



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## TUESDAY, 11 JUNE 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.

### ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of assent: 6 June 2024

A bill for an Act to amend the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Planning Regulation 2017, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Public Health Act 2005, the Summary Offences Act 2005, the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2005 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Corrective Services Regulation 2017, the Parole Orders (Transfer) Act 1984, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for a particular department for the financial year starting 1 July 2023

A bill for an Act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017, the Fair Trading Inspectors Act 2014, the Local Government Act 2009, the Property Occupations Act 2014, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

6 June 2024

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 6 June 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 6 June 2024 [\[973\]](#).

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT


#### Absence of Clerk of the Parliament



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to inform the House of the unavoidable absence of the Clerk today and tomorrow.

## PRIVILEGE

### Speaker's Rulings, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 24 May 2024, I tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Kawana alleging that the Premier deliberately misled the House while answering questions without notice on 5 and 6 March 2024. On 24 May 2024, I also tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Glass House alleging that the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice deliberately misled the House while answering a question without notice on 20 March 2024. On 24 May 2024, I also tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Maroochydore alleging that the member for Capalaba deliberately misled the House on 10 September 2020 and 16 June 2021.

On 24 May 2024, I also tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women alleging that the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misled the House during matters of public interest on 13 February 2024. On 7 June 2024, I tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Burleigh alleging that the Minister for Police and Community Safety deliberately misled the House while answering a question without notice.

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


## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### *Record of Proceedings, Incorporation of Material*

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, sessional order 11 provides that, for the debate on the annual appropriation bills, it is not necessary for members to seek leave of the House to incorporate material in the *Record of Proceedings*, provided members have shown the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker the materials sought to be incorporated and have obtained the Speaker's or the Deputy Speaker's consent, as per standing order 25.

Before consent will be given, members must assure and undertake that: one, for a speech relative to the appropriation bills, the member's total speech must not exceed that which would normally be allowed in a 15-minute speech, thus no speech should exceed 2,600 words; two, speeches should not include graphs, charts or other material; three, members must provide the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service with their speech in electronic form prior to rising to give their speech—other members will be provided access, on request, to a member's speech prior to the publication of the *Record of Proceedings*; and, four, speeches intended to be incorporated should not offend standing orders in any way such as by containing personal reflections, imputations and the like.

### 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 Sacred Heart Primary School in the electorate of Sandgate, Coolum State School in the electorate of Ninderry, Alexandra Hills State School in the electorate of Capalaba and Our Lady of Mount Carmel school in the electorate of Greenslopes.

## PETITIONS

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

### Cash, Legal Tender

**Mr Katter**, from 320 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately enforce that all state government offices must accept cash as a legal form of payment and condemn any move to cease the distribution or acceptance of cash [\[957\]](#).

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

### Intruders, Self-Protection

**Mr Dametto**, from 40,470 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure every Queenslanders deserves the right to protect themselves against intruders by legislating to protect victims from prosecution following the act of defending themselves against an intruder, to be known as 'Castle Law' [\[958\]](#) [\[959\]](#).

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

**Traffic, Police Resources**

**Mr Langbroek**, from 863 petitioners, requesting the House to provide more police traffic resources including the use of acoustic cameras to stamp out illegal behaviour, hooning and illegal exhaust modifications [\[960\]](#).

**Coomera State School, Playground Equipment**

**Mr Boothman**, from 424 petitioners, requesting the House to replace the playground equipment at the Coomera State School [\[961\]](#).

**Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme**

**Mr Andrew**, from 3,463 petitioners, requesting the House to remove section 6.2 Payment of the first four night's accommodation from the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme [\[962\]](#).

**Children, Gender Dysphoria Treatment**

**Mr Knuth**, from 7,827 petitioners, requesting the House to suspend all medical and surgical transitioning treatments for children in Queensland and commission an independent inquiry, similar to the United Kingdom's Cass Review, into gender care [\[963\]](#).

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

**Perry Park, Stadium**

2,285 petitioners, requesting the House to construct a mid-sized rectangular stadium for football at Perry Park [\[964\]](#).

**Animals, Shelters**

1,069 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure legislation includes mandatory codes for provision of species-specific shelter and consider each species' capacity to tolerate extremes in weather [\[965\]](#).

**Bromelton, Incinerator**

887 petitioners, requesting the House to stop an incinerator being built in the Scenic Rim at Bromelton [\[966\]](#).

**School Zones, Speeding Fines**

486 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure motorists are not issued with speeding fines when a flashing school zone sign is not functional or faulty for any reason [\[967\]](#).

**Planning and Development, Ministerial Powers**

1,408 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure there is an efficient, effective and accountable planning and development application assessment system and to remedy errors by the use of ministerial powers [\[968\]](#).

**Scott's Farm**

3,740 petitioners, requesting the House to request the removal of Scott's Farm from the Ripley Valley PDA and to remove the proposed primary school from Scott's Farm [\[969\]](#).

**Daylight Saving, Referendum**

1,837 petitioners, requesting the House to, under the Referendums Act, include on the same day as the 2024 general state election, the question: "Do you support the introduction of daylight saving from 2025" [\[970\]](#).

**Arthritis Queensland, Funding**

1,939 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure increased, ongoing funding to Arthritis Queensland [\[971\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

24 May 2024—

- [872](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Premier and Member for Murrumba
- [873](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice and Member for Bulimba
- [874](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Member for Capalaba

[875](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Leader of the Opposition and Member for Broadwater

[876](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 45, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into scrap metal theft, government response

28 May 2024—

[877](#) Cost of Living and Economics Committee: Report No. 6, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 February and 16 April 2024

[878](#) Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 February and 19 March 2024

[879](#) Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee: Report No. 8, 57th Parliament—Impact of climate change on Queensland agricultural production

30 May 2024—

[880](#) Response from the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development (Hon. McCallum), to an ePetition (4060-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 663 petitioners, requesting the House to include the northern Gold Coast in the TAFE Capital Investment plans for the emerging massive increase in personnel for the health industry

[881](#) Response from the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development (Hon. McCallum), to an ePetition (4061-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 343 petitioners, requesting the House to provide additional capacity to develop sustainable manufacturing expertise and ensure that the TAFE Marine Centre of Excellence at Coomera stands as a hub of opportunity and excellence

[882](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (3972-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 630 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce the length of all low-speed zones (60 km/h or less) around small towns to less than 100 metres both before and after the built up areas and to require all camera detected offenses be emailed to the alleged offender within 24 hours

[883](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4047-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 1,683 petitioners, requesting the House to include funding in the state budget due to be handed down in June for the next two stages of the Coomera Connector and the construction of an east west connecting road to ease traffic congestion

[884](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4053-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 1,251 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake the completion of a full upgrade of Exit 45 of the M1

[885](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4054-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 477 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the upgrade and improvements to the operation of Exit 38 of the M1

[886](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4056-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 179 petitioners, requesting the House to implement the upgrade of the 728 and 729 bus services between Beenleigh and Ormeau railway stations

[887](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4062-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 261 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a regular daily bus service to enable people to connect to the transport hub of Ormeau train station and the nearby Pimpama shopping precinct

[888](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4063-24) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 741 petitioners, requesting the House to secure the funding required for the Coomera Connector's extension between Shipper Drive, Coomera and Eggersdorf Road, Ormeau

[889](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (Hon. Furner), to an ePetition (4064-24) sponsored by the member for Cook, Ms Lui, from 5,089 petitioners, requesting the House to keep the Mossman Mill operational and/or harvest the current crop for the 2024 season

[890](#) Response from the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women (Hon. Fentiman), to an ePetition (4022-24) sponsored by the member for Mirani, Mr Andrew, from 513 petitioners, requesting the House to allocate funding for Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scan facilities at the Rockhampton Base Hospital

31 May 2024—

[891](#) Response from the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation (Hon. Linard), to two paper petitions (4074-24) and (4086-24) presented by the member for Traeger, Mr Katter, and an ePetition (4059-24) sponsored by the member for Traeger, Mr Katter, from 112, 36 and 12,092 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to protect the Great Artesian Basin from any injection of carbon emissions by putting in place regulation prohibiting carbon capture and storage in the Great Artesian Basin

[892](#) Cost of Living and Economics Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—State Financial Institutions and Metway Merger Amendment Bill 2024

[893](#) Supermarket Pricing Select Committee: Report No. 1, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into Supermarket Pricing

[894](#) Women's Safety and Justice Reform—Annual Report 2023-24



- [895](#) Office of the Independent Implementation Supervisor: Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Reforms—Biannual Progress Report 4 (May 2024)
- [896](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Mellish), to an ePetition (4026-24) sponsored by the member for Callide, Mr Head, from 507 petitioners, requesting the House to improve the Calliope State School drop-off and pick-up area for vehicles and pedestrians including more parking or set down spaces
- 4 June 2024—
- [897](#) Auditor-General Report 12: 2023-24—Responding to and recovering from cyber attacks
- 5 June 2024—
- [898](#) Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes: Erratum
- 7 June 2024—
- [899](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 11, 57th Parliament—Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024
- [900](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 12, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 6 March and 15 March 2024
- [901](#) Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee: Report No. 6, 57th Parliament—Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024
- [902](#) Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—Resources Safety and Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2024
- [903](#) Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024
- [904](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 44, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland
- [905](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Minister for Police and Community Safety and Member for Morayfield
- [906](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women and Member for Waterford
- [907](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Referral to Ethics Committee: Members of the Opposition
- 10 June 2024—
- [908](#) Auditor-General Report 13: 2023-24—Education 2023
- [909](#) Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 11, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 6 March 2024 and 16 April 2024
- [910](#) Queensland Government: Third Progress Report titled 'Delivery of Recommendations: Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland', March 2024

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

##### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023:

- [911](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 54
- [912](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 54, explanatory notes
- [913](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 54, human rights certificate

Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991:

- [914](#) Criminal Practice Amendment Rule 2024, No. 55
- [915](#) Criminal Practice Amendment Rule 2024, No. 55, explanatory notes
- [916](#) Criminal Practice Amendment Rule 2024, No. 55, human rights certificate

Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991:

- [917](#) Criminal Practice (Interpreters) and Other Rules Amendment Rule 2024, No. 56
- [918](#) Criminal Practice (Interpreters) and Other Rules Amendment Rule 2024, No. 56, explanatory notes
- [919](#) Criminal Practice (Interpreters) and Other Rules Amendment Rule 2024, No. 56, human rights certificate

Emergency Services Reform Amendment Act 2024:

- [920](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 57
- [921](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 57, explanatory notes

## Marine Rescue Queensland Act 2024:

- [922](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 58
- [923](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 58, explanatory notes

## State Emergency Service Act 2024:

- [924](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 59
- [925](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 59, explanatory notes

## Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995:

- [926](#) Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 60
- [927](#) Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 60, explanatory notes
- [928](#) Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 60, human rights certificate

## Major Events Act 2014:

- [929](#) Major Events (Motor Racing Events) (Townsville 500) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 61
- [930](#) Major Events (Motor Racing Events) (Townsville 500) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 61, explanatory notes
- [931](#) Major Events (Motor Racing Events) (Townsville 500) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 61, human rights certificate

## Criminal Code Act 1899, Jury Act 1995, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, Recording of Evidence Act 1962, Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991:

- [932](#) Justice Legislation (Allowances and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 62
- [933](#) Justice Legislation (Allowances and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 62, explanatory notes
- [934](#) Justice Legislation (Allowances and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 62, human rights certificate

## Forensic Science Queensland Act 2024:

- [935](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 63
- [936](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 63, explanatory notes

## Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Act 2024:

- [937](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 64
- [938](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 64, explanatory notes
- [939](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 64, human rights certificate

## Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Act 2024:

- [940](#) Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Regulation 2024, No. 65
- [941](#) Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Regulation 2024, No. 65, explanatory notes
- [942](#) Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Regulation 2024, No. 65, human rights certificate

## Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023:

- [943](#) Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2024, No. 66
- [944](#) Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2024, No. 66, explanatory notes
- [945](#) Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2024, No. 66, human rights certificate

## Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [946](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Fisheries Structural Adjustment Scheme—Stage 3 and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 67
- [947](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Fisheries Structural Adjustment Scheme—Stage 3 and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 67, explanatory notes
- [948](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Fisheries Structural Adjustment Scheme—Stage 3 and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 67, human rights certificate

## Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004:

- [949](#) Petroleum and Gas (General Provisions) (Annual Fee) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 68
- [950](#) Petroleum and Gas (General Provisions) (Annual Fee) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 68, explanatory notes
- [951](#) Petroleum and Gas (General Provisions) (Annual Fee) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 68, human rights certificate

## Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024:

- [952](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 69
- [953](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 69, explanatory notes

Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024:

- [954](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 70
- [955](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 70, explanatory notes
- [956](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 70, human rights certificate

#### MEMBER'S PAPER


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

Member for Toohey (Mr Russo)—

- [972](#) Information Commissioner Report 4: 2023-24—Reporting on RTI and IP statistics: Survey results about reporting on the operation of the *Right to Information Act 2009* and the *Information Privacy Act 2009*

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Health Workforce

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.38 am): The Miles government is committed to delivering world-class health care for Queenslanders closer to home, and we know that delivering world-class care means that we need world-class health workers. I have had the privilege of hearing from so many health workers right across Queensland this year through our workforce roundtable series. I heard from over 50 health workers at the Rockhampton Hospital, including Fridae King, an incredible midwife who has worked at Gladstone for a number of years in the Midwifery Group Practice program and who is a huge fan of the biggest ever expansion of Midwifery Group Practice in this state's history. At Ipswich Hospital, I heard from the director of paediatrics about the importance of ongoing clinical education in improving the quality of care as 'a rising tide that lifts all boats'.

