have disappeared from the market. This is what this government does not appreciate. The other thing that is a concern about this policy that has been done on the run is that there will now more than likely be a steeper increase at the 12-month mark, making it more difficult for people to cope with the rental increases that are more often than not inevitable.

I also want to question the government on how a bond portability scheme will actually work in practice, because these questions clearly have not yet been answered. In particular, questions remain over how a landlord may be able to make a claim if the tenant had to move to a new tenancy with the bond. What is really interesting and a point worth expressing is that I do not think the government knows how this is going to work either. Rather than going through a detailed proposal to bring to the House to put through legislation, all the government has done is establish a head of power for a portable bond scheme so all those questions remain unanswered. We do not have any details on how it will work or the practicalities. All of this is still up in the air because it will be prescribed by regulation at some other time.

What will also be prescribed by regulation at a later date are the details of what modifications a renter might be able to make to the property. Again, there is no detail on something that could be very, very significant—that is, modifications to somebody's personal property. Most lessors, I think, do not and will not have an issue with reasonable requests, particularly around accessibility—a modest shower rail, for instance, or something else that helps those who need assistance—but, again, there is no detail in this bill. To be frank, I seriously do not think that is good enough. It is not transparent; it seems to be half-baked. I think the government is putting the cart before the horse on this one. One would have thought the government would have properly consulted and worked on this before including it in legislation.

My genuine belief is that they have been in a rush to make it sound like they are doing something so they have stuck it in there and decided they will work out the details later. The same can be said again on another aspect of the bill—that is, the code of conduct. We still do not have anything about the code itself, just that they will work it out at a later time.

**Ms Scanlon:** You abolished it.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection. This code of conduct is so vitally important that this government has taken three ministers and 9½ years to reintroduce it. That is how significant it is. It is so significant that there is no detail on how it will actually work. That is how significant it is; that is how much difference it is going to make. It is absolute lip-service to try to make out that they are doing something. It is all smoke and mirrors which is the constant way this government operates in this space.

There are also some big questions about the limitations on paying rent in advance, and I have mentioned that already. It looks like that may have been addressed. We will have to wait and see the detail when the minister brings that through.

The REIQ made a very detailed written submission to the committee which was reviewing the bill. They pointed out some potential drafting errors throughout the bill—some of which I have already touched on—that may result in negative unintended consequences. The government has ignored the REIQ in the past to their detriment. I hope that they have taken these points on board so we are not back in here in the next term of government making further amendments.

Let me now go to the manufactured homes bill. Manufactured homes and residential parks form an important part of Queensland's housing mix, particularly for Queenslanders over 50. Ensuring the ongoing viability of these facilities is important so that they can continue to be options for Queenslanders to access safe and secure accommodation. Again, the LNP will not oppose this bill. We acknowledge the need to modernise the laws that govern manufactured homes in Queensland. It has become apparent that there are elements that are outdated and are no longer fit for purpose.

In residential parks, consumers own their manufactured home but rent the land its site is on from a park owner. The relationship between the home owners and the park owners is regulated by the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003. It is a unique tenure arrangement that exists under the act, unlike most others across Queensland. In the lead-up to the 2020 state election, the then housing minister, the member for Springwood, promised a root-and-branch review of the legislation governing residential parks. Since that time, there has been a protracted consultation process undertaken by the government, ultimately resulting in these changes outlined in the bill. It is important to acknowledge the work of the committee and the enormous turnout at the public hearings held by the committee. There are people who are very emotionally engaged in these issues and who feel like they have been ripped off for years, and they are expecting changes to take place.

I want to talk about the site rent increases and laws. The most significant issue in this act is the cap being placed on site rent increases. The bill will cap annual general site rent increases at the higher of the consumer price index or 3.5 per cent. It is critical to note that site rent is a relatively unique cost incurred by residents living in manufactured homes. There is a distinct difference between these

properties, which are owned by the residents living in them, and the private rental market. The LNP acknowledges that there were mixed views on this throughout the committee's deliberations. The decision to cap the rent in this manner goes against the government's own objective in the bill, which states that the amendments are to address concerns about site rent increases by ensuring greater clarity and predictability for home owners, particularly for planning and budgeting purposes, as many of these people are on fixed incomes.

Given that pensions are linked to CPI and many of these people are on pensions, there is a very real possibility that pensioners living in these parks could be disadvantaged by the amendments should CPI fall below 3.5 per cent. If the government is planning on intervening in the market in this way, it must be aware of the negative impacts residents could face as a result. I met with many home owner groups and representatives and this is a red hot issue with them. They feel like they have been let down by the government who has not heard what is probably their biggest issue, which is the uncertainty around what the rent increases will be each year. These amendments may well leave residents paying more than they otherwise would have.

**Mr Whiting:** Rubbish.

**Mr MANDER:** It is not rubbish; it is true. I will take that interjection from the member for Bancroft—who has manufactured park homes in his electorate. It is not rubbish. He is saying that the claims by home owners are rubbish.

**Mr Whiting:** Claims by you!

**Mr MANDER:** I am quoting the home owners, and the member for Bancroft says they are rubbish. They are not rubbish. These amendments could leave residents on fixed incomes vulnerable, given that CPI may dictate their pension which might only increase by two per cent but the rent site increase will be 3.5 per cent.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mander, adjourned.


Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 1 May (see p. 1407), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 45, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into scrap metal theft*, tabled on 24 November 2023.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.00 pm): I rise to speak on the committee report titled *Inquiry into scrap metal theft*. This inquiry originated from increasing reports about thieves stripping metal, particularly copper, from critical infrastructure, from community infrastructure, from rural properties, from agricultural industry sites and from housing estates. Scrap metal is one of the most recycled materials globally. Sourcing the easy-picking metal and copper has become a lucrative enterprise for thieves. The metal is stripped and sold to scrap metal markets for export. The Australian Energy Producers advised the committee that, unlike precious metals such as gold and silver, metals like copper, brass and aluminium contain no intrinsic value. The value is realised when they are sold to scrap metal dealers who arrange for the metal to be melted and reshaped for other uses.


The inquiry found that the list of victims is extensive. It includes critical infrastructure assets of electricity, water and telecommunication providers, housing estates, private businesses, sporting and community organisations, road projects, transport infrastructure and the mining industry. That is effectively the whole state. It affects everyone and almost everything required in our modern world from streetlighting, electricity grids, air-conditioning units, water pumps on rural properties, switchboards, lighting for sporting grounds, generators, electronic message signs and silo complexes. The committee also learned that thieves are targeting metal parts from cars, with examples of cars being stripped of catalytic converters while they are parked in shopping centre car parks. A report on the weekend showed that charging cables in EV charging stations in California are now being targeted and stripped of copper wires.

Scrap metal theft seems to be just an example of the growing crime crisis in this state. It adds to the cost-of-living crisis, with increased insurance costs and replacement costs. Community organisations and sporting groups which raise funds to build infrastructure have to start again and raise even more funds. When thieves attacked the network in Virginia, it meant that the Arnott's biscuit factory lost supply for 36 hours. Workers were sent home and production stopped.

Since 2015, theft of copper wire and fittings has been a significant issue for GrainCorp and the communities in which it operates. Sites in Kupunn, Brookstead East, Macalister, Warra, Malu and Miles have been targeted. In a six-month period from December 2022 to June last year, three separate incidents occurred at its silo complex at Kupunn on the Darling Downs. Repairs are estimated to be \$180,000. In December 2022, thieves damaged the free-standing grain storage bins and stripped the copper wiring. As of November last year, the bins remained inoperative due to the cost of repair. At another location in the Kupunn complex, last May thieves knocked down the switchboard, stole all of the cables and cut livewires at the mains. Consequently, GrainCorp was unable to open that location for grain growers for the 2023-24 financial year. Growers had to either deliver to Dalby, which is another 25 kilometres away, or go to GrainCorp's competitors. This has caused an ongoing commercial impact to GrainCorp and put additional strain on its Dalby assets.

In the third incident, thieves stripped a silo complex of copper wiring and pulled out all cables. The mains were still out of order because of the theft at the second location. The third incident occurred where all of the grain had been stored. GrainCorp had to remove the stored grain so the electricians could attend the site and power the sample stand weighbridge. It has warned that, because of the high cost of repairs and the additional security, the loss of business means the future of this site is under consideration. A closure will have a major impact on local growers who will be forced to travel further to deliver grain and it places more pressure on the regional road network.

I note that the committee has made several recommendations to empower police and to track the extent of the crime. Many regional places such as my electorate of Gympie are being impacted by police who are being burnt out from excessive workloads and not enough staff. In the middle of a crime crisis, this will place an even greater burden on the police.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.05 pm): I rise to speak on this committee report regarding scrap metal theft. I thought I might give a particularly authentic view of the people of Pampas in the north-west corner of my electorate, just on the border with the electorate of my honourable friend the member for Condamine. The Pampas Neighbourhood Watch asked me to visit them recently. Its members are mostly primary producers, producers of grain, cotton and so forth—broadacre properties where a lot of money is invested. One of the difficulties they have expressed to me surrounding scrap metal theft is that it is not just a question of the cost of repairing the infrastructure which is damaged when felons go in and steal copper from their electric motors, their augers, their machinery and so forth; it also means that, when that machinery is needed, it is not available.

To give members an indication, there are irrigators there—that is, farmers who produce crops with water that they are entitled to draw from the Condamine River, but they are only entitled to draw at certain periods of time. There has to be a certain amount of flow or height in the river for them to be able to do that. When that happens, they go in like Jack Robinson. They want to start pumping the water that they are entitled to, but then they find out that the motor is stuffed, that the copper has been taken from it. The water that they miss out on can be several orders of magnitude more in value than the cost of repairing the infrastructure involved. It is not just the electric motors and so forth; it is machinery on the property—headers and so forth. Again, when a sorghum crop is ready to go, it is ready to go. It is the same with wheat or cotton. If the farmers get there and discover that the machinery they need is unavailable because thieves have taken copper or parts from the vehicle, that costs an enormous amount. The costs can run into the hundreds of thousands, perhaps even millions, of dollars. We are talking about sums of that kind of value. I have placed a question on notice upon the table of the House to the police minister asking for statistics concerning rural crime in that part of my electorate because I want to make a campaign of public awareness and awareness to the government of the impacts and the costs to jobs and productivity that this theft of copper and other scrap metals from primary producers in my electorate occasions.

I want to stress that the theft of copper and scrap metal is something that ought to have been investigated, and I am glad that that has been done, but we need to bear in mind that the opportunity cost of the theft in terms of lost productivity, lost ability to pump water into storages and lost ability to handle grain or harvest at the right time is astronomical. I say to the members of Pampas Neighbourhood Watch that I have heard you. I am speaking in this place on your behalf and I look forward to discussing with you further the response that I get from the police minister regarding the crime stats there and what we can do to improve security and safety for everybody not only in Pampas but also throughout my electorate of Southern Downs.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (2.09 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 46, 57th Parliament, *Public works inquiry into the state-controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah*, tabled on 30 November 2023.

This report was the result of a self-referral public works inquiry into the condition, suitability and quality of roadworks and the road network in the two state sections of roads out of Birdsville at the request of my colleague the member for Gregory, our deputy chair. The terms of reference for the inquiry were as set out in section 94 in the Parliament of Queensland Act 2021.

All in all, the works met the criteria that were set out in the terms of reference, but the committee did make some other recommendations and noted some other circumstances that could be improved. Not all of these issues are able to be solved by the state, but I am sure that by working collaboratively with other levels of government we could achieve some better outcomes for the local people.

I will go through the recommendations that are pertinent to that. Recommendation No. 2 states—

The Committee recommends the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) should consider a) flexibility when applying national guidelines for low volume roads in areas that experience high seasonal levels of road use, particularly with respect to the width of seal necessary to locate additional overtaking lanes of sufficient length to mitigate the reported impact of dust reducing visibility, and b) the need for appropriate signage to inform road users of the length of overtaking lane available.

What we saw out there—and I am sure my colleague will give further details—is when you are following a road train, all you can see is dust, so you have to go back a fair way. The overtaking lanes are five kilometres in length and it takes you nearly five kilometres, once you get clear of the dust, to round up and overtake the vehicle without speeding and doing all of the wrong things. It is particularly dangerous for tourists. Some people buy a caravan and four-wheel drive and head out not knowing these conditions. We thought the recommendation for signage and some sections with longer lengths of road for overtaking for safety would be a good idea. The Royal Flying Doctor Service use the road network to land. There are only certain places they can land. As aircraft have been upgraded over the years they need more width and length to land these aircraft for people's safety. We thought that was relevant.

We recommended that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider urgent steps to pave and seal the remaining 15.7 kilometres of unsealed length of the Eyre Developmental Road between Birdsville and Bedourie to ensure Birdsville is no longer the only township in the central west district located on a state-controlled road that does not have fully sealed access. In making this recommendation, we were aware that if that section of road were to be raised in any way it would block water flow to a lot of properties, The OBE organic beef suppliers and the Brooks family highlighted at length that if we created a dam wall, as such, their properties would not get water which would hinder production. Building the road up with culverts is not feasible due to the cost. It was said that even if it were bitumened at the current level it would recuperate better from a flood, which would be a lot better for all concerned. There were other local issues. The causeway from Birdsville to the race track—which is a council issue—is in shocking disrepair. If everyone could work together and get this to happen, it could provide safety for major events such as the Birdsville Races, which would be a good thing.

I have to touch on one more thing: after hearing of all of the difficulties of travelling these roads—and hearing constantly from the member for Callide his reservations about electric vehicles—at our overnight accommodation we came across two fully electric Porsche SUVs that had come across the desert to Birdsville which blew those reservations out of the water. Anyway, they were there, and that is where they came from.

The communities appreciated our inquiry, and the fact that we actually came out to have a look—it was of value to everyone. We encourage the minister to particularly look at that 15-kilometre road section. I note the government response that there is some movement on that issue and we do appreciate that. I would like to thank all of the submitters, the Diamantina Shire Council, the Brooks family for showing us around, those from the Barcoo Shire Council who travelled five hours to reach us—I know that is normal out there but we do appreciate it—our amazing team, Jodhi from the secretariat and Deane from Hansard, who kept us all in line and got behind the committee, that I no longer chair. We did a good thing. I would also like to thank the shadow minister, the member for Chatsworth, who came on that trip. I think we all did some good work.





**Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.14 pm): I would also like to make a small contribution into what I see as a significant inquiry into a very important road in my electorate. I have spent a lot of time on that road—more than anyone in this House would have—and it is a road that is used frequently. Not only is that road used for the transport of cattle by road trains given the organic status we have out there and the great marketing that OBE have done in getting our wonderful beef into places like Korea, Japan and so on but also that road is a mecca for the baby boomers who are cashed up and have Winnebagos and caravans and love to head out West at this time of the year right through until probably about October.

I really like recommendation No. 3 of the committee which is that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider urgent steps to pave and seal the remaining 15.7 kilometres of unsealed road between Birdsville and Bedourie. Birdsville is the last town in Queensland not to have an all-access road to a major area. Over the last two or three seasons we have had wonderful out of seasonal rain in that area where the Diamantina is flowing, the wild flowers are showing and the pastures are significant. A fun fact: if we have good seasons out there, cattle can put on two kilograms a day. That is better than a feedlot. That is pure organic grass cattle fattening country. It is one of the most significant pieces of country you will ever see.

If members get a chance to go out there please go out there. Not only is the beer cold at the Birdsville pub, but the locals would certainly love to see you. The most important thing is the sealing of that road. I am hearing reports that we have some health services, such as the dental truck that comes down from Mount Isa, that are not coming through to Birdsville at the moment—I will be up-front with the House that we have to get this confirmed—because of the unsealed road. We have kids out there who need those dental services. Birdsville has a population that is significant for Western Queensland. I ask the transport minister and the health minister to look into that. I will get more information. It is important that the road is sealed so we have access.

The other issue is that we have a growing cattle industry out there that is very important given its organic status. It is renowned in Japan. It has been going for over 35 or 40 years, it was started by the Brooks family. They have a collective of graziers all over the Channel Country, who are part of the marketing of OBE beef.

**Ms Leahy** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** I will take that interjection from the member for Warrego who has similar graziers in her electorate. By the time cattle leave Birdsville and get into the south-east, that affects the condition of the cattle. We have to try to find an all-access opportunity. From Birdsville to Windorah we need to put in more overtaking lanes—another 20 kilometres of them; four more overtaking lanes of five kilometres—on which we can land an RFDS King Air for emergency. We need to make them longer than five kilometres. We need to make them 10 kilometres. As the chair of the committee at the time of the inquiry pointed out, by the time you try to get past a road train you have about three or four kilometres of dust that you are trying to get through and by the time you hit the bitumen to get around the road train, the road train is coming off the bitumen again and going back into dust. It is a safety issue. I ask the Minister for Transport to put some money aside for this in this budget. Let us get the 15 kilometres sealed and let us put more overtaking lanes in place so we can have a safe road and give something back to the very people who make our state economy great by exporting great cattle.



**Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.18 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee report No. 46 to this parliament titled *Public works inquiry into the state-controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah* from November 2023. I would like to thank the former transport committee members: chair, Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah; the deputy chair, Lachlan Millar, who just spoke, the member for Gregory; James Martin, the member for Stretton; as well as current members Joan Pease, the member for Lytton; and Trevor Watts, the member for Toowoomba North. I also highlight the excellent support of our secretariat. It was a tough inquiry to put together with long distances and very limited accommodation in a very small populated area at Birdsville. I also want to thank the Brook family for their exceptional support and hospitality. They spent a lot of time giving us a tour of all of the facilities in the area, including the Birdsville racetrack—and they are on the committee. They showed us a lot of the work that has been done in that space.


It was a very informative inquiry and I learnt a lot about the region such as the amount of overland flow from stormwater events, the impacts on the transport sector and the cost-of-living impacts due to the distance for supplies to travel into the region, especially after a major wet. It is very flat country. When the water moves through that area it moves at speed and there is a lot of it. We also learnt about the impacts on the tourism sector from our grey nomads through the winter months—there is a lot of

traffic—and how that interacts with our transport sector such as the long cattle trains that move the livestock. We also learnt a lot about the amount of investment by the Miles government into the Birdsville Races, such as the upgrades to the toilets, the jockeys' facilities and the catering facilities. Over 4,000 people visit the Birdsville Races. I raise that because that creates a great traffic movement in a short period on that road network, and that was highlighted. That especially affects the causeway that the member for Kurwongbah referred to which floods in major events.

We visited the site of the Birdsville Big Red Bash. It is now much bigger—it is three times the size—than the Birdsville Races. About 12,000 people attend that event for a whole week and that is on the Big Red Sand Dune. A lot of people would have seen that sand dune on television. That is where they shoot some of the country's leading television ads with the likes of Mitsubishi and Ford, and some of those vehicles are electric. As the member for Kurwongbah said, it was quite interesting to bump into two fully electric Porsche vehicles worth around \$240,000 each that were out in the middle of the never-never. They were impressed with the support of the local community to get those vehicles recharged. They even did a speed test on the local runway—they shut down the local airstrip to do a speed test on those vehicles—and put Birdsville on the world stage due to those vehicles being tested in their area. The Big Red is one of the biggest locations for the Big Red Bash, which is now nationally renowned for tourism where some of the best entertainers in our country perform.

The report contained three recommendations, and I will not go into detail about them. The member for Kurwongbah spoke about them pretty well. At the end of the day Birdsville needs a little bit of work—or a lot of work—on some of the highways. It needs some immediate work in the small sector roads to make sure there is a really good network locally. We know that tourism means a lot. One of the things we did learn—and I will put it on the public record—is it costs \$1 million plus land to build a house in Birdsville. They are doing it tough. The cost of living is tough and we have seen that.

I want to thank the local police who turned up at one of our committee hearings to give us information about traffic movements, traffic issues and collision reports from the area. There was also a report from the Royal Flying Doctor Service on the use of the road as an airstrip in a major emergency. We have some really good information on how important that network is to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and I want to thank them for their service.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (2.23 pm): In rising to talk about this public works inquiry, I want to thank the committee secretariat for their work in organising this trip out west to a remote part of Queensland. I thank all of my colleagues who participated in that. The shadow minister for transport, the member for Chatsworth, also joined us, which was fantastic. It was great to get out to a beautiful part of Queensland and take a look at the issue of roads in remote parts of Queensland. We were there just before the Birdsville Races, which is a fantastic event. I personally have not been fortunate to make it. Because of that, the council had spent a lot of time, effort and energy grading the roads. It is a shame that we as a committee did not make it there a couple of weeks prior, before a lot of graders had gone through, to experience those roads in a very degraded state, which is often the case for gravel state roads across a lot of Queensland. Unfortunately, they do not get maintained enough and we need to be doing a lot more to seal them.

The committee was tasked with looking into the roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah. At some point I would love to look into some roads such as Brigalow to Biloela or Biloela to Wandoan or maybe even Biggenden to Burra Burri. Those are a couple of state owned roads that need a few upgrades. Perhaps the committee in the future could take a look at some great roads across the Callide electorate.

I say thanks to the member for Gregory for taking up this issue. He has been a great member for Gregory. I know the LNP candidate for Gregory, Sean Dillon, will be steadfast in his advocacy for a lot of these western roads. He is a true Queenslanders. He is a man from the bush who understands the issues that face rural Queensland. The candidate for Gregory, Sean Dillon, is going to make a great member in this place should he be elected in October. I look forward to welcoming him formally if we get across the line.


I now want to touch on the committee's recommendations. Recommendation 2 speaks about the need for flexibility when applying national guidelines to low-volume roads. This is certainly a big issue that we heard a lot about out there with the Birdsville Races and the Big Red Bash which bring a lot of traffic in a short period. The roads outside of that also have small windows where they provide significant economic contributions through what they are exporting and transporting. As the member for Gregory touched on, it is a brilliant beef area; the Channel Country of Western Queensland is a unique area. If honourable members have not been out there, I very much recommend they go. It is about the second best area of Queensland—second only to, of course, the electorate of Callide.

The economic contribution of the beef industry is huge. We need to be looking at all roads that cart the beef. Whether it is out Birdsville, Bedourie and Windorah way or the beef corridors of Central Queensland, the roads absolutely need upgrading to improve the economic contributions to this state. We have been calling for this for a long time and we will continue to do so. If members have not heard, it was Beef Week recently. I have my beef pin on today.

**Mr Smith** interjected.

**Mr HEAD:** I take that interjection from the member for Bundaberg. If he really thought that, he obviously does not listen too much. Maybe he should find a way to use his ears and listen to his constituents, who absolutely do not support the Labor government across his electorate. It was recently Beef Week and it showcased a beautiful industry that represents this area of Queensland. Of course, the beef industry contributes a lot more to just South-West Queensland. If honourable members missed Beef Week, they should make sure they get there in three years time.

Recommendation 3 talks about the need for urgent steps to pave and seal the remaining 15.7 kilometres of the unsealed length of the Eyre Development Road between Birdsville and Bedourie. When it comes to paving roads it is absolutely critical for road safety. We know that rural Queenslanders are killed on our roads at a far greater rate than that of the city and this absolutely needs to be addressed. We need to prioritise investment in rural and regional Queensland because the stats show that those are the people who are getting killed on our roads. A significant contributor to that is the poor state of our roads and the fact that we have not spent enough on infrastructure in rural and regional Queensland in this state.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.29 pm): At the outset I would like to say a couple of quick thankyou's. As members have heard, I was very privileged to attend the inquiry at Birdsville. The first person I would like to thank is the chair of the committee, Shane King. He did a very good job. It was a good committee to work on and I very much welcomed the opportunity. I also thank Trevor Watts who was not able to make that trip and I was honoured to fill that role in his absence.

As was mentioned by the chair in his foreword remarks, officers from the Barcoo Shire Council drove for five hours to attend the committee hearing. I know that 'five hours' rolls off the tongue pretty readily, but they drove for five hours to turn up to a meeting which may have lasted for only an hour and then drove for another five hours to get back home. That dedication cannot be overstated. The dedication of the ladies and the men in the bush is truly amazing.

The committee recommendations have been stepped through but I believe the best thing I can do in my contribution is to highlight something that is pretty critical that came out in our investigation. It is something that I was aware of prior to going to Birdsville. It is the disparity between the costs of works when it comes to sealing roads on a per kilometre basis. At page 17 in section 6.1 the report states—

Sealing cost per kilometre varied between \$260,000/km and \$650,000/km for these public works.


That is quite a spread between the lower and the higher ends. When you are talking about country roads, bush roads et cetera, the best way to drive down the cost of sealing roads is to give local authorities access to the two key ingredients they need for good roadworks, which are quarry stockpiles and ring tanks for overland flows of water. Water and crusher dust are essential to making a good sealed pavement, particularly on country roads.

I want to highlight the committee's recommendation that that issue be taken up with the relevant state departments and agencies to ensure local authorities, wherever practicable, get access to that all-essential quarry material. As I have already demonstrated, if they do not get access to it then the costs of hauling gravel to complete road sealing can add hundreds of thousands of dollars to the cost per lineal kilometre. When you multiply that by 15, 30 or 100 kays, it adds up considerably. The key thing that I want to emphasise is access to quarry material and access to an adequate water supply.

I would like to acknowledge the great job that the Royal Flying Doctor Service does. I am a city-based member. I live in Belmont near Carindale, but I grew up in the bush in Mount Isa in the mid-seventies, so I am acutely aware of the great role that the Royal Flying Doctor Service plays. A previous speaker mentioned a recommendation in relation to the service. It is quite remarkable when you have a bird's-eye view of sections of the road that have been sealed adequately and you see, effectively, turning aprons at two ends of that section. It is quite a unique Australian feature that allows a state controlled highway to be used as a runway by the Royal Flying Doctor Service in an emergency. To be fair, when these turning aprons were first used in this way, the width of the road was pitched towards lighter aircraft. Now the Royal Flying Doctor Service has a fleet of larger King Air twin turboprop

aircraft that need a wider road and wider turning aprons. Wherever practicable going forward, that is a sensible measure that needs to be taken on board. All members share a common passion for quality health services, whether you live in the city or the bush.

In closing, I want to thank the committee members. They were very good to work with. I thoroughly enjoyed the couple of days I spent on the trip with the committee. My special thanks go to the secretariat whose professionalism was, as usual, first-class.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.33 pm): I rise to contribute to debate on the *Public works inquiry into the state-controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah* report. I thank the committee for taking the time to travel to Birdsville and undertaking site inspections of the roads outlined in this report. Welcome to the road conditions that many of my constituents, unfortunately, deal with on a daily basis.

The report touches on an issue of great importance to Queensland local governments, and that is gravel access and supply. The report states that local governments are currently restricted on the use of gravel quarry areas. We know that across Queensland over 1,000 gravel pits are caught in the slow lane under this Labor government. Councils cannot get access to existing gravel nor can they afford to absorb the increased costs associated with carting gravel longer distances. The committee heard about the restrictions on the use of gravel quarry areas because native title and other rules and restrictions have drastically increased the cost of maintenance on roads. That is not an issue just for council roads. In many cases, state controlled roads are also caught in Labor's slow lane.

The Miles-Palaszczuk government are in the slow lane when it comes to resolving the gravel rash that is causing councils distress and taking up an immense amount of time of council staff. In fact, the Barcoo Shire Council said they would like to invoice the state government for the amount of time that it has taken their CEO to work through this. He has not been able to do his day job because he has spent so much time trying to find a pathway through this issue. Councils want a clear pathway to enable them to access existing gravel pits in a timely manner. Without a clearly defined and efficient pathway, councils and the state government will feel the effects of the increasing costs of gravel and roads will continue to deteriorate even further.

The report outlines a recommendation to allocate additional overtaking lanes of sufficient length to mitigate the impact of dust that reduces visibility. Overtaking lanes are like hen's teeth in regional areas. You can count on one hand the number of passing lanes in my electorate of Warrego, which is an area larger than the state of Victoria. The report states that there are concerns in relation to the optimal length of overtaking lanes, particularly as road traffic can increase by as much as 2,000 per cent. Type 2 road trains are often found on the roads around Birdsville and they come in as far as Roma. Can members guess where the 2,000 per cent of increased traffic drives through in order to get to the roads described in this report? They actually drive through my electorate on roads that are in a similar condition to those described in the report, many of which have no passing lanes. Whilst I welcome the increased economic activity across my electorate from the Big Red Bash and the Birdsville Races, road users know that the Labor government has neglected regional roads—roads like the Tara Kogan Road, the Jackson Wandoan Road, the Bollon to St George road and the Mitchell St George Road.

The report also states that, in terms of the current backlog of maintenance funding for the roads the subject of the inquiry, DTMR advised that there was some \$500,000 in capital renewal investment needs for the road between Birdsville and Bedourie and some \$30 million in capital renewable investment needs on the road link between Birdsville and Windorah. If you drive on Queensland's regional roads you will soon find that \$5.7 billion road maintenance backlog and you will feel it as well.

The people of Birdsville, Bedourie and Windorah should not have to come begging, cap in hand, to have sealed the remaining 15.7 kilometres of roads into Birdsville. This region more than pays its way for the state government. When it comes to natural resources, tourism and agricultural production, the region punches well above its weight. In return, all they ask for is a sealed road to help them to drive down the costs of living in their region. I know that Sean Dillon, the LNP candidate for Gregory, will be out there fighting for the region and he will help the LNP show Labor the door in '24.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): I call the member for Ferny Grove.

**Mr Smith** interjected.


**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr Smith** interjected.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Bundaberg and member for Callide, you will not argue across the chamber or you will both be warned. That is your last chance.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.38 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee's report No. 46 titled *Public works inquiry into the state-controlled roads from Birdsville to Bedourie and Birdsville to Windorah*. I specifically reference local government authorities experiencing high costs to maintain roads due to restricted access to government gravel quarry areas. Through its inquiry, the committee found that the costs are avoidable and calls on my department, which manages the sale of state owned quarry material under the Forestry Act 1959, and the Department of Resources to continue to work with local councils and native title partners to resolve council gravel pit access issues.

I can assure the House that local government access to state owned quarries is fundamental; it is a bedrock issue, in fact, for my department. I can also inform the House that, following the recent local government elections, I am in the process of writing to all relevant Queensland mayors to provide them with an update on quarry negotiations in their area, and this has been going on for some time given our engagement with some of those previous mayors as well. Now with the elections complete, we will deal with the newly elected mayors and their councillors. However, notwithstanding our willingness to assist and get resolutions as soon as possible, I must be clear that my department is required to comply with the federal Native Title Act 1993 and other legislation before granting, varying or renewing a quarry sale permit. In some cases that is what people forget in terms of seeking resolutions to moving forward for access to these quarry resources.

I refer to page 21 of the committee report that raises the issue of compliance with native title and the ongoing and urgent focus that my department has committed to in seeking a resolution of this matter. There are situations where my department cannot issue or renew a quarry sales permit to authorise certain quarry pits until native title is validly addressed. In some cases, consent for relevant native title parties through an Indigenous land use agreement, or ILUA, is required to comply with the Native Title Act. An ILUA can require significant time and financial commitment from the parties involved in negotiations. Due to the lengthy process, my department is working with permit holders to review their quarry needs and with traditional owners to discuss continuity of quarry material supply. My department is prioritising those permits expiring before 2026 and is working directly with local governments to secure their quarry material needs, identifying opportunities to rationalise sites where this material may continue to be obtained.

Some 11 interim agreements have been signed to enable time for binding ILUAs to be negotiated. In some cases, parties have elected to rely on pre-existing ILUAs that provide the necessary future act consent. Through this process, the department has initiated engagement with 13 native title holders and claimants about the proposed ILUA necessary to secure native title holders' consent. Several local governments have been able to maintain much of their required supply through state owned quarry material. For example, Quilpie Shire Council has been able to continue access to 63 of its required 75 quarry pits. Boulia Shire Council originally had 105 quarry pits listed on its permit but has since revised that down to 42 pits. A lot of those were disused, so it found ways to identify those that are available for use. Of those, the department has been able to renew 32 pits to date.


My department will continue to work with local governments, the LGAQ and native title holders to secure a solution where required pits have not been able to be added to councils' quarry permits. My department is utilising other valid options such as relocating quarry materials to alternative sites, where possible, to provide continuity of supply of state owned quarry materials. We are working with the Department of Resources as well. We have a dedicated team of seconded native title specialists from both departments to ensure we work through that process through consultation and negotiations. We will continue to work collaboratively with local government, native title holders, claimants and other departments to make sure we manage this important issue. We do understand the pressures and the need for meeting native title requirements under the federal act. We will continue down that path as required by law to ensure we maintain the valuable resources in the western province.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


## DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Use of Correct Titles

 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): I want to clarify a ruling the Speaker made on 7 March. In that ruling it was determined by the Speaker that we should only refer to previous governments by the Premier at the time and not by deputy premiers or anybody else. This is just a general warning for all members that when referring to a particular government you should only refer to the Premier at that time.

## LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.45 pm): I move—


That the House take note of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report No. 64, 57th Parliament, *Oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman*, tabled on 2 February 2024.

The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee had oversight responsibilities for the Queensland Ombudsman and this report provides information regarding the performance by the Queensland Ombudsman of his functions under the Ombudsman Act. The committee reviewed the Queensland Ombudsman's annual report 2021-22, which was tabled on 26 September 2022. The committee also held a public hearing with the Queensland Ombudsman, Mr Anthony Reilly, and his staff on 1 June 2023. The office contributes to fair and accountable public administration. Under the act, the office investigates complaints about the actions and decisions of state government departments and agencies, local councils and public universities. The office oversees the implementation of the Public Interest Disclosure Act, the PID Act, reviews the way public sector agencies deal with public interest disclosures and educates and provides advice to public sector agencies about PIDs. The act also provides that, subject to any other act or law, the Ombudsman is not subject to direction by any person about the way the Ombudsman performs their functions under the act or the priority given to investigations.

The Queensland Ombudsman tabled its 2021-22 annual report on 26 September 2022, reporting on a range of performance and service measures in its annual report, including investigating complaints; improving decision-making through engagement, training and advice; PID oversight; and financial performance and staffing. There were 10,398 contacts received by the office for advice, assistance or complaint resolution. This is down from 2020-21 when 10,758 contacts were received by the office. In 2021-22 the office delivered a program of administrative improvement initiatives to develop the quality of decision-making and administrative practices in agencies. This included delivering 175 training sessions with 3,145 public sector officers—almost double the 97 training sessions held in the previous year, with the increase attributed to the online delivery of these training programs.

In April 2022, the office published its casebook 2022—a tool for shared learning, including guidance on issues such as reasons for decisions, conducting reviews of decisions and keeping records. The committee was also pleased to note that the office further published casebook 2023 in April 2023 for shared learning to build greater knowledge in agencies. The office reported that it ended the year in a secure financial position with adequate reserve and forecast income to fulfil its statutory responsibilities for 2022-23. The office is the oversight agency for the PID Act and there were 2,092 disclosure types arising from PIDs reported to the office, an increase of 19.4 per cent from the previous year. PIDs relating to corrupt conduct were the most commonly reported type of wrongdoing, representing about 87.9 per cent.

In his opening statement at the public hearing, the Ombudsman provided an update on the new role of Inspector of Detention Services to be undertaken by the Ombudsman following the passing of the Inspector of Detention Services Act 2022 by the Legislative Assembly in late 2022. In preparation for the commencement of the remaining provisions of the act, the Ombudsman stated that he had been recruiting and establishing a team to support the new function.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.49 pm): I rise to speak on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report on the oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman. The report relates to the performance of the Ombudsman's office during the 2021-22 year as covered by its annual report tabled on 26 September 2022. During 2021-22 the office received 6,662 complaints, of which 1,108 were investigated. As a result of these investigations, the office made 180 recommendations for improvements to agencies—99 per cent of which were accepted by the relevant agency.

A selection of case studies from the Ombudsman's investigations were published in the second investigations Casebook 2022. Since its release, the 2022 Casebook has been downloaded or viewed over 1,100 times. In 2021-22, 40 per cent of the complaints to the Ombudsman's office were from outside of South-East Queensland. In order to assess how to improve Ombudsman services to people in regional, rural and remote areas, the Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman visited regional communities in 2021-22, including Townsville, Rockhampton, Mackay, Roma and Woorabinda. They met with local MPs and their electorate staff, as well as local governments and community organisations.

The Office of the Queensland Ombudsman also has oversight of the Public Interest Disclosure Act, the PID Act. This role includes monitoring the management of PIDs, collecting statistics and identifying trends, and viewing the way public sector agencies deal with PIDs. According to the 2021-22 report, 1,466 PIDs were reported—229 fewer than the 2020-21 period. During the public hearing last October, the Ombudsman mentioned that these figures have since increased significantly. According to the Ombudsman's 2022-23 report, the number of PIDs has risen 36.1 per cent since 2021-22—a very concerning development, particularly since most PIDs relate to corrupt conduct. Corruption was the subject of 92.1 per cent in 2022-23 compared to 85.7 per cent in 2021-22.


The 2022-23 report also shows that all 933 matters reported by the HHS were concerned with corrupt conduct. Nearly 86 per cent of them were identified as role reporter disclosures. Role reporters are officers who identify wrongdoings in the performance of their duties including human resource officers, auditors, inspectors and investigators. This increase in PIDs and the overwhelming preponderance of PIDs concerning corrupt conduct needs to be looked at much more closely by the Ombudsman and the committee in the next review.

The 2021-22 year marked the 20th anniversary of the commencement of the Ombudsman Act 2001. To mark the event, the Ombudsman's office undertook analysis of the various insights contained in the report of its major investigations since 2001. The aim was to identify focus areas for improvement. The most common insights included the need for policies and procedures to be effectively communicated and regularly reviewed; good information and record management to ensure quality, compliance and accountability; and/or agencies to be supported by staff with the right knowledge and skills. Other insights included providing reasons or any decisions made using human-centred design and improvement governance arrangements with partner oversight agencies.

The 2022 year was one of growth and change for the Ombudsman's office, starting with the passing in 2022 of the Inspector of Detention Services Act. The act established a new oversight role for the Ombudsman which includes conducting inspections of detention services and reporting to parliament on the outcomes of those inspections. The act fully commenced on 1 July 2023, having partially commenced on 9 December 2022—which is my birthday—and will no doubt feature more prominently in future annual reports.

Another driver of change in 2021-22 was Professor Peter Coaldrake's Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector. Since the Coaldrake report was published, the office has actively engaged with government on implementing the report's many excellent recommendations. Throughout 2021-22, the Ombudsman continued to release high-quality publications of vital importance to Queenslanders.

The new incentives were also implemented to improve community understanding around how to raise concerns. These have greatly assisted many people in understanding the role of the Ombudsman, why the office exists, when it should be engaged with and what to expect from the whole process. The Ombudsman and his staff should be congratulated on their performance. I would like to thank the committee and the secretariat and staff for their diligent work conducting the review on this particular bill.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (2.54 pm): I rise to make this brief contribution to the committee reporting process as it pertains to the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman. As always, the committee, under the tender benevolent guidance of the member for Toohey, acquitted itself magnificently.

As part of its jurisdiction in this area, the committee may report to the Legislative Assembly on any matter concerning the entity, the entity's functions or the performance of the entity's functions that the committee considers should be drawn to the Legislative Assembly's attention; and examine the annual report of the entity tabled in the Legislative Assembly and, if appropriate, to comment on any aspect of the report.

Under the Ombudsman Act, the office investigates complaints about the actions and decisions of state government departments and agencies, local councils and public universities. The office oversees the implementation of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010, reviews the way public sector agencies deal with public interest disclosures and educates and provides advice to public sector agencies about PIDs.

The annual report meets the reporting obligations under the Financial Accountability Act 2009 and the annual report requirements for Queensland government agencies. The office reports on a range of performance and service measures in its annual report, including investigating complaints; improved decision-making through engagement, training and advice; PID oversight; and financial performance and staffing.

Pleasingly, there were signs of constant and overall improvement in performance as reflected in the sheer volume. There were 10,398 contacts received by the office for advice, assistance or complaint resolution. This is down from 2020-21, when there were 10,758. The annual report states 1,583 cases were assessed as involving a human rights element—down from 2,159 cases in the previous year.

Equally as pleasing are the improvements noted in training and delivery of training for staff. In 2021-22, the office delivered a program of administrative improvement initiatives to develop the quality of decision-making and administrative practices in agencies. This included 175 training sessions, with 3,145 public sector officers—almost double the 97 training sessions held in the previous year.

In 2021-22, 129 internal review requests were received and 127 were finalised—which was very impressive. The original decisions were confirmed in 76 cases, reviews were withdrawn by the complainant or declined by the office in 47 cases and decisions were not upheld in four cases. With such a volume of finalised reviews, it is a credit to the office that the measures of client satisfaction were so high.

In 2020-21, the office implemented a new process for measuring client satisfaction involving an email survey to clients whose cases had been closed in the two months prior. Continuing in 2021-22, the overall survey reported that 60 per cent of respondents were either neutral, satisfied or very satisfied.

In the state of Queensland a person can make a public interest disclosure in an effort to report corruption, maladministration and misuse of public resources. It contributes to the cost of providing public services. It reduces the quality of services as a result of unfair, unreasonable, unlawful decisions and actions. Wrongdoing by particular public sector officers and agencies damages the reputation of the wider public sector.

The PID Act encourages the disclosure of information about suspected wrongdoing in the public sector so that public sector organisations can better identify wrongdoing; suspected wrongdoing can be properly evaluated and investigated; actions can be taken to fix these problems; or systems that can reduce the risk of wrongdoing can be implemented. There were 2,092 disclosure types arising from PIDs reported to the office—an increase by 19.4 per cent from the previous year at 1,766.

PIDs relating to corrupt conduct were the most commonly reported type of wrongdoing, representing 87.9 per cent. The committee also noted the establishment of the Inspector of Detention Services, as reported on by the office. This is a role to be undertaken by the Ombudsman. Our committee looks forward to future updates on how this role is supporting continuous improvement for places of detention and related services throughout the state of Queensland.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hunt, adjourned.


## **RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

### **MANUFACTURED HOMES (RESIDENTIAL PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL**

#### **Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

Resumed from p. 1742, on motion of Ms Scanlon—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (3.00 pm), continuing: Before the debate was adjourned, I was speaking about the fact that the increase in rent for manufactured home owners will be 3.5 per cent or CPI, whichever is higher. That is going to cause some distress for people on fixed incomes. On the



other side, park owners and managers generally raised concerns with some of the provisions of the bill; namely, caps being placed on site rent. There was a general consensus that caps may: prevent them from covering increases in expenses; require cost-cutting to maintain profitability in some circumstances; and stifle investment in the future growth of the manufactured homes sector. These are genuine concerns that the government must be able to balance.

There were also genuine concerns raised throughout the committee's inquiry in relation to there being no restriction on the extent to which park owners can increase site rents on new site agreements. I do acknowledge that this can be quite complex, but there is potential here that some residents may struggle to sell their homes as a result of these new laws. It could also potentially create a sense of disharmony and an uneven playing field in individual parks, and that should not be underestimated. Whether it is perceived or real, many residents feel there is a power imbalance between them and park owners. This is not just dreamed up. I think many residents do feel this way because of some of the outdated laws governing the homes in which they live. It is why the LNP does not oppose the bill. Changes to modernise and update these laws are necessary.

That said, I do want to point out that a large number of residents living in manufactured home parks do have positive experiences in their engagement and interaction with park owners. Similarly, many park owners and managers also expressed that they enjoy respectful and productive relationships with the residents in their parks. Ensuring that more residents are able to share in these positive experiences should be a priority for the government. That does lead me to some of the things the review has not covered, and they are very important issues.

Some of the concerns raised by residents and other stakeholders related to conflict resolution, financial transparency and the conduct of owners and residents alike. I want to go back to this power imbalance, because you cannot simply move from these places. Some of these properties are now worth up to a million dollars, and although technically they can be moved, practically they cannot, so people feel stuck there. Most people are very happy to be there, but I heard from quite a number of different home owners that when they get into some sort of dispute about a maintenance issue, or something to do with the upkeep of the park, or something that was promised, if they get a stubborn, uncooperative park owner, one of the terms they heard quite often was, 'If you don't like it, leave.' That is not a very productive way of trying to have a harmonious relationship with your tenants and it causes enormous frustration for home owners. It is really important that at some time in the future this issue is addressed so that conflict resolution and compliance issues can be managed far more effectively than they are at the moment. They are largely being ignored in this bill.

We also consistently hear from residents about their frustration with the QCAT process. That remains a key concern. These are normally older people, and the last thing they want at this stage of their life is conflict and trying to navigate something they are not used to but which park owners deal with every day. That is something we really have to address in the future. Many residents also want greater visibility on the viability and expenditure of the parks in which they live—that is a fair enough request—balanced with not being burdensome to operators. I think that, in choosing not to address these issues as part of these legislative changes, the government has missed an opportunity for sensible and seasoned reform.

From my reading of the bill, there will be a review in three years time. That review will be incredibly important to enable a proper evaluation of the changes that have come about. It will also be an opportunity to address some of those issues. We will not oppose the changes being proposed, but there are some issues we are very concerned about, particularly in the residential tenancies act, with regard to impacts on investor confidence. If that weakens, the very people the government is trying to assist will be the victims. The outcome of that will be fewer houses, which means higher rent and more people looking for a home. On that note, I conclude my contribution.



**Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.06 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak on this bill as chair of the committee and someone who has been involved with some of these issues for over 20 years. I want to start by addressing a couple of things raised by the member for Everton. I know it is easy to criticise us about housing, but I would point out that under Labor more houses each year on average have been built, approved and commenced. That is our record. It is one the LNP does not want you to hear.

The 'long-awaited' reform was the other issue the member for Everton talked about. That is my particular phrase. I said that because I have been working with people in the manufactured homes sector on some of these issues for many years. I will talk about market rent reviews, dispute resolution, and capital replacement and maintenance plans. I would also point out that when we got into

government in 2015 a number of us, including the member for Kallangur—now Kurwongbah—wondered what was being done in relation to the issue of manufactured homes. Nothing was happening in 2015. Reform had stalled, so we got going. In 2017 we had a new act that introduced a code of behaviour, a dispute resolution procedure and limiting rent increases to once per year on one basis. There were great reforms in 2019 followed by more regulations, and in 2022 we started the long process of building up to the point we are today. It is long-awaited because there has been a lot of work that has been done. It has been done cautiously and judiciously, but we have also done a lot of it as well. We have made sure we got it right.

I would point out that only Labor works to improve life for home owners and renters. I think the LNP shows indifference to home owners. At the committee hearing for this bill at Deception Bay a representative from the Alliance of Manufactured Home Owners said—

I would tell you that on no occasion has the LNP engaged. We have been sending emails to all the LNP and David Crisafulli has refused to engage.

...

Let us call it what it is. He has refused to engage. We have actually written to him in the last month and asked what the LNP's plans are going forward and to date we have not received a response, but I would be really grateful if you two could go to him and say, 'Look, you need to have a plan going forward because these people need to know what you are going to do.'

Then the member for Burleigh said—

We have a plan going forward; do not worry about that.

The question is: what plan is that? Is it on housing? What plan do you have and why have you not shown it to anyone? That is telling and sums up the LNP's indifference to this sector.

I remind people why the Miles Labor government is doing this. Ordinary working Queenslanders, including those who rent, need someone on their side. When the housing market puts the squeeze on renters, it is the Labor Party that will lean in and actively intervene to protect Queenslanders. Every ordinary working Queenslanders needs housing that is safe, secure and affordable. Only Labor will make that a priority—it is a central pillar of what we do.

Today, I will just talk to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. Firstly, I am so pleased to see these reforms come through because they have crucial consumer protections. As I said, these are protections that I have been fighting for years to see happen. For example, we are getting rid of market rent reviews, and that is a wonderful thing. These rent reviews have led to site rent increases of 11, 12, 17 and up to 30 per cent in one year. The point is that you cannot have market rent reviews if one side cannot exercise market power. That is where market rent reviews fail. We are also limiting site rent increases to 3.5 per cent, or CPI, and I believe that is the eight capitals' average index. Site rent increases have been the biggest issue for home parks residents. It is the issue they have constantly talked to me about—bear in mind, I have 1,100 home park sites in my electorate.

Home parks will also be required to publish a comparison document for prospective home owners, and that document would include the range of site rents payable, what is included in the site rent and what facilities are available. Home parks will also be required to prepare a maintenance and capital replacement plan which would be accessible to home owners. The plan would outline maintenance and capital costs in the park over the next 10 years. That is a great win for transparency in these parks. The member for Everton said we had not done that yet. This is where the action is happening. It will be a great win for residents to have great transparency in these parks.

There are many more initiatives that make up what I have described as the greatest suite of reforms this sector has seen for 20 years. I will now talk about the role of market forces in this sector. As we have heard, we are delivering these reforms because of how market forces operate in this particular housing sector. These residents have little market power. They have invested in homes that are permanently tied to land they do not own, land that they rent. They cannot move their home if they are dissatisfied with the rent they pay. The only market power they have after making this large investment is to sell up and move. No other housing sector has such an imbalance of power, and that is why we must intervene.

This is why we will keep leaning in to help out these hardworking Queenslanders. It is very clear that more change is needed. I believe we need more measures that empower home owners committees. If you want to address an imbalance of power, let's empower the home owners committees to help resolve those issues. I agree that we need to find a better way for dispute resolution because QCAT is just not working for them.

There are also broader issues that we need to put on the table in the future. I also agree that we need to review the act in totality because we have to examine the whole sector in totality. We want every Queenslanders to have safe, affordable and secure housing, yet this is a sector where there are homes selling for \$1 million, \$2 million, and they sit on land that is rented. The question is: is that what we want? Is that the path we want to go down—a land-rent-based housing model within Queensland?

There is no doubt that some operators are chasing the higher end of the market, and it is very clear that there are large profits to be made. Avid Property Group last week announced that they would pay \$284 million to acquire eight Living Gems sites. Hometown USA bought the Lifestyle Group for \$685 million in 2018, and Stockland bought the Halcyon group for \$620 million. I will table an article that lists all of those acquisitions.


*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Australian Financial Review*, dated 15 May 2024, titled 'Developer Avid flags \$1.4b land lease housing play' [846].

In conclusion, there are a couple of principles that should guide actions in this sector in the future. These villages are a haven for retirees, for those on a modest income. Let me quote one of our witnesses—

Over-50s villages are pensioner havens and have been for decades ... Australia's over-50s villages are what they are and must not be allowed to be converted into something they are not. They are the low-income retirees' havens that Australia needs, and needs lots more of. Over-50s parks and villages must not be allowed to be turned into the more expensive lifestyle communities ...

That was Bruce Hill-Webber at the hearing in Deception Bay on 23 April. Let us keep home parks as a haven for ordinary working Queenslanders who have retired.

The other important principle is co-investment. Park owners bring their own investment to home parks. Home owners bring in an equal-sized investment into these home parks as well. You need both. The sector cannot survive if one side is knocked out. Both sides need each other to build that lifestyle in these villages. All parties need to remember that, and I hope to see that principle reflected in work to come. I commend these bills to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.15 pm): I am pleased to make a contribution to the residential tenancies and manufactured homes bills before the House. As the deputy chair of the committee, I would like to start by thanking the shadow minister for housing, the member for Everton, Tim Mander, my colleague the member for Burleigh and our staff for their contribution to and consideration of the details and aspects of this bill that I will cover off shortly.

It was a pleasure to travel across the state and listen to members of our community. Up to 50 per cent of our community choose to rent. That number is a lot higher in many locations, and certainly there needs to be a level of consumer protection. I appreciate the member for Everton's comment when he said the government has missed the mark to make changes to the law in Queensland to assist private investment in this area—95 per cent of housing stock in Queensland is built by private investment.

Whilst I understand the need for consumer protection, as the government rightly said, we need to have a balanced view, and that was the second paragraph in our statement of reservation to both of these bills. At the time of a housing crisis, there needs to be consideration to see housing affordability and availability on the agenda. I know this is not a planning bill but, for me, planning is one aspect that could deliver a large amount of stock to the market. Planning reforms could see parcels of land unlocked.

Let's turn to the detail of the residential tenancies bill to start off with. I would be pleased if the minister has taken on board some of the comments regarding concerns that the REIQ have had. For example, a tenant might want to pay 12 months rent in advance for the property—it may be of benefit to them, for whatever reason that is—but, under the current law of this bill, it is actually an offence for the owner of the property to accept that money, even if the tenant wants to do that. I understand the motivation of that law—to see demands for paying 12 months up-front taken off the table. If we are taking away the rights of tenants, that has missed the mark on that point.

In terms of the rights of renters, the rights of consumers in this space—both for the residential tenancies and the manufactured homes bills—most people will find themselves at QCAT if they have a dispute with either the RTA or the owners of the park. I would challenge the government and, again, ask the minister to see how they think that QCAT is of assistance to the consumer when it can take up to two years for some of these disputes to be resolved. The reason QCAT was set up in the first place was to have low-cost, effective mediation to resolve arguments or issues, and it would be great to see investment in that consumer protection to get some outcomes that could be replicated across all of the parks.

I recognise the member for Burleigh's contribution in one of our hearings. We agreed that it would be great to see a standard management agreement that could be applied right across the parks. You would have a standard set of company-wide items for all parks and then specific items in individual park locations. It again comes to the point of consumer protection. At the moment when an individual has a site agreement, if there is an outcome at QCAT for that individual site it is effective for only that site and not all of the other sites within that park. A standardised agreement that could be applied throughout the park I think would give the home owners committee in each of the parks the opportunity to coordinate better and have a stronger footing when talking with the park owners.


I have covered off a couple of areas of concern. I place on record that we heard of a range of experiences. Some were very positive, where home owners and park owners had more of a shared ownership model through active listening and participation of the home owners committee. In fact, they were almost like a body corporate whereby budgeted money was put into a sinking fund or administration fund that the HOC could have some input into. Then there were those bad situations involving poor management. We were told that one of the managers said to the home owners, 'If you don't like it here, you can leave.' Practically, you cannot lift and shift some of these manufactured homes. They are there. I would also like to see a review of this in the future to see transportable homes separated from manufactured homes, which are more permanent. Transportable homes are certainly of a different class. We are seeing some of those market rent reviews applied in perhaps a mischievous way by some.

I refer to the removal of the market rent review. We heard from some very responsible park owners that when a greenfield site is built it might not have a bar facility, a bowling green, a pool or a gymnasium, and the market in that location—site specific—would be at a lower rent and that as those facilities were added to the park there would be increases. Those park owners said to us that they really need an opportunity to scale up the rent in those locations. At the moment, the way the bill is written, it will only increase by 3.5 per cent or CPI, whichever is greater. I challenge the minister to think about how that could happen when parks are being established or when there are significant investments in the site and other facilities—pool facilities, bowling greens and things of that nature.

As I mentioned, we heard of a range of different experiences right across the state. There were some very positive things. In the parks where the home owners committee had some decision-making or autonomy, the people living there, from my perspective, had a better quality of life and felt they had some say in the development of the park. The experience of the people in those parks was positive.

I refer to a submission from the REIQ that we should all take note of. I know that the government has addressed a couple of the 38 points they made, but those 38 points are of significant concern to the management of rental properties and to the stimulation of private investment and the desire and willingness of people to be involved in private provision of rental stock. Capital follows where it is welcome. I suggest to the government that it has missed the opportunity to provide some conditions such that capital could flow to this sector—through rental reform and general private investment as well as through the manufactured homes part. In a time of housing crisis, we need to see additional availability as well as affordability.

There were some great submissions. A lot of people were very concerned about the minimum increase of 3.5 per cent, which just did not align with their annual pension increases. For those renters, some of the most vulnerable, I think the government has missed the mark. Overall, we welcome some changes but the government has missed the opportunity to stimulate private investment.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise to speak briefly mainly to the residential tenancies component of this cognate debate. Although I was a member of the committee, unfortunately I was not able to go through the inquiry process as normal due to the supermarket inquiry. I thank committee members for allowing me leave to do that important work and not be available for many of the public hearings held by the committee.

I want to touch on what some people may think are smaller pieces of reform contained in this legislation. They are still very important to everyday Queenslanders. The first is with regard to the extension of the notice-of-entry period from 24 hours to 48 hours, other than for general inspections. This could be if valuations need to take place. It does make a difference, especially when we think about a modern renter in terms of work. If you get an email from your real estate at 4.30 in the afternoon giving you 24 hours notice that they will be onsite, that can cause difficulty. It is difficult for working families to change their next day to ensure they have the property looking reasonable for a valuation, for example. Maybe they have let the lawn go. These seem like small things, but when you are the

renter and the balance of power is not in your favour, it can cause stress and anxiety. I think that is a good, workable piece of reform that reflects the modern-day renter, especially those who are working and engaging in different activities.

The ban in rent bidding was a commitment of this government. It is very important. We need to ensure that not only are there equal opportunities but also there are opportunities for empowerment for those who are renting. We need to ensure there are not those of bad faith on either side and make sure there is a greater level of equality around renting. Where we are seeing high volumes of people trying to rent a particular property—sometimes we see 30, 40 or even 60 applications for one property—we need to ensure real estates and landlords are not taking advantage of people in vulnerable situations. We know that this is occurring. It has occurred in my electorate of Bundaberg and in the Bundaberg region. It is a feature of the current economy and the private market not constructing as quickly as it did post COVID.

I was not able to attend all of the hearings, but I thank the member for Bancroft for reminding me of the hearing held in Deception Bay, I believe. The member for Burleigh said—

There is no doubt you guys have done a fantastic job of lobbying us. I know I have had thousands of emails from you. I am sure these guys have as well. Congratulations on the work that you have done and I am sorry that this is not putting in place the things that you would like to see. There is an election in October—

That sounds good from the member for Burleigh. He is congratulating constituents of Queensland for engaging with the parliamentary process, but what is interesting is that the witness then said—

If I can just interrupt you there, this should be bipartisan. You are looking after the people of Queensland. However, I would tell you—and you are LNP?

To which of course the member for Burleigh said, 'Yes.' Then the witness said—

Right. I would tell you that on no occasion has the LNP engaged. We have been sending emails to all the LNP and David Crisafulli has refused to engage.

The member for Burleigh said—

Carol, we have had numerous conversations.

The chair was quite good, and he said—

You got yourself into this.

That was another quick wit by the member for Bancroft. Ms Fitzpatrick then stated—

Not since I have been in AMHO or since I started AMHO.

Ms Whyte said—

Let us call it what it is. He has refused to engage. We have actually written to him in the last month and asked what the LNP's plans are going forward and to date we have not received a response—

**Mr McDonald** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** I hear the member for Lockyer trying to silence the witness from being heard, but I will continue with the quote—

... but I would be really grateful if you two could go to him and say, 'Look, you need to have a plan going forward because these people need to know what you are going to do.'


The member for Burleigh said—

We have a plan going forward; do not worry about that.

Where is the plan? Is it in the desk here? It is not in the desk. Is it in my pocket? No. Where is the plan, member for Burleigh? It is a failure to plan. There is no plan.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** It is in the clouds; that is right. There is no plan. I want to thank the member for Burleigh. Even though I was not able to be at that hearing, I got to enjoy every single moment of it because of the transcript.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (3.31 pm): I rise to speak briefly in this cognate debate. Like every member in this House, I am constantly faced with the real hardships of renters. I am so pleased that this bill provides some really practical ways of addressing at least some of the pressures on renters—the banning of rent bidding, limiting rent increases to an annual basis, making the bond process fairer with a portable bond scheme

and a range of other things. Although they cannot address all of the issues that renters face, they are really practical and transparent ways that we can somehow manage at least some of those pressures. I am very grateful to the minister for the immense amount of work that she and her department have done—as well as all of the stakeholders—in what is a very tricky situation.

I want to speak briefly to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill and talk about those incredibly vulnerable Queenslanders who live in a lot of those residential parks. This bill is addressing some of those concerns and vulnerabilities they have about financial pressures and the unpredictable and unsustainable rent increases to make sure there is a level playing field between park operators and home owners. That is incredibly important.

I cannot talk about this bill without speaking of the Monte Carlo Caravan Park and the amazing residents of that park. A very small number of them live in manufactured homes and they will be assisted by this bill. However, a number of them do not; they are caravan owners and they simply do not fit into this legislation. I want to thank the minister for working with me to try to address their needs. This is a group of people who look after each other. They are some of the most vulnerable people in our community and they deserve to have a secure roof over their heads. They actually would not be in this situation if it were not for the LNP. Prior to 2012, the park was owned by the government and as soon as the LNP came into power they sold that park off and literally ripped the rug out from under them and that has contributed to their vulnerability. I want to say publicly to all of those people that I am absolutely committed to supporting them. I thank the minister for making sure that at least for that particular group of people in my community and elsewhere the manufactured home bill is addressing some of those real concerns.



**Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.34 pm): I rise to talk to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. Every time this government does something it makes it slightly worse for investors, and that is the problem we face with both of these bills. In terms of the residential tenancies bill, we have to face the fact that in the last year 56,000 investment properties have left the marketplace because of the changes that this government has made in various bills over the last few years. It is all very well to put in place protections for those renters, but if there are no rental properties for these people to rent then the outcome is not going to be good. I have been warning about this for a number of years every time this government brings a bill on this issue before the House.

There are a couple of things in the residential tenancies bill that concern me because it may encourage more people to leave the market. The bill stops rental companies and investors from trying to seek financial information about the people who may rent their property, it stops them from asking how many people are going to live in that property, and it also stops them from asking how many animals or what types of animals may live in the property. We have heard from investors on numerous occasions—and I am sure every member in the House would have heard this—that they are concerned that they no longer have control over what happens in their properties, for example, whether the walls are painted or there is a dog that cannot control its bladder function wandering through the house. Do not get me wrong: I have a dog and I love dogs and it is very important for people to have dogs, but it should be to some extent—

**Mr Power:** What sort of dog?

**Mr HART:** I have a cavoodle. I will show you a photo later.

**Ms Pugh:** Table it.

**Mr HART:** I cannot table it. I do not have a picture of it but I will try later. It is very important for people to have pets—I totally agree with that—but at the end of the day it needs to be a decision of the person who actually owns the property as to whether they are happy to have that dog on their property. That is how investors think. If we change that—and this bill is going to change that—then those investors may leave the investment pool and those properties may not be available anymore. All we are doing is creating a bigger and bigger problem. I know I will get slammed by members on the other side for being anti dog, anti cat or whatever it is, but that is not the case at all and it would be misleading to go down that road.

When it comes to asking about the financial situation of the renter, the LNP highlighted in our statement of reservations that the community housing sector had told us that under some of the bills that they operate they charge a percentage of what people earn. Therefore, if you can no longer ask

what people earn, you have created another massive problem in the community housing sector. Some exemptions were listed in the original bill, but the community housing sector told us that there are a number of acts that apply to their sector that were not mentioned in the legislation and the committee would recommend that the government look at that.


I have spoken a number of times in this place about committee reports. The committee reports are the report of the chair, the report of the government, but not necessarily a report of the whole committee. This committee report, when it was written, did not mention that, did not put that forward as a recommendation. I have been told second-hand because I have not seen the amendments yet, but I am glad to hear that apparently the government was listening to what the LNP had said and that those changes have been forthcoming. I look forward to that. However, I hold grave concerns that we may lose another 56,000 properties next year from the rental pool, and that will be a massive problem.

On the manufactured homes front, this has been something which has been coming for a long time. As the member for Bundaberg and the member for Bancroft said, as a former shadow minister for housing I have had numerous conversations with the manufactured homes sector, as has the member for Everton and as has just about every shadow minister on this side of the House. We have had numerous conversations. To play politics with this whole discussion is absolutely disgusting.

We need to be cognisant that there are various different types of manufactured home parks—from a caravan that has had its wheels taken away to a multimillion dollar house. That is how wide and varied they are. The site agreements that are in place take into account all of these parks in general. The big issue that these tenants in manufactured home parks have is that some of the sites, including a site with a caravan that has had its wheels taken off, attracted the same rate as a multimillion dollar manufactured home park with a pool, a tennis court, a bowling club, a bar and whatever else, and that was not appropriate.

With regard to the site rent review, we heard that some of the site rent reviews were coming back with nine per cent and 10 per cent a year, which makes it very difficult for someone who lives on a pension—and we heard from many pensioners living in these parks—to keep up with those rent increases. The government has taken away that site rent review, and I fully support that. However, it has instead put in place a 3.5 per cent a year increase or an average of the CPI over the eight capital cities in Australia, whichever is the highest, so the base for rent increases is going to be 3.5 per cent. That 3.5 per cent over 10 years is 35 per cent. Some of these people are facing a 35 per cent increase over 10 years into the future. Of course, once they realised that, they then were thinking, 'Maybe this is not the best outcome possible for us.'

Another big issue that was raised, which really was skimmed across in the committee chair's report, was the buyback situation. We heard from a lot of the park owners that they did not think the buyback situation was going to be a problem for them because many of these sites are sold pretty quickly. If things change then that may change, but for the moment they are sold pretty quickly. The issue becomes a GST issue, which is more a federal issue than a state issue. If a company which owns a manufactured park is forced to buy back a property, then there is GST involved in that process. Because they are buying it from an individual person, they cannot claim an input credit for it. They may be buying a property for \$500,000 and selling it for \$500,000, but there is 10 per cent GST that has to be paid somewhere and they cannot claim it back. It is an issue that the committee has skimmed over, and I do not think the government has fully considered it. I would really appreciate the minister responding to the GST issue in her summing-up that happens later to see how that may be solved. There may be some negotiation with the federal government about input credits or something else, but that may be a real issue. Overall, I think this is probably a good outcome for the people who live in manufactured home parks and it has been a very long time coming. I support the bill.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.44 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill debated in cognate. Both of these bills enact really important aspects of our groundbreaking Homes for Queenslanders plan around supporting renters and supporting people with less bargaining power in the housing market, and I think we can agree that those are crucial matters at this point in time with the pressures we are facing.