These are just some of the voices that have built the foundations for our new workforce strategy. They are the ones who are experiencing the impact of the global workforce shortage and dealing firsthand with the huge demand for care in our hospitals, yet these amazing frontline staff continue to show incredible dedication and commitment to looking after each and every one of us. They work around the clock to make sure that Queenslanders get the care they need when they need it most.


The \$1.7 billion Health Workforce Strategy that we are delivering today is dedicated to all of our health heroes. Every dollar of that investment and every principle in the strategy is focused on training, gaining and retaining the health workforce that Queensland will need over the next decade. It is a strategy for the whole workforce—from our doctors and nurses to our security guards and wardies. We will start by delivering \$40,000 incentive payments to trainee doctors to become GPs and more places for our rural generalists to train in anaesthetics. These critical measures will ensure that the primary and surgical health care that our regional communities need will be delivered. I want to acknowledge the Australian Medical Association Queensland for their advocacy for this investment and for working with our government to deliver it.

We will also support our hardworking nurses to work at the top of their scope with our new nurse practitioner candidate roles, and we will support student nurses with our free TAFE program. Our \$5,000 cost-of-living placements will continue for student nurses and midwives, and we are expanding the eligibility payment so that all students undertaking their placements in regional, rural and remote locations can access this much needed cost-of-living support. We are doing this because we recognise the critical importance of our regional, rural and remote nursing and midwifery workforce and the value they provide to communities.

We are investing \$36 million to boost security staffing across Queensland to make sure that each and every health worker is safe at work. We are committing over \$23 million to secure Queensland's future nuclear medicine, diabetes and imaging workforces—all of which are critical to providing life-saving care. All of this is in addition to the \$129 million I announced with the Premier last week to employ 268 additional ambos across the state.

These investments build on our government's proud record of boosting our frontline workforce. Since 2015 we have hired over 23,000 health workers, including over 13,000 nurses and midwives. I am incredibly proud this morning to advise the House that we have now met our election commitment to hire 9,475 frontline workers in this term of government. This fantastic achievement has only been possible thanks to our nation-leading Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme, where we have now seen over 1,000 workers come from interstate and overseas to work in regional Queensland. Our amazing health heroes show up to work every day to support Queenslanders, and it is only the Miles Labor government that has a plan to keep supporting them.

## Budget, Energy

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs) (9.43 am): Today, the Miles government will deliver the largest cost-of-living budget Queenslanders have ever seen—another \$1,000 towards the \$1,300 cost-of-living rebate for every Queensland household, an extra \$372 for pensioners and concession holders, bringing the total rebate to \$1,672. I know that we will hear from other ministers on 50-cent fares, 20 per cent off car rego, \$200 for Queensland kids to play sport and help for new home buyers. The Miles government is putting money back into your pocket for groceries, rent and school uniforms—delivered through public ownership and coal royalties. We are making multinational companies pay their fair share.

Queensland's nation-leading rebates are fast, fair and deliverable. We are putting downward pressure on prices permanently through the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, with a \$26 billion boost to deliver the cheapest form of energy—that is, renewable energy. This is clean energy in a timeframe that secures tens of thousands of jobs in Queensland industries. The Job Security Guarantee funded by our budget will protect existing jobs for workers in the energy sector. More than that, whether you are a miner in Mackay, a boilermaker in Bundy or a welder in Winton, the energy transition funded in this budget delivers your job security.

There are other matters of important public affairs in relation to energy and the clean economy. On the weekend, the leader and deputy leader of the federal opposition indicated that they would renege on Australia's 2030 targets. They indicated they would not support our large-scale storage in Queensland. The LNP effectively announced coal would continue to burn into the 2040s—

**An opposition member:** Hear, hear!

**Mr de BRENNI:**—undermining investor confidence and costing jobs. I take the interjection from I think the member for Mermaid Beach, indicating support for the continuation of burning coal into the 2040s. As Michelle Grattan wrote in the *Conversation* on Sunday—

... rejecting a target to which Australia has committed would carry international consequences.

...

... with climate action written into various trade and security policies by other countries, that could carry significant economic costs, if not sovereign risk.

The choice for Queenslanders is: a massive backward step under the LNP with their coal-burning, gas-guzzling, tree-clearing, low-wage, high-unemployment nuclear plan for Queensland; or our plan funded by this budget that delivers economic security, job security, climate action, public ownership and help for households to make ends meet—

**Honourable members** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! Members to my right, particularly.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I will say it again: or our plan funded by this budget which delivers economic security, job security, climate action, public ownership and help for households to make ends meet, delivered by Labor, because that is what matters to Queenslanders.

## Public Transport, Fares

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.46 am): We know that every dollar counts. Last month, I joined the Premier and Deputy Premier to announce an Australian first—50-cent fares for every trip taken on a Translink service. This will mean savings Queenslanders can see every single day. From Monday, 5 August for six months all Translink public transport fares in Queensland will be a flat rate of 50 cents across all zones. A person catching the train from Robina to Bowen Hills four days a week will save more than \$2,100 over six months. As the Minister for Transport, I want everyone to be able to access public transport easily and affordably, and this initiative will go a long way in achieving that.

We will be looking closely at the results of the trial to determine if it meets our goals of providing critical cost-of-living relief, reducing road congestion and encouraging more people back onto trains, trams, buses and ferries. Most importantly, this initiative means more money back in the pockets of Queensland families. We know they are feeling the pinch, and I was proud to join the Premier and Deputy Premier last weekend to also announce a 20 per cent reduction in rego fees for 12 months. This


is a cost-of-living measure we anticipate will benefit millions of car owners across the state. This builds on our previously announced freeze on rego fee increases, set to come into effect from next month. For a family with a four-cylinder car, the reduction will mean an \$85 saving on their rego fee—money that can be spent on groceries, the mortgage or rent or put into savings.

Not only does our rego reduction benefit millions of Queensland drivers, but it will also put more money back in the till of more than 480,000 small businesses across the state. The rego reduction will apply to the rego fee and the traffic improvement fee for all light vehicles, regardless of purpose of use. The fee will also apply to trailers utilised by mobile small businesses across the state. We know that vehicle expenses can have a big impact on the bottom line for Queensland's hardworking small and family businesses, especially those who need to run a fleet. For a tradie's journey to the job site, for school drop offs or for students getting to uni, our cost-of-living relief will deliver savings everyone can see. I am proud to be part of a government that is listening to Queenslanders to help deliver the cost-of-living relief they need to make ends meet.

I also joined the Deputy Premier last month to announce half-price Airtrain fares for six months—an initiative that will benefit tens of thousands of travellers, as well as the more than 20,000 people who work at Brisbane Airport. For too long Queenslanders have been short-changed on Airtrain fares by a dud deal struck by a former LNP government.

This government has a plan for transporting Queensland and only a Labor government will deliver the transport infrastructure and cost-of-living relief that Queenslanders need.


### Children, Sport and Recreation

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (9.49 am): The Miles government is putting Queensland children first by helping hardworking families get their kids involved in sport and active recreation which we know is so vitally important. Since 2019, our enormously successful FairPlay program has seen more than 210,000 vouchers, worth over \$30 million, redeemed by eligible Queensland families. This has helped contribute toward the cost of sport and active recreation membership, registration and, just as importantly, participation fees. However, we have listened to the feedback from Queensland families who have constantly told us that FairPlay vouchers need to be more than \$150 and have requested that we expand the program to include everybody.

I am very pleased and proud to stand here today to inform the House that from 1 July this year, every Queensland child between five and 17 will be eligible to access this important program. Through the state budget, FairPlay is expanding by a further \$33.5 million. It is now a \$40 million boost for families right across Queensland for the 2024-25 financial year. The value of these vouchers will increase from \$150 to \$200, and the number of vouchers will also increase from 50,000 to 200,000, ensuring more Queensland kids can participate in the activity of their choice. Importantly, up to 50,000 of these vouchers will remain guaranteed for those under the current eligibility criteria.

Mr Speaker, you and I and many in this chamber know the power that sport has in helping shape young lives and benefiting their physical and mental health development. It is absolutely fundamental. The Miles government knows that families are doing their best to manage the cost-of-living pressures, and we are helping to break down the financial barriers because being active should not be limited to those who can afford it. Cost-of-living action is at the heart of this budget, along with building the infrastructure we need for our growing state and investing in our greatest asset—our children. This is the biggest cost-of-living relief package ever for Queensland, helping the household bills and putting downward pressure on inflation.


### First Home Buyers, Stamp Duty

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (9.52 am): This weekend our government announced it would lift the stamp duty threshold for first home buyers. Queenslanders looking to buy their first home will now no longer pay stamp duty on a place up to the value of \$700,000. Buying a home is a big deal, and measures like this will make it easier for young Queenslanders to break into the market. Our new threshold means 85 per cent of Brisbane homes are accessible for the concession. That is compared to 77 per cent in Melbourne and 70 per cent in Sydney. In fact, I hopped online over the weekend to find a unit in the building I first rented in Carrara well under the threshold. It means a young nurse buying a \$700,000 property on the northern Gold Coast will pay no transfer duty, saving more than \$17,000.

It should not just be those with the bank of mum and dad who can afford to buy a home. By slashing stamp duty, we will help 10,000 more Queenslanders into the market each year. We are able to do this by making foreign property investors pay their fair share. We will bring our foreign investor transfer duty surcharge into line with New South Wales and Victoria, and we will raise our land tax surcharge on foreign investors from two per cent to three per cent, which is still below New South Wales and Victoria. In the choice between foreign investors and Queensland first home owners, we will back Queensland first home owners every day of the week. It is a costed, laid-out policy that will provide direct cost-of-living relief for thousands of Queenslanders. It will add to the doubling of our first home owner's grant, our First Nations home ownership program and the shared equity scheme—a scheme that could be helping thousands of Queenslanders right now if it were not for being blocked in the Senate by the LNP and the Greens.

The LNP might try to spin their way to claim the win, but they never came out with a policy. They are big on slogans, short on detail. The fact is that at no point has the Leader of the Opposition ever said how much they would raise stamp duty to, or how they would pay for it. Only the Miles Labor government has a detailed plan to deliver more homes for Queenslanders.

### Cost of Living

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (9.54 am): Queenslanders have told us that national cost-of-living pressures are impacting their ability to be able to meet the demands of household bills. That is why we have seen record investment in cost-of-living measures already announced from this year's budget—from our \$1,000 power bill rebate and 50-cent public transport fares, to the 20 per cent reduction in car registration and the \$200 FairPlay vouchers, just to name a few.


We know that another key concern for Queensland communities is rising pressures on the household grocery bill, leading in some instances to food insecurity for families. Increased food insecurity means more Queensland children are potentially starting their school day on an empty stomach. That is why the Miles government has boosted the School and Community Food Relief Program by \$15 million in this year's budget because no child should go to school hungry. We are working with schools across the state, along with charitable organisations, to ensure children have access to adequate levels of food at school, whether that be through the expanded breakfast clubs, the school lunch program or the delivery of healthy food and drink education programs.