The issue of manufactured homes is quite close to my heart. Pumicestone has nine residential home parks and several thousand residents of manufactured homes. Our parks range from full-featured, high-cost buy-in, modern lifestyle communities to older relocatable home and caravan villages. I have engaged with hundreds of home owners on these changes and I can say they have been warmly welcomed by those residents.

Home owners tell very consistent stories about their experiences in manufactured home parks. What they are promised when they first buy in and the site rentals that they pay in the early phases when there are still brand new homes being sold when there might be future phases of development planned are very different to the brutal rent increases which they face via market rent reviews once the park operator has moved from the property development phase to what I would call the 'shifty landlord' phase. In that case, that profit centre does shift to that landlord-tenant relationship, and those site rent increases have been ferocious. I have had residents describe site rent increases of well over 20 per cent in my electorate as a result of market rent reviews. That is why it is so important that our bill is banning market rent reviews into the future. I also note that the difference between what people are promised when they first make their purchase and what they go on to experience as residents later down the track goes to the crucial nature of the park comparison documents and the provision of site maintenance and capital replacement plans that are part of these much needed reforms.

The member for Everton in his contribution falsely claimed that the change around limits to site rent increases could disadvantage residents. We know that that is absolutely untrue. The legislation incorporates existing, more favourable site rental agreements and places a maximum increase on site rents to either 3.5 per cent or CPI, whichever is the highest. It is LNP maths for you. Only the LNP could claim that limiting site rent increases when they have never been limited before—the current regime is producing outcomes of up to 20 per cent increases and perhaps more—could disadvantage residents. Seriously, if the LNP is proposing to further limit site rent increases through an option that it would like to put forward, then I invite it to stand up and provide details of that proposal. As in all things with the LNP, there is a lot of whingeing, a lot of whining, a lot of grizzling and an absolute failure and refusal to stand up and provide any alternative. They would much rather attack our reforms than suggest what they might do instead.

The reality, of course, is that the member for Everton did not speak up in support of our changes to the manufactured homes act, and we all know why. It is because, given the opportunity, he will roll them right back. The LNP is the party that took its resistance to limits on property development donations to the High Court it was so determined to collect that sweet property developer donation money. They are not going to stand up in favour of vulnerable manufactured home park residents and against the interests of the property development sector any day of the week. I take the member for Everton's whining and grizzling and undermining of our reforms in this space with the grain of salt it deserves because, at the end of the day, given the opportunity, the LNP will roll these reforms back so fast.

I was really interested to see the comments of Roseann Whyte, President of the Alliance of Manufactured Home Owners, who stated that the LNP have completely failed to engage with her organisation on these issues of manufactured home park reforms. At the end of the day, only Labor will take steps to ban market rent reviews permanently and protect vulnerable seniors who are in manufactured home parks. We see every single day of the week that the LNP will never stand up for the most vulnerable. They will always back their big business mates, and this is just one more example of that being the case. I commend these bills debated in cognate to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.49 pm): It is no secret that when we talk about the manufactured homes act before us—which I will limit my comments to—there is a power imbalance between the home village owners and the residents. Without addressing this imbalance, the disadvantage that exists will only accelerate to the point where we may not be able to resolve it in the future. This is why it is vital we take action today to ensure those who are living in residential parks are treated fairly and with respect. The manufactured home industry has made a huge progression from the time when residential parks consisted of converted caravans and prefabricated homes and the original manufactured homes act was proclaimed in 2003. At the time the focus was on ensuring old parks remain viable—a far cry from the current situation. Today the industry is populated by many corporations that still benefit from the support that is offered by the act. This is often at the expense of home owners whose demographic is, in reality, the elderly and mostly pensioners and self-funded retirees with limited funds. Naturally, they are the more vulnerable segment of our society.

We know that the act has not kept up with the shift in the balance of power that the supplier now has over the consumer. This is to the severe detriment of the home owners and the community at large, many of whom are looking for alternative accommodation in their twilight years. It is, therefore, essential that the act is amended from the ground up to ensure equity and fairness is achieved. It is important the proposed amendments come from the people who are living with this reality. For starters, we need to outline and provide solutions to the major issues within the manufactured homes act to ensure fairness is restored to the home owners who are covered by this act.



We also need legislation to reinforce the provisions of the act to protect home owners from unfair business practices. We need to offer specific areas where amendments to the act are necessary to deal with deficiencies, inequities and anomalies. We need transparency, clear definitions and fairness. Many of us have had approaches on these issues over many years and I want to share the main issues that have been gathered from residents and park owners on the surveys I have conducted in the Burnett electorate. I share the privilege of having a large number of these homes in my electorate, particularly in the area of Bargara. Residents and park owners have given me some ideas that I will place on record.

We need to: properly define what a 'manufactured home' is going forward; provide a minimum term for site agreements for the purpose of termination; impose a mandatory period to resolve delays in disputes about consent to assignments; prohibit market rent reviews of site rents for the basis of increasing rent; remove the ability of park owners to increase site rents to recover unforeseen repair costs from home owners; implement a criteria for a tribunal to confirm or reduce proposed site increases; prepare, maintain and implement an emergency plan for parks; separate the measurement of metering and supply of utilities, which was very highly sought after from a lot of home owners in different parks; provide a disincentive for park owners to reposition a manufactured home; and separate the charge by park owners so that it is not more than the cost of the supply of those utilities.

One thing was interesting in terms of the CPI increase: a lot of engagement over the years should have been based on the base rate in Brisbane. There are so many different components to CPI when you look into it; it was something I did not understand but the base rate in Brisbane is seen as fairer CPI. We welcome the opportunity to make sure this is now in legislation.


In the time I have left I will address the ongoing scare campaign around the manufacture of tiny homes that are rolling across the street. I think it is 'too much' that we are rolling out these tiny homes. I put to the House that it is too much if these things are costing \$1 million each. I challenge the minister to provide the true cost breakdowns of the houses—this has been refused to date. These issues need to be resolved because, as a registered builder who is still active in the trade, I can build a lot more than two homes for \$2 million, particularly in rural Queensland without any issues that I think are important.

Labor love putting costs in media releases but when they roll this out there is not one dollar figure except one that stuck out to me. In Tara they rolled out five homes for \$5.1 million. Since then, there has not been one media release with a dollar figure attached to it. I will continue to ask questions around viability and, more importantly, accessibility.

As taxpayers, we want to see more homes for vulnerable Queenslanders. More importantly, we want to see these issues confronted. When the housing crisis is really biting what we are really asking is: why all of a sudden are we as a generation expected to accept a modular tiny home as a new solution for vulnerable Queenslanders? I guarantee that anyone in this House 10 years ago would not have thought that this conversation would ever be on the agenda of any government—to provide solutions by rolling out modular tiny homes.

We know that tiny homes are costing between \$700,000 and \$800,000 each, and that does not include the value of the taxpayer funded land these homes are being rolled out on. It is important we have transparency about what the true cost of providing these tiny homes is. Attempts to get these costs have been denied. When the minister constantly uses the phrase, 'I think these homes cost too much,' I can assure the people of Queensland that I will strive for housing solutions. After 10 years of neglect, we need to provide quality, fit-for-purpose housing—but not at any price. We need value for money. Most of the delivery, to date, has been by private corporations.

As someone who had 23 years in QBuild and is still passionate about that organisation, my problem is they include the QBuild apprenticeships as part of their media release when these are being delivered by builders out of Toowoomba and other builders. My point is: stop the scare campaign, particularly among those who are most vulnerable, and let's look at real solutions for housing in our communities. If you can justify \$1 million for a tiny home, please stand up in the House and do so.


 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (3.56 pm): I rise to talk about the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I would like to say a few things before I talk about the act. I would like to thank the housing minister, Minister Scanlon, the assistant minister, the member for Pumicestone, who has been across this working with us all, and the member for Bancroft. This particular member has been working on the residential homes act. He has known about this and worked with residents for many years, and he has done a really great job. On behalf of the RV village in Tinana I

would like to say 'thank you' because they asked me to say thank you in the chamber. The member and the chair of the committee came up and addressed the residents. He went over very well, I might say. I did not blow his tyre up. He blew a tyre leaving the RV village and I think he blamed me at one stage. The member Kurwongbah, Shane King, has also done a lot of work on this. We have worked together to make sure that we have landed in a good spot and the good spot is this legislation. I would like to thank the minister because the minister has listened to us.

Before this legislation, people were desperate. I meet with people in residential parks quite often, particularly the Tinana RV park in my electorate, and Norm and residents from Latitude25 which borders the Hervey Bay and the Maryborough electorates. The member for Hervey Bay and I have had many conversations with the residents of these RV parks. We spoke with Trevor there, who has been talking to the member for Hervey Bay and myself quite often about the conditions and how the residents felt. They did not feel too good. There are a lot of things happening. I mention the member for Burleigh—we have seen the transcripts and heard from the member for Bundaberg about what happened there. We were talking about the opposition being involved and he said 'the opposition housing minister will be like putting a fox in the hen house' to try and help us. They were not impressed because they knew which side of the fence the LNP would be on—it would be with the overseas owners of a lot of these parks. A lot of the residents felt all the time they are being bullied, they are being harassed in the parks. They have lost a lot of their rights in terms of the selling of their residential homes.

I was interested to hear the opposition spokesperson say that house values would go down and they would not be able to sell them. That is contrary to what the people in the RV villages have been telling us, that this legislation will be an asset and it will help them. We know from talking to the people in the RV villages that a lot of the managers of these parks are not friendly. We have even heard of elder abuse of some of the residents that is happening in the parks. This legislation with provisions regarding market rent reviews and capping increases at 3.5 per cent or CPI gives certainty to the residents in the parks. As the member for Bancroft mentioned in his speech, a lot of the residents are on a fixed income—they are pensioners—so they need certainty and they need protection. That is what this bill will do.

I want to thank the committee. We had a really good roll-up at Hervey Bay. A lot of residents came and talked to the committee, listened to the committee and put their ideas forward. We came up with good ideas. As the member for Hervey Bay will tell people, some really good ideas came from the residents of these RV villages. One thing I did pick up is that they were very happy that the government listened. They were very happy that the chair of the committee, the committee and the minister listened to what they put forward. That is a big thing. They felt listened to and they felt that this government cared; the Miles Labor government cared for them and about their wellbeing in making sure they had a roof over their heads. We see otherwise from those opposite. I had a personal feeling that they would be backing the multimillionaires and overseas superannuation funds that own a lot of these RV parks. We see it with progressive coal royalties; we know who they are backing: the cigar-smoking Bentley Zurich owners of the mines. It would make no difference with the RV villages in terms of who they would back and where that would leave a lot of people in my electorate who live in these RV villages. They are great people; they are down-to-earth people who have worked hard all their lives. They just want some certainty. The Miles Labor government through Minister Scanlon has given the people certainty that they will be looked after. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (4.02 pm): I want to start by talking about what Queensland renters are currently going through. In the last three years there has been a 47 per cent increase in asking rents according to SQM Research—a 47 per cent increase. Even those renters who are managing to keep up with rent hikes can still be evicted, kicked out of their homes, for next to no reason. Are these bills stopping unlimited rent increases? No. Are these bills giving renters safety and security with a guaranteed right to a lease renewal? They are not. What is there in here for those tenants who are having their rent jacked up by 20 per cent, 30 per cent or 40 per cent or who are being evicted without grounds in retaliation for speaking up about maintenance or minimum standards? We will be supporting these bills, but I would like to table amendments to the residential tenancies amendment bill that we have drafted that will offer real protection for renters.

*Tabled paper:* Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, amendments to be moved by Dr Amy MacMahon MP [847].

*Tabled paper:* Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes to Dr Amy MacMahon's amendments [848].

*Tabled paper:* Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Dr Amy MacMahon's amendments [849].

What is in these amendments? Queensland needs a rent freeze. Labor's own Treasury department has estimated that in 2021 more than half a million Queenslanders were in rental stress, being pushed financially to the limit. That is half a million Queenslanders whose families were weighing up every week whether they could afford groceries, school supplies or a visit to the dentist alongside having to cover increased rent. That was three years ago. In 2021 the Greens first introduced legislation for a cap on rent increases and since then things have only gotten worse. Since then rents have gone up three times faster than wages. More and more renters' income is going into the pockets of investors instead of going towards things like health care, basic necessities or even allowing renters to save up for a deposit on a home of their own. How many more Queenslanders are going to be forced into rental stress? How many more families are going to be sleeping in cars or tents? How much worse do things need to get before Labor and the LNP back the Greens and take action to protect renters with a rent freeze and a guaranteed right to a lease renewal?

Renters need a guaranteed right to a lease renewal. Right now renters can be evicted at the end of their lease for no good reason. In fact, the end of a lease is reason enough. The Greens' amendments would ensure that every tenant will have to be offered a lease renewal unless there is a valid reason not to, such as failure to pay rent or because the owner wants to make significant renovations to the property. So long as Labor and the LNP support renters being kicked out of their homes without grounds, there will be no such thing as housing security in Queensland. Every renter knows that, if they try to enforce any of their rights—if they raise concerns about maintenance, apply for a pet, complain about agent conduct—they risk retaliatory action and not having their lease renewed. Without a guaranteed right to a lease renewal, all other renters' rights are undermined.

Many of the organisations that made submissions to this bill also called for limits on rent increases. In their submission to the bill, Tenants Queensland said of Labor's weak housing reforms—

... they do not stabilise rents. Rents have continued to rise unabated ...

The Queensland Council of Social Service said in their submission—

Rapidly rising rents have significantly damaged housing affordability. Current rental data confirms rent increased more than 45 per cent in Queensland in the four years to December 2023 ...

Queenslanders with Disability Network also called for limits on rent increases, writing that 'most people with disability live in private rentals and lack a flexible income to accommodate significant rent increases'. DVConnect, which support victims of domestic violence, argued that the power imbalance in the rental market is driving up rent and forcing victims of domestic violence into insecure housing and homelessness. DVConnect wrote—

Women and children impacted by DFV are at increased risk of homeless and DVConnect considers lack of renter rights as a contributing factor.

These are the kinds of people who Labor and the LNP are sticking the boot into when they continue to side with investors and the real estate lobby. Just last week the Labor Prime Minister gave his tenant an eviction notice. Anthony Albanese, like the rest of the millionaire property investors in the Labor Party, is so out of touch with ordinary people he did not see anything wrong with evicting his tenant in the middle of a housing crisis. Why did he evict his tenant? He was selling the property. For most investors, this means they are going to get more money from selling their property if it is sold vacant. This is why our amendments will also remove the planned sale of an investment property as a valid reason to evict a tenant. We are getting rid of the so-called Anthony Albanese rule to stop Labor prime ministers, premiers and other MPs from evicting tenants just because they want to increase the sale value of their investment property.

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order, member for Capalaba.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Most of the good things that these reforms do and the reason we will be supporting these bills is that they were changes previously introduced by the Greens, and in some cases it was years ago. These were changes that could have been made years ago if Labor and the LNP had chosen to support our proposals at the time. I speak of proposals like—

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Capalaba. Cease your interjections.

**Dr MacMAHON:** They are proposals like allowing renters to make reasonable modifications to their homes including disability accommodations, something for which we have been calling for years, or outlawing rent bidding and processing fees that agents and landlords have been using to coerce thousands of dollars in extra rental payments. The Greens introduced proposals in 2021 that would have outlawed these practices. How many thousands of dollars would renters have saved if Labor had backed in our changes instead of waiting till now? The government has finally been forced to backtrack on the changes it made around 12-month rent increase limits. At the time we warned the government that the way they had set up those changes was going to backfire, and what did we see? We saw people being evicted from their properties so that landlords could continue to put up the rent faster than once every 12 months.

We heard from people who had been asked to put in fraudulent tenancy agreements to get around the rules so the rents could still be put up. Exactly as we had warned, people were evicted from their homes. At the time, Labor had not talked to a single renter about those changes. Just as we warned, those changes—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Logan!

**Dr MacMAHON:** I take the member's interjection. The member might remember that the explanatory notes for those changes said that there had been no consultation.

**Mr Power** interjected.

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

**Dr MacMAHON:** The member can read the explanatory notes. The government said, in black and white, that they had done no consultation on the amendments around 12-month rent increase limits. I welcome Labor adopting the Greens housing policy. Renters would like to see more of it. First home buyers who are getting outbid at every auction by wealthy investors receiving billions in tax incentives from Labor governments would like to see more of it.

I am sure that there are many members of parliament in marginal seats, which the Greens could win in October, who would love to see Labor adopt more of the Greens housing policy. There are Labor and LNP members of parliament who are going to lose their seats unless they stop siding with property investors, the banks and property developers. We should not forget that many Labor and LNP members of parliament are themselves property investors and many will benefit from rapidly rising rents and rising property values. Even if they lose their seats to the Greens, in the end they will all have a cushy retirement funded out of the wages of their tenants.


The point is that if those members of parliament could put self-interest aside and put themselves in the shoes of renters, first home buyers or the majority of people who do not have a property portfolio then they are welcome at any time to copy the Greens homework. They do not have to wait another three years to support these measures. We have amendments before the House now that the government could support. If you are going to copy our homework, do it properly.

I would like to move an amendment in relation to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I move that the words 'now read a second time' be deleted and the following words inserted: 'be considered once the government commits to legislating a freeze on rent increases'—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr BERKMAN:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The point of order is that the member for South Brisbane moved a second reading amendment. My understanding of standing orders is that from this point in the debate we move on to debate that question. Could I have clarification on that?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** The member did not move the amendment before the expiry of the speech.

 **Mr SKELTON (Nicklin—ALP) (4.12 pm):** Whilst it is wonderful to follow that contribution, for the record I want to clarify that obviously the attack on our Labor Prime Minister should not go unanswered. I will name some Greens who own multiple investment properties: Mehreen Faruqi, Elizabeth Watson-Brown and Nick McKim all own multiple investment properties. It is a bit hypocritical to point to one person when lots of members of parliament are doing the same thing.

I want to speak about the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill 2024. There are six such parks in my electorate. I have talked to a lot of stakeholders and heard a lot of stories. As late as Wednesday of last week, I was at Palmwoods Tropical Village doorknocking to let people know about the cost-of-living reforms. Residents there brought up this topic. They are very thankful that we have listened to them.

As part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan, we are committed to further modernising the legislative framework for manufactured home parks. The way that these parks operate is that home owners own their homes but not the land underneath them, with site rent set by park operators. During our consultations, dating back to 2022, we have heard from thousands of home owners in residential parks, many of whom highlighted significant financial pressures caused by unpredictable and unsustainable site rent increases.


Most of these home owners are pensioners on low fixed incomes who often buy a manufactured home with the proceeds from the sale of their family home, making them particularly vulnerable to unaffordable site rent increases and, potentially, unfair business practices, which we heard a lot about. Sometimes home owners have limited understanding of the risks posed by increased site rent and the inability to sell their home. They have a limited capacity to move or downsize if rents become unaffordable. The bill will rebalance the relationship between park operators and home owners by limiting the grounds on which rent can be increased, limiting the amount by which rent may be increased annually, introducing a scheme requiring park owners to reduce rent and buy back vacant park homes that remain unsold after 18 months, implementing responsible incentives to apply downward pressure on site rent and upward pressure on quality, and increasing transparency for home owners and prospective home owners about residential parks.

Currently the act does not limit the methods that can be used to increase site rent or the amount of rent increase that can be applied. The bill addresses this by prohibiting market rent review based increases in any new site rent agreements. It will void terms in current site rent agreements that provide for market rent review based increases and provide an alternative framework for park owners to increase site rent more fairly and predictably. The bill will cap annual general site rent increases at the higher of CPI or 3.5 per cent. It will create a regulation-making power to prescribe the approved bases for site rent increases that can be used to prevent unclear formulas being used in site agreements. This will provide clarity and certainty for residents in manufactured homes parks, particularly about future costs when they buy a manufactured home and enter into a site agreement.

To ensure a reasonable balance for park owners, the bill removes provisions that allow a home owner to assign their current site agreement at the time a home is sold, including site rent terms. This will enable park owners to update the basis for site rent increases and the amount of site rent paid at the time when homes turn over. In turn, this prevents long-term misalignments with market prices and reduces the impact of site rent increase restrictions that will apply while home owners are living in the park.

The bill will also provide greater transparency by requiring residential parks to produce a park comparison document on the park's website, enabling customers to be better informed about affordability and the facilities and services on offer. There will be a requirement for park owners to provide home owners with a maintenance and capital replacement plan for the park, advising how income from site rent is spent in the park. The bill will introduce a requirement for new parks to provide information to the regulator and become registered to operate a residential park. These reforms will mean cost-of-living certainty to thousands of Queenslanders in residential parks.

Our government has listened to manufactured home owners across the state who are facing site rent increases. I am happy to commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.18 pm): I rise to speak to the cognate debate with a feeling of deep disappointment in the case of the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill 2024 and a sense of I am not quite sure what in relation to the latest government imposed changes for private rental investors contained in the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Some years ago, a retired Emerald resident approached me for help. His mother had passed away at the great age of 91. He was the executor of her will but had been unable to resolve the estate or her modest bequest to family members.

Like many working Queenslanders, on reaching her retirement years his mother was searching for a residential retirement option that was affordable but which would also provide her with safety, independence and a way to preserve the financial value of her home. She purchased a manufactured home in a residential park in the Moreton Bay region and was happy there. This is an increasingly popular solution for many Queenslanders when they retire. The problem arose when they wanted to resell her home. The corporate owner of the park put up every obstacle one could think of. They were to be the sole selling agent, they had last approval of the advertising and they controlled inspections of the home and whether any open days could be held at all.

I sought the assistance of the Attorney-General, Yvette D'Ath, and I do thank the minister for her concern and the personal intervention of her staff in helping my constituent deal with a Sydney-based park owner to resolve the matter. Unfortunately, the entire time the park owner was blocking the resale he was still charging the deceased person's estate rent and other charges for maintenance and the enjoyment of shared spaces by the deceased. This woman had passed away and had not been seen enjoying the common spaces of her own home for many years. The problem played out over about three years and, by the time it was resolved, there was very little left in the estate to honour his nanna's modest bequest. This is an insult at the very least. Indeed, most reasonable people would view it as an evil scam played out on a deceased's relatives at the saddest of times.

When this bill was introduced into the House I was very hopeful that the issue might be completely resolved by closing every avenue for this type of behaviour by the park owners. It does try to address the issue by streamlining the sales process and introducing a scheme which requires the park owner to reduce site rent and to buy back vacant homes that remain unsold after 18 months. However, I note that it only reduces the rent, not cease charging it when the renter has passed away. If the park owner was unable to charge rent from the person who had passed away, we would no doubt see a highly motivated sales process. I note that they can continue charging this rent for 18 months.

Twiggy Forrest is not living in a manufactured homes park in the Greater Brisbane suburbs. The people living there are people of modest means. They have worked hard all of their lives and they seek a modest and safe retirement option and some modest bequest to leave their beloved families. A year and a half will significantly reduce the already small legacy gifts to the family, grandchildren and favourite charities. Some 87 per cent of manufactured homes that will be covered by this bill are in corporate owned residential parks containing only manufactured homes—no caravans or cabins. These are clearly residential parks, not a tourism venture. Furthermore, for the park owners, business is clearly booming. Six corporate operators, each owning nine or more residential parks, account for almost 40 per cent of all parks or 60 per cent of all such homes in Queensland. This concentration of ownership is expected to continue with just five operators responsible for over 75 per cent of all new developments. This is very unwise.

All in all, this long-awaited bill is a disappointment. It has missed an opportunity to genuinely modernise the laws governing manufactured homes in residential parks in a way that is consistent with fair and proper treatment of home owners. This bill's existence demonstrates the fact that the Labor government is aware of these problems but is taking a half-hearted approach to the financial accountability, transparency, conflict resolution and corporate conduct of these park owners.

The other bill in this cognate debate introduces more rental reforms to an already fatigued sector. I said in my introduction that I am baffled to even see this bill brought on for debate. We have a major and unfolding rental crisis right across the state. This affects an estimated 1.5 million people. Private property owners house some 95 per cent of these people in private rentals. These property owners are mainly working Queenslanders seeking to build a retirement nest egg. They are teachers, police officers, nurses, firies, clerks and small business owners—and the vast bulk of them only have one investment property. In other words, they are reliant on their own jobs to put food on the table. They are not living off huge rent rolls from multiple properties.


Since introducing the so-called stage 1 rental reforms in 2021, we have all seen the continuing reports of a mass exodus of private rental properties from the rental pool. At the 2022 Housing Summit, the then deputy premier expressed his own bewilderment that 20,000 rental properties had disappeared from the private rental market. That is not baffling to anyone else. Everyone can draw a connection between the state government's so-called reforms and the exit by mum-and-dad investors, and that is before we even look at the impact on new rentals entering the market. I have it on good authority that

in Emerald, a town heavily reliant on rentals to fill its workforce requirements, there is not one new residential rental property under construction—not one. This is becoming a serious constraint on the town's productivity in one of the most productive parts of Queensland.

The bill we are debating today represents the fifth tranche of reforms to Queensland's rental laws in as many years. Together, those so-called reforms have created a serious imbalance between the rights of the property owner and the rights of the tenant. In many ways this latest bill is possibly the most unfair of all. The very people Labor says it is protecting—that is, the Queenslanders who rent—will be seriously hurt by these reforms. That is why this fifth bill is absolutely reckless and ill advised. When these reforms started, my Emerald office received a call from a gentleman in Western Australia who rang to say that he was selling his Emerald rental house and taking his money back to WA. We need to have people investing in towns like Emerald and building rental properties so they can be rented out so we can get a workforce out there to take up the jobs that we need to keep this state going. Between the Labor government's rental regulations and reforms, the thought bubble about land taxes, what he saw as inflated valuations and local government rating arrangements that explicitly disadvantage investment in rental properties, he wanted to get out of the Queensland market as fast as he could go.

There are so many damaging aspects to this bill which in a truncated debate I will not have time to specifically address, but I believe that among the most damaging we must include amendments to allow renters to modify and personalise their rental property with both fixtures and structural alterations. The bill will establish a head of power for a framework to be prescribed by regulation to agree to property modifications. In essence, this debate is not even able to address what will actually be put in place. It will not come before the Queensland parliament. There are changes around bond processes which will make it harder for property owners to claim against bonds. There are changes around fees and charges such as the landlord having to provide a fee-free method for the renter to pay rent and an obligation to advise the renter of any financial benefits the property owner or the property manager receives. Will this include tax deductions for mortgage offsets against one's house or capital gains in a self-managed super fund?

Then there are the rent control amendments. Unfortunately, the banks are not required to cap the interest rates on loans for private investment that provides a property to the rental pool. All in all, this bill will damage Queensland's rental pool and make things even harder during this housing crisis. The Premier need only look to his own policies when the rental pool shrinks even further and private rental properties go from being the most common form of rental arrangement to a nearly extinct category.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of both of these bills on behalf of renters in my community and across Queensland. I want to speak to the parts of both bills that require both residential park residents and renters more generally to be better protected from unreasonable fees and charges, including re-letting costs, and certain rental payment methods as outlined in the committee's reports.

I will refer now to the Choice consumer advocacy magazine and an article about this very issue. It outlined very recently that rental agents are shifting costs to renters. The article talks about RentTech platforms that charge renters extra to make rental payments and also add on late fees that can contribute to financial hardship in what is, I think everybody agrees, a cost-of-living crisis.

According to the article, people who rent report are being given no choice but to use RentTech platforms and other online platforms at their own expense in addition to their weekly rental costs. Tenancy advocates say that it is all about shifting costs from the real estate business to the tenant. As we know, and as outlined in the article, renting is hard and expensive without being hit with those unfair extra costs. The article also goes on to say—

But more and more landlords and rental agents are turning to platforms such as Ailo, Rental Rewards and Simple Rent and giving tenants little choice but to use them.

This bill will ensure that tenants have access to fair methods of payment and that they do not have to pay extra fees when they are paying their rent. I think every member of this House can agree that that is only fair and only right. When you sign up to pay a particular amount of rent you are not signing up for those extra fees and charges. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Pugh, adjourned.

## MOTION

### North Queensland, Secession



**Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (4.30 pm): I move—

That this House supports taking the necessary steps to form a separate state of North Queensland in accordance with section 124 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

The last time a state, or colony, was formed was in 1859, and that was Queensland. At the same time, the USA had formed close to 20 new states—17 new states since 1869. Geoffrey Blainey said—

Australia has created no new states since 1959; the United States in contrast has created close to 20. For a land of this size we do not have enough states. We thus miss one of the advantages of federalism.

Bernard Salt, an Australian demographer, said that it is only a matter of time until people awaken and expand their cognitive bandwidth to say, 'Maybe we can do things differently in Australia.' Those lines drawn on a map 165 years ago perhaps are not meant to be there indefinitely, forever and ever. At what stage in our history do we question that and say, 'Maybe we can move that. Maybe it would make sense.' The tipping point is to ask: is there a cultural connection or is there a cultural divide between some of these areas and can we govern those areas better with more autonomy? I know the arguments that are going to come up: 'Oh, we're already doing that.' I can assure you that from our optics you are not.

Let's look at Cape York, for instance. Vegetation management is a huge political issue driven, I would say, out of geographic narcissism. That means that people in the city say, 'We have these values. We think these values should be imposed on you up there.' I can assure the House that 90 per cent of North Queensland does not want these vegetation management laws. Cape York has over 90 per cent remnant forest and there is perhaps five per cent down here, yet you are applying the same laws to both here and Cape York. If you said to someone up there, 'Would you like to clear two or three per cent of your property?' we would love that. It would have an amazing commercial benefit. We have only over a hundred thousand head of cattle up there in Cape York. They are not even putting a dent on the landscape. You could put in a million head of cattle up there. It would actually be good for the forest up there to have some more activity.

Cape York gets 52 million megalitres of rainfall a year and has just over a 100,000 head of cattle. Compare that to Victoria, which gets 19 million megalitres of rainfall a year—versus 52 million megalitres of rainfall in Cape York—and has 4.2 million head of cattle. This debate is not just about cattle or Cape York, but you can see how frustrated we are that there is all this resource but we do not get to use it because of decisions made 2,000 or 3,000 kilometres away. They are ridiculous decisions. The vegetation management science was flawed, again. You did not have any measure of the regrowth. It was a political decision made from here.

Another good example to give as a metaphor for this debate is the North Queensland Cowboys. The NRL said at the time that the empirical evidence said we should not have a team up there: 'You don't have the finances, the resources, the commercial activity or the player base to support a team up there. It could not possibly happen.' Well it did! We built a team. We built a player base. Businesses got behind it. We have a great new stadium now. They played the other Queensland team to create a terrific Queensland contest, and they got to the grand final and won. They were the national champions. The NRL nationally is better for having the Cowboys. It is better from expanding, from dividing and creating that second Queensland team. That is a metaphor for what we can do for Australia and for Queensland.

This is not about being parochial. It is not that anyone wants to separate. There is a cultural indifference, I believe, in the city towards those areas up north. People say, 'We couldn't possibly leave you in charge of the environment. You would destroy it,' or 'We couldn't possibly let you handle Indigenous issues or, God forbid, have them control themselves. We have to make those decisions from down here because you will never be mature enough.'

Tasmania has 500,000 people, with a GDP of \$41 billion, and they have 12 senators. For North Queensland there is a requirement for zero senators. You could argue that they have two senators but, on a pro rata basis, we have a GDP of \$90 billion and close to one million people. How can that be fair?

I can give a long catalogue of policies that are made down here that are pretty good and probably work in South-East Queensland but they are either irrelevant or destructive in rural and regional areas. We are sick of coming down here and arguing, 'I get what you are doing for Brisbane, but that is not going to help us.'



Another great example I could give you is renal units versus the Olympic Games. In Mount Isa we have 10 renal chairs. Alice Springs has over 60. We do not have the money to build a renal unit in Mount Isa, but we have over \$20 billion to spend on the Olympic Games. Even if you say it is \$7 billion, it is still a lot of money that could be spent up north.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member's time has expired. Ride 'em Cowboys!



**Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (4.35 pm): I rise to oppose the motion as a Far North Queenslander. I appreciate the passion but I always remember reading some time ago the saying of Philip II of Macedonia: never surrender reason to passion. I want to begin by acknowledging the passion of the member for Traeger in some of the points that he raised. I agree that, when we look at federal representation and the number of senators, we can learn from that. However, inefficiencies in some areas certainly do not increase efficiencies in other areas.