The funding boost included in this year's budget also contains \$1.3 million to support food and nutrition awareness and education for families of school-aged children through community focused programs. This is on top of the commitment of \$2.7 million announced in last year's state budget to extend and expand the Miles government's school breakfast programs, particularly in communities experiencing hardship across Queensland. The increased investment in school breakfast programs has seen close to \$200 additional schools supported to deliver school breakfast across the state, on top of the approximately 300 schools already supported through our existing funding. This means more Queensland children than ever are being supported to access healthy food and drink at school, helping to ensure kids can concentrate on learning.

In addition to this important boost in funding, Minister Farmer and I are co-chairing the School and Community Food Taskforce, a cross-sector group which will provide expert advice on options to support access to healthy food and drink for Queensland families, as well as provide the opportunity to share ideas and experiences across government, organisations, logistics and food retailers.

Making sure young Queenslanders have the best opportunities to learn and can learn on a full stomach matters which is why new Premier Steven Miles and our government are committed to this and many other cost-of-living measures. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of these programs in schools across the state.

### Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.57 am): With reported incidence of domestic and family violence increasing at an alarming rate, our domestic and family and sexual violence service system has experienced increased demand for counselling, shelter, accommodation and perpetrator intervention services. The Miles government is committed to supporting survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence, ensuring they have access to the services they need, where they need them and when they need them.

In our pursuit to end all forms of domestic, family and sexual violence, we have committed an extra \$154.4 million over four years to support and strengthen frontline services and increase the workforce. The 2024-25 state budget will make the increase of \$36 million recently announced permanent in the forward years to ensure stability for the sector, to increase staff retention and maintain continuity of service delivery. We have listened to the sector and we have made sure this is being imbedded in their core funding. This significant investment will go directly to frontline domestic, family and sexual violence service providers to provide trauma-informed information, advice, referral, specialist counselling and support and emergency accommodation to women and children affected by domestic, family and sexual violence. The investment will also provide a continued focus on programs and interventions that break the cycle of violence by addressing the behaviours of the person using violence or who are at risk of using violence, and addressing gaps in service delivery. Since 2015, the Queensland government has committed more than \$1.9 billion toward stopping all forms of violence against women.

Earlier this year we released *Queensland's plan for the primary prevention of violence against women 2024-2028* and appointed the Queensland Council of Social Service to establish a domestic and family violence peak body to work in partnership with government, the DFV sector and the community to strengthen and expand efforts to prevent violence against women and children. I acknowledge all of the vulnerable cohorts of First Nations people, the LGBTIQ community, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disabilities, who are even more vulnerable. It is important that we invest in domestic and family violence services for these particular areas.

Domestic, family and sexual violence in all its forms is a violation of basic human rights. Every person deserves to feel safe and to be free from violence and fear. The Miles Labor government remains committed to supporting the domestic, family and sexual violence service system from prevention to recovery.

### Police Service, Recruitment

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (10.00 am): On the back of the Miles Labor government's record investment in police, the Queensland Police Service is currently undertaking the biggest recruitment campaign in its history. I commend police for their clever, agile and aggressive recruiting efforts. It is an undeniable fact that Queensland is now leading the nation when it comes to the recruitment of new police officers.

Police advise that, after a tough few years facing the labour market headwinds experienced by every sector of the economy nationally and globally, we have turned the corner on recruitment and are now seeing a positive growth in police numbers. There is a graduation this week and another graduation in two weeks time. Within a month, when even more police recruits enter the academies, there will be a record over 700 recruits undergoing training in Queensland. This is the highest in our state's history. Police advise that there are currently more than 2,200 further applicants in the recruit pipeline.

The Queensland Police Service advises that by the end of June the combined number of police officers and police recruits will be the highest on record. In the first six months of our new Premier, police advise that the officer headcount is expected to have increased by over 250 officers. This is a massive increase in a short period of time and it reflects the Premier's commitment to supporting community safety. It shows that our new Premier is 'miles better' for police—but there is more.


**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

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

**Mr RYAN:** By the end of the year, Queensland is projected to have the highest number of police officers in its history. Police advise that by the end of this year there will be another record—that is, the combined number of police and recruits will be the highest on record. These are very solid achievements given the labour market challenges the world is facing.

These recruitment achievements also reflect what happens when a government invests heavily in the front line to support community safety. The investments being made by this government will deliver around 3,000 extra police personnel. The government is funding these extra positions and the Queensland Police Service, despite challenging labour market headwinds, is delivering on those commitments. I say it again: the Queensland Police Service leads the nation when it comes to recruitment because it is a world-class police service. We thank their members every day for their efforts in keeping us all safe.

## Early Childhood Education and Care

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.03 am): The first eight years of a child's life are absolutely critical. We know that if we can support a child in those early years we will set them up with the best chance for a good and happy life. Of course, that is what we all want for Queensland's kids, but to ensure vulnerable children have protective factors around them to help shield them from life circumstances is a game changer. This is why we are so pleased to have announced that in this year's budget we will fund Putting Queensland Kids First, the early years strategy which the Premier flagged as a priority coming out of his very first cabinet meeting as Premier. It is a \$502 million investment which includes almost \$200 million over four years for education initiatives. It is a strategy that focuses on early intervention and prevention to deliver better outcomes for Queensland children and families, and it starts at conception. Key investments include: enhanced child health checks in the first five years of life; enhanced child development services in priority locations; early childhood coordinators within existing child, family and community services; extending free kindy hours up to 30 hours a week in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; supporting young parents at risk of homelessness; and funding mental health support for parents, partners and families.

We are providing health practitioners in 20 priority primary schools, removing the barriers faced by some families. Five schools in Ipswich, Logan, Moreton Bay, Townsville and Bundaberg will be the first to receive a health practitioner in 2024. We are employing family support coordinators in over 200 primary schools and behaviour specialists to work with high-needs primary schools and special schools to support classroom teachers. Ipswich, Logan, Moreton Bay, Townsville, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay and Maryborough will be the first communities to receive the coordinators and behaviour specialists in 2024, with more communities to benefit in 2025. The reaction from stakeholders has been so positive. From Lady Gowrie Queensland—

These initiatives and programs ... will provide children and families more opportunities to engage in health and education programs earlier supporting better outcomes for all and enabling children to flourish.

From C&K—

C&K welcomes these initiatives and the plan to bring children and families to the programs and services they need to flourish.

The Queensland government has already invested \$645 million for free kindy for every four-year-old in Queensland; \$106.7 million through the Student Wellbeing Package, which is already providing access to wellbeing professionals in state schools; and \$288 million to support educational engagement for a range of students who simply cannot work in mainstream schools. Through prioritising and investing in our youngest Queenslanders, the Miles government will support all children to have a bright future.

## Cost of Living

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.06 am): In the past few months I have had the absolute honour of travelling across Queensland as the Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. I have spoken with young people, seniors, carers, people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. I have listened to their concerns. I have heard their stories. I can tell you that top of mind for almost every one of them is the cost of living.

The Miles government's 2024-25 state budget will provide real, practical help and cost-of-living relief for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. We will be investing heavily in our child and family services. There will be more money for seniors and disability services and more funding for multicultural affairs. We will include additional funding for more foster and kinship carers so they can receive financial support to look after children with complex and high-support needs, as well as provide additional support for our Extended Post Care Support program. This is a program that is providing financial support for young people leaving care up to their 21st birthday. It has been an absolute game changer in the first year of operation.

The Putting Queensland Kids First strategy also features strongly, with a \$9 million investment over two years for our Safe Pathways trials for early intervention and support for young women with children at risk of becoming involved with the child safety system.




In the disability area, we will be announcing additional funding for better services and supports for our most vulnerable people and people with disability, and we will be giving our initial response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the NDIS review, with more to come.

Senior Queenslanders are also important when it comes to needing help with the increased cost of living. That is why this budget will include concessions and rebates on energy, utilities and rates bills, and our cost-of-living rebate. Seniors will receive \$1,672 off their electricity. This means that the majority of seniors and pensioners in Queensland in the next financial year will not pay one cent for their electricity. That news has been well received. I was recently with the member for Pumicestone on Bribie Island for one of our seniors expos. The 150 seniors present were very happy to hear about our incredible rebates.

This is a carefully considered budget providing practical help for Queenslanders doing it tough. We want to put more money in the pockets of all Queenslanders, and this budget will provide significant relief to just about every home in the state. It is a budget that recognises and responds to the challenges being experienced by our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Only a Labor government cares about our seniors and our vulnerable families and it is only a Labor government helping Queensland households.

### **Parole Board Queensland, Appointments; Voluntary Home Buy-Back**

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.10 am): Community safety is of paramount importance to the Miles government. That is why we have taken steps to strengthen laws surrounding community safety and how we deal with the risk certain people can pose to society. I recently received advice that there have been some administrative errors in some appointments made by the Parole Board Queensland. Specifically, I have been advised that the board did not follow appropriate process in making some appointments. As has been said publicly, this will not result in the automatic release of anyone who has been denied parole. However, out of an abundance of caution the government will this week seek to pass urgent amendments to rectify this situation and maintain community safety. I note the member for Clayfield's public comments on this matter and I am happy to organise a departmental briefing for him.

Queenslanders expect and deserve a high-functioning Parole Board. This week I have requested a meeting with the president of the Parole Board to understand any issues that are occurring and ensure that the Parole Board is aware of the government's expectations and the community's expectations.


I would also like to take this opportunity to update the House on the Voluntary Home Buy-Back scheme. I am advised that as at 3 June, 632 home owners have settled contracts under the scheme across Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Moreton Bay, Lockyer Valley, Goondiwindi, Somerset, Gold Coast and Noosa LGAs. All have followed stringent checks and balances to ensure responsible use of taxpayer funds. In relation to the Mi Hi Grove complex, home owners received two independent valuations using a reputable valuer who was used in all LGAs except for Brisbane. Property owners could also seek a further valuation if they wished. I am advised that 40 out of the 42 property owners have accepted offers and contracts are being signed. I recently met with the treasurer of the body corporate and offered to organise a meeting between her and the valuers which, while initially accepted, has been declined. That offer remains open.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Ms BOYD:** I also wish to make it clear that the recent comments made by the member for Ipswich West suggesting property owners were told that they would not receive any assistance if they spoke to the media are wrong. I call on the member for Ipswich West to stop spreading misinformation and stop using these property owners, many of whom are in a vulnerable position, for political purposes.

### **Miles Labor Government, Budget**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (10.13 am): I have been Premier for 179 days. In that time I have travelled—

**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Mr MILES:** I have been Premier for 179 days. In that time I have travelled the state listening to what Queenslanders want and need from their government. Overwhelmingly, Queenslanders need and want support—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Nanango!

**Mr MILES:** Overwhelmingly, Queenslanders need and want support—support to manage their household budgets and drive down bills, to help put food on the table and give their kids the best start in life, and support from the front line when they need it most. Today the Deputy Premier and Treasurer will hand down our government's first budget. It is my first budget as Premier. It is a budget I am proud of.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr MILES:** Today the Deputy Premier and Treasurer will hand down our government's first budget. It is my—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left will cease their interjections. There was nothing provocative that I could hear that the Premier is making statements about.

**Mr MILES:** Today the Deputy Premier and Treasurer will hand down our government's first budget. It is my first budget as Premier. It is a budget I am proud of that delivers what matters to Queenslanders. Cost of living is my No. 1 priority because it is Queenslanders' No. 1 priority. Our budget invests more than \$11 billion in cost-of-living relief and concessions. That is the biggest cost-of-living contribution ever seen in this state—31 per cent more than last year. We are taking \$1,000 off the energy bills of every Queensland household. That jumps to \$1,372 for vulnerable Queensland households. We are slashing rego fees by 20 per cent, which will give as much as \$172 back in the pockets of Queenslanders who own a car. For seniors the 20 per cent rego cut will build on the existing half-price concession, making rego essentially 70 per cent off for those with an eligible concession card.

For those who do not own a vehicle, we are making all Translink public transport services 50 cents no matter how far people travel or where they go. For someone travelling from the Gold Coast to Brisbane for work five days a week, that will save more than \$2,000—thousands that could be better spent paying the rent or mortgage or buying the basic essentials. For Queenslanders who dream of owning their own home, we have lifted the first home owner stamp duty threshold to \$700,000. We expect this will save a first home buyer purchasing a home for \$700,000 about \$17,350. This builds on Queensland having the highest first home owner grant in the nation at \$30,000, because I believe that young people should aspire to own a home and be supported to achieve that dream. That is something I want for my kids and for all Queenslanders.