With no detail from the member for Traeger about how North Queensland secession would work, we can only make the cruel assumption that it will mean more politicians and more bureaucracy. I want to make it abundantly clear that I think we should be looking at reducing government, if anything. Whether we look at getting rid of councils or—

**Mr Dametto** interjected.

**Mr HEALY:** You will never learn anything when you are talking.

**Mr Lister:** That is why you know nothing.

**Mr HEALY:** I have never been kicked out of the chamber, buddy. Maybe we should look at other ways of increasing efficiencies. Billions of dollars have been given to councils. I have to reflect back to a speech made on 15 September 2016. The member speaking in that debate, probably in the same tone as me, was the then treasurer, minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships and minister for sport. Mr Speaker, you might remember that. I read that speech and I thought, 'Gee, there are some good points.'

I can understand the reasoning for people living in the north but we have to look at the reality, and that is that maybe now is not the time. I would love to see the member for Traeger as premier. I think he would make a great premier. He is well dressed. He presents well. He is passionate. I can see the member for Hill as the treasurer. He would be a fantastic treasurer. I can see the member for Hinchinbrook as the attorney-general and police minister. While they raise concerns about how certain environmental decisions are made down here about up there, I can only imagine how people down here would feel about decisions made up there.

Putting to one side the emotive language of proponents of separation, nobody has made it quite clear how it would be funded. At the end of the day it does come down to the money. A lot of the points that the member for Traeger touched on refer to efficiencies of delivery, and these things all come down to fiscal responsibility. There is much talk about what the north produces in terms of royalties and gross state product, without any discussion on how much it would cost to set up and run the necessary health, education and emergency services.

I acknowledge the comments from the member for Traeger regarding the Cowboys. The Cowboys play in a stadium that was built by the taxpayers of Queensland and the Australian government. The NRL, who are a national club, put in a significant amount of money. These things do not just happen. There is usually a collective.

While we are not denying that mining royalties originate from North Queensland, infrastructure and services in regional areas are more proportionately funded and subsidised than those in the south-east purely because of the cost of the decentralised nature of our state and the cost of service delivery in rural and remote regions.

Can you imagine what it would cost to deliver power across northern Queensland without the subsidy of consumers from the south-east? It would be unprecedented and it would be significant, but you have to build the infrastructure. You have to put these things in place. In the 2023-24 state budget over \$16 billion was invested in regional Queensland thanks to coal royalties. That is \$16 billion of investment in regional Queensland the LNP does not, and would not, support because they would not support that sort of investment with that funding. The \$16 billion investment in regional Queensland is in comparison to the \$4.3 billion spent on infrastructure in Brisbane and Redlands last year alone. If you look at subsidisation and the way the money is being spent, a single state is a strong state both economically and financially. The cost of Queensland providing the services and infrastructure we have today is significantly lower than if a new state government were formed. For example, money raised in the more populated south-east corner is used to build schools and roads and pay teachers, doctors

and nurses across the population. These are the facts and they remain undisputed. It could be a discussion we have in 100 years, but the reality is that at the moment it would weaken our state and it would be a very poor North Queensland.

**Mr Andrew** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mirani, you will cease your interjections and you will direct your comments through the chair.



**Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.40 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the member for Traeger's motion calling on the House to support and take the necessary steps to form a separate state of North Queensland in accordance with section 124 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

When I first came down to Brisbane I had the perception from living in the north that people in Brisbane must hate us up in North Queensland. When you look around at Brisbane, if we had a fifth of that in North Queensland we would be a lot happier, we would be a lot more prosperous and we would be able to achieve a lot more for this state. When you get down here and you start interacting with people from the south-east corner you realise that they do not hate us up in North Queensland; they just do not get us.

If Queensland were Europe, you would have about five countries, maybe even six, between the border of New South Wales to the tip of Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands group. There is a huge geographical space there, and it stands to reason that people in South-East Queensland would look, act, talk, speak and operate differently to someone in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The reality is that we are trying to apply the same set of rules to the whole state, but we are at completely different ends of the spectrum in terms of ideology all the way through to development. If you are trying to build something on the Brisbane River, for example, you cannot apply the same development rules and regulations and the Queensland Development Code as you would if you were building something up on the cape or in a remote Indigenous community. It does not work. You cannot apply the same building standards to places where they are just trying to put roofs over people's heads. The latest changes to the Queensland Development Code relate to disability-ready housing. That has just driven up the price of a normal house by \$30,000 to \$40,000 in many cases. Can you imagine how that exacerbates things up in the gulf, where it already costs you a million dollars for a donga. When it comes to building things up there, you are just trying to break in new country. It just does not work. What works in Brisbane, the Gold Coast or the Sunshine Coast works perfectly fine for them, but we are at a different stage. That is why we are talking about separation from the state and the shackles of the south-east corner.

If you talk to North Queenslanders, the roads compared to Brisbane's are completely shot. If you talk about the health system, it is an absolute mess compared to Brisbane. I just talked to someone from JCU who said there is an oversupply of doctors in the south-east corner. We cannot even get one to come up to North Queensland to work in our regional towns. We have to go and find new hybrid models just to keep operating a doctor's surgery at Cardwell right now. That place is a beautiful spot, a gem right on the east coast. The Bruce Highway runs straight through that town and we cannot attract a doctor. People have asked us, 'Where is the money going to come from?'

**Mr Andrew:** The coal industry!


**Mr DAMETTO:** I will take the interjection: the coal industry. The coal industry is propping up Brisbane right now. Brisbane had the opportunity to build this beautiful city—and it is a beautiful city; you should all be very proud of it.

**Mr Andrew** interjected.

**Mr DAMETTO:** It was built off the backs of hardworking people in regional Queensland. It is time to segregate. Let North Queensland be a separate state so we can start utilising the wealth generated in North Queensland to build a Brisbane in Townsville, to build a Brisbane in Cairns for the member for Cairns. We would all benefit then. The whole country would benefit. More GST being generated helps the whole country. Being able to develop North Queensland is very important. Right now we have the same environmental rules being applied in North Queensland.

We have heard a number of people say, 'You're going to double the number of people up there when it comes to bureaucratic nightmares and heavy departmental scenarios. You would be duplicating things.' We would not duplicate; we would use the departments that already exist in North Queensland. Keep your Brisbane stuff. Keep your department heads down here. We will have our own department heads up in North Queensland once we have our own separate state.

This motion is not about the member for Traeger becoming the premier of Queensland. The reality is that geographically 25 per cent of Queensland is represented by KAP. If you separated the state of Queensland right now the Labor Party might actually have a chance of winning government in the next state election, but I can tell you that they are shot in North Queensland right now. The only opportunity both sides of the House have to show North Queensland they support them is by supporting this motion.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.45 pm): We know that Queensland is stronger together. From the cape to the Gold Coast, our state has always punched well above its weight. If we use the NRL rule of thumb as a reason to break away, will Redcliffe move a motion next? Phins up! If this motion was to pass and the state had to split, I know exactly where the capital would be—Mackay. Mackay is the heart and soul of regional Queensland. Just last month our community cabinet visited Mackay and everybody was amazed at how beautiful and abundant my region is. I am sure everybody would love to come to Mackay.

We are getting on with the job of expanding the Mackay Ring Road with a further investment of \$99.4 million from the state government to continue the works completed in 2020. We are getting people home faster and safer. We are expanding the Mackay Base Hospital, and I love the fact that we are spending \$250 million on another 128 beds. This has been brought forward by at least a decade and a half. It means that we are going to get another paediatric unit and medical and surgical ward upgrades. New birthing suites will also be located on the same level as the surgical department, ensuring a smoother transition of care for mothers and newborns. The women's health unit and the child and adolescent unit will also be moved into the new contemporary ward when the hospital expansion opens in the second half of 2026. These services will make a real difference to residents in my community, delivering them even better care closer to home.

We are also investing in community safety, giving our police and frontline responders the tools they need to do their jobs. A total of 20 extra police officers will join the ranks across the Mackay, Mackay Northern Beaches, Bowen, Moranbah, Sarina and Proserpine stations, including the Mackay Tactical Crime Squad—if the member for Mirani does not want them at Sarina, we will have them back in Mackay—child protection investigation unit and highway patrol. These extra police officers will be supported by 17 new high visibility police vehicles.


It does not stop there: in the last 12 months we have funded more than 3,600 free TAFE places in my region, giving residents in my community the skills they need to get the job they want. It is very important that we keep upskilling people and giving them training to get into work because they want the opportunity to live and work in Mackay.

Working in Mackay has never been better, with unemployment still historically low, thanks to the Miles government. I was having a look at the end of last year to see what the spend was in Mackay compared to the south-east corner. One thing that I found is that the Mackay region beats the south-east corner when it comes to receiving our share of state government infrastructure spend per person. The infrastructure spend has been higher in the Mackay region for the past five years.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Mackay, I will have to ask you to come back to the motion. You are speaking about North Queensland but you are not speaking to the motion at the moment.

**Mrs GILBERT:** I am speaking against the motion because I believe that, if we do split, my region will be worse off. I was listening to the contribution of the Katter party and they were talking about how they were going to pay for everything from coal royalties. I can remember a time when Mackay was on its knees because the price of coal was so low. People had left Mackay. We had 2,000 empty houses. You would drive through Paget and people had signs up saying they were trying to get work. What will happen to North Queensland if this Katters motion gets up and there is no money coming in from coal royalties? We would be desolate. We would have high unemployment and we would have no money—

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion to take steps to form a separate state of North Queensland, in accordance with section 124 of the Commonwealth Constitution, that was moved by the member for Traeger. This is not a new argument and was last brought before the House in 2016 by the KAP. However, 128 years ago, the Queensland Labor member for Rockhampton—you have to listen to this—William Kidston first moved a motion for a referendum for the separation of northern and central Queensland colonies. It was passed by the Speaker's vote after a 20-20 split in the vote. However, the movement was blocked because a number of members who were absent when the vote took place managed to have their votes recorded.

Again, in 1948, another new state movement was inaugurated in North Queensland following the Governor's speech at the opening of the Queensland parliament which contained suggestions that a new state might be formed in Queensland when they had a reasonable degree of economic stability. Right now, we do have that economic stability. The south need us and we do not need them. In fact, we would flourish without the south and their interference.


In 1955, the North Queensland movement gained momentum following a representative popular convention held in Mareeba when the New State for the North Queensland Movement was officially launched. Agitation for a North Queensland state had persisted through the 1970s and 1980s, with continual demands for a referendum. The driving force at this time was the North Queensland Self-Government League which had the aim of having 'a separate self-governing sovereign state by 1988'. In 1994, the North Queensland Party was formed with Frank Rossiter of Townsville as a leading figure. A new North Queensland flag was proposed and approved at a meeting on 16 October 1994. This is not a new argument.

In April 2016, the KAP set up a working group to help drive the push for a separate state, which we are still committed to strongly progressing, which leads us to today's motion. There are many factors behind our decision, the top one being that people in North Queensland firmly believe that the highly populated southern regions and electorates determine what is in the best interests of the north. Had there have been a North Queensland state, Queensland Rail would not have been sold and the state would be receiving \$1.7 billion of transport haulage every year. Now the money is in the hands of the multinationals.

By becoming autonomous, North Queensland can develop to its full potential, with decisions about what is in the best interests of North Queensland being made by North Queenslanders. There is nothing worse when you have a private member's bill, or when you have issues to bring to the House's attention, and the fate is decided by a majority of southern MPs. Until the recent announcement of CopperString, the region had not had one major infrastructure project for over 30 years. Even then, the KAP had to drag the government kicking and screaming to the table to get CopperString over the line.

We have constantly been impeded by southern politicians who make decisions on what is in the best interests of the north. The vegetation management laws, which were brought up before, were about sustainable management in the region. We can clear all the sclerophyll forest for windfarms but, when it comes to appropriate vegetation for farming to produce a product, to put it on the market and to sell it to Queensland and the supermarkets, it is very difficult to do because of the laws that have been put in place down here.

Billions of dollars have been spent on the Airportlink, sports stadiums and footbridges yet we cannot even get an inland highway stretching from the Tablelands to Cairns that we have been pushing for for 40 years. That highway would take 40 minutes off that journey. What do we have instead? We have speed monitoring cameras. I commend this motion to the House.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (4.55 pm): I will start by apologising for the history lesson that is going to come up—I went back further in *Hansard* history than the member for Hill. I want to congratulate the KAP on their passion for their part of the world. There is nothing wrong with being passionate about where you are from, where you live and the communities—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Bundaberg, I think we have just had an issue with your mic turning off. Thank you.

**Mr SMITH:** It was the member for Stretton, I am sure! I was giving the KAP a wrap and all of a sudden my mic went off. It was the member for Stretton, I am sure. I have spoken previously about when I flew with the member for Traeger in his two-seater plane over his part of the world, and what a beautiful part of the world it is. He spoke about the cultural connections but he also spoke about how he believes there is a cultural disconnect between the south and the north. I thought I would go back to the very first sitting of the Queensland parliament on 29 May 1860. I was hoping to find some great Churchillian-style speech that would talk about how good it is to be a united Queensland.

When I went to the Legislative Council debate, basically it was just the governor rambling on about how great the royals are and then a little bit of extra procedure. Then I went to the Legislative Assembly and their first thing was to form a committee so that they could reply to the governor in the Legislative Council. Then they had to actually adjourn the parliament so they could go off for a couple of hours and decide what they were going to write to the governor. When they came back, they moved the speech that they had written. They spoke about it and then they argued whether or not they needed to come back the next day to decide if the speech was good enough. That argument kept going on and on, so that was all pretty useless.

Then I thought to look at 1901, when we became a federated nation. I went to that first sitting and it was again rambling on about how the Queen had passed away and now there was a new king. Basically, I thought there is a cultural disconnect in Queensland and we should be a republic. That is what I think this motion should really be about. After reading through all that *Hansard*, we should be a republic. That is the best way that we can move forward as a state.

What I did reflect on, as I was reading through those original parts of *Hansard*, is that there was a process in place. This motion does talk about section 124 of the Constitution of Australia. That states—

A new State may be formed by separation of territory from a State, but only with the consent of the Parliament thereof, and a new State may be formed by the union of two or more States or parts of States, but only with the consent of the Parliaments of the States affected.

If we go back to section 122, which is one section back from the section the member for Sandgate, Stirling Hinchliffe, spoke about in his contribution in 2016—he spoke about section 123. It states—

Government of territories.

The Parliament may make laws for the government of any territory surrendered by any State ...

If this new northern state is going to be formed, first there must be a territory ceded and then that territory will be under the laws of the Commonwealth.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** That is right: the Katters are going to put Albo in charge of northern Queensland, because that is the process.

**Mr Andrew** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Mirani, I have asked you repeatedly to stop interjecting and to put your comments through the chair. Now you are not using members' correct titles. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr ANDREW:** I withdraw.

**Mr SMITH:** If this was going to happen, under the Constitution the state of Queensland would need to cede a territory. That territory would then come under the laws of the Commonwealth. The new state that would eventually form would have to determine what laws it would have, who would conduct the electoral commission and where it would be called. Would it be called at the Bundaberg line? If we do have a new northern state, I do not mind it being at the Bundaberg line because finally Bundaberg can stop carrying Hervey Bay, Maryborough and Gympie in Wide Bay! Finally we will be free of them! Bundaberg drives the Wide Bay economy—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** Not on a train. We do love trains in Bundaberg.

There is no detail in the motion. We cannot support something that has no detail. The Katters want to put Canberra in charge of northern Queensland. That is what would happen if this were to succeed. Canberra would be in charge of northern Queensland. That is what the Katter party has asked for today.

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

*In division—*

**Mr Dametto** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Hinchinbrook! I remind members that standing orders still apply while division bells are ringing. You will cease the cross-chamber chatter.

Resolved in the negative under standing order 106(10).

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.06 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising about a social media post that I have just been made aware of. The Minister for Health has posted a video from parliament earlier today claiming I said certain words which I did not and are reflected in *Hansard*.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! I am sorry, member for Mudgeeraba; I am trying to make sure you can be heard. Members to my right will cease their interjections. Member for Mudgeeraba, I remind you that when you are rising on a matter of privilege, whether it is suddenly arising or otherwise, it is not a chance to state the entirety. I will ask you to write to me on the matter.

**Ms BATES:** The characterisation is also false and misleading, and I believe that the health minister has deliberately misled parliamentary proceedings. I find that personally offensive. As a mother, a DV victim and a woman—

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, I have just given you guidance—

**Ms BATES:**—I find the actions—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba—

**Ms BATES:**—of the minister disgusting—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, you are talking over the chair.

**Ms BATES:** I apologise. Mr Speaker, I will be—

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am going to ask you to listen now. You have made your general case. It is not an opportunity to prosecute the entire argument. I will ask you to write to me on the matter.

**Ms BATES:** Mr Speaker, I will be writing to you about this matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mudgeeraba.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders. Standing orders still apply, members. You will show courtesy to the House as a whole.

## MOTION

### Transport Infrastructure



**Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (5.08 pm): I move—

That this House notes:

1. the overwhelming feedback provided to LNP MPs and candidates across the northern suburbs of Brisbane acknowledging the failure of this third-term Labor government to provide congestion reduction solutions for the area.
2. the overwhelming support for a tunnel to be built between Kedron and Carseldine that would:
  - get people home to their families sooner
  - reduce time stuck in traffic on Gympie Road
  - improve productivity of small businesses and their staff
  - reduce time taken to get to the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay regions
  - provide jobs to the construction industry

And calls on the Miles government to:

1. publicly release the findings of the \$35 million study into the proposed toll tunnel this week from Kedron to Carseldine including the:
  - route alignment and portal locations,
  - construction cost and timeframes,
  - amount of any government contribution,
  - benefit cost ratio,
  - toll prices,
  - expected traffic volumes,
  - changes to existing surface roads, and
  - any public transport benefits.
2. allocate funding in the upcoming budget to finally progress the project.

Earlier today I read with a lot of interest an online *Courier-Mail* article which I think best summed up the absurd situation we are in. It is headed 'Premier's bonkers blame game over Qld's busted roads, transport network'. I have to give it to the ALP. I thought I had heard every single excuse known to humankind, but they have trumped it yet again. Apparently, all of the traffic congestion on the northern side of Brisbane can be blamed on those pesky new immigrants.

I did a bit of research into population growth. I would like to share that with the House. The claim that international migration is the primary reason for traffic congestion is simply wrong. Queensland's population growth is in line with predictions. In fact, in 2015 the government projected that Queensland's population would be 5.25 million in 2021, medium series data. The 2021 Census showed that Queensland's population was 5.16 million. In 2015 the government projected that Queensland's population in 2026 would be 5.73 million. The Queensland Government Statistician's Office currently predicts that the 2026 population will be 5.66 million. It is completely and utterly absurd for the Premier to say that the reason for traffic congestion in the northern suburbs of Brisbane is new immigration. It is absolutely absurd.

It is worthwhile providing a bit of history of the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. The LNP Brisbane City Council previously undertook a traffic study for the north side in 2022. This received \$10 million in funding from the Morrison federal government. The Brisbane City Council study recommended a tunnel from Kedron to Carseldine via Trouts Road. In August 2022—I have to stress—then minister for transport and main roads, then minister Mark Bailey, called council's proposal—

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

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The House will come to order. What is your point of order, member for Miller?

**Mr BAILEY:** The member for Chatsworth is referring to me by my Christian name and surname. He knows that he needs to refer to other members by their titles.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice—and I will take it in silence. Member for Chatsworth, I remind you to use members' correct titles.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Certainly. Then minister Bailey called council's proposal a 'feeble fantasy' and a 'farce'—his exact words. In June 2023, the Palaszczuk government announced that the Queensland Investment Corporation, QIC, would undertake a \$35 million study for a potential toll tunnel from Kedron to Carseldine. It is worth noting that earlier this month the RACQ called on the government to release traffic modelling for the project.

Traffic on Brisbane's north side is a complete and utter nightmare, and I will shortly mention a few people who know that firsthand. In the 2023 RACQ *Annual average speed and average travel time on Brisbane and Gold Coast (state/TMR) roads* report, the average speed during morning peak hours on Gympie Road decreased from 42 kilometres an hour in 2019 to 36.8 kilometres an hour in 2023; Sandgate Road/Braun Street decreased from 45 kilometres an hour in 2019 to 40.3 kilometres an hour in 2023; and the Gateway Motorway from the Pine Rivers Bridge to the Deagon Deviation decreased from 89 kilometres an hour in 2019 to 82 kilometres an hour in 2023.

Queenslanders are frustrated. They are not getting the roads, rail and other infrastructure their communities demand. I will tell the House about a few people who get it. In fact, I am delighted to announce that in the public gallery right now we have Fiona Hammond, the candidate for Stafford; Dean Clements, the candidate for Pine Rivers; and Amanda Cooper, the candidate for Aspley. They have been doorknocking for months and months, and they know that traffic congestion in the northern suburbs of Brisbane is right up there. At the end of the day, the election is going to be very interesting. When it comes to getting involved with their community every single weekday, they are out there doing the job. I salute what they are doing because they back up everything that we know and they are not looking for feeble excuses like the Premier of this state. I support these candidates. If we are honoured to get into government, we will get things moving.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the next speaker, there were a considerable number of interjections when I was taking some advice from the Clerk. I will remind the House to remain orderly or I will start warning people and removing you from the chamber.



**Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (5.14 pm): I move the following amendment—

I move that all words after 'notes' be omitted and the following inserted:

- '1. The Labor government commenced consultation on the Gympie Road bypass tunnel on 30 October 2023 to provide congestion busting solutions.
2. That there has been overwhelmingly positive support for the Miles Labor government proposal to build the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.
3. That when in charge of the transport budget, the LNP:
  - (a) cut \$1.6 billion from Queensland's transport and roads budget;
  - (b) cut \$60 million from road safety funding;
  - (c) sacked more than 2,500 Transport and Main Roads workers—20 per cent of the workforce;
  - (d) sacked 700 RoadTek road builders;
  - (e) did not progress any new infrastructure projects other than a new office at 1 William Street.
4. That the only funding allocated from the LNP for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel has been to fund billboards falsely claiming credit for the project.
5. That the Labor government has already allocated \$35 million towards the project.
6. That the Labor government delivered the Northern Transitway to bust traffic congestion along Gympie Road; and
7. That the LNP did not support the Northern Transitway.'

The Northern Transitway is a project that I have advocated for and is now providing benefits and improved connectivity for people in my electorate and across Brisbane's north side. This is a project that fits hand in glove with the proposed Gympie Road bypass tunnel. This is a project that the LNP opposed; this is a project that the LNP said they would cut. The fact is that those opposite are all about putting on a good performance and we are about taking action for the people on the north side of Brisbane.

In April last year this government moved ahead with a \$35 million investment into a detailed proposal for a Gympie Road bypass tunnel between Kedron and Carseldine. The Queensland Investment Corporation is leading the detailed proposal and is expected to report its findings to the government in mid-2024. This includes two concurrently led streams of planning for transport: one, a detailed investment proposal for a road tunnel with portals near the Airportlink at Kedron and Beams Road at Carseldine; and, two, a master plan for surface works for at-grade public and active transport along Gympie Road. Even the Brisbane City Council and Lord Mayor Schrinner are well aware of our progress on this project and have made attempts to claim credit for our proposal with costly billboards around Brisbane in the lead-up to the election. I cannot really blame them because this is a great project.

Just last month, the Northern Transitway was completed to Rode Road, improving public transport connections along Gympie Road with a separate dedicated bus lane in each direction. This is a key project that will integrate with a future Gympie Road bypass tunnel. As I stated in February, future stages of the transitway would be delivered following positive consideration of the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.

We have already allocated \$35 million for a detailed proposal of the tunnel, which is well underway. I note that at the time of the announcement the Leader of the Opposition said he would not stand in the way of the project but accused the government of spending \$35 million on 'another study'. That was from the *Courier-Mail* on 12 June 2023. Less than a year ago the Leader of the Opposition said that we should not do a study, but now this year he has seen how popular this proposal is and he wants to see the findings of the study. They are also now demanding that we fund a project that they said we should not be spending any money on less than a year ago. When it comes to transport policy in Queensland, the LNP and the Leader of the Opposition have no vision of their own other than cuts. They want to cut transport projects and they want to cut transport jobs. The member for Chatsworth—

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr MELLISH:** The member for Chatsworth belled the cat earlier when he said that the Brisbane City Council, with funding from the Morrison government, wanted to put a motorway up the Trouts Road corridor. That was the LNP proposal, which my community and many other members on the north side



fought against. With the argument we put there of what we wanted to do, council moved away from that and we have now come up with \$35 million for this detailed proposal already underway for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.

I note that my opponent in Aspley is up in the gallery. I welcome her here, but I note that the LNP plan and my opponent's plan was to bulldoze the Trouts Road corridor. My community will not forget that the LNP plan was to bulldoze the Trouts Road corridor. Our plan is for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel and the Northern Transitway on the surface. It is clear that the opposition have zero plans when it comes to transport. They have zero plans for the north side of Brisbane. When it comes to transport, they just want to cut. When it comes to transport jobs, they just want to cut.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (5.19 pm): It is a gift to follow Labor speakers in this House, but it is a particular gift to follow someone with such a poor memory and poor knowledge of history as the member for Aspley. We cannot wait until Amanda Cooper is the next member for Aspley: someone who actually does deliver for an electorate; someone who knows how to make decisions and someone who has a great recollection of history; someone who remembers that it was the LNP government that funded the Bruce Highway upgrade, neglected by years of Labor; someone who remembers it was the LNP government that delivered the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing after years of neglect by Labor; someone who remembers it was the LNP governments at both levels that agreed to the funding arrangement that delivered the Gateway Upgrade North project to help people on the north side; someone who remembers what it was like to cut public transport fares rather than increase them by 25 per cent a year, year on year on year, as it was under the Labor government; someone who remembered if it was okay to order trains that had chairs—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The statistics being used by the member for Clayfield are misleading the House and I will be writing to you.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Frivolous.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Miller, that is not a point of order. There is a process to follow if you think someone is misleading the House. I would ask you to not take further frivolous points of order.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I correct the record: it was 15 per cent increases, but 15 per cent—wow, that is a great improvement! What did we do under the LNP? We froze public transport fares and then we got rid of the carbon tax. We reduced public transport fares—something this minister has never been able to do—and we had trains that had seats and we had trains that could fit through tunnels. That is what the LNP delivered.

Cost of living, crime and traffic congestion are three key issues in the Clayfield electorate. Costs keep going up, crime continues unabated and people are stuck in traffic longer on the north side of Brisbane. That is simply what people tell me on a regular basis at community events, mobile offices and meetings. The other thing people tell me is they do not have faith in this crisis-ridden and chaotic, tired, old Labor government to properly fix these problems. They see the supermarket inquiry as a half-baked political stunt at best. They see the youth crime response as piecemeal, uncoordinated and ineffective, because cars keep getting stolen, homes keep getting burgled and ordinary people keep getting assaulted, and they know that Labor does not have the plans or the heart to tackle the problem. Traffic congestion keeps getting worse, and people are sitting in traffic longer, delays are more frequent and promised projects are not delivered either on time or on budget.

There are three major surface arterials heading out of Brisbane that run through my electorate—the Gateway Motorway, Sandgate Road and the road that runs from Bowen Bridge Road/Lutwyche Road/Gympie Road from the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital north. All three are regularly jammed. All three regularly feature in the RACQ's list of Brisbane's most congested roads. Anyone heading south in the morning to get to work or heading north to get home or to collect the kids from school in the afternoons knows just how busy those three roads are. Gympie Road in particular has become a traffic choke. Here is what a local said about it—

Gympie Road ... acts as both a major highway and a suburban connector road, and it does neither well. If you ask any northsider, they will tell you to avoid Gympie Road during peak hour. It is basically a car park. The six-lane, 10-kilometre road, which stretches from the end of Airportlink tunnel at Kedron through to Beams Road at Carseldine, is the most congested road in Queensland.

That person goes on to say—

A generation of planning failures has meant that locals living on the northside face daily commuting times two to three times longer than those travelling the same distance from the CBD on the southside, despite not having to cross the Brisbane River.

Who said that? Which local made that little contribution on Gympie Road under the control of the Labor state government? Anika Wells, the federal Labor member for Lilley. She accurately described it. She knows there has been a generational failure by this Labor government to improve it.

Labor's chaotic and crisis-ridden Northern Transitway debacle, which has seen all work stop at Rode Road, has taken longer, cost more, harmed local businesses and failed to improve traffic congestion at all. It has done this for \$172 million—over \$100 million over budget—and it is not finished. It has just stopped—stopped at Rode Road. The footpaths are a mess, the gutters are a mess and the intersections are yet to be remedied, right in the newly minted transport minister's front yard.

We remember the member for Aspley's debut performance in relation to this. He turned up in February and said, 'I am disappointed to learn about the delays,' yet what we know is that in November he was briefed about them; he had just been covering up. Here is what TMR told local media in 2023: 'TMR will continue to work to ensure the efficient delivery of this key infrastructure by mid-2024.' This is a commonsense motion by the member for Chatsworth. If Labor fudge this motion and do not answer the questions, it will show they are not interested. It is time to show Labor the door in 2024.

*(Time expired)*



**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (5.24 pm): I support the minister's amendment, and I do so not only because it contains some outstandingly sensible summaries of what has occurred in relation to these issues—and I will come back to those at a further time—but also because it means that we can dispense with the risible content within the member for Chatsworth's motion, especially the lines about the feedback that has been provided to LNP MPs and candidates on the north side. There are two LNP members from that part of the north side of Brisbane and this is the first time I have heard them speaking about some of these topics and issues. It has been a bit of a shock. Equally, we hear things about candidates. I will come back to some matters in relation to one of the candidates, but I do know that while Fiona Hammond, the candidate for Stafford, was a Brisbane City councillor she had a really strong record of undermining similar projects to this. She certainly undermined Airportlink and undermined the Northern Transitway. There is no question about that.

It is interesting that we have heard the projects are being proposed effectively by the member for Chatsworth around what he said was linking Stafford to Carseldine. I think he is talking about the Trouts Road project that the Brisbane City Council were promoting with the Morrison government's help, but that is not connecting Stafford to Carseldine. It does not do that. It is a basic misunderstanding of the north side of Brisbane—not uncommon for the former assistant minister for public transport.

As minister for infrastructure and planning in a former government, I oversaw the key period of delivery of the Airportlink tunnel and Northern Busway, so I saw and experienced former councillor Hammond's undermining of that project in a number of different ways. She is so against those sorts of projects that it is no wonder she resigned as a councillor when we saw Lord Mayor Schinnerer's support for the Gympie Road tunnel proposal. I say 'support' because, as usual with the LNP administration in council, there is a lot of moral support but no financial contribution. As we heard from the minister, there were some billboards funded—billboards lending some support or even trying to claim credit but no real commitment and no real engagement. That is what we see from the LNP consistently across the board—a failure to respond to the issues that will genuinely be congestion-busting across the north side and coming up with projects that will plough through the Trouts Road corridor, and these certainly are issues that constituents in electorates like Everton should be very concerned about. I know that constituents are raising it with the member for Stafford and I know that they have raised it with the member for Aspley, the minister.


I want to acknowledge that another candidate, Amanda Cooper, would be very aware of some of those issues around the Airportlink project as it was at the time because she resided in the area where it was being developed—maybe not in the council area that she represented at the time, but she did reside in that particular area. That was very important and I can understand that she might have an appreciation around those sorts of things.

I do know that the big thing we will see that will deliver change and opportunity will be further exploration of this project that can provide further opportunity. Significantly, there are more things that Labor is delivering. Labor has genuinely delivered Airportlink and the Northern Busway, but then there is Cross River Rail. Cross River Rail will make a difference to congestion on the north side, providing greater opportunities for public transport to be better operational on the north side of Brisbane and relieving some of that congestion. There is no question that that will be done under the same tactics that we saw from the Newman government coming up with crazy concepts about the BaT tunnel or whatever it was.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** It was very batty; I take that interjection from the member for Miller. The idea of combining a busway and underground rail was absolutely batty. It is those sorts of things that have been the cause of the delay of good, positive solutions for the north side on a range of congestion matters. I commend the amendment to the House.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.29 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by my good friend the member for Chatsworth. In starting my contribution I want to acknowledge the contribution from the member for Sandgate where we basically heard five minutes of his greatest hits as a cabinet minister. The only problem is that he forgot the greatest hit of all, and that was 'rail fail'—the catastrophic failure of the transport system in Brisbane and South-East Queensland that ultimately led to him resigning/being sacked as a minister.