My mega cost-of-living relief package is also expanding the successful FairPlay voucher scheme. On Saturday I joined young football superstars from the Holland Park Hawks to announce the vouchers would increase from \$150 to \$200 and will now be available to all Queensland kids. That means even more can get into sport and experience the social, community and health benefits that brings.

Creating opportunity for Queensland kids is something that I am passionate about. That is why the establishment of the lunch box taskforce is something I have driven since my first day as Premier. Today's budget delivers \$15 million towards direct relief for vulnerable families and busy parents to help provide Queensland kids with free school breakfasts and lunches so they can focus on learning and support tuckshops in giving kids healthier options. This funding will also support the lunch box taskforce to implement their ideas to fill the tummies of Queensland schoolkids.

For apprentices there is a \$1,000 rebate available to purchase industry relevant tools. That will help those people taking advantage of our industry driven free TAFE courses. We cannot forget about Free Kindy, which began this year, too. That is saving Queensland parents up to \$4,600 a year. These new measures are on top of our continued support for Queensland's most vulnerable including a \$200 rate subsidy, free glasses every two years and \$830 for general dental care for seniors. This record \$11 billion of cost-of-living support is something only my government can deliver because we are making multinational coal companies pay their fair share. We are leveraging our state's economic success to put money back in the pockets of everyday Queenslanders and to deliver a record health budget. As a former health minister, I can say a record-breaking \$28.9 billion health budget is big news. That is a massive investment to deliver more hospital beds, increase the healthcare workforce and


provide Queensland's doctors and nurses with the tools they need to save lives. This represents a 10.6 per cent increase on last year, reflecting the demand on our hospitals and emergency departments and a boost to our hospital big build.

It is only my government that is building the hospitals and healthcare facilities of the future: new hospitals at Bundaberg, Coomera and Toowoomba; expansions to 11 major hospitals; \$60 million towards a new Cairns health and innovation precinct; and \$200 million for a brand new Cooktown Hospital, set to replace the current multipurpose health service that was built as a temporary facility in the 1980s. I am proud that I can deliver new and improved facilities for our frontline workers and for Queenslanders.

With more hospitals comes thousands of extra beds for sick Queenslanders and the need for more doctors, nurses, allied health workers and ambos. That is why our budget invests more than \$300 million to support and retain the current workforce while attracting new talent to Queensland. Queensland doctors will also receive a \$40,000 boost to train in general practice under a new \$20 million Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme. The incentive will bolster Queensland's primary care services by incentivising trainees commencing their training in 2025 and 2026 to undertake general practitioner training across Queensland, because we know that our emergency departments are now bearing the brunt of a decade-long decline in primary healthcare funding under the former federal government.

There is also critical funding to recruit over 260 Ambulance Service staff: 188 on the front line and 80 in specialist positions, because Queensland is strong when our frontline services are strong—a front line that saves lives. I want to thank the thousands of health heroes who clock into work today and every day and make a difference. You are the reason Queensland has one of the best health systems in the country and the world, and we will back you all the way to the bank.


## ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.21 am): I can advise that the Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Queensland will be absent for question time today as he is in an important briefing regarding the Miles government's cost-of-living budget for Queenslanders which will be introduced into the House this afternoon. As such, the Premier will answer questions for the Deputy Premier today.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.22 am.

### Redcliffe Hospital, Maternity Services

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.22 am): My question is to the Premier. Following the tragic death of Thea Flasket at Redcliffe Hospital, has the health minister briefed the Premier on the progress of changes the minister promised in training advanced neonatal resuscitation, providing clearer advice on the risks and options of induction and expanding postnatal support for women?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. As we have said publicly, those matters that were raised have been the subject of a review. The review made 37 recommendations, 23 of which have been implemented while work is underway to implement the other 14. Clearly, we take the concerns that were raised very seriously, as does the health minister. Redcliffe Hospital is one of our best hospitals and I know firsthand that the staff who work there do a fantastic job. Redcliffe is my local hospital and I have many times, both as health minister and since then—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members to my left, I have repeatedly told the House that if a minister is being responsive to the question as asked I will not hear interjections.

**Mr MILES:** Many times I have visited with the maternity services at Redcliffe Hospital, and they do a great job. They do not deserve to have the opposition coming in here and criticising them and the safety of their services. They deliver world-class care and I—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was whether the Premier has been briefed by the health minister.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am going to be very clear today, members. I will take points of order that are important and not frivolous, and I will ensure you do. I am listening to the response from the Premier. I will hear that response. So far the Premier, as I have heard him, has been responsive to the question as asked.

**Mr MILES:** Many members of my community have had their babies at Redcliffe Hospital and had fantastic care. I know that there are many expectant mums right now who would be looking forward to having their babies at Redcliffe Hospital and I do not want them to hear the statements of the Leader of the Opposition and fear for their safety or the safety of their babies. This just continues the LNP's approach of talking down our health workers and talking down our health services. Let's not forget that those opposite think our regional healthcare staff are duds. They think our regional healthcare staff are duds, and now they are trying to tell people from my community that the birthing services at Redcliffe Hospital are unsafe when they are not unsafe. Queensland is one of the safest places in the world to have a baby, in large part thanks to our investment into the hospitals and the health staff and the midwives that support mothers to have their babies. I can also advise the House that Redcliffe Hospital recently appointed a full-time staff specialist obstetrician as medical director, further ensuring that the safety of mums and bubs at Redcliffe Hospital can be assured.

### **McGregor, Master H**

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. Has the health minister briefed the Premier on the death of Hugo McGregor at the Mackay Hospital in March last year?

**Mr MILES:** Clearly, the health minister and I talk regularly about health matters, although it is often not possible to disclose publicly information related to individual cases and individual patients.

**Opposition members** interjected.

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

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I am calling the House to order. Members, all members are on notice. If I call the House to order, it will come to order. Otherwise, I will start naming members.

### **Budget, Miles Labor Government**

**Mr KELLY:** My question is of the Premier. Can the Premier outline the priorities of the Miles Labor government's first budget, and is the Premier aware of any similar or risky alternative approaches?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question. I recently spent some time in the electorate of Greenslopes along with the member for Greenslopes and met some fantastic members of his community such as representatives of community organisations and small businesses and the local Scouts—a bunch of folk working hard alongside the member for Greenslopes to make that community stronger—and I was genuinely impressed with the folk who were there. Of course, they said to me, as do Queenslanders right across the state, that they wanted my first budget to focus on them and their cost of living.

That is why I have been very pleased to outline all of the initiatives that we will take to support them with their cost of living: nation-leading \$1,000 energy rebates for every single household, bolstered by a further \$300 from the Albanese government and an extra \$372 for vulnerable households; 50-cent public transport fares no matter where you go or how far that is, including transferring services—that is just about as close to free as we could make them; 20 per cent off rego, saving Queensland households hundreds of dollars; and \$200 FairPlay vouchers for every kid playing sport. I want to see every kid have the chance to play club sport, and this \$200 voucher will ensure parents can afford to do that. I also want every kid to aspire to grow up and own their own home, and we are supporting them to do that through our increase to the stamp duty threshold, effectively abolishing stamp duty for first home owners buying a home worth up to \$700,000.

There is nothing more important that a government can do to help a family with their cost of living forever than to help them get into the property market. They will forever be better off if they can buy their first home, so abolishing stamp duty for them, on top of the highest first home owner grant in the country, underlines our commitment to supporting them to buy their first home.

While the Leader of the Opposition endorsed our budget a week before our cabinet did, Queenslanders are not going to fall for that. Queenslanders know what he stands for: cutting taxes on coal companies, cutting public servant numbers, cutting services and cutting cost-of-living relief.

### **McGregor, Master H**

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Whistleblowers have told the opposition that the health minister was briefed about the tragic circumstances around Hugo McGregor's death in June last year. Can the minister explain why she did not urgently action changes to neonatal resuscitation, providing clearer advice on the risks and options of induction and expanding postnatal support for women after being briefed?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I will firstly say that I have met with Andre McGregor to hear of his experience of the health service. My heart goes out to the McGregor family for their loss.

**Ms Camm:** Have you met Jenna?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I met with Andre. The family was invited to attend and he attended on behalf of the family, which is appropriate. My heart goes out to them.

I want to update the House that the Mackay HHS Chief Executive and Chief Medical Officer have both met with Mr and Mrs McGregor to personally hear about their experiences and have offered them their sincere condolences. Of course, there was an independent review and that has been provided to the family, the Coroner and the Office of the Health Ombudsman. It is important that the Health Ombudsman and the Coroner continue their investigations. Those investigations are ongoing.

I want to say this about our maternity services: as the Premier said today, Queensland is one of the safest places in the world to give birth. Our hardworking midwives and obstetricians do an incredible job and they are supported by us. Last year I was thrilled to announce an additional \$42 million to continue to support rural and regional birthing services. I have met with the midwives and obstetricians in Mackay. Of course, following the investigation a couple of years ago, so much work and reform has happened across that HHS to make it even safer for women to give birth. I am really excited about working with the Friends of the Mackay Birth Centre as we embark on an exciting new project for a new birthing centre. I know that the women of Mackay and the stakeholders are really excited to work with us on that.

I reassure the House that, in relation to that particular case, all of the recommendations from the independent review are being implemented. It is now before external agencies such as the Health Ombudsman and the Coroner. Legal proceedings are also underway so there is not much more I can say at this point.

### **Infrastructure**

**Ms BUSH:** My question is to the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government's Big Build program is benefitting Queensland, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for Cooper, who is an outstanding member for her part of Brisbane. Our electorates are right next door to each other and we both know that Brisbane, Queensland is the place to be. It is where everyone is coming to. We are looking at over one million additional people moving to Queensland over the next 10 years and we know that our electorates will be impacted, as will many electorates throughout the state.

Led by the new Premier, the new Miles Labor government's first budget will give Queenslanders what they need in order to meet cost-of-living pressures, and that is jobs—72,000 of them. The 2024-25 budget includes \$27 billion worth of capital investment in our Big Build. That is the best cost-of-living relief that we can give any person. Do members know where \$18.57 billion of that will be spent? In the regions, outside of Greater Brisbane, supporting 50,000 jobs. That is absolutely outstanding. However, all we hear from those opposite is whingeing and whining, and it continues on and on. As the economy slows there is no doubt that this level of investment in job creation will be critical to Queensland's future success, and no-one knows that better than the new Premier, Steven Miles, and the Miles Labor government. Over the next 10 years we will be revolutionising infrastructure in this state.

To answer the member for Cooper, Cross River Rail and the new cancer hospital to be built next to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital will be unbelievable infrastructure that will benefit our

electorates. The member asked me if I knew of any alternative approaches or what others are doing in relation to this. The only person I channelled was Campbell Newman. I can tell the member for Cooper that Campbell Newman said, 'I have no idea. That's why I don't know who the Leader of the Opposition is anymore. I don't know what he stands for. I don't know what his vision for Queensland is.' I can tell the Leader of the Opposition and this House today that the people of Queensland know what the new Miles Labor government's vision for Queensland is. It is the Big Build. It is to build the infrastructure this state needs, and we are proudly going to deliver it.

### **McGregor, Master H**

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Minister for Health. A review into the tragic death of Hugo McGregor found effective processes for neonatal and O&G emergencies may not be embedded well or well understood by staff. Why did the minister only act in November after a media story broke about another tragic death, that of baby Thea Flaskett?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I reject the premise of the question. Obviously, when an independent clinical review follows an unexpected death, all of the recommendations are implemented and they were implemented as soon as that review was complete.

### **Women and Girls, Health**

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is supporting women's health care in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Redlands for her question. She is an amazing advocate for women's and girls' health, as are all members on this side of the House. We are proud to support access to health care for women and girls. In 2018 we proudly decriminalised termination of pregnancy in Queensland. Earlier this year we made it possible for our hardworking nurses and midwives to prescribe MS-2 Step to help women, particularly in regional areas, access termination of pregnancy services earlier. Those are both key historic reforms for women and girls. They are two reforms that those opposite voted against.

I have to say that I was a little bit shocked last week when the Leader of the Opposition said he would support absolutely every initiative in our budget before he had even seen the budget. He said that, if he is elected in October, he will honour the contracts that are signed and the projects that are underway. That is exactly what he told the media at his press conference. I am so pleased that the opposition have now had a change of heart when it comes to termination of pregnancy because, in this year's budget, we are investing almost \$42 million to support the Termination of Pregnancy Action Plan. That includes \$8 million for NGOs to provide wraparound support. Lock in those contracts because they will not be going anywhere if the Leader of the Opposition is elected. There is \$9.9 million to establish a statewide virtual service—so pleased that that project is not going anywhere—and \$21 million to employ more nurses and social workers to deliver this important care.

I do not want to steal the Treasurer's thunder, but I am happy to advise the House that this year's budget includes almost \$5 million for voluntary assisted dying services—another really important, historic reform that those opposite did not support. Suddenly there has been a wonderful change of heart. I wonder if the member for Broadwater consulted all of the members of the LNP who voted against these amazing, historic reforms. What did he tell the candidate for Oodgeroo, Amanda Stoker? She will have to be the new attorney-general who supports termination of pregnancy and voluntary assisted dying. How is she going to cope? I love the fact that they have had a change of heart and that they will be absolutely supporting all of these wonderful initiatives.

### **Hospitals, Data Collection**

**Ms CAMM:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Whistleblowers from across Queensland hospitals have claimed that they have been ordered not to record SAC1s in official records. Is this proof the government cares more about protecting its image than about protecting patients?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I absolutely reject that question. All SAC1 events have to be recorded. We have a whole team within Queensland Health—Clinical Excellence Queensland—that provides the guidelines so that those incidents are immediately recorded. We also have obligations, of course, to report sentinel events federally. All of those incidents are reported. I am briefed on those incidents.

They are entered into RiskMan and, importantly, it is an opportunity for clinicians to learn when unexpected events happen. That is exactly what Clinical Excellence does to support those clinicians. We learn from when those things happen. We support the staff to continue to improve their services. They provide excellent care for Queensland. I am proud of them. They are not duds. I am incredibly proud of them. The fact is that they do their job so professionally. When these unexpected events occur, there are clinical reviews and those recommendations are implemented. Where appropriate, of course, matters can be referred to the Coroner and the Health Ombudsman. That is the appropriate course of action.

### **Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence**

**Mrs McMILLAN:** My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General advise the House how the Miles Labor government is supporting the domestic, family and sexual violence sector in Queensland, and is the Attorney-General aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Mansfield for her question, for her dedication to her community and to domestic and family violence services and for her engagement and contribution to the Red Rose Foundation board. During Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month it was a pleasure to join the member for Mansfield at the Red Rose Foundation candle-lighting memorial service, where, sadly, we remembered way too many lives lost. In doing so, I make a brief mention of Betty Taylor and acknowledge her contribution. She has just stepped down as CEO of the Red Rose Foundation. She has been working in and supporting the DV sector for over 28 years. We thank Betty for her tremendous work.

It is important to remember the lives lost but also victim-survivors—those who are at the moment in the middle of that trauma and who have still not reached out for help and those who are trying to remove themselves from that harm. It is also important to remember all of the service providers who are supporting victim-survivors to flee from harm and to stay safe and supporting them on their journey going forward. That is why I am so proud of the 20 per cent increase in core funding that the Miles Labor government has announced.

Why is that important? It means that we are not directing what it should be spent on and where it should be spent. It is in the core funding so that domestic, family and sexual violence providers can decide for themselves where their demand is, where their needs are and where they need to concentrate that additional funding most, including an uplift in their staff and those core services. Sadly, we know that there are a lot of people—a lot of men—waiting on perpetrator behavioural change programs. We know that we cannot just focus on those being harmed; we need to focus on those who are doing harm in order to change that cycle.

We talk about silent bystanders. During Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month I was surprised at the silence from those on the other side. There have been no announcements about any policies or what they stand for. Importantly, their spokesperson posted nothing on social media in relation to domestic and family violence.

**Ms Fentiman** interjected.

**Mrs Frecklington:** What an absolutely disgraceful comment.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Waterford and member for Nanango!

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection from the member for Nanango, because everyone has to have a voice. We need to make sure we are leading by example, that we are talking about domestic and family violence.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you will cease your interjections. Minister, you have time remaining. Do you have anything further to add?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Thank you. It is important that we—

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Whitsunday is warned under the standing orders. It is not an opportunity for silence to be broken by a member's interjection.

**Mrs D'ATH:** It is important that we all have a voice, that men and women in this place have a voice.

*(Time expired)*

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

### Budget

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the Treasurer said, 'When we come out of the budget we're going to fight for Queensland every day until 26 October.' Does this government care more about saying and doing anything to cling to power rather than having a plan for Queenslanders after the election?

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my right, that is uncalled for.

**Mr MILES:** I thank the shadow Treasurer for his question. It strikes me that Queensland has a brand new Premier but the same old opposition—the same tired, old opposition with no plans and no ideas. The member asks about plans for our state's future. I have been Premier for six months. In that time I have outlined plans for the homes of the future—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana.

**Mr MILES:**—plans for the community safety of the future, plans for the cost of living of the future—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Mr MILES:**—and plans to give Queensland kids the best start in life. That bloke has been Leader of the Opposition for 3½ years.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, resume your seat. Member for Kawana, if you cannot hear me, I suggest that there may be other things required. I have asked you to come to order. I have asked you to cease interjecting. You are warned under the standing orders. You are fortunate that I am not asking you to leave the chamber entirely.

**Mr MILES:** I have done all of those things in just six months. The member for Broadwater has been leader of his party for 3½ years and is yet to come up with a single idea—not a single plan for our state and not a single plan for the future.

The member asks me about focus on the election date. I can say who is focused on the election date: the member for Broadwater, who is already calling himself the premier-elect. The member for Broadwater takes Queenslanders' votes so for granted that he has already decided that he is going to be the premier.

On this side of the House, we are focused on what matters for Queenslanders—what matters for them now and what matters for them for the future. We know that the best way we can support them now is with cost-of-living relief such as our \$1,000 energy rebates, our 20 per cent cut to rego, our \$200 sport vouchers, our 50-cent public transport fares and our plan to help first home owners get into the market. They are all plans that are costed and delivered in our budget. The member who asked me the question should probably be aware of that because he endorsed all of our plans a week ago. They are strong plans designed to address the concerns that Queenslanders have, for now and for the future. That is what we on this side of the House are focused on doing each and every day and it is what we will keep doing to deliver for Queenslanders.

### Cost of Living

**Ms NIGHTINGALE:** My question is of the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs. Can the minister update the House on the ways the Miles Labor government is helping Queenslanders, including those in Inala, with cost-of-living relief, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for Inala because the scale of cost-of-living relief that this new member for Inala has delivered to her community is massive. Thanks to this new Premier, in just three weeks in this House the member for Inala has already delivered more cost-of-living relief than those opposite did in their entire term.



Like me, the member and perhaps all of us on this side of the House are keen to see what the Leader of the Opposition does this week. Some say the LNP strategy is deceptive. Some say the LNP strategy is weak. Some say the LNP strategy is all about being a small target. Even Campbell Newman called the Leader of the Opposition's tactics 'dishonest' and he described them as 'disingenuous'. Last week we saw the Leader of the Opposition endorse our budget sight unseen.

The problem for the Leader of the Opposition is this: on 18 April 2024 in this House he voted no to renewable energy targets, he voted no to public ownership of Queenslanders' assets and he voted no to job security for Queensland's energy workers. The problem for the Leader of the Opposition is that this budget that he says he endorses funds the very things that he voted against. It funds government owned renewables that he voted against. It funds pumped hydro that he voted against—that he says he is against. It funds the job security fund that in this House he voted against.

The problem for the Leader of the Opposition is that less than two months ago he voted against the very measures that make up the budget. The question is: when does the Leader of the Opposition ever tell the truth? When does he ever tell the truth? The problem for the Leader of the Opposition in trying to create such a small target for himself is that eventually he turns himself inside out. It is a tactic that is deceptive. It is a tactic that is weak. It is a tactic that is falling apart for the Leader of the Opposition. It is no wonder that Campbell Newman said this of the LNP, 'It's insane ... it's dishonest, it's disingenuous.' Now every Queenslander knows what they would get with an LNP government.

*(Time expired)*

### Budget

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. What does it say about the government the Premier leads given he cannot maintain the confidentiality of a sealed budget that is leaked to Channel 9 before it is tabled in parliament?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Kawana for his question. What I can assure the House is that we are delivering a budget on what matters for Queensland. The member is right: there have been some disturbing and very damaging leaks. Somehow it got out that we were giving Queenslanders \$1,000 off their energy bills. I really wanted to keep it secret until two o'clock today, but somehow it got out there. Somehow somebody found out that we were cutting public transport to 50 cents. I am still investigating that one. Somehow it got out that we were cutting rego by 20 per cent. That is very concerning. Somehow somebody found out that we were giving kids \$200 vouchers so they could play soccer. Hand on heart, I do not know what happened there. Somehow the media found out that we were abolishing stamp duty for first home buyers on homes up to \$700,000. I am very concerned about that one. Somehow it got out that we were increasing the health budget by 11 per cent, to a record \$28 billion.

**Ms Fentiman:** \$28.9 billion.

**Mr MILES:** That is \$29 billion to support our health system and our health workers. Somehow the media even found out that we are delivering a surplus this year when we had projected a deficit.

The member for Kawana is right to be very worried about all of these leaks because I do not know how all of that got out. I can assure the member for Kawana that there are plenty more surprises still to come. There are plenty more surprises in the budget that somehow we managed to keep under wraps. He should look forward to the Deputy Premier's speech to hear what they are. That is when he will find out what he supports. At two o'clock today the member for Kawana gets to find out what is in the budget that he has already endorsed. I will report the outcome of my investigations to the House.

### Public Transport, Fares

**Mr SULLIVAN:** Sorry, Premier, it was me! My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is lowering public transport fares in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr MELLISH:** I thank the member for his question. I know the residents of Brisbane's north side will be very happy with the apparently leaked announcement that the Miles Labor government is backing the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. We do not know how that one got out.

Every Queenslander deserves to get where they need to go in a cost-effective, safe and timely manner. Our cost-of-living measures, including our 20 per cent reduction in rego and our 50-cents transport fares, will make a real difference for Queenslanders every single day. For too long too many Queenslanders have been at the behest of the LNP's dud deal when it comes to getting to the airport

as well. More than 20,000 people work at Brisbane Airport and thousands more travel to and from the airport every day. For more than two decades Queenslanders have been stuck with a shoddy deal struck by the then Queensland Liberal Party—in fact, negotiated directly by their deputy leader over there.

I am proud to be part of a government that will cut Airtrain ticket prices in half as part of our massive cost-of-living relief initiatives. From 5 August, half-price train tickets will be available to the Brisbane Airport terminals for a six-month trial period. Workers will see their tickets slashed in half. This could be a regular saving of up to \$60 a fortnight.

Even former LNP leader Campbell Newman says it is 'insane', 'dishonest' and 'disingenuous' for the Leader of the Opposition to back a budget without even seeing it. As we have seen with this Airtrain deal, you cannot trust the LNP to deliver value for money for Queenslanders. They have also promised to deliver the Sunshine Coast direct line to Maroochydore at an extra cost of more than \$6 billion. We do not know where the money is coming from there. We know they have committed to buy out the very dud airport deal that they locked us into decades ago.

How much is this going to cost? It has been reported that this will cost several hundreds of millions of dollars. Which transport projects and transport jobs will they cut to fund it? The LNP needs to come clean with Queenslanders. If they cut coal royalties, where is the money coming from to fund their empty promises? Queenslanders know that the Miles government will back them and we will deliver for them. You simply cannot trust the LNP.