The Labor government's go-slow on key congestion-busting infrastructure to the north of Brisbane is having dire consequences not only for the outer suburbs—and hopefully very soon after October they will be represented by our fine friends in the gallery: Fiona Hammond in Stafford; Amanda Cooper in Aspley; and Dean Clements in Pine Rivers—but also for constituents further out in the electorates of Glass House and Pumicestone where Ariana Doolan is doing a great job. In Morayfield, Kurwongbah, Bancroft and Murrumba, this is having dire consequences for mums and dads trying to get to work and trying to get home to their families. It is having dire consequences for small and family businesses trying to employ locals and pay their bills. It is having dire consequences for anyone wanting to buy a house, rent a house or get ahead in this housing crisis, but I will unpack that further in a moment.

A tunnel from Kedron to Carseldine is desperately needed. Contrary to the statements of the Premier, it was needed long before the recent huge increase in migration foisted on us by the Albanese federal government. That has just compounded the existing disaster that is congestion on the north side. We do not have an M1 or a Clem Jones Tunnel that can deposit you right in the middle of the CBD. We do not have a Centenary Highway or a Legacy Way that will do likewise. We have Gympie Road, Sandgate Road or one of the other car park rat runs we resort to using. I and my constituents and those of the northern suburbs and the broader Sunshine Coast are fed up. Sadly, those opposite have let politics override practicality. Instead of accepting the findings of the 2022 Brisbane City Council traffic study that recommended a tunnel along the Trouts Road corridor, then transport and main roads minister Bailey called it 'feeble' and 'a farce', only to spend three times more—\$35 million—tasking QIC with exploring a solution. So where is the outcome? It is needed today. In fact, it was needed yesterday. In fact, it was needed 10 years ago, and that is why this motion is calling that out.

I mentioned that a lack of infrastructure investment north of Brisbane is impacting on housing availability. Do not take my word for it; take the words of the Mayor of the City of Moreton Bay, Peter Flannery, who in a media release today said the following—

AV Jennings' announcement last night to terminate their option for development at Waraba, due to expected costs not aligning with their forecasts, is a timely reminder for Government ...

Let me remind the House that that is Caboolture West: 30,000 homes, 70,000 people, a city the size of Mackay. He went on to say—

However, we will not meet State Government mandated housing targets if a pipeline of catalytic infrastructure is not prioritised now.

City of Moreton Bay has done the planning and we know what we need to manage impending growth. We have 12 growth fronts, but all of these are in underdeveloped areas.

The fact of the matter is land can't be turned into housing without infrastructure. Developers need certainty. They can't just sit on paddocks and wait for their day in the sun!

It's all well and good for the State to mandate growth targets for Councils but they need to support that growth.

That is why we have been calling on the State and Federal Governments to expedite funding for key infrastructure NOW.

He went on to say—


We really need the Bruce Highway Western Alternative ...

Sure do, but guess where that ends? At Bald Hills. Guess what that is going to do? Put more people onto Gympie Road trying to get into the city. Guess what is needed from there? A tunnel from Carseldine to Kedron. That is why the member for Chatsworth moved the motion that he did today.

While I am on that, the members of my communities and those of stage 3 in and around Narangba need certainty on the Bruce Highway western alternative. They need answers, they need certainty and they need timelines. The mayor continued—

With Councils only receiving 3% of tax revenue—it is up to the State and Federal Governments to make a real contribution to infrastructure ...


We cannot sit here and wait for another 10 years. To ensure that we get a tunnel from Kedron to Carseldine, show Labor the door in '24.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (5.34 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the minister in this debate and to associate myself with his contribution. The original motion moved by the LNP shows yet again that, when it comes to their record, they have learnt nothing. The absolute hide of those opposite when it comes to transport and main roads options across the north side is nothing short of outrageous, but sadly, with that lot, I am not surprised. I guess you could say, 'I'm not angry; I'm just disappointed.' Firstly, the member for Chatsworth appears to be channelling the Brisbane City Council Lord Mayor and their LNP candidates trying to pretend that this was their project and trying to pretend that they came up with the idea when we know that they had absolutely nothing to do with it. I can confirm off the top of my head the dollar figure that the LNP council put into this project—zero—but they were happy to put their faces up on billboards across the north side claiming it was them. They were happy to use taxpayer dollars but not happy to put money into the project itself. What the LNP brought the study in for, as the minister outlined, was to bring bulldozers and put a service toll road through the middle of the idyllic Chermshire Hills forest. Thankfully we stopped that.

The member for Chatsworth does not even know the difference between the two projects. He tried to claim that the Brisbane City Council-LNP Morrison government funded study into the Trouts Road tunnel was the same thing as what we are talking about today. He is completely off the planet. The truth is that even in the LNP's motion this evening they have missed some of the really serious points. This project is greater than the north side because of its suggested connection to the airport, to the Gateway, to the CBD, to the Legacy Way and out west and to the Clem7 on the south side; it is actually a South-East Queensland project that we on the north side will benefit from. They cannot even see that. The business case is deliberately looking at Carseldine to Kedron for that very reason—that is, to fill in the missing piece—and also to reflect the nature of Gympie Road in Chermshire and the parts of Kedron that I represent, because it is not just a commute road; it is a part of the community and, in some sense, a hub of the community and as a crossing for school, for local employment and small businesses and for sporting businesses.

In fact, it divides the suburb of Kedron in two. I should declare that my wife and I are raising our family in Kedron but not in a way that would stop me from participating in this debate. We undertook consultation with communities at various points along Gympie Road, as the minister pointed out. Likewise, we did similar with the Northern Transitway to get more cars off our roads and after that consultation we made some changes to the initial plans—simple things like longer turning lanes to allow better access to local streets for our residents and the addition of high-frequency bus stops at key retail locations. Of course, the member for Chatsworth himself said in 2020 that he would 'cease it immediately'.

In order to compare the LNP's experience as to its consultation processes and what it is doing for north side transport, let us look at one of the busiest areas of Gympie Road—that is, its corner with Hamilton Road. Often the traffic stretches from Hamilton Road—a council road—up to the Prince Charles Hospital. What did the Brisbane City Council do? Sadly, a nurse died there about five years ago. We were in genuine negotiations with the state and the hospital and we put in \$1 million two budgets ago. What did Fiona Hammond come up with? A T-junction section with no entry point in or out of the hospital. You cannot make it up. It is like we are in *The Hollow Men* or *Yes Minister*. Why would you invest millions of taxpayers' money with a T-junction that does not even provide an entry point to the hospital, undermining staff, visitors, patients and locals? It is ridiculous. She got done over by the mayor and pushed sideways. With a plan like that, what did the Leader of the Opposition say? He said, 'A T-junction that doesn't provide access to the hospital? That's a great idea! I'll take her. Maybe she can bring that sort of thinking to the party room.' Good luck!

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.39 pm): I thought 12 per cent might be a stretch to be honest, but after that I can see why the member for Stafford's branch was hunting him. He scraped through his preselection but he is not going to scrape through the next vote and he knows it. That is why he had the shakes. He knows Fiona Hammond is coming for him.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Through the chair. Pause the clock and resume your seat. Member, there is a longstanding convention in this chamber that we do not refer to other members' physical attributes. I would ask you to withdraw that statement and to not repeat similar matters in the future.

**Mr MICKELBERG**: I withdraw. He knows it; he knows through his words and his lack of action that he is cooked. He comes in here and talks a big game, but the people of Stafford know full well that the current member for Stafford does not have their interests at heart. How many times has the member for Stafford raised this issue in the parliament before today? Zero. It takes an LNP motion for the member for Stafford to get up and talk about the issues in his community and that says everything to the voters in the Stafford electorate.

**Mr SULLIVAN**: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence. I will also be writing to Mr Speaker because that is absolutely misleading and I can show the *Hansard*.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Resume your seat. There is a process, as I have outlined already, regarding the misleading of the House. In relation to the other matter, I would ask that you withdraw.

**Mr MICKELBERG**: I withdraw. I rise to support the shadow minister's motion because Labor have given up on tackling the traffic gridlock afflicting North Brisbane. They have given up on the thousands of Queenslanders who make the daily commute from Moreton Bay and the Sunshine Coast down to Brisbane. They have given up on helping tradies get to work on time, they have given up on couriers trying to drop off parcels to eager online shoppers and they have given up on mums and dads getting home in time to say goodnight to their kids at the end of a long day working in the CBD. Queenslanders deserve better. Queenslanders on the Sunshine Coast, in Moreton Bay and in North Brisbane deserve better than this Labor government.

Honourable members have heard some of the impacts that a generation of Labor failures has had for residents across Brisbane. However, I want to focus on the impact on small and family businesses today and what a failure to plan and build means for my constituents on the Sunshine Coast. It is well acknowledged there is a missing link in Brisbane's motorway network, a missing link of a high-capacity north-south route alternative to the Gateway Motorway. I would be surprised if there was anyone in this place who has not experienced a vehicle accident on the Gateway Motorway causing traffic gridlock for anyone trying to travel north at the end of a long day. During the last sitting week I found myself backtracking through Brendale, Bray Park and Petrie following an Apple Maps route trying to work around an accident on the Bruce Highway. It meant another 50 minutes added to my commute and it meant more traffic on local roads in the electorate of the member for Pine Rivers. No-one won—not commuters, not residents—and it is all down to a lack of planning and a lack of action from this Labor state government.


For those Sunshine Coast residents who do make the torturous journey up and back from Brisbane each day if—and it is a big if—they manage to make it down the Bruce without hitting traffic, they can take it as a given that they will hit traffic the moment they get to Boundary Road at North Lakes, again at the Pine Rivers Bridge, again at the approach to Beams Road and again all the way down Gympie Road to the Brisbane CBD. If they want to, they can drop into a tunnel at Kedron or maybe go down the gateway, but the chances of them getting to Brisbane without hitting traffic gridlock are zero.

We know that right now each morning in the north-west of Brisbane more than 329,000 trips are made during the morning peak. That is 329,000 commuters who sit in traffic for longer than they should. It is congested now, but by 2041 the congested network kilometres in North Brisbane will rise by 181 per cent. The problem is bad now, but in 2041 it will be nearly twice as bad as it is now. One would think that tackling that problem would be a priority for this government which so often likes to trumpet their big builds. What have we heard from Labor? What have we heard from the member for Aspley? This runs straight through the centre of the member for Aspley's electorate and what have we heard? Nothing—absolutely nothing.

When I speak to small and family businesses, they frequently raise concerns about traffic congestion. They speak about the financial impacts of trucks sitting in traffic. They speak about the business disruption of not being able to get products delivered when promised. They have spoken about the disruption when employees cannot get to work on time because of an accident. Many of the businesses that I meet are in Labor electorates on the north side of Brisbane. To be fair, they frequently want to meet because they want to work out how to support our candidates because they have given up trying to get action from ineffectual Labor members. They have given up trying to get action from the members for Pine Rivers, Aspley and Stafford, so they reach out to us trying to get some action. In

many of those places there are significant commercial and industrial precincts and they tell me of the need—the critical need—for roads that link to the airport, the CBD and the Port of Brisbane. They talk about the concerns of having trucks and other freight sharing roads with cars in their electorate and of navigating school zones. They talk about the safety risks associated with that and the fact that freight is expected to grow by 60 per cent by 2040.

This is a problem affecting the majority of South-East Queensland. Everyone north of the Brisbane CBD and the south-east lives this problem. It is time to show Labor the door in '24.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.45 pm): I rise to support the amendment to the motion. I am the first of the Moreton Bay members to speak on this motion. I point out that my electorate consists mostly of commuter communities. Every day we travel up and down that highway and then we hit the traffic of Brisbane. If we can bust the congestion, it will make a real difference to the lifestyles in our area. It will mean hours and hours more with the family each week instead of spent on the road.

This congestion does happen most times of the week. For example, I take my daughters down to play hockey at Rasey Park and Downey Park every Saturday morning and that congestion is still there. When I play hockey on a Sunday afternoon I have to deal with that traffic on the highway and I have to calculate that into my travel time. Gympie Road congestion is an everyday problem for me and everyone else in Bancroft. I can point out that it is the Miles government that is taking action on congestion. We are taking action on this. Gympie Road is a crucial connector for Moreton Bay residents and I am really proud to support our \$35 million investment to investigate a Gympie Road bypass tunnel. I think that stacks up very well against the LNP expenditure on billboards.

The residents of Moreton Bay want to see a transport solution to bus congestion and that is exactly what Labor is delivering. The potential benefits of this bypass tunnel are shorter commuter times, better connections to the Bruce Highway and to and from the Sunshine Coast, better connections to the west of the city through Legacy Way and south through the Clem 7 to the M1. Labor is doing more than just one project to help bust the congestion in that general area. What will really make a difference to the congestion in this area? It is one project—Sunshine Coast rail. What a difference that would make.

Wasn't it instructive that the member for Buderim talked for five minutes and never once mentioned the congestion-busting potential of Sunshine Coast rail? Thanks to Labor we are going to see a heavy rail connection that will make a trip to Brisbane at least 45 minutes faster than a car, and that will get so many more cars off the road. That is a 37-kilometre rail extension between Beerwah and Maroochydore. It will improve connectivity to Moreton Bay, Brisbane and beyond. The first stage will see that 19-kilometre dual track built from Beerwah to Caloundra. Can I mention the members for Nicklin and Caloundra for their great advocacy for this project?

**Mr Hunt:** Yes, you can.

**Mr WHITING:** I will mention it again. It is the longest spur line in the South-East Queensland passenger network. The first stage will cost between \$5.5 billion and \$7 billion. We have put \$2.75 billion on the table to build that and now the Labor federal government has matched that commitment. That full rail line will include seven new stations, a 1.2-kilometre tunnel at Little Mountain, 17 kilometres of elevated structure and that new corridor will be protected. That is the kind of investment that Labor and only Labor is delivering in our area to help ease congestion, to help bust congestion.

We are getting the projects done and we are getting the projects funded. We know the LNP talk a big game on infrastructure but the facts are clear: when they were in government they delivered zero infrastructure projects on the north side. In fact, the only project they delivered was a building for themselves in the middle of the city, and even that was done without a proper business case. That shows what the LNP's 'right priorities' are.

The LNP love the Gympie Road bypass tunnel proposal. They love it so much that the BCC has promoted it on billboards throughout the city. Even today the Leader of the Opposition posted a video online saying that it is time to get the north side moving. This is getting messy. LNP councillors are taking credit for the project but they have committed zero funding towards it. You cannot expect those opposite to talk seriously about busting congestion if they will not put money on the table.

I commend the amended motion to the House. I commend the member for Aspley for his great work on this project.

*(Time expired)*



**Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.50 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by my colleague the member for Chatsworth. I have to make a concession and probably show my age: every morning I like listening to ABC radio.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** Or the wireless, yes; I take that interjection. I like listening to Craig and Loretta, who are quite entertaining. They have a mixture of light stuff, occasionally quite serious stuff and political stuff. The funniest guy on the Craig and Loretta show is Brad the Traffic Guy. Brad the Traffic Guy is incredibly entertaining. He is a New South Wales supporter. I think he is looking for a partner. There is an ongoing story about his life and he is very entertaining. However, that entertainment stops when he gives his morning traffic report.

The traffic report is so predictable. Every morning, the first thing he starts with is the traffic congestion on the north side of Brisbane. There will be a slow run going through Everton Park down to Enoggera and on Old Northern Road and South Pine Road. Gympie Road will be congested once again. People travelling on Samford Road, from the old Keperra drive-in through to the Enoggera intersection, will need to allow more time because of the congestion. Time and time again he talks about the congestion on the north side of Brisbane.

I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Clayfield. I remind members that there are only two LNP members of parliament who represent the north side of the river and they are the member for Clayfield and myself. If we talk about who is responsible for the congestion and the lack of work that has happened for 30 of the past 35 years, it is the Labor Party. I look across the chamber at the Labor Party members who represent the north side of Brisbane. They are the members for Aspley, Pine Rivers, Stafford, Ferny Grove, Kurwongbah, Bancroft, Morayfield, Murrumba, Redcliffe, Nudgee and McConnel. The scary thing is that eight of them are ministers. Eight ministers live on the north side of Brisbane but have done nothing to ease the congestion that we have to put up with every day.

One thing that people always bring up is that they are sick of being stuck in traffic, whether it is outside my office at the intersection of South Pine Road and Stafford Road or on the link road, which cost \$30-odd million and gave us about 15 seconds extra of traffic light green time. The project has been a total and utter waste of money without an upgrade of the intersection outside my office where, by the way, there is also a very good billboard that promotes my office. How many times have we heard about upgrades to Youngs Crossing Road? The Linkfield Road overpass is hit by a truck every six months, which puts it out of action. What of the upgrade to the Beams Road rail overpass?

Who do they blame for the delays that have happened following promise after promise? They used to blame the federal government, but who is running the show down there now? It is Albo! Now we do not hear a single peep from these guys. They should get on the phone to Albo and get these jobs done.

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Sandgate!

**Mr MANDER:** The member for Sandgate summed up best the way these guys operate. They whinge and whine about everybody else. It is the Brisbane City Council or it is the federal government—unless we have a Labor federal government—but it is not them. We hear excuse after excuse. Rather than promising delivery, the member for Sandgate said that these projects deserve further exploration. That is what this government is all about: it is about smoke and mirrors.

We have an army of candidates who will represent the north side of Brisbane far better than this mob has for 30 of the past 35 years. It is an absolute disgrace to have eight ministers—half the cabinet—not representing their local areas and not making sure that we can move faster and get home quicker and that businesses can operate more efficiently on the north side of Brisbane. People such as Fiona Hammond, Amanda Cooper and Dean Clements from Pine Rivers will do a magnificent job. They have a proven track record and are true community people who will stick up for the north side of Brisbane.

*(Time expired)*



**Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (5.55 pm): I rise to speak to the amended motion. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Gympie Road gridlock is a problem for anybody in the Moreton Bay area who commutes to work in Brisbane or who wants to visit family on the north side or head to Chermside to do some shopping. As the member for Bancroft said, Gympie Road is a crucial connector. That is why our Miles Labor government is putting our money where our mouth is with \$35 million that we have already committed to the Gympie Road bypass tunnel project.

Today we see the LNP mistruths start rolling out. They are claiming that they care about the north side. They are pretending that they will make the Gympie Road bypass tunnel a reality. However, when it comes to major transport projects across the north side, into Moreton Bay and all the way up to the Sunshine Coast, as ever the LNP are all talk and no action. This is especially so with the Sunshine Coast direct rail project. The opposition has spent 30 years talking it up and doing absolutely nothing. It was a Labor government that laid the groundwork, got on the phone to Albo and kicked off the planning. We spent \$14 million doing the business case. It was our Miles Labor government that secured \$5.5 billion in funding to kickstart the line from Beerwah to Caloundra.

**Mr Hunt:** Hear, hear!

**Ms KING:** I know that the member for Caloundra welcomes that project enormously. As they try desperately to win a few votes, the only porky that the LNP has left is pretending that they will build the line to Maroochydore by 2032 even though the business case and the engineering experts say it cannot be done and the LNP already have their \$6.5 billion black hole to contend with.

Here we go again with LNP porkies on the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. They are telling fibs to Queenslanders to win votes. They are talking a big game about infrastructure but giving absolutely no detail on how they will deliver or fund it. It is our Miles Labor government that is commissioning the feasibility study on the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. It is Labor that is doing the consultation to get community feedback on the project. It is only Labor that will ever actually build it, not the LNP whose track record is taking an axe to infrastructure. The LNP do not build; they only ever cut. We remember that it was the LNP that tried to kill off Cross River Rail even when they had federal funding for it. It is Labor that is delivering that key project. The LNP cut the Northern Transitway; Labor built it. The LNP cut planning for further stages of the northern busway and their list of infrastructure cuts just goes on and on.

The LNP will say anything for a vote. This week it took the ghost of Campbell Newman to call out their claims about how they can magically fix 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?

That came from the former premier, their strongman and the opposition leader's mentor—that very special person. He went on to say, '... Queenslanders have a right to know and you have spent nine years apologising.' The LNP have a lot to apologise for. I do not think they have ever said sorry to Queenslanders for their \$1.6 billion cuts to road and transport budgets. They have never apologised for gutting 700 workers from RoadTek or sacking 2,500 TMR workers or the total of 14,000 workers they kicked to the kerb. Queenslanders absolutely have a right to know how the LNP will build all the infrastructure that they have promised and still balance the budget.

Queenslanders have a right to know the details of the LNP's much vaunted debt reduction plan. Is it cuts to infrastructure? Is it sacking public servants? Is it cutting services that Queenslanders depend on? Queenslanders deserve to see behind the LNP's slick slogans and glossy brochures with no substance. It is all glamour shots—no delivery—but it takes a lot to put lipstick on these LNP porkers. No wonder the LNP leader is constantly on the run from the media here in the precinct. We heard all about him hotfooting it as fast as his little legs would carry him away from Tim Arvier yesterday. Who can forget the LNP leader standing up in his very first press conference as leader and walking back the LNP's commitment to build the next Bribie Island bridge?

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is a longstanding convention not to refer to the physical attributes of a member of parliament. I ask that the member for Pumicestone withdraw those statements.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): That is a fair point of order. Member, I ask you to withdraw.

**Ms KING:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Bear in mind the longstanding convention about not referring to people's physical attributes either directly or via insinuation. Moving forward, I ask you to bear that in mind.

**Ms KING:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Who can forget the LNP leader standing up and walking back his commitment to build the next Bribie Island bridge in his very first press conference as leader? After he took over from Deb Frecklington, that LNP commitment to a new Bribie Island bridge was cut to the guts. At the end of the day, Queenslanders know that members of the LNP like to




showboat about infrastructure, but their record speaks for itself. Only Labor builds; the LNP just cuts. Queenslanders know what to expect from another LNP government—the three big Cs: Crisafulli, cuts and chaos.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member just referred to the Leader of the Opposition by his last name. Again, I ask you to ask the member to withdraw the comments reflecting on the member's personal name rather than his title. The member just did it before she sat down.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The general practice is to remind members of the need to use correct titles. If it continues, I would consider a warning. I thank the member for the point of order.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.01 pm): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Pumicestone talks about the opposition leader, little runs and so forth. I have doorknocked with the opposition leader in the electorate of Pumicestone with our candidate Ariana Doolan. I can say that we are running with Queenslanders and we are running with the people of Pumicestone. They are running with us and our candidate Ariana Doolan, because they know this Labor member for Pumicestone is running away from her constituents and the issues that matter to Queenslanders. Whether it is the member for Pumicestone, the member for Stafford or all the other Labor members who just spoke, Labor is running away from its record. Why? It is such a bad and an appalling record.

I had the pleasure of listening to the debate today when Labor Party members were giving shout-outs to our candidates in the gallery. I have never seen that in my 15 years in this place. When the Labor Party has a candidate to run against me, there is no way on God's earth I would give a shout-out to them if they were sitting in the gallery. It is politics 101. Come on. One after another they gave a shout-out to our great candidates sitting in the gallery: Amanda Cooper for Aspley; Dean Clements for Pine Rivers; and Fiona Hammond in Stafford. In the last two weeks I had the pleasure of spending a little time with Dean Clements, a veteran running for the Liberal National Party in his community of Pine Rivers. We talked to the business community. I say to the member for Pine Rivers, who is about to speak, that they are not too happy with the local representation. They have a veteran of upstanding citizenship against a union hack running again. That is what she was—a union hack.

**Ms BOYD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence to the comments and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw. Before you recommence, member for Kawana, I point out that I have given you some latitude but you are straying a long way from either the motion or the amendment. I ask you to come back to the amendment or the motion. You have the call and I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was getting so excited that I forgot what we were debating at the moment anyway! I was too excited about our wonderful candidates in the gallery. Let's talk about transport and the fact that the Labor Party has neglected the people of Queensland when it comes to addressing traffic and congestion on our roads over the last nine years. There was a lot of talk from Labor members today in terms of: if, would, could, maybe, should, plan and look at. Where are the concrete results?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the numerous interjections—exploration. They are going to explore those issues. I am reminded of the fact that when we raised this issue at the time, the member for Chatsworth reported that the then transport minister's comments were that the Brisbane City Council was feeble, or whatever it was, and that he wanted an aboveground solution. The reality is that not only could the Labor Party not stand it because they knew that the member for Miller was basically a baby koala killer—he was going to bulldoze all these koalas—but, and no-one has mentioned it, this issue was taken off then minister Bailey's desk and out of his portfolio and given to Treasury. That is how much the Labor Party did not trust then minister Bailey to deal with this issue and find a solution. They took it off then minister Bailey and gave it to the Investment Corporation—Treasury. They did not trust then minister Bailey to be able to deliver this project, let alone the \$35 million business case.


Let us talk about the member for Bancroft. How long has he been in this parliament? He is only concerned about traffic congestion because he goes to hockey on a Sunday and wants to get there and back quicker. Now he is concerned about this issue of congestion because he plays hockey. The

member for Stafford offered us a pecuniary interest because he lives in Kedron and has a family. Today he is putting an interest on the table in that he has an interest in busting congestion. How about an interest in being a Labor member of parliament? The Labor Party has been in power for 30 out of 35 years and has neglected the people of Queensland and neglected the infrastructure that we need.

Premier Miles was the infrastructure minister. I see the Premier now. The new Premier says, 'Call me Steven.' I quote from his letterhead: 'New Premier Miles, new government Miles'. What happened to infrastructure minister Miles? Where were his plans for this? Why didn't he deliver this when he was the deputy premier or the infrastructure minister? The reality is that they are only saying this now to get them through to the election, because we know that they will do and say anything to get re-elected. It is time for a change. People have given up on Labor. Show Labor the door in October '24.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, as per the Speaker's ruling this morning, the members for Logan, Kawana and Chatsworth are no longer on a ruling as of 6.00 pm. I urge the members for Kawana, Chatsworth and Logan not to go back on a warning.

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.07 pm): I rise to support the amended motion moved by the Minister for Transport. There have been massive investments made by Labor governments in my community of Pine Rivers since 2015 that reduce congestion and improve the lifestyle and accessibility for people in my community to move around. I was proud less than 12 months ago to stand with the Treasurer and the members for Aspley and Stafford to announce that we would investigate the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. I was proud because I appreciate just how essential it is to improve the commute along Gympie Road and the surrounding arteries. This is a project that only Labor will invest in. We are only the party with a vision to commit to this type of project. I know that we are the only party that would ever make the commitment needed to get this project right.

As our regions of Moreton Bay and the Sunshine Coast continue to grow at rapid speeds, we must invest to have better road connectivity and congestion-busting projects delivered. This project will bypass 19 sets of traffic lights. It is also anticipated to slash 30 minutes off the travel times in peak hour. Further than that, it is also anticipated that this will ease the strain on the surrounding connectors and key roads.

Often described as the missing link, I have long been a vocal advocate for better connectivity for our north side commuters. Unlike the south side, the number of traffic lights people need to contend with on the north side to move around is considerable. It was not planned properly before it was populated. A tunnel is the only solution to make a considerable improvement for my community in the way that we move around the north side. I have long advocated for safer roads and road improvements that help in busting congestion within the electoral boundaries of Pine Rivers, but I have a deep appreciation for the need for large-scale infrastructure to make a really meaningful impact—and that is what this bypass tunnel will achieve.

I thank the members of my community who between 30 October and 3 December engaged in the consultation process to inform the investment proposal. When my community engaged with this investment proposal, it was made clear that the proposal was being prepared for the state government's consideration in mid-2024. For the benefit of those members opposite, 'midyear' by its definition is the 183rd day of the year, which is 2 July. In the instance of a leap year, it is midnight between 1 July and 2 July. Mark it in your calendar, member for Chatsworth.

It is not a surprise to me that there is overwhelming support for the Miles Labor government's proposal to build the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. I hear it all the time from my community. One of the milestones in this work that was particularly exciting to me was the opportunity I had on 22 February to get out on site with the geotechs and see the investigation work they are completing to inform the investment proposal. It was here that I saw them digging 60 metres down and extracting 200-million-year-old rock to be sampled to understand the composition of the environment in the seven-kilometre stretch of the proposed tunnel.

**Mr Mellish** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** I take the interjection from the member for Aspley. It was like Christmas for those geotech engineers as they talked me through the different levels of prehistoric earth and the complexities of what this meant to the planning and construction of a tunnel. A simple briefing from experts would have prevented this motion being moved in the House tonight because it would not take long through a briefing for there to be a deep appreciation around what is needed to be gathered by experts to inform an investment proposal.

It is understandable that the LNP are entirely out of their depth on matters like this. We need look no further than their record when they were last in government to appreciate why—gutting the transport budget and cutting the workforce in TMR by more than 20 per cent. The only new infrastructure project that was built on their watch was the ‘tower of power’—a new office for themselves at 1 William Street.

This is simply another opportunity for the LNP to claim kudos for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. We have seen them try to take the kudos already with misleading billboards. It is very clear to all watching that the LNP are operating in a policy vacuum. They are very big on slogans but very short on ideas. How on earth can they propose to govern Queensland if they cannot even govern themselves? I welcome the LNP producing one single meaningful plan for Queensland, but I will not hold my breath. They are so bereft of ideas that they have to have a death march into the gallery rather than propose a good motion.

*(Time expired)*

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

**AYES, 46:**

**ALP, 46—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 31:**

**LNP, 31—**Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

Pairs: Enoch, Gerber; Howard, Frecklington; Lauga, Molhoek; Mullen, Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** A division has been called. Ring the bells for one minute.

**AYES, 46:**

**ALP, 46—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 31:**

**LNP, 31—**Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

Pairs: Enoch, Gerber; Howard, Frecklington; Lauga, Molhoek; Mullen, Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes:

1. The Labor government commenced consultation on the Gympie Road bypass tunnel on 30 October 2023 to provide congestion busting solutions.
2. That there has been overwhelmingly positive support for the Miles Labor government proposal to build the Gympie Road bypass tunnel.
3. That when in charge of the transport budget, the LNP:
  - (a) cut \$1.6 billion from Queensland's transport and roads budget;
  - (b) cut \$60 million from road safety funding;
  - (c) sacked more than 2,500 Transport and Main Roads workers—20 per cent of the workforce;
  - (d) sacked 700 RoadTek road builders;
  - (e) did not progress any new infrastructure projects other than a new office at 1 William Street.
4. That the only funding allocated from the LNP for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel has been to fund billboards falsely claiming credit for the project.
5. That the Labor government has already allocated \$35 million towards the project.
6. That the Labor government delivered the Northern Transitway to bust traffic congestion along Gympie Road; and
7. That the LNP did not support the Northern Transitway.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (6.19 pm): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! Can we hear the member's contribution?

**Ms BATES:** The health minister has just posted another video online attributing comments that I allegedly directed at her. Mr Speaker, I did not direct those comments at the health minister. I believe the health minister has again misled parliament and I will be writing to you.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mudgeeraba.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Toowoomba South, we do not need to hear from you either.

## RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### MANUFACTURED HOMES (RESIDENTIAL PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL

#### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1767, on motion of Ms Scanlon—

That the bills be now read a second time.



**Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (6.20 pm): I rise to make a short contribution in support of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. My electorate of Nudgee is far from immune to the pressures on housing that we are seeing across the nation. The cost of rent, accessibility to affordable or social housing and rights during tenancy are all issues that I consistently hear about from locals in my community, whether that is when I am out doorknocking, holding mobile offices or through contact to my electorate office.

With this bill our government seeks to act on those issues for renters in Queensland. As I speak today, I am proud to be a member of a Labor government delivering genuine reforms as part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan that is all about, and for, Queenslanders. Our plan does not just look like a record investment to deliver more social and affordable homes as part of our Big Build; it also means protecting renters.

With this bill we are doing what we can to act on increasing rental costs by banning all forms of rent bidding, which will help to stabilise rental prices and level the playing field for those seeking rental properties. We know that rent bidding is causing significant anxiety for people when they are appearing to look at properties, think that it is within their range and then are outbid. We are also acting on the costs associated with moving for renters by introducing an affordable bond scheme to significantly reduce out-of-pocket costs for renters when they move into a new home. On top of that, we are helping renters to keep their bond when they deserve to by cracking down on dodgy bond claim practices and ensuring landlords must provide evidence to back a claim against a tenant's bond amount. We are capping bond amounts, introducing fairer fees and charges, increasing privacy protections and rights for tenants and more.

I also note that when the LNP was last in government they abolished the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act 2000, which regulated against unfair practices and conduct in the rental sector. We have since seen that that was a poor decision. It has not been in the interests of Queenslanders, and it is something that we are bringing back by establishing through this bill a rental sector code of conduct. Across the board this bill tightens up practices in the rental sector and increases protections for tenants, who are clearly in an unfair power relationship and situation. For those poor renters who are not scrupulous in their dealings, they need these protections. We are giving renters the fair go they deserve.


In this House we hear many things that you just let through to the keeper. I have done that for a long time with regard to contributions from the Greens political party, but I have to say that I take offence at being called corrupt—something we are called often—that we side with big banks, property investors and developers, and that we should put ourselves in the shoes of renters and first home buyers. We are all real people in here. We all have a background. We all have a history, and in fact it is not hard to put yourself in the shoes of a first home buyer or renter when you have been both. The member for Nicklin made the point that many members of the federal Greens political party are themselves property owners. I am not attacking that. We need people to own rental properties so people can rent. I do not own any investment properties. That is not a judgement; I just do not own them.