### **Mossman Mill**

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Premier. After attending a meeting in Mossman it was clear the community does not want to transition the 127-year-old mill, which will result in the loss of over 500 local jobs and leave \$40 million worth of this year's crop to rot. Will the Premier immediately invest the \$12 million transition funding and any additional funding to keep the Mossman mill fully operational for the next two years until an identified long-term solution can be activated?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Hill for his question. I, too, would much prefer to see the Mossman mill continue to operate. When I met with workers and community members in Cairns earlier this year, I conveyed to them the commitment of our government to either support an ongoing operator or find economic alternatives for the town. The reason for that is not because we would not much prefer to see the mill continue to operate. We would much prefer to see that. Those funds could go towards that, but we do have to be responsible with taxpayer funds. Taxpayers have already invested significant amounts to keep the mill open to date, and that has still seen the mill enter administration. While we would prefer to see a viable operator come in and take the mill over and keep it operating, keep all of the workers there and keep supporting that community, if that is not going to occur then we need to come up with an alternative. Those funds remain there and available should there be an operator willing to take the mill on. That remains our preferred scenario.

In recent years we have invested some \$22 million and I think the Australian government has invested \$26 million, so a lot of money has been spent to keep the mill open to date. We have \$12 million there and available should a potential new operator come in. We have worked hard with the various proponents who have come forward to look at the mill to see whether they can come up with a viable business model. Unfortunately, so far it does not seem like the administrator has been able to find somebody who can take it over.

As I said, those funds are there and available should that be viable. If it required more than those funds, I would be happy to talk to them about that. At this stage, the advice to me is that it is not the specific quantum dollar amount where things fall over; it is the long-term viability. Unfortunately, that might be something we cannot necessarily fix. If there is a way we can support the administrator and future operator then we will seek to do that. I am obviously happy to keep in touch with the member for Hill throughout that process to make sure he is informed and we can properly consider any ideas that come to him.

### **Cost of Living**

**Mr POWER:** My question is to the Minister for Tourism and Sport. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is supporting Queensland families to lower their household costs, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative policies?

**Mr HEALY:** I thank the member for the question. I know that the member for Logan appreciates how important affordable access to community sport is. We have had regular discussions, as many on this side of the chamber do. Investing in our children and in our future is absolutely fundamental, and that is why we have expanded this program. It has gone from 50,000 up to 200,000 and we have dropped the criteria; 150,000 of those vouchers are now available to every child in the state, which is fantastic.

We have consulted and listened to the community. When we first came out with these programs we were told that we needed to open them up and there needed to be a lot more of them. We have listened, and as a result we have expanded that program. I can tell members that it has been enormously popular. Sarah from Brisbane recently said, 'Thank you for not restricting it to people with healthcare cards. Those working families on a medium income aren't necessarily doing so well these days, so this helps all of us.' This is another example of where we have been listening.

I want to touch on the Kangaroos Junior Rugby League Club in my electorate of Cairns.

**Ms Grace:** Great club!

**Mr HEALY:** It is a great club. They have pumped out some pretty good Queenslanders over the years. Mr Speaker, I know that this may be an area of conflict for you, so I will get through this as quickly as I can. The Kangaroos said, 'You gotta love this. The kids get something to do. Let them dream big and be like "Hammo" and Nanai, who started at Roos juniors.' We only have to look at how they performed last week to see that they are providing aspirational goals for young kids across the state.

We are not only investing but also listening to the people of Queensland, and that is why we expanded this. Cairns Athletics said, 'Great news for athletics and all sports in our region.' This is not just for our part of the world; it is across the state. With the cost of living having such a significant impact at the moment, this provides overwhelming opportunities. We are a government about opportunities and we are a government about listening. I want to conclude by saying that I, too, was concerned this was leaked, but I believe it has been popular.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Up the suburbs!

### **Police Service, First Nations Advisory Group**

**Mr BERKMAN:** My question this morning is to the police minister. In February the First Nations Advisory Group to QPS was sacked by email after raising concerns with the minister and the commissioner about the request to sign a new confidentiality agreement. Was the First Nations Advisory Group sacked because they publicly raised concerns about racism in the QPS, including about QPU President Ian Leavers and the new commissioner, Steve Gollschewski?

**Mr RYAN:** No. The Queensland Police Service has a very strong commitment to working with all First Nations partners right across the state. The Queensland Police Service is very committed to serving not only those discrete communities but also First Nations people wherever they might be in the state. The Queensland Police Service is also very committed to ensuring there is a First Nations Advisory Group. The latest advice I have is that there is a process underway to ensure a First Nations Advisory Group that not only is fit for purpose but also is able to work in strong partnership with the Queensland Police Service as it delivers policing services right across the state.

The Queensland Police Service is also committed to Path to Treaty. They are part of the truth-telling process and are currently undertaking work to prepare for the next steps in that process. This is reflective of the Queensland Police Service's commitment to being a modern but also compassionate police service for all Queenslanders. They acknowledge that throughout the history of our state there have been many dark moments when it has come to policing our First Nations people and First Nations communities. They acknowledge that, and they are fundamentally committed to ensuring that the future is one of partnership, respect and acknowledgment. I support the Queensland Police Service not only in its efforts around ensuring there is a First Nations Advisory Group but also in its commitment to ensuring all Queenslanders are supported and policed appropriately, in accordance with the law.

### **Affordable Housing**

**Mr RUSSO:** My question is of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government's budget will deliver more affordable housing, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for Toohey for the question. I was just in his electorate the other day opening 33 new units as part of a complex in his community specifically for First Nations women and children who are experiencing homelessness. It is just one of many partnerships the Miles government has. This particular one was with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service, and it is a fantastic development. We were able to meet those tenants.

I do not know how this has been leaked already, but, of course, later today our budget will lock in billions of dollars for more affordable housing just like these ones. I note the member for Toohey is incredibly proud to have affordable housing in his community, as is everyone on this side of the House. We know that the best thing that we can do to drive more affordable housing is to deliver more housing supply into our communities.

It was so disappointing to see the member for South Brisbane in the media last week railing against new affordable housing in her own electorate. The government's plan will unlock 14,000 more homes through the Woolloongabba PDA, but new housing is apparently not part of the member for South Brisbane's agenda. I table a copy of the ABC article for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Article from ABC News online, dated 5 June 2024, titled 'Apartment towers up to 75 storeys proposed for Woolloongabba to alleviate housing crisis opposed by Greens' [\[974\]](#).

This is a part of the city that is close to hospitals, to workplaces and to public transport—it is literally on top of a brand new train station as part of the Cross River Rail—but the member for South Brisbane has said, 'Not in my backyard'—no to mandated social and affordable housing, no to well-located homes. It is typical for the Greens to say they care about social and affordable housing but, when it is proposed to be in their own backyard, they say, 'No, not interested'—NIMBYs.

It is not just the member for South Brisbane who has been railing against social and affordable housing in her own electorate. Last week, the Leader of the Opposition backed the chief NIMBY—the member for Bonney. He is also seemingly against social and affordable housing in his electorate, despite the fact that I have said that I will put in new planning measures to make sure that we protect the environment and deliver social and affordable housing on a privately owned golf course. The member for Bonney is a cosplay conservationist who suddenly cares about the protection of the environment. I am not sure where he was when they were voting against tree clearing laws.

Those opposite say they want to unlock more housing supply. They say that and then they oppose it. They say they want more housing supply—it is assumed they want density—but, again, they do not want that either. Only a Labor government can be trusted to deliver homes for Queenslanders.

*(Time expired)*

## Water Quality

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question is to the Minister for Water. I refer to media reports this morning of drinking water contamination in parts of Queensland and ask: is the minister aware of this issue and what steps has the government taken to address it?

**Mr BUTCHER:** I thank the member for the question and I certainly take water security and the drinking water in Queensland very seriously. The comments in the news this morning related to the presence of PFAS in local waters not only in this state but also nationally. We have done a lot here in Queensland to address the issue of PFAS in our water, including banning PFAS and monitoring those places where it is known that PFAS has leached into the ground. Today's budget will provide funding for a large-scale project in Ayr to support another project of—

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** It is not a leak. I have not mentioned what it is yet. It is a water leak! I am aware that PFAS is in our water supplies around the state, and there are some very significant issues with PFAS, including in Ayr. We will invest a lot of money to make sure that those regional Queensland communities that have PFAS, particularly in their drinking water, are safe. We know that the Ayr community has been watching a cloud of PFAS plume move towards the bores that service the town.

I acknowledge the new Labor candidate in Ayr, Anne Baker, and her support for these projects to move forward in Queensland. She knows how important drinking water is in Queensland, particularly in the Ayr region. We want to make sure that that community has alternative sources of water in future so there is no PFAS in the town's drinking supplies. I also acknowledge the Ayr council, which intervened very early to ensure the bores that were affected by PFAS were not part of the town's supply.

They are also monitoring and testing to make sure that the community are safe. I acknowledge the council for the work that they have done. As far as water supply and security here in Queensland goes, every Queensland community, particularly regional Queensland communities, can rely on a Miles Labor government to support them.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** It is those voices over there that you are hearing—

**Mr Lister** interjected.

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

**Mr BUTCHER:** This is the type of person who will be looking to support water security here in Queensland. It just shows how out of touch the LNP is in Queensland when it comes to water security, particularly in regional communities. We have supported brand new funding for the Cairns Regional Council's water security projects.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the next question, I did warn the member for Southern Downs under the standing orders. I will give you the benefit of the doubt, believe it or not, that you did not hear me because no-one would interject that loudly after being warned. I call the member for Callide.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, member. I was just reminding myself that the member for Callide is actually warned under the standing orders. I was not going to interrupt the minister because that is what your interjections were designed to do. I call the member for Caloundra.

### Police Service

**Mr HUNT:** My question is of the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is supporting the Queensland Police Service to protect Queenslanders, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr RYAN:** I thank the member for the question. He asks me a lot of questions and I think it is because he likes me saying that I have known a lot of members for Caloundra and I think that this member for Caloundra is the best member for Caloundra the Queensland parliament has ever seen. This member for Caloundra delivers for his electorate and he delivers in many ways, particularly on the community safety front.

Until we heard the Leader of the Opposition commit to our budget last week without seeing it, the LNP had never expressed support for the new police station in Caloundra South, which will be funded in this budget and will be delivered in the next few months. They have never expressed support for the new PCYC that will be delivered at Caloundra South as well, which will also be funded in this year's budget. They have never expressed support for any of the other great community safety initiatives that will be funded in this budget as part of our community safety plan—our \$1.28 billion community safety plan which is supporting victims, delivering for the front line, detaining offenders, intervening when people offend and preventing crime before it occurs. Evidence shows that our community safety plan not only supports the front line, boosts resources for the front line and supports victims but also is backed by stronger laws.

I was at the Caboolture Show over the weekend—a great show in its 97th year. The commitment from Labor was there. We were there every single day of the show. I think the LNP had their stall for only one day, but that is okay. It was a little bit cold. It gets a bit cold, a bit hard. They do not have that much commitment. Interestingly, on the Sunday, a fellow called Campbell Newman won one of the final woodchop divisions. Fair dinkum. I thought what a great connection in the lead-up to budget week—a Campbell Newman wins the woodchop at the Caboolture Show when the LNP is notorious for chopping.

It reminds me of some of the recent remarks of Campbell Newman in respect of the LNP—and I like this one: 'Campbell Newman and the LNP to stop youth crime.' With what? With a magic wand? With incantations? With spells? Campbell Newman, as well as everyone else, knows that all they have is slogans where we have a well-costed, evidence-based, well-funded community safety plan which delivers the extra resources for the front line and supports victims backed by stronger laws. Just like the member for Caloundra, on this side of the parliament we back the front line and community safety, but those opposite are just choppers, like Campbell Newman at the Caboolture Show.

### Bruce Highway Western Alternative

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. When will the minister and the department provide the communities affected by stage 4 of the Bruce Highway Western Alternative with a clear timeline, proposed routes, further consultation and a finalisation of the gazettal process?

**Mr MELLISH:** I thank the member for the question. I would like to know whether the opposition support this project and which route they support. They have signed up to the budget, so surely they must be going to vote for whichever route is going forward in this project. We have undertaken detailed community consultation. There was detailed community consultation in December and in January and February of this year—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members, I cannot hear the minister.

**Mr MELLISH:** There will be further consultation on this project in due course because we want to make sure we get this right. I have spoken to the mayor and I have met with many locals about this project. I know that the member opposite, the local member, has many different views on this. He has changed his preference of where the route should go. I would be keen to hear whether the opposition support this project and what their latest route proposed for this is.