When I was 18 I became a renter. I was in the private market from the age of 18 until I was able to buy my first home at 30 years of age. The bank of mum and dad was not there for me. My parents had both died. One of my parents was in a retirement facility from the age of 46 because she had a terminal illness. I have always been a renter in the private market. I had to build a deposit myself. I put myself through university and I put my husband through university and he then supported me when he became a nurse. I raised our children and we bought our first home in Nudgee, and I thank Nudgee for giving me a start. Growing up in a single-parent household and having parents who passed away at quite a young age, I do understand struggle.

The Greens political party does not have a monopoly on suffering and struggle and they do not have a monopoly on advocating for renters in this state. As the member for Nudgee I do not just doorknock in election years. Because I have been a candidate it is my fifth election, so I have doorknocked for 12 years. It was those stories that moved me to join this party and mean I continue to advocate now as I did when I was first elected. As a first home buyer it took me until the age of 34—before I was elected—to even afford to put window coverings on all of my windows because it was so hard to raise a deposit when I was working full-time and putting myself through uni.

**Ms Scanlon:** They are opposing Help to Buy.

**Ms LINARD:** That is right; I take that interjection. They are opposing Help to Buy. I absolutely reject the arrogance and judgement of the Greens political party saying that we on this side do not understand what it means to struggle and that we do not understand what it means to rent because we are apparently part of some political class—which they are also members of. We are real people with real stories who are fighting for people in our electorates. I commend the Labor government for these reforms. I commend my colleague the housing minister for these reforms, and I hope they will make an appreciable difference to the people of Nudgee and all renters in Queensland.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak on this cognate debate on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. Both of these bills highlight the problems being faced by Queenslanders right across the state in seeking housing. Whether it is manufactured homes and residential parks, rentals, private purchases, new builds or government housing, the problems are endemic. This is a housing crisis.

At the beginning of March there were 25,506 sites across 203 residential parks in Queensland. They provided homes to approximately 38,000 home owners. It is estimated that another 10,000 manufactured homes and an additional 55 residential parks are planned for development in this state in the next 10 years. The bill seeks to set limits on how and the amount by which site rents can be increased; address delays in selling manufactured homes; and improve transparency with new registration requirements. It is imperative that the government strike the right balance between residents and park owners.

This bill has missed opportunities because the government restricted the range of amendments and chose not to address many other issues such as conflict resolution, financial transparency and the conduct of owners and residents. The residential tenancies and rooming accommodation bill is proof of the government's mismanagement of policy and its reckless and chaotic approach to legislative changes. Policy is made on the run because it is only used as a solution to political and image problems. As the REIQ said, this bill—

... marks the fifth reform to rental laws in Queensland within as many years. Lessors and mortgage managers are fatigued by the constant legislative reform ...

Careless, badly considered and haphazard legislative changes have not helped the housing crisis. Last year the government limited increases to every 12 months. The impact was that, when the 12 months were up, property owners ended tenancies with renters when the term of their lease expired.

This allowed them to enter a new lease with new renters at a higher price. The policy was a direct consequence of a thought bubble from a former premier who floated the idea she was considering rent caps. It was a thought bubble which made it even tougher for renters to find a home.

Earlier this month the REIQ chief executive officer said that curbing the rental crisis requires government support in the form of social housing and rental assistance. She said—

... the rental market will still heavily rely on everyday citizen investors choosing to rent out their properties ...

and called on the government to recognise—

... the crucial role they play in housing Queenslanders and encouraging them ... to do so.

This bill makes amendments regarding controlled rent increases; modifications and personalisation by renters of a property; rent bidding; privacy provisions for renters, including entry notices, documents required for applications and storage of personal information; changes to the bonds process; and fees and charges. Renting is one of the options needed in a healthy housing market. The housing crisis has deteriorated under this government. Labor has lurched from chaos to crisis. Treating the housing crisis as a political problem and a media problem means that Labor has done untold damage to the housing market in this state. It has demonised sectors, mum-and-dad investors and landlords and pitted people against each other. It either treats problems in a silo or ignores them. It is hard not to be cynical about the government's approach. Housing forums, media events and press releases do not solve the issues. You cannot put a roof over someone's head with a media release. The pressures did not appear overnight. They have built up over years. Much of the housing crisis can be laid at the feet of the government. It has been in power for almost 10 years.


Legislation has originated from ill-considered thought bubbles. Kneejerk and haphazard legislation is continually having to be amended. It has cynically repeated false promises to deliver and it has not released enough land for new homes. It never planned or forecast how many social homes were needed. It continually neglects the community housing sector. The REIQ said that the housing crisis needs long-term solutions, including a concerted effort towards improving productivity and affordability in the construction of new dwellings that are essential to fixing this supply issue. Again, Labor's policy mismanagement has exacerbated the problems. The systemic failed timber policies spanning years of successive Labor governments have directly resulted in increased housing and renovation costs. It is almost 4½ years since the government promised a timber action plan. In 2019, it promised to undertake a two-year study to identify sustainable future options for timber supply. We are still waiting. Meanwhile, contracts for native timber logging will cease at the end of this year. The severe shortage of timber is pushing up renovation and building costs.

In the middle of a housing crisis, the government is unable to understand the contribution of its anti-forestry, anti-timber agenda. It is complicit in exacerbating the crisis. As a result, Queenslanders are paying more for housing, rent and renovations. The potential unintended consequences from this latest bill are steeper rent increases, a reduced number of rental properties due to hurting investor confidence and limiting the choice for tenants on how they might want to structure their rent payments.

A healthy housing market needs a mix of options. I regularly receive complaints about the housing market in my own electorate. People struggle to access safe and secure housing. It is one of the most difficult issues to resolve. A healthy vacancy rate is between 2.6 per cent and 3.5 per cent. A tight market is between zero per cent and 2.5 per cent. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland's March quarterly rental report showed Gympie vacancies were at 1.1 per cent. My office fields calls from distressed residents trying to find crisis accommodation. Too often we are told that there are no available vacancies. Private renters contact me distressed that it is getting harder and harder to find somewhere to live. Whether you call it social or crisis housing, there is very little available across the Gympie region. The pressure on the private rental market puts pressure on the social housing list. People are living in tents, under bridges, in the main street and in their cars. Charity groups—those that provide help for the vulnerable—are being stretched. The situation has deteriorated so much that, three years ago, former Gympie Citizen of the Year Marlene Owen co-founded the Gympie Regional Homeless Assistance group to feed the homeless and vulnerable members of the community.

The government must get the mix right between renters, landlords, home owners, mum-and-dad investors and residential park owners. Queenslanders and Gympie residents are paying the price because housing has been treated as a political issue. When people are living in their cars, in tents or are couch surfing and when families are being split and forced to live apart, the last thing they need is haphazard and reckless legislation, spin, platitudes and trickery. I do not oppose the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Before I call the next member, I want to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the Commonwealth parliament's member for Hinkler, the Hon. Keith Pitt. You are most welcome, Sir.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.35 pm): We had better take it up a notch then, hadn't we, Mr Deputy Speaker, and be on our best behaviour? I want to thank the member for Kawana for the wonderful political lesson he gave earlier tonight, but I want to assure the member for Kawana that no member on this side of the House and no Labor candidate anywhere would seek or want the endorsement of the member for Kawana. That would do nothing but drive their primary vote in a downwards direction. In fact, I would urge the member for Kawana to continue to do what he does best—that is, get out there in public and drive the voters of Queensland away from the LNP and over to Labor. It is only a matter of time before 'Operation Boring' is relaunched and we see the member for Kawana whipped from our screens once again, both big and small.

I support these bills. I want to speak mainly to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. However, I do commend the manufactured homes bill and note that improving regulation in this sector will greatly assist responding to challenges in the housing sector. There are really big challenges in all parts of the housing sector—social and affordable housing, the rental market, the residential market and of course the investment and development sectors as well. I commend the minister for rolling out the Homes for Queenslanders plan. This plan is increasing support for people experiencing homelessness. It is building more social and affordable housing. It is supporting new homebuyers to move into their own home, and it is encouraging and supporting developers and councils to increase private sector housing supply. The plan also aims to make renting a home cheaper, easier and fairer, and that is what this bill focuses on and that is what I will focus on, too.

The current cost pressures in the housing market, whether you are renting, buying a house to live in or looking to invest in property, are being driven by a number of key factors: increased demand that is outstripping supply and increasing interest rates and other costs, particularly insurance costs. Just this week we debated the cheaper power bill. The purpose of this bill is to provide cost-of-living relief, but from a macroeconomic perspective it is part of a range of measures that the Miles and Albanese governments are putting in place to put downward pressure on interest rates. If we do put that downward pressure on interest rates, one of the drivers of rental increases and one of the barriers to buying your first home will be reduced.

There are other activities as part of the Homes for Queenslanders plan that are responding to supply issues, but I will not go through those, other than to mention the 80 units of social and affordable housing being built in Stones Corner as we speak. Interestingly, the Albanese government's Help to Buy scheme will also help to reduce demand in the rental market by helping 40,000 low-income people, including many young people, to buy a house. Amazingly, this is being blocked in the federal parliament by the Greens and the LNP. While the Greens are rightly pointing out that there are massive challenges for renters, they do not want to support policy solutions to actually help renters. Why? Apparently the Greens will only pass this initiative if the Albanese government supports a two-year rent freeze. That is an alternative policy idea that really needs exploring.

I would suggest that those interested start by reading Per Capita's report *Regulating rentals in Australia: what works?*. The rent freeze advocated by the Greens are known as first-generation rent freezes and involve very hard rent controls. Before anyone suggests that I have read this one report and think I know it all, it is important to note that this report includes systematic reviews, and I have read many of the studies referred to in the reviews and other studies as well. Here is what the report says about first-generation rent freezes—

What is clear from a systematic review of the literature ... is that hard rent controls, such as rent freezes, have significant potential downsides.

Overall, the research seems to find that setting a hard cap on nominal rent prices, tend to induce high costs for landlords, and fewer benefits for tenants.

I will not go through all of the aspects of this report, but those downsides include a decrease in housing supply, a decrease in spending on maintenance and tenants being extremely reluctant to move, which leads to a very inefficient use of housing.

What the report does say is that there is very strong evidence for improving housing outcomes for renters by using second and third generation rent freeze policies, and these are the sorts of initiatives that are actually outlined in this bill—such as only allowing an annual rent increase. By slowing down

the frequency of rent increases, you slow down the velocity in the market which will also contribute to moderating rental increases. The bill does a number of other things to make renting fairer and easier, such as banning all forms of rent bidding, increasing notice periods for entry, allowing for transferable bond loans, limiting reletting costs and ensuring fee-free options for payment of rent.

I welcome the establishment of a head of power to allow a new rental sector code of conduct to be developed. There are two things that I think should be explored under this provision that would greatly assist both landlords and tenants. Firstly, I believe it would be extremely beneficial if offers from landlords and responses from tenants had to be documented in an agreed form when this process involves a managing agent. I am aware of some landlords who wanted to offer two-year leases and were told that tenants did not want this. When the landlord insisted on evidence that the offer was made in writing and a response was received in writing, amazingly the tenants accepted the offer. Why would a managing agent not want to offer a two-year tenancy? I would put the following: first, less opportunity to increase rents which means less opportunity to increase the fees of management agents; and, second, less opportunity to collect reletting fees.


Secondly, I would encourage the minister to consider the manner in which managing agents charge the landlords. The majority of managing agents charge a fee that is based on a percentage of rent. This creates a significant incentive for managing agents to encourage landlords to increase rents. I have seen numerous examples of correspondence from managing agents encouraging significant rental increases, and I have spoken to many landlords who have outlined the many examples of being pressured by managing agents to increase rents. One solution would be to ban percentage-based fees. I would certainly never advocate for setting the fee a managing agent can charge. Like any business, they need to be able to cover their costs based on their expenses and they need to be able to apply a fee that they think the market can bear. This would remove an incentive to encourage the increasing of rents, and it would encourage more competition in the market between managing agents.

I want to say that my managing agents have always done a very good job in managing our investment property. I think the majority of managing agents are decent people and do a fine job for property owners and renters. However, there are significant market failures in this area and smart business owners take advantage of those. I think these market failures need to be corrected in the interests of both renters and landlords.

It is very rare that I would agree with the member for Everton, but I agree that the manner in which some political parties target and portray landlords is completely unfair, divisive and inappropriate, and I will declare for the House that I am a landlord. I really do not care what those political parties say about landlords. Like the majority of landlords in Australia, my wife and I have one investment property and we would like to think we are fair and reasonable landlords. We purchased this property as part of our financial plan which aims to look after us into our retirement and it allows us to help our children as they move into adulthood. Like most landlords, we willingly comply with any laws introduced by the government. I will note the really important role that managing agents play in helping landlords to comply with those laws.

I personally would have liked to have seen a policy that Bill Shorten put forward and took to the 2019 election implemented. That was incentivising people who want to invest in property to do so by investing in new housing stock. I think that would have made a real difference. Perhaps that will be reconsidered in future.

The Homes for Queenslanders plan is working to ensure that all Queenslanders have access to high-quality, appropriate housing regardless of whether you live in public housing, own your own home, rent a property or live in specialist accommodation such as manufactured home parks, aged-care facilities or retirement villages. The provisions in this bill will make it cheaper, easier and fairer to rent a house. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (6.43 pm): We have another cognate debate and this time it is two very relevant bills. The Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill proposes to increase certainty for the owners of homes in parks across Queensland. This is a popular form of retirement living; however, it should be available for all ages due to their affordability. I have advocated for years for governments to develop these in my own community in addition to the ones we have. The fact that there is still nowhere for manufactured accommodation, including tiny homes, has me scratching my head, especially with the former House with No Steps site vacant five years on. I continue to call on the government to utilise in the interim this site until affordable projects are realised in my community. We have workers consistently sleeping in cars throughout our streets and they need somewhere to go.



Community living has great benefits, as well as challenges, including laws that regulate the relationships between residents and between residents and the park operator. There have been calls for reforms to these laws for many years. After much advocacy, a public consultation process occurred which included seeking feedback on an issues paper and a consultation regulatory impact statement last year. Home owners and their representatives—such as the Queensland Manufactured Home Owners Association and the Palm Lake Resort Hervey Bay Homeowners Association—supported aspects of the bill, although they suggested parts could go further, such as registration to provide home owners with proof of ownership and preventing retirement village style fees. Park owners and industry representatives—such as the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland and the Urban Development Institute of Australia—largely opposed provisions in the bill due to their potential impact on the future viability of residential parks. We need to look after both the owners and the operators as we actually need more of these parks, not fewer.

The biggest change in the bill and the one of greatest interest to my constituents is how rents are set. The amendments ban the use of market rent reviews to increase rents and it caps annual rent increases. Understandably, this was supported by home owners and opposed by park operators, including AHC and Ingenia, who argued that the market should set the price for rents. The department responded that the limits on rent increases provide greater predictability as it prevents large increases in high-inflation environments. Overall, the bill introduces many beneficial changes to the regulation of manufactured home parks. Even if it does not contain everything that was sought, it is really good progress in this space.

The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill introduces a range of much requested changes to Queensland rental laws with the objective of strengthening renters' rights and making it easier to resolve disputes between tenants and landlords. The following provisions are included in the bill: a portable rental bond scheme; a sector code of conduct; the banning of rental bidding, which I think we are all really pleased to see an end to; and improvements to privacy. Views on the bill were diverse, with general support from renters and representatives, such as Tenants Queensland and Q Shelter. However, they also identified changes that they believe should have been included, such as: an annual cap on rent increases, which I have just mentioned for manufactured homes and it is interesting that it has not transgressed across to here; ending evictions with no grounds, which is really important, especially for our community, where after COVID renters were being displaced because Dutch auctions were being held because rents spiralled—some things happened that should never have happened; and improving energy efficiency in rental properties. This could occur if our advocacy regarding environmental upgrade agreements is realised so that owners can install those energy-capturing solar systems et cetera via loans that they can repay through their rates over a period of years.

The Property Council of Australia submitted that the bill undermines investor confidence which could result in a further decline in rental accommodation. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland opposed many of the changes in the bill for similar reasons, while supporting others. Ultimately, has anyone analysed whether these changes will lead to fewer rentals? Alternatively, if investors leave the accommodation market, will that lead to more houses to purchase, leading to a stabilisation of housing prices and rents?

There is an argument here for Treasury to model the housing market so that we can at least estimate how all of the different levers affect the market to make better policy and decisions in this chamber. As I am not an economist and we cannot find this information, I can only revert to personal experience. Yes, when I was very young, I was a renter; also, later on in my life, though this was many years ago, I was a landlord. The reality is that you look after your good tenants. I would have no issues with these changes if I was still a landlord. However, as I experienced, when you have a bad tenant—and, yes, there are those—the trauma to the owner is extensive and expensive with little power to evict those who refuse to pay their rent whilst trashing your house.

On the other side, there are good landlords who are then blanketed by rules and regulations brought in to address the bad landlords. Ultimately, these all add to the cost that is then passed onto the tenant. It is a vicious cycle; however, one outside the scope of this bill.

Finally, I would like to thank the minister, departmental staff, the committee and secretariat and all who contributed to the review of the bill. I commend them both to the House.



**Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (6.49 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate of the bills before the House. The first I will comment on is the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. From the outset, I should point out that for the last two years I have been a renter while waiting for some financial and settlement details to come through. I can assure the House firsthand of the issue around lack of rentals. In Logan, it is currently at 0.9 per cent. It is a very real issue out there to actually try to find a rental. It took three months and multiple applications for me to be able to find a rental and, even then, it was not necessarily what I wanted it to be. It ended up with my son having to sleep in a garage, but that was about the best I could do in order to give some level of stability. I certainly went to a number of rental open houses where the queues were out onto the street just to be able to have a look at the rental.

The other aspect of this bill that I am impressed with is in relation to the privacy and the amount of information that an applicant has to provide. A lot of the real estate agencies go through third parties in terms of obtaining all the data. The amount of personal information I had to provide—payslips, passports, driver's licence, my kids' names and ages—in order just to be able to apply for a rental, let alone be accepted, went to multiple third parties, and I have no idea where that data is now and where that is stored. For a rental applicant, that is a very scary proposition that you have just handed over pretty much all your identifying particulars on the off chance that you might actually get somewhere to live. I am glad to see provisions in this bill that will limit and restrict the amount of information that an applicant has to provide.


The other matter I wish to speak to is extending the entry notice periods. When I decided to move out of one of my rentals and I gave notice—and I did it purely because the landlord could not tell me how much the rent increase would be at the next lease expiry, so I indicated that I would leave—they obviously listed it for rent and had a number of people come through. It is really hard as a parent with small children to try to keep a place at a reasonable presentation, particularly if you are looking at a townhouse or apartment with three kids in there, with all their things, to try to keep it nice and clean. You want to do that for the landlord so they have a reasonable prospect of getting someone through. However, there was a period where I was given notices every day for 10 days. I had people coming through 10 days in a row. I would only get the notice the day before. I can understand that, for an average person who is still trying to perhaps pack up their life and move and have a life, to have to comply with that is quite taxing. I am very pleased with those provisions.

Moving onto the manufactured homes bill, this is important in my electorate. I have over five sites in my electorate and over 1,000 home sites, with plenty more on the way. We have a large Halcyon development coming into my area. That will bump up by another 500 sites in the next couple of years. I do not see any backward step in the market for this type of investment and residential lifestyle. I probably should say from the outset, now that I have moved out of my rental, I am now living in a manufactured home residential park with my mum. It is not exactly where I thought I would be at this point in my life, but it is really good when you do have family, and certainly there have been many times previously in my life where I had moved out of rentals and had to go back to live with Mum whilst waiting for one. That is really good when you have the opportunity. However, unfortunately, the big family home had to be sold when my parents got 'Newman-ed' back in 2014. They are now just in a small house themselves, and I had to lend them money when they had to sell the family home. A bit of reciprocity there with helping out parents. Hopefully soon I will be able to have a place where I can actually be living with my kids again.

This is an issue for people, and I am seeing it firsthand now that I am living in one of these residential manufactured parks. It was an area that I really did not have much visibility of until I came to represent areas like Eagleby where we have Palm Lake Resort, our Sapphire Gardens and Ruby Gardens—hundreds and hundreds of residents. The idea was quite foreign to me that you would, as a retired person, sell all your big family assets, go in and buy a house but still not actually own the land and still have to pay rent on that land, and that that rent would rise, with no control and no justification at all. The idea that a cap will be introduced is welcomed. I know it does not satisfy everyone that when CPI is low, people are going to be forced to endure the 3.5 per cent increase—I understand that—but considering the stories that I have heard of increases of 10 and 15 per cent annually, noting that many of the people who live there, like my parents, are on a pension, Mum on a disability pension, and that the ability to be able to meet those rising costs every year is quite difficult.

It is not a case of, 'I can just pack up the house that I bought and leave.' When it does become too much and the occupants in those manufactured homes have to move, the provisions again in this act to help streamline the sale and to protect the residents as they go through and move is something that is welcomed.

I thank the committee for coming out to Logan. A number of my residents appeared before the committee and also attended in the public gallery. That to me was evidence of how important these amendments are to people in my community. Many people I have spoken to at some of my mobile offices and community events are so happy to be able to financially plan for what those costs might look like, with what is left of their super or what is left of their pension or what is left of their assets in the bank as it gives them a bit of security. I commend both bills to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.56 pm): I rise to address the cognate debate on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill 2024. I wish to focus my contribution today particularly on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This legislation was first introduced on 21 March 2024 by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works where it was subsequently referred to the Queensland parliament's Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee for detailed scrutiny.

I note that the stated primary objective of this legislation includes things such as to enhance renters' rights, encourage private investment, improve tenancy issue resolution pathways and stabilise rents in the private rental market. These objectives are said to be enacted through amendments proposed to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. Accordingly, there are a number of proposed measures within this legislation, including reforming the rental bond process, extending entry notice periods and establishing protocols for the proper handling and disposal of renters' information, prescribing a rental application form that restricts the amount of information collected from prospective renters, as well as reforms to the imposition of fees and charges, including re-letting costs and specific rent payment methods.

I acknowledge that this legislation will also establish a framework for renters and property owners to agree on modifications for safety, security or accessibility, and clarify the process for personalisation modifications. Perhaps the most well-known measures that are contained within this legislation pertain to the application of an annual rent increase limit to the rental property rather than the tenancy itself, as well as the prohibiting of all forms of rent bidding.

In examining this legislation, the committee received 103 submissions, along with a separate public briefing and public hearing. In its tabled report No. 7, the Queensland parliament's Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee made one recommendation, that being that this legislation be passed. As already outlined, the Liberal National Party will not be opposing this legislation. That being said, as the parliamentary committee's examination identified, and as various stakeholders have highlighted publicly, there are many aspects with this legislation which may have significant implications and unintended consequences which deserve the further attention of this state Labor government.

Queensland is deep in the midst of a housing affordability and rental crisis under this Labor state government. Labor's consistent track record of rushed, ill-conceived and haphazard legislative changes have only exacerbated the housing crisis here in Queensland. Too often, rather than providing genuine relief for renters, Labor's various and sudden shifts in policy have created instability and uncertainty, making it harder for people to find affordable housing. We are seeing many people living in their cars in electorates right across Queensland, including in the Premier's own electorate.

The current state of Queensland's housing and rental sector only reinforces the need for well-considered and balanced reforms that address the complexities of the housing market without causing additional harm. These are matters which I raised and called on the Labor state government to address in 2021 when I addressed the debate on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. The state Labor government was warned that reforms which are aimed at the rental sector and the interactions between renters and lessors are an incredibly complex exercise that requires due diligence and a well-balanced approach. In the years that have followed, Labor's ongoing erratic approach to both regulatory and legislative reform has only plunged Queensland's housing and rental market into further chaos. Sadly, this has particularly impacted those who rely on rental properties. Labor's constant pivoting from one crisis to another without a clear and strategic vision has only damaged the confidence of both renters and landlords.

**Mr Tantari** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Hervey Bay, any more of that and you will be warned under the standing orders.

**Dr ROWAN:** I hear those interjections from the other side, but it is this instability which has been detrimental to all involved and it has created an environment where many do not feel secure in their housing situation. That is simply not good enough here in Queensland. Ultimately, a healthy and well-functioning housing market demands a diverse range of options, with renting being a critical component. For Queensland's housing and rental market to function effectively there must be a respectful coexistence between lessors and tenants. Policies that foster mutual respect and understanding are essential to creating a stable and supportive housing environment. Instead of pitting people or segments of property—lessors and lessees—against each other, Queensland needs solutions that promote genuine cooperation within the rental market.

Despite the disingenuous actions and political grandstanding by candidates and members of other political parties, including Labor and the Greens, demonising landlords will do nothing to solve the housing crisis. In fact, it will only deepen the divide. What is more, as has been reported nationally, the hypocrisy and duplicity on this matter by members of the Greens political party truly knows no bounds, given various Greens members of parliament and senators own multiple investment properties yet continue to demonise any Australian who owns more than one property. The Liberal National Party recognises and appreciates that the vast majority of rental properties are owned by mum-and-dad investors. These are everyday Australians and Queenslanders who provide essential housing options and if the wrong balance is struck, they will be driven away from the market. Such an exodus has the potential to lead to a significant reduction in available rental properties, further exacerbating Queensland's housing shortage and driving up rents.

Whilst enacting and mandating measures that are designed to protect tenants and to ensure affordability, the state Labor government has a duty to ensure these measures do not have unintended negative consequences on the rental market and on property investors including a reduced supply of rental properties, potential decreases in property maintenance, various market distortions as well as additional financial risks for landlords which could ultimately impact the overall efficiency and health of the rental housing sector.

In concluding my contribution today, I want to reaffirm the comments provided by the Liberal National Party's member for Lockyer and member for Burleigh in their statement of reservation to the committee, wherein they stated that—

In order for Queensland to have a healthy housing ecosystem, Government decision making on housing matters must be measured, well thought out, stable and sensible. This has been severely lacking in the Government's recent administration of the housing portfolio. It is important to note this, as past decisions taken by the Government have resulted in many of the changes which are included as part of this Bill.

The only thing I would add is that, incredibly, given the state Labor government's abysmal track record on affordable housing and improving rental opportunities for Queenslanders, the Greens political party have made it clear that they intend to support the re-election of the state Labor government again this October. Once again, the hypocrisy of the Greens is unbelievable. They have shown their true colours. They preference Labor all of the time. The Greens cannot be taken seriously on the subject of affordable housing and striking the right balance between landlords and renters.


As I have said before, tenants deserve to have rights and opportunities that reflect the standards and expectations of a modern society. However, importantly, those rights must be balanced with corresponding responsibilities to the lessors and property owners. Lessors and property owners have a duty to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities to their renters and these duties must be matched by reasonable rights.

**Government members** interjected.

**Dr ROWAN:** I hear those interjections from the members opposite, but here in Queensland we have a housing crisis which has been created by this Labor government. The Greens, which intend to support the Labor government again, have no credible solutions on this issue here in Queensland.

What we need is a balanced framework. We need to have more affordable housing here in Queensland. Certainly our renters need to have available housing stock and the Labor government has well and truly failed, not only on housing here in Queensland but also on a cost-of-living crisis which they are failing to address in a comprehensive, sustainable way. There are other crises right across Queensland with respect to health, youth crime and many other matters, but when it comes to housing here in Queensland they have failed over the last three terms. They do not have a credible strategy moving forward. We know that the Greens political party, which also does not have any credible

strategies whatsoever, will support and say anything to re-elect this Labor government. Queenslanders absolutely deserve better when it comes to housing here in Queensland. In October of 2024, it will be time for Queenslanders to show Labor the door.


 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (7.05 pm): I rise to speak on this cognate bill, but I will focus my contribution on the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. The bill will improve fairness and transparency for the nearly 38,000 Queenslanders who live in residential parks along with the many seniors and retirees who will consider parks as a good retirement living option in the future. I acknowledge the hard work of the Minister for Housing in developing this important legislation, as well as the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee. I thank the many individuals and organisations that have made submissions and attended public hearings. Public feedback is vital in developing legislation such as this. I also acknowledge the hard work done by the member for Bancroft who has been working on this for quite a while.

In 2022 the government heard from more than 2,200 home owners about their experiences in residential parks. Many highlighted the significant financial pressures caused by unpredictable and unsustainable site rent increases. The Miles government is committed to addressing concerns about rent increases in unsold homes in residential parks. This bill will amend the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act to improve consumer protections in the parks. It is not only a balanced approach that will assist residents but also a reasonable and viable approach for the industry.

The bill contributes to the objectives of the Homes for Queenslanders plan, the Queensland Housing Strategy and the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan. It ensures rental parks are fair and transparent and that the legislative framework for residential parks is contemporary and meets community expectations. Manufactured homes are a vital part of the housing solution. Residential parks, such as the Sunnybank Hills Caravan Park in my electorate, house both short-term and long-term residents. The Sunnybank Hills Caravan Park is well-known in our community. It is located across the road from some fantastic local restaurants, as well as the popular Lucky Star Tavern where we held the Stretton by-election victory party. We were pleased to be joined later in the night by a few of the residents from the Sunnybank Hills Caravan Park. They certainly had a good time. Many of the residential parks around Queensland are close to public transport and provide great options for seniors and retirees who have moved on from their family home.

In order to ensure residential parks remain viable, the legislative framework needs to be modernised. To do that, we are balancing the relationship between park operators and home owners. The amendments in this bill will prevent unfair business practices and provide greater clarity and predictability of costs for residents. It will prohibit market rent reviews and new site agreements and stop them being used in existing site agreements. There have been cases where some site rents have been discounted while a park is under development to attract people to buy, only to be increased steeply once the park is full—that is something we absolutely want to stamp out. Our strong regulatory response will limit site rent increases for current and future home owners to CPI or 3.5 per cent, whichever is higher. This will provide relief for home owners who will be able to predict future costs with greater confidence.

The bill will also establish a buyback scheme that will incentivise park operators to prioritise the sale of previously owned homes and it will also encourage park operators to take responsibility for maintaining the quality and amenity of parks to attract prospective new home owners. In addition, the bill will update disclosure requirements, remove complexities involved in the sale of homes, modernise the act's termination provisions and allow QCAT to consider a broader range of factors and safeguards to ensure that park operators can adjust to the reforms. Overall, this bill supports a fairer and more stable residential park industry for consumers and investors. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (7.09 pm): I rise to speak on both the bills, but I am particularly proud to speak in support of the manufactured homes bill. I love—I really mean that—representing the great residents of Greenbank Gardens, Claremont Resort, Chambers Pines and Opal and Amber by Living Gems in Logan Village. Over the years residential park residents have brought up a variety of issues with me. One of the most important is the huge increases in site rents that could simply blindside residents, upsetting their plans for a stable, secure and safe retirement. I was invited to speak about these issues at a packed community hall at Claremont Resort and I also spoke to many other residents about these issues. People were passionate, they were direct and a little angry. Frankly, I agree with them. Many elderly couples are downsizing and they are seeking certainty and community, and they look to us to keep them financially secure.

Recently, larger corporations have taken over what were often family run parks and I think some of them have taken advantage to cleverly push the boundaries of market rent reviews. Some of these parks were old enough to have their roots as caravan parks. At that time there was little regulation over rents simply because the caravan park residents—or at least enough of them—could relatively easily vote with their feet; they could pack up and move to a caravan park with better rates. At least they had that credible threat to do so and that kept the rates lower as, of course, a park owner earns nothing on an empty caravan park site. Now almost all of these manufactured homes, although they are on a plot that is perhaps not much bigger than a caravan site, are built—and some people would say this is the way they are designed—to be impossible to move.

These homes are not in any way caravans. They can be very spacious, comfortable and, in some cases, luxurious. This means that downsizing seniors make a major capital investment into their manufactured home and soon they can actually feel trapped in that place, trapped in that investment. This means there is a distinct imbalance. Residents can buy into the strong sales pitches, be wowed by the newly built pool or bowling green and have the slick salesman gloss over the issues of long-term costs. As I said, these seniors felt they were buying into security where their costs would be controlled so they could enjoy a secure retirement. However, we saw these extreme rent increases and an abuse of the market rent review process.

This bill restores more financial security to residents and indeed a measure of dignity by limiting rent increases to either the consumer price index or 3.5 per cent, meaning that next year's family budget will not have the extreme blow that hurts our park residents. Speaking to residents, we recognised that many residents are pensioners or part pensioners. Because the Commonwealth pension is linked to the consumer price index, if there is a higher CPI, the pension will increase in parallel. That provides certainty to seniors in our residential parks and a fair return to park owners.

Many park owners and managers do the right thing by residents. We know that a community works best when they work together. However, just like most things in human nature, sometimes this is just not the case. This can be especially daunting after a resident moves into a nursing home or, even more sadly, is deceased. In these cases distressed sons and daughters or other family members are left to deal with the sale of their parents' manufactured home. Of course, there is no incentive for the park to facilitate that sale; they still receive the site rent even though the house is empty. No-one is driving on the roads or using the bowling green or the hall, but they will receive all of the site rent. I have heard that when a park is still expanding there are even incentives to do the opposite as sales of brand new houses make money for park owners and older houses do not.


The member for Gregory spoke of limitations on advertising and holding open houses being placed on home owners, making it even harder. I have heard the same stories including park owners saying the home had to be sold through the park owner's sales office. I spoke to one gentleman whose father was in a home and he was trying to sell it to give his father financial security. His father was quite distressed that he wanted to hand over what limited capital he had, but the park was refusing to participate. I asked them for a meeting. It was actually a park outside my electorate. I asked for a meeting. They did not respond. I asked for another meeting. Finally, we set up a meeting. When I spoke to the gentleman and said, 'Are we still doing the meeting next week?', he said, 'No. As soon as we confirmed the meeting, they rang, made an offer and concluded the sale.' They would rather stall than conclude the sale or actually talk to an MP about the complex issues involved. That is why we are acting.

As sales fail to go through, families' limited savings dwindle and the families and former residents are in distress. That is why we are introducing a new buyback and site rent reduction scheme for families in this distressing situation. It will limit their losses but, more importantly, reduce rents on sites by 25 per cent after they have been uninhabited for a certain time. That really incentivises the park to work for sales because after 18 months, if the park owner has not found a buyer, they must buy the home at an agreed price. We want to see park owners with the same motivation to help owners get a fair price for their home and these site rent reductions to continue so this provision gets it right. I note that this is distinct; these are where people have a significant capital investment that is trapped on a particular site and a particular site rental agreement. They are very different from other agreements like caravan parks or normal renters where, although it is difficult, there is a credible threat that you can walk away.

I want to thank some of the MPs who really worked hard on this. I can see the member for Hervey Bay, who I know is passionate about this. I speak particularly of the chair, Chris Whiting. We would have spoken almost weekly about our campaign to do this. He was the one who really kept it on track. I also thank the member for Waterford and, of course, the member for Macalister, Mel McMahon, as

well as Shane King. This is a passion project for people like ourselves. We have sat down at kitchen tables, at halls and at senior events. Collectively, we can feel proud that we have made a difference and we are providing certainty and security for future residents. I also want to mention the housing minister, who took this issue seriously and pushed it through the department after we made those representations.

Now I will be going to these houses with a new conversation. I will be speaking to them about embedded networks and about the \$1,300 that two Labor governments are delivering to reduce their cost of living. I will continue to keep fighting for the cost of living for manufactured housing residents because they are great communities; they are great people. I am extraordinarily proud to be able to stand up for them in this place for a better deal.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.17 pm): In this cognate debate I am going to largely limit my comments to Labor's rental reforms. I will start by saying that I think it is quite generous to actually call them rental reforms when really all we are doing is tinkering at the edges. This bill bans rent bidding, which is itself a practice that has only become prolific because of the desperate state of the housing crisis. The bill also allows renters to make reasonable modifications, it increases notice periods for access to the property and it mandates fee-free rental payment options. These are all small but good reforms. Notably, they are all changes that the Greens proposed in 2021. I will go to that question quickly of fee-free rental payments.

Some real estate agents require tenants to make payments through apps that can charge processing fees as much as four or five per cent of the usual rent. That may not be a surprise to the Labor and LNP landlords in the building but it shocked me. That means a typical couple renting an apartment in Brisbane at the median price and made to pay through one of these apps would have paid an extra \$3,000 in rent since we tried to mandate this very same change almost three years ago. If Labor had supported this proposal back in 2021 instead of three years later, they could have saved renters thousands of dollars, but they did not. They squibbed on it back then and they are squibbing on meaningful reform again now.

This bill does nothing to address the fundamental power imbalances between renters and landlords. This is why in relation to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill I move—

That the words 'now read a second time' be deleted and the following words be inserted:

'be considered once the government commits to legislating a freeze on rent increases, a long-term cap on rent increases, and commits to giving renters a guaranteed right to a lease renewal'

I take no pleasure in suggesting that the very modest reforms in this bill be delayed until we get some meaningful reform, but these are very important issues. Rent controls and a genuine right to remain are too important to be left for kicking the can down the road, especially in the face of a potential LNP government in October. We heard a bit of a wet lettuce retort from the member for Greenslopes about rent freezes. He referred to the Per Capita think tank report, but he neglected to mention that the report says that rent freezes might be troublesome because in Queensland our protections for renters are so weak that renters have no right to remain, which puts them at jeopardy.

In circumstances where rents have risen three times faster than inflation over the past few years, I do not think that you can say with a straight face that there is not an argument for freezing rents to let wages catch up. Wages have been close to stagnant for a little while now. They certainly have not increased at a rate of 45 per cent or 47 per cent over the past few years. A temporary rent freeze will narrow that gap somewhat. It is an important step that the government should be taking.

The Per Capita report that the member for Greenslopes referred to gives us some very interesting figures about what rent caps have actually done when they have been implemented. The ACT government put rent caps in place that, over the year to 2023, resulted in a 1.9 per cent decline in rents while the rest of the country saw increases of over 10 per cent, but far be it for the member for Greenslopes to try to give a complete picture. Much of his efforts focused on the Greens because he knows he is in trouble as his party keep neglecting renters. They will keep neglecting renters at their own peril.

There is no doubt that Labor could cap rents today. We know that is the case because the manufactured homes bill, which we are debating at the same time as renters' rights, caps rents for people in manufactured homes to CPI or 3½ per cent, whichever is the higher. I do not think that is

good enough. It is not good enough for people living in manufactured homes and it is certainly not good enough for any other renter, especially when they have had successive years of ludicrous rent increases. However, at least it would be a start.

We have heard from ministers that the justification for the changes to manufactured homes legislation is fundamentally that rents have risen faster than wages. That is no less the case for the 1.7 million renters in Queensland. I will say it again: in the last three years, rents have risen three times faster than wages. We have seen different figures of 45 per cent to 47 per cent increases in rents over those few years. It is clear: Labor cannot claim that it is not possible or that there is some barrier to putting rent caps in place. They cannot claim that they will not work. I will send the member for Greenslopes a copy of the report that he referred to so sparingly. It is there. It is plain and simple. It is in their own legislation. Clearly, Labor seems to think that some renters deserve the protection of rent caps but other renters do not. The 38,000 people who live in manufactured homes deserve a rent cap but the other 1.7 million renters get nothing—zilch.

Before everyone gets carried away saying that the Greens have no credibility, I say what rot. The amount of time both sides of the House spend in here talking about us demonstrates how scared they are of losing seats to the Greens at the October election. It is not just us saying this. QCOS agrees with our position. Tenants Queensland agrees with our position. QCOS gave evidence that, in as many words, similar protections must be provided to renters to provide increased housing security and affordability.

The so-called rent caps that the government is introducing through this bill are almost laughable. As the member for South Brisbane indicated, when they passed their yearly limits on rent increases we told them that it would jeopardise the security of renters even further. That has now had the predictable effect of incentivising landlords to evict their tenants after six months so they can jack up the rent. We told them it would happen and they ignored us. QCOS told them that it would happen. TQ told them it would happen. It has taken 14 months for them to get their act together and reverse these changes. How many hundreds of tenants have been evicted because of Labor's sloppy legislation over those 14 months?

We really have to point to the housing free marketeers here. They say that we cannot mess with the housing market, but look where a free housing market has got us. It has got us to the point where people are literally one rent increase away from eviction and where people are being turfed out into a rental market that offers nothing. Today my team had a look and the cheapest two-bedroom rental they could find anywhere in my electorate was 470 bucks a week, which is more than anyone on a JobSeeker payment or similar will get.

In terms of the right to renew, again, the government's claim was mind-boggling. They take us for fools if they claim that they have ended no-grounds evictions. Every tenant is susceptible to being evicted at the end of their lease. That is not an end to no-grounds evictions. Going back to the Per Capita report, they said that allowing no-fault evictions was one of the key things that should be addressed in our housing market. Will the government end no-grounds evictions? Now is their chance. They squibbed on it before, but they have to do it now.


You cannot do one without the other. Rent caps cannot work if you do not have a right to remain and a right to remain is worth nothing if your landlord can jack up the rent as much as they like to effectively make it unaffordable next time around. We have to work on both of these issues to address this undeniable power imbalance between renters and landlords. If the government are not going to do it now, if they are not going to make these changes, then they will lose seats and they are going to lose government. They have to accept that more than one-third of Queenslanders are renters and they are neglecting them day in, day out.

I cannot finish without acknowledging that the Labor government is now parroting the *Courier-Mail* and the LNP's lines by blaming the government-made housing crisis on immigration rates. That is disgraceful. It is nothing more than a dog whistle. It is despicable that those on the government benches are comfortable using migrants as a scapegoat for their own abysmal failures. It is not migrants who have failed to keep pace with the need for social housing and who have spent generations bowing to the demands of the property industry; it is this government. Instead of again waiting for years to apply our policy, please, for renters across Queensland, just do it now.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Before I call the next member, I remind members that every member who now speaks is speaking to the amendment.



 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (7.27 pm): I rise to say some brief words in support of the amendments moved by the member for Maiwar calling for a rent freeze, a long-term rent cap and a guaranteed right to a lease renewal. Today we have heard many speeches from people lauding the rent caps that are being put in place for people in manufactured homes and rightly pointing out the pressure that people in manufactured homes have been under as they have dealt with rent increases that they cannot afford and that have been extremely unfair. The fact that we can do this for one group of renters but not others is mind-boggling.

Labor could be capping rents today. They know how to do it because it is in the manufactured homes bill. The measures they are putting in place for manufactured home owners are still insufficient. It is not good enough. It is not good for people living in manufactured homes or for the many other renters who have faced successive years of rent increases, but it will be a start. The justification that the minister gave this morning—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member for South Brisbane, I remind you that you are speaking to the amendment moved by the member for Maiwar, which relates to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. You have already spoken on the cognate debate.

**Dr MacMAHON:** I would like to share a story from a constituent with whom I spoke over the weekend and for whom a limit on rent increases would be life changing.


I spoke with this pensioner. This woman has already been priced out of an NRAS property. She had expected that she would be able to live the rest of her life in an affordable NRAS property, but an exorbitant rent increase forced her out of that home, forcing her into another private rental, and she now feels more vulnerable than ever. She is not alone. With both federal Labor and state Labor abandoning NRAS tenants, we will see more people forced out of their homes because of rent increases that they cannot afford. This week there is data out to show that, if a rent freeze had been put in place in Queensland in March last year, renting households would have saved over \$2,000. That is money that could have been used for essentials, food, transport, health care or dental care. Better Renting Executive Director Joel Dignam said—

If people's energy or groceries bills were going up \$3,000 a year, it would be the subject of talkback radio every month ... With rent, it's almost treated as the way things are.

We know that this government can do it, because it is doing it for manufactured home renters. I also address some of the arguments that a rent freeze, rent cap or rental regulation would result in a reduction in housing stock. The ACT has had caps on rent increases for some time without a reduction in the number of rental properties. Evidence from Spain has shown no reduction in rental supply as a result of rent control regulation. A rental stabilisation study from New Jersey found that there was little to no significant impact on new constructions. Similar evidence from AHURI shows that changes to tenancy laws have not caused investors to divest from properties. Without these measures in place, do we know what is guaranteed? If rents are not frozen, more renters will be priced out of their homes, children will be forced to switch schools because they will be forced into a new area, people will be forced into financial stress—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for South Brisbane, I understand your contribution. I bring you back to the amendment. The amendment is not an opportunity to debate rent freezes; it is about deleting the words 'now read a second time' and inserting the following words 'be considered once the government commits to legislating a freeze on rent increases'. It is a procedural amendment that you have moved to do that before the second reading. I think I have given you quite a lot of latitude. Do you have much more?

**Dr MacMAHON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I urge all members to support this amendment and to think about those renters in their electorates already in financial stress who will be struggling with future rent increases.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (7.32 pm): What this amendment would do is delay commencement of important reforms that would help thousands and thousands of renters in this state and tens of thousands of home owners in residential home parks. I cannot believe that the Greens would try and delay protection for renters. This is not the first time we have seen this, though. The Greens in the federal parliament teamed up to delay and block for months the Housing Australia Future Fund, which stopped struggling Queenslanders get access to that important investment that would deliver more

social and affordable homes. Right now, they are doing the same again in the federal parliament, delaying the Help to Buy Scheme that would help low to middle income earners in this state get into home ownership. I now move—

That the question be now put.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

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

Resolved in the negative under standing order 106(10).



**Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (7.38 pm): Following that political stunt pulled by the Greens just to waste the time of the parliament, I rise to add my contribution to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill 2024, which we are debating cognately in the House today. I will direct my comments towards the manufactured homes bill. The objective of the manufactured homes bill is to increase certainty for existing home owners by giving immediate relief from large, unpredictable and unsustainable rent increases and to improve consumer protections in residential parks. The bill seeks to address many of the concerns raised by current residents including site rent increases by getting rid of rent reviews, streamlining the sales process, providing greater transparency for home owners or prospective home owners, introducing new registration requirements for residential parks and information and disclosure requirements on park owners.

In Hervey Bay we have many thousands of manufactured home sites. The Hervey Bay electorate has 14 residential complexes, which is, I believe, the most in any electorate in Queensland. Many hundreds of these home residents have spoken to me over the years on many occasions leading up to the introduction of this bill in this House, and expressed their views on the current legislation as it stands. They told me that the legislation needed to be reviewed because they believe that the power dynamic between the residents and park owners had over time become progressively more and more difficult for those individuals to live in their piece of paradise in their later years.

I am proud to be part of a Miles Labor government that heard their call and acted by bringing this bill before the House to resolve the most difficult issues residents in Hervey Bay raised with me. They include the capping of annual general rate increases that will, for many residents, add a level of certainty, particularly in these days of cost-of-living pressures. Many local residents told me that that was their No. 1 concern given that many had previously experienced substantial spikes in rent over the years. This will have a big impact on current and new residents who want to take advantage of a residential park lifestyle as they consider that in their future.

I want to thank the committee chair, the member for Bancroft, who took up my suggestion that the committee come to Hervey Bay so that my local home owners could engage with the committee and be listened to directly. Thank you, member for Bancroft. I acknowledge the work he has done to get change for the better. I also want to acknowledge the member for Kurwongbah, as well as the member for Maryborough, with whom I have had a lot of discussions regarding the situation that a lot of residents are in across the Fraser Coast. I also need to acknowledge the member for Maryborough for being heavily involved in the changes that have come about. I acknowledge the work the member for Bancroft has done to get change for the better, and today he will see the fruition of his work—very well done to him.

I would also like to thank the members of joint home owners committees from parks in Hervey Bay and Maryborough who presented to the committee at the Hervey Bay Golf Club and the residents who came out in great numbers, as the member for Maryborough mentioned in his contribution, to make their position known to the committee and the government. Congratulations to you all. Your efforts to instigate change are reflected in this bill.

The measures contained in the bill are the most comprehensive reforms brought to the manufactured homes park sector in the last 20 years. The difference between the LNP and the Miles government on these matters cannot be more stark. We engage, we consult, we listen and we act. I note a conversation at the hearing held at Deception Bay between the member for Burleigh and a witness, where the witness said—

I would tell you—

and this is to the member for Burleigh—

that on no occasion has the LNP engaged. We have been sending emails to all the LNP and David Crisafulli—

that is, the Leader of the Opposition—

has refused to engage.

The member for Burleigh then said—

... we have had numerous conversations.

to which the witness replied—

Let us call it what it is. He—

that is, the Leader of the Opposition—

has refused to engage. We have actually written to him—

that is, the Leader of the Opposition—

in the last month and asked what the LNP's plans are going forward and to date we have not received a response, but I would be really grateful if you two—

that is, the committee members who were there—

could go to him and say, 'Look, you need to have a plan going forward because these people need to know what you are going to do.'

The member for Burleigh said—

We have a plan going forward; do not worry about that.


You have to ask yourself: what is that plan? We have not seen it. It is all talk, talk, talk. What is the plan, member for Burleigh? You have no idea. You told the witness at the hearing that you have a plan. What is the plan? Where is it? It is nowhere. You do not have one, as always. Home owners are waiting, like we are waiting for most of the other LNP plans that they talk about.

**Mr Hart:** You've been in government since 2015. What have you done? You've done nothing.

**Mr TANTARI:** No. Keep going. What is your plan? It is 2024. Where is your plan?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Burleigh and member for Hervey Bay, I ask you to cease your quarrelling. Member for Hervey Bay, I remind you to direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr TANTARI:** This Miles government legislation does deliver the long-awaited improvements to the rights and protections for many of our most vulnerable in the community, like those in Hervey Bay and across Queensland—many who rely on home parks to provide them with safe, affordable and secure housing. I congratulate the Minister for Housing for bringing this bill forward. I support the bill.

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (7.45 pm): I am proud to rise in support of both of these bills. I will firstly deal with the bill that relates to residential tenancies and renters. The Miles Labor government is proud to be supporting Queensland renters through our Homes for Queenslanders plan, which includes initiatives to support Queensland renters, with over \$160 million of additional funding to help tackle the cost of living. By expanding the range of support available, more eligible renters can find, get and crucially keep a rental home.


That is a real relief for Bundamba renters right now. Thousands of Bundamba locals and local households will be supported by these reforms. This direct cost-of-living support goes alongside additional protections for renters that are contained in these laws. We are strengthening the rights of renters in addition to easing the cost-of-living pressures experienced by renters in my community and right across Queensland. It is through these reforms that Labor is delivering real and practical assistance for renters.

It is a great pity that the LNP thinks that our Home for Queenslanders plan is too much. Why? It is because it is building more social and affordable housing and offering more support to renters. That is something that the LNP simply does not believe in.

Turning to the manufactured homes bill, I am also very proud to support our reforms to deliver greater protections and cost-of-living certainty for manufactured home owners. These reforms make conditions fairer for residents, many of whom are seniors. These are home owners who rent the land that their homes are on, often facing steep unpredictable rent hikes. Many are pensioners on fixed incomes who are struggling to cope with rising cost-of-living pressures.

I want to place on record my acknowledgement and thanks for our local Bundamba manufactured home owners at communities like River Terraces, Redbank Palms and Laeta Living at Blackstone. I thank them for their time, their feedback and their participation in these reforms. I think of Gary Rankin and Maree Tierney from River Terraces. I have had many meetings with them right through the process of these reforms, including through the regulatory impact statement consultations. It is because of people like Gary and Maree and so many others across Queensland that home owners will be happy to see these laws change to limit site rent increases to CPI or 3.5 per cent and for a ban to be introduced on rent reviews, as rent reviews have been used to justify unrealistic steep rental hikes. These reforms will make it much fairer to sell a manufactured home.

While others talk, Labor is taking real action to deliver immediate and tangible relief, ensuring fairer rent practices and greater security for these home owners. This is what the new Miles Labor government is about: listening and delivering. I conclude by placing on record my thanks and acknowledgment to the member for Bancroft, the member for Maryborough and the minister, who is in the House now. These are wonderful reforms and I commend them to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.50 pm): I rise to address the cognate debate on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. As many others have said at the outset, the LNP and I support renters. I am, as you have heard ad nauseam, the father of five children. At the present they all still reside at home. I have high aspirations for them. I hope that one day they can aspire to home ownership but I suspect, like all of us, they may have to make a start as renters within the rental market, so I will always support efforts to make sure that as renters they get a fair go.

It is very much a balancing act, because without landlords you do not have renters; indeed, without renters you do not have landlords, so you have to make sure it is finely balanced. I would also point out that you need things like good planning laws, critical infrastructure and a few other things to make sure there is a supply so that people like my kids have places they can move into, whether as home owners or as renters. At the moment, the fact that I still have living under my roof a 23-year-old carpenter, a 21-year-old university student and a 19-year-old in their gap year suggests that on the Sunshine Coast our market is not in the right place, and it may not be for many years to come.

I mentioned that it is important to keep that balance. I fear that we may have already tipped that too far in favour of the renter. I will use an anecdotal story to illustrate that. I take quite a lot of offence at what the Greens members of this chamber often refer to as wealthy landlords. Not all owners of investment properties are wealthy by any stretch of the imagination. I think particularly of my parents. My parents are not upper class. They worked most of their lives to scrape into the middle class and then worked their way into the middle class quite solidly. When we moved back to Queensland some 35 years ago, between them they had spent a combined total of 50 years working in the aged care sector. They have done it tough: they put four kids through school, they made sure they provided for us and sent us on our way.

As they neared their retirement years they decided to make an investment, something that would give them an additional return on top of their superannuation and their pension payments. They did not buy a property in New Farm, Ascot or Hamilton. They bought an investment property in Morayfield, a couple of minutes up the road from where they live in Burpengary. They were good landlords. They worked hard to ensure they were responsible and provided all the maintenance and ensured everything was kept shipshape. They were also very understanding when at various times their renters were not able to make payments and came to an agreement through the real estate to ensure those renters could stay on.

Sadly, after the last lot of legislation that we passed in 2022 they realised that things were just getting a little bit too hard to continue to be landlords, so they sold the property. In one way it was great because aspirational first home buyers, such as I was talking about earlier, purchased their first home. That is great. That is wonderful, but it has also taken a property out of the rental market. We heard some statistics earlier on, and please do not quote me, but I understand we have seen a reduction of some 20,000 rental properties in Queensland. You cannot keep doing that and expect people to find the housing they require.

As I said, I fear that the last tranche of legislation may have tipped that scale a little bit too far, and I am concerned we may be going even further here again tonight. Others have gone into some detail, but let me briefly touch on the unintended consequences. There is the potential that we will see a further reduction in the rental pool available for renters looking for housing. There is the potential that

we will see steeper rent increases. We also fear this may limit the choice for how tenants structure their rental payments. I said at the outset that we want to support renters. We are not going to oppose this, but we will be watching very closely how this is implemented and how it is received within the rental market and whether it does have any of those unintended consequences we have listed.

In the time remaining I want to return to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. Like others, I am very fortunate to have a number of these in the electorate of Glass House: the Twin Cedars Village outside of Beerburrum and the Living Gems Village in Maleny. We have a very large new one coming on the outskirts of Beerwah. We are not sure when the opening date is for that. It seems to still be a fair way off. Just on the edge of the electorate at Palmwoods we now have two: the more established Palmwoods Tropical Village and the recently opened GemLife. They are very attractive to a certain buyer. I am shocked to admit that I am now in the over-50 category and could potentially move into one of those lifestyle villages—apart from the fact that I still have five children living at home and they would not be welcome, so maybe that is the way we get around it. No, I do not think that is me yet.

In the same way I mentioned that we need to find the balance in terms of landlords and renters, we also need to find the balance between site owners and park owners. You cannot have a site owner unless you have a park to own a site in; therefore, you need people who are willing to make investments in establishing these villages. Equally, a park owner is not going to get a return on their investment if you do not keep your site owners happy, so it is a case of finding that finely tuned balance.

I know there are some amendments in this legislation that will look to achieve that, but there is one that I particularly want to raise as a concern, which is that we will now be capping site rental increases to the higher of CPI or 3.5 per cent. I know others have said it, but I need to repeat it: many of the people living in these villages are pensioners. Their pensions are capped to CPI. If you get a situation where CPI is less than 3.5 per cent, they will be disadvantaged. They will have a net increase in their site rent based on their living expenses and their income, so that is a concern.


The Greens just suggested that we do something similar in the broader rental market. I think that would just be catastrophic. You would see property owners leave the market in droves. I am pleased to see that the Labor Party agreed with the LNP and voted that down.

Like others, I think this reform in manufactured homes and residential parks has been a long time coming. It has involved a lot of consultation. Obviously there are a lot of people who live in these homes and villages. They have had a lot of input. I know they had greater expectations than what we are seeing in this legislation. There are missed opportunities around things like conflict resolution, financial transparency and how both site owners and park owners conduct themselves in their negotiations with each other and ongoing. Like the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, we know there are very good things in this, and we will therefore support it. We do put a place marker out there to say we think there are things that need to be monitored and there is potentially further work required.

I will finish my contribution with an acknowledgment that addressing these balancing acts between renters and landlords and park owners and site owners is really only tinkering on the margins of addressing our housing availability and affordability crisis. I briefly touched on supply. That is a critical matter that needs to be addressed if we are to ensure people like my five children will ultimately one day be either home owners or renters.

I mentioned briefly in our debate earlier this evening the disastrous news that AV Jennings has pulled out of their development in Caboolture West, citing investment uncertainty and infrastructure costs. I commend Mayor Peter Flannery of the City of Moreton Bay for calling out the fact that it is all well and good to have housing targets and it is all well and good to have growth areas, but if we do not get the critical infrastructure like water, sewerage and roads then we are not going to make these affordable. We are not going to make them a wise investment decision for developers, and in the end it is potential aspirant home owners who will miss out. We will never fix our housing crisis if we do not address those matters.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Before I call the member for Waterford, I will just warn all members about walking around or using materials as props. I will directly address the member for Coomera. You have been holding material up, and the Speaker has ruled on this before, so I would just caution you to be aware of those behaviours.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (8.00 pm): I rise to support the bills before the House, and I start by saying how very proud I am to be a member of this Labor government that is absolutely focused on delivering cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders. People who live in manufactured home parks are often pensioners on low, fixed incomes. This bill will improve fairness and transparency for close to 40,000 Queenslanders, giving them more certainty about future rent increases.


My community of Waterford includes a large number of manufactured home parks, and I am very close to many of those communities at Ingenia, Halcyon Rise, Regal Waters, Palm Lakes Bethania and River Glen. There are many more. I really want to thank the housing minister for bringing in these reforms and recognising that a lot of these Queenslanders are very vulnerable and are on very fixed incomes, and the rate rises that we have seen from these big, multinational companies have far outweighed what these seniors can afford. This is exactly what Labor governments do. I am just so proud and, thank you, housing minister, for bringing this much needed bill.

The bill contains the most comprehensive reforms to manufactured home parks in 20 years. It will limit rent increases and prohibit the use of market reviews as a basis for rent increases. As Patrick Glynn from Ingenia Bethania outlined in his evidence to the committee, market reviews can lead to increases of up to 14 per cent every year. It is an untenable situation for so many residents and for those people considering moving into these parks. Limiting rent increases will give people on fixed incomes the ability to properly plan ahead.

The bill will also make it easier to sell manufactured homes, streamlining the sales process, so that home owners do not feel stuck. We know that, as many people's circumstances change, they may want to move or they may need to move. These reforms will mean that park operators will have to reduce site rent and buy back unsold homes so home owners do not continue paying full rent while they are going through the sale process. Importantly, this bill makes a range of changes to make it crystal clear that the laws are focused on protecting the rights and interests of home owners and rebalancing that relationship between park owners and home owners.

Since I was elected, I have had countless conversations with home owners who have told me that there needs to be more fairness in these parks. I have heard about unfair rent and insurance increases, maintenance not being carried out and relationships between home and park owners breaking down. This feedback was also borne out in the consultation that we undertook in 2022. Over 2,200 home owners told us what changes they wanted to see, and I am pleased that that process has led to this bill. In particular, I want to acknowledge Roger Briggs, Chris Dickson, Patrick Glynn and Gerard McDonald who presented to the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee. I also want to acknowledge the home owners committees from Ingenia Bethania and Halcyon Rise, both of which made submissions to the committee process.

I also want to place on record my thanks to the member for Bancroft for his work as chair of the committee and for holding a hearing in Logan so that home owners could easily give and hear evidence. I also thank Roger Marshall for his unwavering advocacy on behalf of home owners not just in my electorate of Waterford and his home of Regal Waters but also across the state. This bill is about delivering transparency and fairness for people living in manufactured home parks. As part of the Homes for Queenslanders plan, the Miles government is committed to continue modernising the legislative framework around housing to improve protections. This bill is part of that work and it is part of our commitment to deliver cost-of-living relief for so many Queenslanders. I thoroughly commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (8.04 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate, with specific reference to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The stated aim of the bill is to strengthen renters' rights, support private investment, provide better pathways to resolve tenancy issues and stabilise rents in the private rental market.

In relation to the aim of resolving issues in tenancies, it should be noted that the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Annual Report 2021-22 shows that the number of lodgements relating to tenancy disputes have been trending down in recent years—a trend which predates the implementation of Labor's stage 1 reforms. In 2022-23, 10,398 tenancy lodgements were made to QCAT. This represents just about 1.6 per cent of the 618,442 rental properties in Queensland. Statistically, that is known as a rounding error.

It is evident, therefore, that existing tenancy agreements already provide ample protections for tenants, with a minimal number of conflicts or disputed tenancies in Queensland. This leads me to wonder if the government's exaggerated assessment of the number of disputes was simply a pretext used to justify introducing the bill's stage 2 reforms. Many changes in this bill will significantly and materially disadvantage investment property owners. If lessors are required to meet more onerous requirements and absorb greater financial risk without being able to recoup those costs through rent, many will inevitably leave the market altogether.

It is also important to note that 90 to 95 per cent of available rental stock is owned by private, mum-and-dad property investors who have invested their savings in investment properties as a nest egg for the future. Investing in property is designed as a ladder of opportunity to accumulate personal wealth and is a core principle of Menzies' ladder of opportunity for ordinary, everyday Australians.

Rental properties are investments, just like shares, bonds or rare books. Rental property income is treated like other investments and is heavily taxed. Why then would the government introduce measures designed to reduce the value of a person's assets, which is what the bill and the others like it will do? The fundamental question here is: are rental properties a legitimate form of actual investment or not? What makes the government think that it has a right to simply remove it from the same operation of the free market as other investments? Property owners have rights too and should be free to determine rental charges and frequency of increase for their hard-earned investment based on their own cost increases and risk level.

Many of the bill's changes risk driving these private landlords to exit the sector altogether. A 2023 survey from the Property Investment Professionals of Australia found that 43 per cent of respondents had cited changing tenancy legislation as a reason for selling their investment property, saying it had become too costly or too difficult to manage. Many others mentioned the loss of control over their property and increased compliance costs due to growing administrative and financial burdens. It is just overpowering.

A Queensland government funded study by Deloitte Access Economics looked at the impact of stage 1 reforms and found that the reforms would lead to property owners maintaining less autonomy over their leased houses. In extreme cases, property owners may decide to simply opt out from the long-term rental market, turning instead to alternatives such as short-stay accommodation or retaining the property for their own personal use. This bill's imposition of rent controls will add yet more constraints on property owners, further reducing the supply and cost of housing in Queensland.

The bill seeks to limit the rent increases to 12-month intervals attached to the property instead of the tenancy. Something that never seems to be mentioned when talking about the rental market in Queensland is the fact that the landlords themselves have been hit with massive increases in costs and risks over the last few years. Property ownership in Queensland has been hit with significantly increased cost pressures, including increased interest rates; increased compliance costs for the government's stage 1 reforms; unprecedented supply chain issues impacting construction costs; and eye-watering increases in the cost of insurance—due to the Queensland government's crime epidemic—and property taxes.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ANDREW:** It is the truth. It is on the news every night. This has left many property owners with little choice—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ANDREW:** I am not taking interjections. This has left many property owners with little choice but to take action in passing on some of these increased costs to tenants, resulting in higher weekly rents. The reality is that there is a real cost to owning a rental property, including the cost of land tax; council rates, which have gone up in some places in my electorate and outside my electorate by over 100 per cent; insurance premiums; and repairs and maintenance, which have gone through the roof. Even the government will say, 'The cost of everything has gone up 100 per cent,' but people with rentals do not get that opportunity. Loan interest charges increase on an annual basis, but some increase more frequently with interest rates going up almost monthly at one point. Some of these costs have soared on an annual basis over the past few years, particularly insurance, and we know why that is. I just expanded on that.


In truth, renters and landlord interests converge: if costs are lower for landlords, then costs will be lower for renters. It is simple mathematics. If we make renting more difficult for landlords, that imposes more costs on renters and rents will rise—and they will always rise. No-one is saying anything. We should be making it easier, not harder, for people to rent out second properties in order to help boost the housing supply and bring prices down.

I find it interesting that, while the Miles government are more than happy to demonise and punish small mum-and-dad property investors in Queensland, they are silent as a grave when it comes to condemning the ruthless profit taking of the state's trillion-dollar insurance industry. No-one has said a word about that. What about what is in parliamentary petition 4044-24 at the moment? No-one wants to talk about that and how property taxes and all those other things come into play. If there was meaningful change, they would want to change it. No-one is doing anything about it.