I will have more to say on this project, which will be a vital project north of Brisbane relieving congestion. In that part of the world we have many Bruce Highway projects, in conjunction with the federal government. We opened some recently, including additional lanes up to the Bribie Island turn-off. There are some really great projects. We have the Sunshine Coast direct rail, with a commitment on the table matched by the federal government to get stage 1 done by 2032. We have a number of projects, including the Bruce Highway Western Alternative, to relieve congestion in that part of the world. We will have more to say on this project in due course, but it would be good to hear what the opposition's position on this project is.

### Cost of Living

**Mr WHITING:** My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Can the minister outline what the Miles Labor government is doing about cost of living in the minister's portfolio, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, you have one minute to respond.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I will go straight to the risky alternatives because I think that is appropriate. When it comes to water pricing in Queensland, we know that a Labor government has delivered a two per cent rise. While the opposition were in government, guess what it was. There was a 12 per cent rise, year on year, in South-East Queensland. I know that the member is passionate about water pricing in Queensland because he knows that only a Labor government will support our seniors and our vulnerable people in regional Queensland and South-East Queensland to make sure their bills are cheaper.


It has been over 250 days since we announced our water security plan for South-East Queensland. That is 250 days in which the opposition has had an opportunity to tell us what their plans are for water security here in South-East Queensland, and what have we heard? Crickets. Absolutely nothing. They have no plan for water in Queensland. They have no plan for water security in South-East Queensland and in regional Queensland. Only Labor will deliver on that.

*(Time expired)*

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

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.22 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders—

1. Following the introduction of the appropriation and associated bills by the Treasurer, proceedings be suspended until the ringing of the bells at 3.15 pm.

2. Upon resumption at 3.15 pm, government business take precedence until the adjournment is moved by the Leader of the House, with no debate or amendment.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (POWERS AND PENALTIES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 2 May (see p. 1544), on motion of Ms Linard—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (11.23 am): I rise to speak on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill strengthens the framework to safeguard Queensland's environment for future generations and empowers the department to hold polluters accountable. I refer to an article from the *Conversation* dated 29 April 2024 titled 'Chemicals, forever: how do you fix a problem like PFAS?' I note that the issues of PFAS have been raised in today's media, as per the question in today's question time from the shadow minister, the honourable member for Nanango. I table this article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Conversation*, dated 29 April 2024, titled 'Chemicals, forever: how do you fix a problem like PFAS?' [\[975\]](#).

The article refers to American chemical giant 3M, which has been found responsible for polluting waterways around the world with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, PFAS, which are found in cleaning products, non-stick cookware and personal care products including shampoo and make-up. The article refers to a series of lawsuits in which 3M has been ordered to pay billions to clean up PFAS contaminated waterways.

A recent report by the chemical safety non-profit ChemSec found that the cost of PFAS remediation globally amounts to around \$26 trillion per year, not including rising healthcare costs from exposure to PFAS. PFAS contamination has now been reported in South-East Queensland water plants. They are dubbed 'forever chemicals' because they do not break down in the environment or the human body. PFAS have been linked to cancers, thyroid disease, altered sex hormone levels, reduced kidney function and lower birth weight in babies.

This bill aims to implement recommendations stemming from the 2022 report by retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge and incorporates critical environmental policy principles into the EP Act, including the polluter pays principle. I want to acknowledge the shadow minister for the environment, the honourable member for Bonney, for his contribution during the second reading debate.

This bill will clarify that failure to comply with a general environmental duty constitutes an offence when it leads to serious or material environmental harm. The bill introduces environmental enforcement orders, EEOs, allowing authorities to issue notices to address environmental harm events. A notable addition to the EP Act is the standalone duty for a person who causes contamination resulting in environmental harm to restore the environment to its pre-harm condition. Whilst this principle is a foundation of environmental responsibility, it has raised concerns about practical application and the challenges of identifying the original polluter.

A notable change in this bill is that environmental nuisance will no longer be precluded from material or serious harm. This is aimed at addressing ongoing concerns in South-East Queensland and the Ipswich area, where waste management issues such as odour have significantly impacted local communities. I want to refer to another article from the ABC dated 1 December 2023 titled 'Restraining order filed against Queensland waste facility after thousands of complaints about bad smells'. The article refers to the waste recycling facility at Swanbank that has received more than 25,000 complaints to the state government over the past five years. From the article I quote Sarah Waite, a local resident, who said that the odour was like 'a wheelie bin left in the hot sun'. She said—


It is a repulsive smell that you cannot get used to and it is difficult to persist with if you are outside.

Another local resident, Kellie Bryan, said that the odour had a 'sweet tang' that caused her to immediately start 'coughing and gagging and then vomiting'. I table that article by Victoria Pengilly from 1 December 2023.



*Tabled paper:* Media article, dated 1 December 2023, titled 'Restraining order filed against Queensland waste facility after thousands of complaints about bad smells' [976].

The bill has raised concerns amongst various stakeholders, including the City of Gold Coast, all of whom shared concerns about the lack of consultation and unintended consequences of the polluter pays principle that may place undue responsibility on end-of-waste receivers who lack control over the sources of contaminants that enter water systems. The department of environment and science needs the tools to take action when environmental harm is evident, but it must do so with transparency and collaboration and view industry and landholders as partners and not adversaries in the shared goal of environmental protection. Whilst the opposition will not oppose the bill, for too long our environment has suffered because the Miles Labor government has not followed through on its promises. We must ensure that our actions today lay the groundwork for a sustainable and thriving future for Queensland.

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (11.28 am): I rise in strong support of this bill. I do so because this is an incredibly important issue for me, it is an incredibly important issue for our community, and I am proud to see these laws before the Queensland parliament. In recent years—in fact, going back over many decades—too many families in our local community have suffered from the environmental impacts of a few specific industries. By 'environmental impacts' I am talking about odours, and by 'a few specific industries' I am talking about the waste industry and some particular operators and activities in that industry. Waste operators and composters in particular have burned their social licence in our community because they treat our community with zero respect and they have zero social licence.

I am extremely proud that last year we passed laws with stronger penalties and powers for the independent environmental regulator, including the ability to hold company directors personally responsible. Since that time, as part of the Miles government, I have been proud to work with other local Ipswich Labor MPs, like the member for Ipswich and the member for Jordan, and we were able to secure a landmark independent review of our environmental odour laws. This review was independent of government and undertaken by a retired judge of the Planning and Environment Court and a senior crown prosecutor—eminently qualified people; that is serious legal firepower—and that review has led to these laws.

The Miles government was proud to support the implementation and accept all of the recommendations of the review in full or in principle. To see this legislation before the House giving effect to those recommendations is a really important milestone and it is something that I have been proud to work on behalf of our community to deliver. These recommendations include hardwiring human health and safety into the legal definition of 'environmental harm', delivered by Labor. It puts the precautionary principle and polluter pays principle into our law, delivered by the Miles Labor government. That is what today is about: the Miles government delivering for Ipswich; the Miles government delivering better environmental laws by putting these recommendations into law.

It does frustrate me that the Ipswich City Council has approved a new composting facility at Swanbank and entered into a multimillion dollar contract with NuGrow—that is not something that we need in our local community—but that frustration turns to outrage when we consider the LNP's position on waste and the LNP's position on the environment. This is the party that, when in government under Campbell Newman, removed the waste levy in Queensland—they got rid of it—which opened the floodgates for waste from interstate to come back into Queensland. It was only when Labor was re-elected that we reintroduced the waste levy and stopped interstate waste coming from over the border. Even in opposition, the LNP tried to repeal the waste levy after we brought it back. In August 2019, when the now leader was the then shadow minister for the environment, they moved a motion from opposition to repeal the waste levy—absolutely flabbergasting behaviour.

I am glad that the now shadow minister, the member for Bonney, is here in the House so I can remind him of what he said in 2019 about the waste levy. He called it a new tax. He said he was 'proud to be part of a party that has ruled out introducing any new taxes'—the waste levy. He was proud to support repealing the waste levy. The member for Bonney then went on to say—


Interstate dumping, particularly in Ipswich, is a huge issue, but let us be clear: this is a problem that can be solved at the local government level, particularly with the Ipswich City Council.

I do not necessarily disagree with the member for Bonney in his statements of 2019. I turn to his contribution on this bill. The LNP are not opposing this bill, but they have put some caveats on it. I note that their contributions, including those of the member for Bonney and the shadow ministers, are spouting industry lines, quoting waste industry recycling like big business and big waste companies and quoting the Queensland Resources Council. It is clear that the LNP will always line up with big



business, whereas Labor will always line up with the people. That is why I support this bill. I commend it to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Before I call the member for Mirani, I will remind the House that the following members are on a warning: Bonney, Everton, Whitsunday, Nanango, Kawana, Southern Downs and Callide.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.35 am): I rise to speak on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill has been introduced in response to the 2022 review of the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The review was prompted by the significant odour nuisance issues in the Swanbank industrial area and surrounds caused by new housing being built too close to existing waste management activities. The bill's changes, however, are likely to have broad and far-reaching impacts far beyond Swanbank's odour issues. The government agreed, or agreed in principle, to all of the 18 recommendations made by the reviewers. Several recommendations were implemented in last year's Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Act. This bill implements most of the review's remaining recommendations.

This bill will give the government regulator a much greater range of enforcement tools and stronger penalties than it had previously. The bill seeks to enact the polluter pays principle and the precautionary principle, with a focus on the proactive prevention of environmental harms before they have even occurred. Like all other forms of predictive policing, this proactive prevention approach carries a number of potential risks for those industries regulated by the EP Act.

Major changes introduced by the bill include: (1) a new general environmental duty offence for the failure by someone to take reasonably practicable action to prevent or minimise serious environmental harm; (2) a new environmental enforcement order, EEO, which may require operators to improve their onsite processes, including equipment, which will, or may in the future, cause unacceptable environmental harm; and (3) a duty to restore environmental harm, which requires operators to restore an environment to the condition it was in prior to an incident involving contamination. My concerns with the bill relate specifically to the introduction of a new environmental enforcement order and new general environmental duty offence.

New section 359 establishes the enforcement grounds for issuing an EEO as where it is deemed necessary to secure compliance with an environmental protection policy or achieve a general environmental duty. Under the bill's changes, an EA holder could be issued with an investigation order or an EEO compelling the operator to undertake actions over and above conditions set out by their EA. This could mean requiring an operator to change their onsite practices if the regulator decides they are, or may cause, an unacceptable environmental harm such as an offensive sound or odour, or it might mean an EA holder being required to change its equipment, such as its water management system, in order to meet more rigorous water release limits than those stipulated in their EA. An EEO may also require an operator to cease an activity indefinitely or change its operating hours. Again, it is important to stress that these requirements could be imposed whether or not an operator is operating in full compliance with the conditions of his EA.

Clause 13 of the bill amends section 319 of the act to incorporate offences in relation to a general environmental duty, GED. The clause does not attempt to protect operators from being in breach of the new offence by offering a defence for where an operator is deemed to have taken all reasonable practicable measures to prevent the offence. This provision is broadly drafted and no definition of the term 'reasonably practicable' is included in the bill. Presumably, it would be up to the regulator to decide its meaning and how it should be quantified and measured in practice. Where the regulator decides an operator's actions do not constitute reasonably practicable measures, the operator will be found to be in contravention of the GED and to have therefore committed an offence under the act whether or not they were operating in full compliance with the conditions set out in their EA.

As a number of industry stakeholders pointed out at the public hearing, this could represent an unacceptable sovereign risk for the industry and for businesses in Queensland. This is something that would make investing in a Queensland operation extremely risky. As the Queensland Resources Council submitted, such a change could effectively put people out of business simply because they are unable to comply with new amended conditions such as reduced limits. Operators may also face substantial and unforeseen costs in complying with an EEO, or amended EA, particularly if the new conditions involve major changes to infrastructure or the installation of costly new equipment. All this

leads to considerable uncertainty and a significant sovereign risk for businesses that are operating under the EA in Queensland.

Under the current act, a person must report potential actual environmental harm within 24 hours of when the person becomes aware of that harm. The bill changes this wording to when the person 'becomes aware, or ought reasonably to have become aware' of potential or actual environmental harm. How exactly would the regulator identify or measure the exact moment someone 'ought reasonably to have become aware' of something? The bill does not say. This use of vague, ill-defined terminology is likely to cause even more confusion and uncertainty for operators and the third parties that are associated with them.