Where are the controls and the hard caps on the antics of the insurers or any of the other giant monopolies that today like to prey on the poor and the powerless? Where is everyone talking about it here on the left? No-one is. If you reckon you are going to do it, stand up and do it. Why is it only the small private landholders—most of whom are ordinary Queensland householders trying to get ahead—that governments are prepared to take on and punish in this way? This bill is not about renters or renters' rights. It is about driving ordinary Queenslanders out of the rental market to make way for the giant property conglomerates and institutional investors who are itching to establish the same property monopoly here as they have done in countries all over the world. Let us be honest.

If the government continues to punish property owners, the result will be they will simply sell their investment properties and there will be a decreasing supply of properties available for rent; or, worse, all those properties being sold by small individual investors will be scooped up by large multinational property investment trusts and build-to-rent profiteers that the Queensland government is so closely partnered with it seems. This bill marks the fifth reform to rental laws in Queensland in as many years. No other sector has endured this level of legislative scrutiny and reform over such a short period of time or has been demonised by its own government like this one. The bill purports to improve scrutiny but it does nothing. We are falling backwards. Let us do some real reforms. I ask members to have a look at petition No. 4044-24.

*(Time expired)*

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (8.14 pm): I rise to speak on the cognate bills: the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill. The two bills before the House highlight the Miles government's commitment to support Queenslanders through some of our toughest times. The high cost of living and the demand for suitable, affordable housing are real-time issues and carry a lot of weight for everyday Queenslanders who are doing it tough. When you hear stories about people choosing to put food on the table over a roof over their heads, you know something is wrong.

Approximately one-third of the state's households rent their home. There is an increasing trend of renting, with more Queenslanders expecting to rent for longer and many becoming lifelong renters. Some of the most vulnerable Queenslanders rely on the private rental market for sustainable and long-term housing. That is why we need strong measures in place to ensure housing security for Queensland families. I want to thank our Premier and this Labor government for putting the housing needs of Queenslanders first.

The key objective of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 is to amend the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to strengthen the rights of renters, support private investment, provide better pathways to resolve issues in tenancies and stabilise rents in the private rental market. We will achieve this by implementing a suite of measures.


Queenslanders can have confidence that the Miles Labor government is on their side. We are reforming the rental bond process to ensure that bond refunds are fair and transparent and that claims against the rental bond are genuine and substantiated. We are also prescribing a rental application form that limits the information that can be collected from a prospective renter. This will make the rental application process fairer and easier by giving renters a choice about how to submit their rental application and prescribing a rental application form that limits the information that can be collected from a prospective renter. We will be applying an annual rent increase limit to the rental property rather than the tenancy.



The one I am fully supportive of is the banning of all forms of rent bidding. I have heard too many stories of rent bidding when I have been doorknocking or at mobile offices or through calls to my office. I hear about it amongst my personal networks. I even heard about it catching a cab one day when the cab driver shared his story with me. It is definitely affecting vulnerable Queenslanders. We are talking about people who are already in some of the most vulnerable situations and competing with everyday pressures just to survive. I am proud to speak on this bill because I know it will make a lot of difference to the lives of everyday Queenslanders.

The Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill is another solid bill that increases certainty for existing home owners by giving immediate relief from large, unpredictable and unsustainable rent increases. The Miles government is making residential parks fairer and providing cost-of-living certainty for owners of manufactured homes. The bill aims to improve consumer protections in residential parks while balancing reasonable industry viability. The bill seeks to address concerns about site rent increases by limiting the bases that can be used to increase site rent and the amount by which rent can be increased annually to ensure greater clarity and predictability for home owners; and delays in selling manufactured homes by streamlining the sales process and introducing a scheme which requires park owners to reduce site rent and to buy back vacant manufactured homes that remain unsold after 18 months. To provide greater transparency for home owners and prospective home owners, the bill will introduce new registration requirements for residential parks and information and disclosure requirements for park owners.

The LNP know that these reforms are good for Queenslanders living in manufactured homes in parks, so much so that they want to delay them because they think they will be too popular. That speaks a lot about those opposite. The Miles Labor government stands on the side of Queenslanders. We acknowledge that Queenslanders are doing it tough and we are pulling all levers to ensure that home security is at the top of our priority. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (8.19 pm): After our state being governed for 30 of the last 35 years by the Labor Party, we are in a housing crisis the likes of which Queensland has never seen. It has never been tougher for people in our state to put a roof over their heads. We are not opposing either of these bills—every little bit will count—but there are concerns which have been and should be raised about this government's approach and how it is the main contributor to the housing crisis so many are experiencing.

I will start with some comments on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill because I have many renters in the great electorate of Bonney, particularly in suburbs like Labrador, Biggera Waters and a big part of Arundel as well. I think we do have to consider the chance that this could put rents up further by further decreasing the desire for people to invest in property. Rentals are, of course, an important part of a healthy housing market. When you have thought bubbles or kneejerk changes in policy like we have seen from this government, it really limits the pool of rental properties that are available.

In the Liberal National Party we welcome people investing in property because most of these investors are everyday Queenslanders. The overwhelming majority, I would say, are everyday Queenslanders. They are not people to be demonised. They are an essential part of our property market in supplying houses for Queenslanders. We need to be very careful to not hurt investor confidence and to limit the choice that renters have as well for their payment options like limiting up-front payments which I believe some amendments to be moved will address. Queenslanders have already experienced the worst rental increases in the nation.

Supply has clearly not kept up with demand. Today, as other speakers, in particular the member for Glass House, have mentioned, we saw another devastating blow for housing supply in our state with news that AV Jennings is not proceeding with its plans for 3,500 affordable homes in Caboolture West, finding it so difficult to develop that they even copped a fine of \$17.2 million in the process. The City of Moreton Bay Mayor, Peter Flannery, said a key reason this development is not proceeding is because the state government have not prioritised a pipeline of catalytic infrastructure, further saying that it is all well and good for the state to mandate growth targets for councils but that they need to support that growth. If the minister had not been so obsessed with calling in a bad development in my community for 350 luxury homes on sport and recreation land at Arundel Hills and instead focused on how she could have supported this proposal for 3,500 affordable homes in the key growth area, our state would have been much better off.

There are also no details before us on how the portable bond scheme will work in practice, or on the code of conduct or the home modification framework. The code of conduct, of course, was something so vital that it has taken a decade to be reinstated.

The supposed ban on rent bidding was outlined by several submitters to be already banned under existing legislation as well. However, I will say the privacy provisions for renters are reasonable—that is, the extended notice period from 24 to 48 hours for entry, other than for general inspections; the prescribing of a rental application forming categories of supporting documentation to limit the information that can be requested of prospective renters; and requiring that personal information of renters must be securely sought and disposed of within three months of an unsuccessful rental application or three years after a tenancy ends. I think those are perfectly reasonable.

I will make some comments as well about the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill because I am proud to represent four of these communities in my electorate. I firstly mention the Pine Ridge Caravan Village in Coombabah. I want to particularly acknowledge Colleen Marney who was standing in as the president of the home owners committee before it was disbanded. It is very hard to get people to step up into those roles. Many people in this community of Pine Ridge have a disability or they live on the age pension, so they are particularly concerned about rent rises that could occur when inflation drops below 3.5 per cent.

I have written to the department a number of times about concerns from residents in this community. It is clear to me that the regulatory services unit in the department is under-resourced. It struggles to take enforcement action where it needs to. I have also heard from residents there that Caxton Legal Centre do a great job supporting them and going in to bat for these residents, but they can really only do so much and they really do struggle to match the resourcing of the owners of parks like this when they attempt to take action against unfair and potentially illegal behaviour. Experiences like this are why it is disappointing that these laws are a missed opportunity to modernise the manufactured homes legislation, especially around conflict resolution and conflict within parks and financial accountability and transparency.

I also want to acknowledge Seachange Arundel, my largest community of this type in my electorate, particularly their president Alan Henderson, their vice-president Chris Lambert, their secretary Chris Rogers, their treasurer Bill Cohen and members Val Holbrook, Phil Gutteridge, Rena Anderson and David Chick. I want to thank all those members for the outstanding job they do advocating for the almost 700 residents in what is a special little community there in Arundel. The concerns that they have are around Seachange being sold potentially at any time and the lack of security that comes with that and the potential these laws give for unfair price increases once again. They are concerned that this does not provide what the government themselves say this is for—to provide greater clarity and predictability for home owners.

I also want to acknowledge everyone else in my electorate at the Harbourside Gardens lifestyle resort in Biggera Waters and Settlers Village in Coombabah.

The caps included in this will stop some of the outrageous price rises we have heard members talk about from occurring. They will limit the bases which can be used to increase site rent. Those are good things, but I do acknowledge those concerns about when the CPI is below 3.5 per cent. I think that is something which a lot of Queenslanders still will not be reassured by through this legislation.

To wrap-up, this is overall just tinkering around the edges. It is some trumped-up changes to give Queensland renters false hope that this decade-old government is taking the housing crisis that they are largely responsible for seriously. What we really need to see is meaningful action to address the housing crisis in our state. That will only come with change and—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr O'CONNOR:**—they are waiting for it! The only way that is going to occur is if we show Labor the door in October 2024.



**Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (8.27 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the cognate debate and will concentrate my comments on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill amends the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Amendment Act and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation.

Tenants advocacy and other special interest groups were largely supportive of the intent and measures proposed by the bill, whereas groups representing property owners or their interests, including the REIQ and the Property Council of Australia, expressed reservations about several of the amendments. Currently, rental laws allow renters and property owners to agree to any changes that can be made to a rental property and whether those changes need to be removed when the tenancy ends. The bill proposes to amend existing provisions and include new provisions regarding attaching fixtures or making structural changes necessary for a renter's safety, security or accessibility. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland generally supported the provisions relating to safety, security and accessibility but recommended a distinction be made between minor and complex modifications. Mixed views were expressed by inquiry participants in relation to requests for personalisation modifications and associated timeframes.

REIQ submitted that it does not believe there is a substantial basis to legislate a process for personalisation modifications. Rental property owners generally agree to reasonable, minor personal modifications. It depends on what they call 'minor'. If it is due to a handicap it may not only always be minor. If it is a picture hanging on the wall that is minor, but it is up for debate. Tenants Queensland stated that the proposed timeframes to propose or refuse a request are too long. They recommended that requests made under the new section 207, in particular, have a timeframe of 14 days as a request has to also proceed to the body corporate which has no timeframe within which to respond.

Debate, on motion of Mr Weir, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Hearn, Master B



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (8.30 pm): Helen Keller said that a hearing impairment 'means the loss of the most vital stimulus—the sound of the voice that brings language, sets thoughts astir and keeps us in the intellectual company of man'. Few would argue with one of the 20th century's leading advocates for people with a disability, but the passage of time means that the most vital stimulus—the sound of the voice—is now available to more people than ever before, and it is not only the sound of voice. Last Friday I met with Burdekin local Billy Hearn, who is nine years old, and his mother, Marsha. We spoke about Billy's dreams and experiences and about how much he enjoyed his teacher's performance in the Burdekin Singers & Theatre Co.'s production of *The Little Mermaid*. It may sound like a normal day to most but, to Billy, it is the sound of success because at birth Billy was diagnosed with sensorineural hearing loss—a hearing impairment that makes it challenging to distinguish multiple sounds and voices—making a theatre production a challenge to say the least, but not in the Burdekin.

When Billy asked his mum to book tickets to the show he thought he would simply watch his teacher Olivia perform. He knew he would enjoy it but was conscious of the fact that he would most likely miss out on hearing her sing. Burdekin Singers enlisted the help of Burdekin theatre's sound technician Dave Luscombe and, boy, was Billy in for a pleasant surprise. Dave put together a system to connect Billy's cochlear sound processor with the theatre's sound system and Billy was no longer just watching the show; he was immersed in the sounds of the production, including Olivia's performance. It was an impressive achievement by both Dave and Billy's teacher, Olivia, but when it comes to Billy impressive does not sound good enough.

Billy also participated in the REgional TArgeted INtervention or RETAIN program presented by Hear and Say with the assistance of the QCoal Foundation. The program assists children across Queensland, like Billy, to develop and maintain optimal listening, speech and language as well as assisting with social skills and access to the school curriculum. Part of the program saw Billy sharing his story at the second annual Power of Speech event in the Premier's Hall here at Parliament House and in July he will represent Queensland in a public speaking event at Parliament House in Canberra.

Many people, including myself, would describe Billy as inspirational and, according to his mum, Billy has taught his family so much. He inspires those around him with his hard work. Billy's focus, however, is on acknowledging the support he has received from the Burdekin community and his school, along with raising funds for Hear and Say to help other kids achieve their dreams and fulfil their potential. To both Billy and I that sounds like a great outcome. What a great kid Billy is. He has a great attitude and I have absolutely no doubt that he will achieve a lot in his lifetime.

### Nudgee Small Business Awards



**Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (8.33 pm): May is Small Business Month in Queensland and I am delighted to be celebrating this year by once again running my Nudgee Small Business Awards, which is now in its fourth year. I started these awards for my local community during COVID when many of them were struggling to keep their doors open as a way to encourage our community to shop local, and it was no surprise to me when so many in our community—always so supportive of one another—rose to the occasion and were flooded with thousands of votes in our very first year. It has been my absolute pleasure to continue them each year since, providing the opportunity to shine a light on the thriving small business community and to celebrate their vital contributions, whether it is stimulating the economy, creating local jobs or in so many other wonderful ways—and, of course, being employers of our local people. The growing support for the awards each year is a testament to that strong and connected community.

My favourite part of hosting these awards each year is definitely seeing how excited the winners are to see how much our community loves what they do and the services they provide. Many of these businesses find any way they can to give back to our community, whether it is those who are always ready to help out locals in need of a warm meal or through supporting hardworking and vital community support services across the electorate. Being able to give our community a way to show them some love and thanks through these awards is something I look forward to every year. It is also an opportunity to build and foster new connections and relationships and to gain a better understanding of their needs as a small business and as their local member connect them with a range of support services our state government provides in order to help their businesses grow and thrive. The core of any business, of course, is its people, and this year I have introduced a Best Employee award to shine a light on the workers who help make our small businesses so great.

Just like every year, we have been flooded with votes and stories this year of so many local workers who deserve recognition and appreciation for what they do. I am very much looking forward to awarding this for the first time this year. Voting closes for the awards this Friday. It has been an absolute pleasure, as it is every year, to visit those businesses and business owners and see how much they love hearing that they have even been nominated in their category and, of course, meeting their staff, their wonderful workers, who have been nominated. Sometimes they are taken aback by the comments and stories that people share about them. For them it is a job. They do not think they are special but a smile can make all the difference to someone who might be having a tough day. I look forward to delivering the exciting news to our winners and to celebrating the contribution they make in the Nudgee electorate.

### Coomera Electorate, Road Infrastructure



**Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (8.36 pm): The people of the northern Gold Coast await the budget with what I would like to say is great anticipation, but, unfortunately, I think it is more like trepidation for the people of the northern Gold Coast. First of all, going through from the top of the northern Gold Coast, we have exit 38. The previous minister had the business case for exit 38 on his desk for four years from November 2019. There has not been one dollar in any budget since. At exit 45, the people of Ormeau can spend up to an hour to get over the M1. Yes, there was \$13 million spent on a bandaid solution to fix a safety issue coming off the M1. It has created a massive issue when you get off the M1; it should have been a \$130 million spend. Going down to exit 54, the previous minister is on record as saying he will not do anything about east-west connectivity. He is not going to do anything about—

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, resume your seat. Member for Millar, what is your point of order?

**Mr BAILEY:** I find those comments personally offensive and inaccurate. I ask that he withdraw them.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

**Mr CRANDON:** I am not sure what I am withdrawing.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, you have identified the member for Millar.

**Mr CRANDON:** I withdraw. The previous minister is on record in the media refusing to do anything about east-west connectivity around exit 54 or do any further upgrades around exit 54. On the Coomera Connector, not one dollar—

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, resume your seat. Member for Millar, what is your point of order?

**Mr BAILEY:** Again, I find the comments personally offensive and inaccurate and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr CRANDON:** I withdraw. On the Coomera Connector, once again, there was no planning or funding from the previous minister. For exit 54 not one dollar. North of Shipper Drive, not one penny.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Millar, what is your point of order?

**Mr BAILEY:** He has personally referenced me again. His statements are inaccurate. I find them personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Millar has taken personal offence. I would ask that you withdraw, member for Coomera.

**Mr CRANDON:** I withdraw. Not one dollar was available in any budget since 2019 for any construction north of Shipper Drive. This government promised bus services three years ago. Where are they now? We are still waiting. We still have no idea what will happen with the bus service to Jacobs Well. We have no idea about additional bus services between Beenleigh and Ormeau. We can only say that the previous transport and main roads minister was a failure for the people of the northern Gold Coast on the simple basis—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those comments personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, the member for Miller has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?


**Mr CRANDON:** I withdraw. The people of Ormeau, the people of Coomera, the people of—

**Ms McMILLAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask you to consider a ruling in relation to the member ignoring your ruling as the chair. The member continues to have to be addressed around his directions to the member for Miller.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mansfield. That is not a point of order. I will continue to run the chamber.

**Mr CRANDON:** The people of Ormeau, the people of Yatala, the people of the canelands, the people of Coomera, the people of Upper Coomera—all of the people up and down the northern Gold Coast from Coomera in the south up to Yatala in the north—have been failed by this government and the minister currently sitting in the chamber has failed the people of the northern Gold Coast. The previous minister was deaf to the calls for assistance and some sort of respite from all of the traffic jams that they experience on the northern Gold Coast each and every day and he should be ashamed of himself.

### M1 Motorway

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (8.41 pm): What an absolute gift it is to follow the member for Coomera! What we saw in the Newman government was that not a single dollar was spent on the M1 in three whole years—not one dollar. There were no upgrades to exit 41, no upgrades to exit 45, no upgrades to exit 49.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Order! Member for Coomera.

**Mr BAILEY:** We saw them block the Coomera Connector and the second M1—

**Mr Crandon:** You've had the money since 2019 for exit 49.

**Mr BAILEY:** We hear the cheap squealing—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you made the contribution before the member for Miller. You have referenced him many times. The member is not taking interjections. I will ask that he be heard without being interrupted or you will be warned.

**Mr BAILEY:** They had three years with the largest majority in Australian political history. What happened on the M1? Zero, nothing! This is the sound of the LNP acting on the M1 under the Newman government—nothing, zero.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Callide and member for Mermaid Beach.

**Mr BAILEY:** I am happy to follow the member for Coomera any day because he had three years to act and did nothing for the M1, did nothing on the second M1 and had a zero record. That is why his record—

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Callide, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BAILEY:** That is why his majority has dropped from 70 down to 51.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you are also warned under the standing orders. If there are further interjections you will be removed from the chamber.

**Mr Zanow** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who said that?

**Mr Zanow:** Me.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You are warned as well.

**Mr BAILEY:** I will put up my record on the M1 versus that of the member for Coomera any day of the week. The people of those areas have benefited from billions in investment because of my role as the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. That is because I understand what the M1 means, unlike the LNP. I now move on to the substance of my speech.

The difference between the LNP and the Labor Party has never been more stark. Look at the key issues. On choice, it was this government that legislated choice for women in Queensland; it was opposed by most of the LNP MPs sitting in the chamber tonight. A fair share in terms of progressive taxation for cost-of-living relief and for our hospital rebuilding program from multinational mining companies was brought in by this government; we know it would go under the LNP. Cross River Rail was cut by the LNP when in government and it would have been cut again in 2017. It is being built by this government. Light rail on the Gold Coast was built by Labor and opposed by the LNP. On the Sunshine Coast direct line, the LNP did nothing in the federal government or in the state government; it is being built by federal and state Labor governments working together to connect the Sunshine Coast to the South-East Queensland rail network. Voluntary assisted dying would not have happened if not for Labor; it was opposed by the majority of the LNP. Renewable energy is rising from four per cent to 27 per cent because of Labor; it was opposed by the LNP. Public ownership of power assets was legislated under Labor; it was opposed by the LNP. A transition plan—under Labor, not the LNP. We have opened 29 schools; six were closed by the LNP. There is a vast difference between Labor and the LNP.

*(Time expired)*

### **Sippy Downs, Police Resources; Sugar Road and Mooloolaba Road Intersection**



**Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (8.45 pm): The communities of Sippy Downs and Palmview are fed up with all of the break-ins. They are fed up with the stolen cars. They are fed up with attending their local police station only to find it closed. Our community want their voices heard. That is why today I am tabling a petition calling on the state government to upgrade the Sippy Downs Police Station to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That is the least our community deserves.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding the need for a 24-hour police station in Sippy Downs to combat crime [850].

This petition has received overwhelming support with more than a thousand signatures. Local police officers have been telling me to keep pushing as it is what they need to get the job done. They need more police officers and resources allocated to offer a bigger presence to tackle the growing crime epidemic and provide more community engagement. It has been 15 years since the Sippy Downs Police Station opened. During that time, the Sippy Downs population has almost doubled and a whole new estate has been built in Palmview and well over 5,000 residents have moved in already, yet the current police station operates on business hours with fewer police than it did in 2009. If only criminals worked Monday to Friday we would be right!

Here are some scary statistics: since 2015 in Sippy Downs, home break-ins have increased by 79 per cent; stolen car offences are up a massive 188 per cent; and, incredibly, assaults have risen by more than 1,000 per cent. It is unfathomable that Labor has ignored our community on the Sunshine Coast for so long. Why does this Labor government not care? Why do they not care about the families when a possibly violent person is creeping around their home while they sleep? That is a regular occurrence in my electorate. Why do they not care about the tradies who wake up to find their tools stolen or their ute taken? The current small team of police officers at the Sippy Downs station are doing their very best with very little. They are not just covering Sippy Downs and Palmview; they often get called to help in Buderim or Mountain Creek. Imagine the assistance they could offer if they had the appropriate resources.


To make matters worse, I can advise that the Sippy Downs and Palmview Neighbourhood Watch has recently disbanded, with the entire committee resigning this month. They spent years fighting for a safer community, but in the end they could no longer continue without adequate support, despite their passion for volunteering. I want to thank the tireless efforts of group president Margaret and committee members Howard, Jill, Melissa and John. Neighbourhood Watch groups can play an important role in our communities if supported correctly. Sippy Downs and Palmview are now worse off and that is just another reason why we need a 24-hour police station.

Before I finish I want to table a petition calling on the state government to upgrade the intersection of Sugar Road and Mooloolaba Road in Buderim.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding the need to upgrade the intersection of Sugar Road and Mooloolaba Road, Buderim [851].

Despite funding being allocated previously by the former minister for transport—that is a credit to him—it has now been cut and traffic congestion is getting worse every single day. Traffic is banked up for kilometres on Buderim Mountain and on Golf Links Road, so I call on the government to make fixing the intersection of Sugar Road and Mooloolaba Road a priority in the upcoming budget.

### Beef Week

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (8.48 pm): What a week we have had in Rocky with the biggest beef exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere. It was even bigger with the return of international guests and a multitude of passionate locals fuelling record crowds for Beef 2024.

**Mr Stevens:** Tomahawk steak.

**Mr O'ROURKE:** That too; the steaks were pretty good. Support for the event is booming post COVID and people converged on Rockhampton, the beef capital of Australia, for a week-long festival of cattle culture. Ticket sales surged with 119,324 people going through the gates at the Rockhampton Showgrounds over the course of the week, which was up from 115,866 three years ago. That is a lot of people when we consider that the population of Rockhampton is approximately 82,000 people.

For the people who have not been to Beef Week, it is like the Brisbane Ekka on steroids. We had people from across the country converge on Rockhampton. There were over 600 international delegates and 35 countries represented. All came to see the best of the best in our beef industry. It really puts Rockhampton on the world map as a beef cattle destination. Everything that you want to see and know about the Queensland beef industry is on display.

Beef produced in Queensland is consumed in more than 60 countries around the world, and I am not surprised as it is the best tasting, cleanest and greenest beef in the world. Queensland is home to almost half of Australia's cattle herd. Beef is our most valuable agricultural export, worth some \$10 million a year, and the industry supports about 40,000 jobs. That is why our government is increasing our support for Beef 2027 and the beef industry. It was great to see that the Miles government has increased its support to the Queensland beef industry by announcing a doubling in funding for Beef 2027 and other assistance for the beef sector, worth \$2.45 million. The Albanese government was proud to support Beef 2024 with a record \$6 million investment.

We understand the importance of the cattle industry. This year's Beef Week was a huge success thanks to the work of the organisers and all involved. A special thanks goes to all of the wonderful volunteers, sponsors, competitors, exhibitors and of course all of the visitors to the region, which included the Miles government cabinet that met during Beef Week at the Rockhampton Showgrounds.


**Mr ANDREW:** Mr Deputy Speaker—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. Member, I ask that in future you do not jump before the member's time has expired.

**Mr ANDREW:** My apologies, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mirani. You have the call.

### Renewable Energy

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (8.51 pm): Up north, local communities are still celebrating last month's decision by Arc Energy to pull the plug on the proposed wind development at Chalumbin, and so it should. For three years Arc Energy tried to gain federal EPBC approval for the project before abandoning it after receiving unofficial indications that it was unlikely to ever be approved.


In my electorate, \$111 million has been spent on taking up housing and properties. For what reason? We do not even have an EIS. We do not have any financial understanding of what we are doing with the Burdekin hydro. What a disgrace it is that, when I asked the minister about all of the frequency situations and what happens with koalas and all of our fauna, I have had no answer. There is no understanding. We are just going ahead and spending all of this money to destroy our ecosystem by clearing thousands and thousands of hectares of remnant vegetation, which will never be replaced. We will never have a situation where it can be replaced. On what premise? We do not even know but we are still spending the money.

No environmental groups and no greens people are standing up for anyone or anything. They are all dead in the water. Why? Because they do not have the decency or the integrity to find out what will happen to the animals and other things that cannot speak for themselves. That is why I am here. I am here to speak for them. I am out in the bush, I see what happens and I know this: nothing good will come from renewable energy. If you want it then put it down here in the south-east. Put it down here where it should be because nothing good will come of it up there.

As the saying goes, measure twice and cut once. The coal industry is paying for everything. No subsidies will come from the renewable energy sector. It is just a farce and a scam on our whole society. Show me where it makes a difference. Show me where power prices are lower. Show me what it does to make sure that Queensland is actually bolstered by this stuff, because I cannot see it. Open up the books. Show us all the contracts. Show us who is going to do the clean-up because I cannot see it. No-one says it. No-one wants to talk about it. It is all commercial-in-confidence. It is like someone under a blanket with a torch reading a book. It is disgraceful.

*(Time expired)*

### Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (8.54 pm): I was a little sad to interrupt as I wanted to give the member the courtesy of continuing. Tonight I rise with immense pride to share a significant milestone in our south-side community—the opening of the Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital. With a \$65.4 million investment, this facility will commence operations at 8 am on Monday, 27 May 2024. It marks a significant step towards better health for our southern Brisbane residents by providing exceptional free healthcare services right at our doorstep.

The Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital or Maroo-goodji-ba—forgive me, member for Cook—features a minor injury and illness clinic, kidney dialysis, cancer day therapy, outpatient consultation rooms, and advanced medical imaging and diagnostic services. I certainly acknowledge the Premier for the progressive, strategic and intelligent concept of satellite hospitals and his great vision. Thanks to health minister Shannon Fentiman's dedication and the Treasurer's nation-leading coal royalty tax initiative, this project became a reality.

The Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital will open from 8 am to 10 pm and will respond to non-life-threatening conditions efficiently. This investment is part of the Queensland government's nation-leading \$377 million Satellite Hospitals Program, providing quality urgent care in our rapidly




growing regions. Alongside other satellite hospitals in Kallangur, Redlands, Ripley and Tugun, the Eight Mile Plains facility stands as a testament to the success of that program, offering prompt, efficient and cost-free treatment to thousands of Queenslanders.

Our Labor government's dedication to health care goes beyond this facility. As part of the \$14 billion Big Build, we are investing in major expansions at south-side hospitals: 249 more beds at the PA and 112 new beds at the QEII hospital to meet the needs of the additional 25,000 residents expected to settle in Brisbane's southern suburbs in the next decade. I am honoured to represent the Mansfield electorate, which will greatly benefit from the new satellite hospital. Our Labor government is steadfast in its commitment to providing better healthcare options closer to home.

In stark contrast, at the last election the LNP's infrastructure plan did not contain a single new hospital ward, a single new bed, a single ED expansion or a single extension to health services. The threat to cut nursing jobs and potentially shut down or privatise essential services is very real in my community as 1,370 locals lost their jobs when the LNP last governed Queensland, and my community will not forget. I am proud to be part of a government that has delivered 3,700 new nurses and midwives to date. We need our Labor government to support our health system.

*(Time expired)*

### Federal Budget


 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (8.57 pm): Just over a week ago, the Albanese government delivered their third budget. Despite RBA warnings and the clear evidence that the decisions of the Albanese Labor government are driving homegrown inflation, they handed down a true Labor budget—one that is big taxing, big spending, fails to tackle inflation, increases pressure on interest rates and cost of living, and hurts everyday Redlanders. Instead of restoring budget discipline, Labor has added \$315 billion of new spending at a time when some restraint was needed, digging a deeper inflationary hole. Under Labor, Australians are worse off. Despite the Treasurer's spin, prices are rising: housing is up 12 per cent, rents are up 12 per cent, insurance is up 26 per cent, electricity is up 18 per cent and the promise of \$275 off power bills was broken, and gas is up 25 per cent. Under Labor, spending has been out of control, putting upwards pressure on interest rates that have gone up 12 times.

Redlanders are experiencing cost-of-living pain and the federal Labor government does little to ease it in their budget. Under Labor, home ownership for many aspiring young Redlanders has become out of reach. A typical Redland household, already with a mortgage, is \$35,000 worse off. The federal budget did little in real terms to help young people to get into and to pay off their own homes. Under Labor, \$450 million was spent poorly on a divisive referendum instead of closing the real gaps. Sadly, Minister Enoch, the state member for Algeester, prefers to travel and spend large amounts of money on herself rather than build houses for the Quandamooka people on North Stradbroke Island to help close the gap.

In 10 years Labor has not identified a single Aboriginal home that it has built. While referring to Straddie, there was no funding in the federal budget for upgrading Dunwich Harbour as part of the SEQ City Deal. The upcoming state budget needs to put funding on the table for this project and build the Harold Walker Jetty, a simple marine project for under \$1.5 million that it still has not been able to build.

Under Labor, the cost-of-living crisis is deepening and now the federal government offers Australians a \$300 energy rebate. The state government's electricity rebate will plunge the state budget into the red by \$3 billion. The Queensland government has abandoned the forecast surplus on a last-ditch pre-election splurge to buy votes. Labor MPs wanted to cut the only Olympic venue out of the Redlands. Toondah Harbour was scuttled by Labor division. The Cleveland line duplication and busway have not happened. Show Labor the door in 2024.

### Marendy, Dr P

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (9.00 pm): Last Thursday I joined a very large congregation at the Greek orthodox church of St Paraskevi in Taigum to pay our respects to a titan—and I do not say that lightly—of the north-side Greek community and of Redcliffe specifically, Dr Peter Marendy, who passed on 8 May 2024 aged 91. Dr Marendy was born on 4 June 1932 in Innisfail to his immigrant parents who later moved to Townsville and, with other Greek immigrants, established the Bluebird Cafe in Flinders Street, which is a real Townsville icon and one of the many famous Greek owned cafes throughout Queensland.

Young Peter Marendy had great intellect, capacity and commitment and he wanted to be a doctor. He wanted to pay back for the great service he experienced as a child when he had pneumonia. His family always remembered the great care he had been given. Aged 18, he left Townsville to begin his studies at the University of Queensland. He graduated in 1959. Peter met Mary Cassimatis during that time and they were married in 1961. Peter once told me that their 63 years of marriage and their four children—Elessa, Charles, Stephanie and Anthony—were his greatest achievement and joy. After medical placements in Brisbane, Ipswich and Townsville, in 1965 Peter and his family settled in Redcliffe to establish his own practice.

**Mrs D'Ath:** Hear, hear!

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I take that interjection from the member for Redcliffe. I know that the member knew Peter very well and his great service to the local community. He poured himself into looking after his patients over 61 years of private practice on the peninsula. Last year, Peter retired from medicine at age 91. He was reputedly the second-oldest practising doctor in Queensland at that time.

One of Peter's greatest passions, other than the Redcliffe Golf Club and his golf game more generally, was his faith and his community and he had a founding role in the establishment of St Paraskevi. He was instrumental in acquiring the property at Taigum and fundraising for the beautiful church that was consecrated in 1995. Peter was parish president for 35 years. That was where I got to know him. I know how hands-on he was at every event and every activity. It was fitting that his funeral was performed by Bishop Bartholomew and a phalanx of Greek orthodox priests. Condolences to Mary and family. Vale, Dr Marendy.

The House adjourned at 9.03 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, 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, 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