The bill's strengthened powers for amending the existing conditions of an EA may result in significant additional costs for operators. It is therefore disappointing to find that, yet again, no regulatory impact assessment has been carried out on the impact of the bill's changes. A number of stakeholders expressed similar disappointment at the absence of an RIS. Many also expressed, yet again, their frustration with the consultation process as a whole, saying that the time frames for consideration and responding to the bill were inadequate. We are seeing this across the board. According to the testimony at the public hearing, no formal stakeholder engagement was undertaken by the department beyond that set out in its consultation paper. Stakeholders were not consulted on any exposure drafts of the bill. Had this happened, the government might have produced a better drafted bill and allayed many stakeholders' concerns around the bill's potential impact.


Overall, there is a troubling lack of detail and clarity in the bill and its associated documentation. The bill itself is filled with highly subjective and ambiguous wording such as 'human health', 'mental health', 'safety' and 'wellbeing'. The bill's amended definitions for 'environmental nuisance' and 'material and serious environmental harm' are similarly unclear. None of these terms are objectively identifiable or measurable and their meaning should have been promptly clarified and defined in the bill. The government continues to produce these broadly drafted framework bills—known as umbrella bills—which contain no specific detail on how the bill's changes will operate in practice or how it will be administered. The parliament is then being asked to consider, debate and pass these bills without any real understanding as to what its true parameters or likely impacts may be.

As the QRC said in their submission, to remain internationally competitive and to continue to attract investment to the state, Queensland's regulatory environment needs to be clear and consistent 'especially for those parties that have complex obligations around safety'. QRC further stated that such a broadly drafted piece of legislation is 'reckless and potentially will cause greater litigation and conflict as opposed to creating better environmental outcomes'. It was not alone in this summation. AMEC, the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies, went further in their submission describing it as—

... rigid, legalistic, cumbersome, inflexible, and reactive. It is not cost-efficient, and this proposed advancement will not encourage regulated companies to develop innovative technology or to go beyond compliance.

AMEC also points out something I have noticed myself: that the Queensland government appears to be moving towards an increasing criminalisation of environmental offences and a much stricter approach to enforcement and penalties. AMEC warned that such an approach is taking Queensland further down the path towards a 'command-and-control style of regulation' which could ultimately see entire sectors such as waste and recycling wiped out.

As a number of submitters have pointed out, Queensland already has a highly developed regulatory framework around environmental protection and the rate of environmental offences here in Queensland is statistically low. Overall, I believe the bill's tougher and more punitive approach is both unnecessary and inappropriate, particularly when the potential cost to businesses and individuals is likely be substantial. Piling more costs and regulatory pressures on businesses is incredibly unwise, especially during one of the worst cost-of-living crises this state has experienced. As was pointed out during the public hearings, most operators are small family-run businesses that are located in regional areas. We must ensure that these businesses are able to flourish in the future.

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.45 am): I am pleased to rise and speak on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. As has been highlighted, the Queensland government commissioned an independent review into the adequacy of existing powers and penalties of the Environmental Protection Act 1994. This followed strong advocacy to the Minister for the Environment from our Ipswich Labor team about the significant odour issues that have been experienced in our region. I was surprised to hear the member for Mirani's

speech. Their One Nation candidates were very vocal on this issue, yet he seems to not support the legislation that is before us.

This review was undertaken by the esteemed retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge and it aimed to identify whether the tools under the EP Act, particularly in relation to environmental nuisance, are sufficiently contemporary to address current and future challenges. The review found that, while the EP Act generally contained an adequate range of powers and penalties to enforce environmental obligations and to reduce the risk of environmental harm, changes were required to clarify and make the operation of powers, penalties and tools in the EP Act more proactive.

I am pleased that the government response to the review supported all recommendations, and recommendation 12, which called for expanded powers to end existing EA conditions, was supported in principle. The bill before us will give the environmental regulator additional tools to prevent environmental harm before it occurs. The changes will ensure there is appropriate emphasis on human health, wellbeing and safety in Queensland's environmental laws. It shifts the focus to the proactive prevention of environmental impact. The bill will also clarify that environmental 'nuisance' can be considered 'serious or material environmental harm'. This enables a greater range of enforcement tools and stronger penalties for persistent issues such as odour that are more proportionate to their impact on the community.

I worked in town planning policy for many years both in government and in the private sector. Urban encroachment, adjacent incompatible activities and the loss of industrial and agricultural land have been issues that we have been attempting to address for many years. Getting the balance right is not always easy. I have always had some sympathy for industrial and agricultural operators who establish their businesses in areas where they are clearly zoned to operate, only to have complaints from adjoining neighbours and community. Noise, light, dust and odours are critical issues that can impact the livability of a community, which is why early planning is so critical. This has never been more important than in our Ipswich region. There are several landfills and composting sites within the Swanbank and New Chum industrial areas which are known sources of odour. The department has been investigating and responding to concerns raised by the community about odours, dust and other environmental nuisances in and around these areas for several years. While these odour issues have been longstanding, in recent years they have indeed worsened. It was very rare for those of us who live in the Springfield area to be impacted by the odours, but, as the 2023 Swanbank odour complaints heat map issued by the department shows, the odours have reached as far as Springfield Lakes to the east of the region.


I want to thank my community who have raised their concerns with me for making their complaints, because this has supported the department in their investigations and actions against noncompliant operators. What is clear is that a significant number of those odour complaints relate to odour from composting facilities. We know that it is certain types of feed stock—the material received by composting facilities—that is causing these dreadful odour issues. Again, whilst I have sympathy for industries that have been operating for decades in these areas, it is clear that some Swanbank operators have made limited proactive efforts to adjust their operations to suit their changing surroundings over time.

As a government, of course we want to encourage an organics industry. In fact, the Queensland Organics Strategy aims to develop and raise the standards of the composting industry to improve the recovery of organic waste matters. However, development of an organics industry should not be at the expense of the community or the environment, so our government is working very hard on implementing a number of actions to address the odour issues and bring relief to our communities. They have increased compliance inspections and targeted operations at Swanbank, including enforcement action against noncompliant operators. There is additional community engagement and education about odour reporting and community health, including short-term air quality monitoring. There are regular drop-ins where residents can meet with department officers to discuss compliance activities and investigations into current odour issues.

The department is also rolling out additional long-term air monitoring. Whilst current monitoring suggests that emissions from sites present a relatively low risk to health, those who may have underlying medical issues may be more susceptible to the impacts. The department has been undertaking an EA modernisation process to update composting EAs across Queensland to reflect the best practice guidelines for composting, which in turn will support adopting practices that minimise

odour impacts. The legislative changes proposed in today's bill will improve compliance powers and it is an additional but very important measure.

I want to thank the department for their significant work over many years but particularly over the last year. I would also like to thank the minister for her support of our communities in Ipswich. There has never been more action on the ground on all fronts to reduce odours in the Ipswich region. Everyone has a right to enjoy being in their backyard without feeling nauseated by the disgusting odours emanating from those composting facilities. Whilst we can throw everything we can at this issue including court action, like we have done recently with NuGrow, these companies need to step up and do the right thing by our communities. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (11.50 am): I rise to give my contribution on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I want to say at the outset what a testament this bill is to the incredible efforts of the Ipswich community and in particular to those living in and around Swanbank and New Chum.

I understand that, as at 2020, 42 per cent of Queensland's waste and 55 per cent of South-East Queensland's waste ends up with private waste operators in the Ipswich region. That is an incredibly heavy burden to put on the shoulders of residents in nearby suburbs. I am genuinely proud that the Greens have stood alongside the Ipswich community in their fight for a healthy future free from the adverse impacts of a poorly regulated waste industry.

The community has fought tooth and nail to have their health and wellbeing taken seriously. They have held rallies, tabled petitions, pitched stories to the media, written to ministers and members, and made it clear that they will not be ignored. While I am on this point, I want to make a special mention of Danielle Mutton, who has been a relentless advocate amongst the Ipswich and Lockyer Greens. She needs to be singled out for her great work on this, amongst other local residents and those in the branch.

The community can also be immensely proud that this bill introduces a raft of positive changes with the potential to protect not just their own communities but also other communities from the impacts of odour, noise, aerosols, fumes, particles and smoke—all environmental factors which can cause serious health and amenity impacts and which before this bill were not taken seriously under the state's principal environmental protection legislation.

The bill sets out some key principles of environmental protection that must be considered when administering the act. Some of these, like the principle of intergenerational equity, were already in the act but by way of secondary means, buried away at the back of the act, so it is good to see these brought forward and joined by the principles of polluter pays, proportionality and the primacy of prevention. How these will operate in practice is yet to be seen. I will add that I am not totally reassured that the consideration of these principles will be as strong as it could be or be enforceable, but they are critical protective principles. It is vital that they genuinely guide all of the actions and decisions made under the act. Instead, it looks like they may be treated as just a nice thought, much like the existing section 5, which requires that a person performing functions or exercising powers under the act must do so in a way that best achieves the objects of the Environmental Protection Act. That provision has existed in the EP Act ever since it was introduced in 1994, and in the intervening time Queensland's environment has continued to degrade while ecological processes on which we all depend remain under threat.


We are pleased to see the new duty to restore the environment and enhanced duties to notify of environmental harm. These are essential given that the baseline condition of our surrounding environment is degrading. Importantly, the bill brings environmental nuisance impact—things like noise, odour, dust particles and smoke—within the remit of serious and material environmental harm where those relevant thresholds are met. This just makes sense. There is no denying the impacts that all of these issues can have on health and wellbeing. I want to turn to an example from my electorate particularly around the impacts of noise.

The ongoing upgrades to the Moggill Road roundabout, which are projected to save mere seconds in peak-hour traffic in the morning and afternoon, have involved protracted night-time works since the project began in mid-2021. The local residents have been subjected to near constant noise and sleepless nights and it has been next to impossible to get hold of the environmental management plans, which are supposed to address the noise limits and the measures taken to meet those limits. It is essential that these kinds of impacts are treated seriously and that impacted communities can hold governments and corporations to account, and that requires as a bare minimum that the environmental management plans are accessible, are visible to the public and are available for enforcement.

With that in mind, it is good to see that the all-important general environmental duty will finally have some teeth, with penalties introduced for those who fail to do everything they can to minimise environmental harm when carrying out their activities. There is also clarification that the new environmental enforcement order, which consolidates existing enforcement mechanisms into a single order, can be issued even where an environmental authority for the activity exists. This means that where an activity might be causing more or different harm than is authorised, there is no ambiguity that an enforcement order can be made.

There is no doubt these are all good changes, but I remain concerned. I am concerned because the department has—and has had for a long time—a multitude of enforcement tools at its disposal which it has entirely failed to use. Not only that, but when companies breach their environmental authorities there is a fairly regular practice—a trend at the very least—of just updating the conditions so that those activities are compliant. This is so much the case that companies can often happily accept strict conditions safe in the knowledge they can simply have those conditions changed once they commence.

What we desperately need in Queensland is an independent, well-resourced environmental protection agency. It is now almost two years since consultation was completed, but it remains unclear to us whether the government has any intention of implementing or even further advancing this election commitment to introduce this important statutory authority. This is essential for future environmental protection in Queensland. We cannot afford to continue with a regulator that is under-resourced and that does not have the powers or the independence it needs to properly effect the operation of the Environmental Protection Act.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (11.57 am): I am very pleased to rise and speak in support of the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I would like to firstly thank Minister Leanne Linard and the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation. Their work has helped get these substantial reforms into parliament. I am really grateful for Minister Linard's support and her personal appearances in Ipswich and for listening to residents. I would also like to thank retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge for their independent review into environmental penalties and powers in Queensland. That review was initiated in part by the significant odour issues in the Swanbank industrial area—those issues that have affected Ipswich for decades.

I would also like to thank those advocates in the Ipswich community who have devoted a lot of their own personal time and energy into putting this issue in the spotlight. Their lived experience of the odours and the toll taken on their daily lives and their health and wellbeing is the reason this legislation is so desperately needed. Those advocates and many other residents of Ipswich have been calling for stronger action and we have listened. They have demanded tougher penalties for noncompliant waste companies and they have demanded those companies step up their efforts to reduce waste and composting odours. If a company operates close to a residential area, they have a corporate responsibility to not do harm to nearby residents. If they cannot adapt to community expectations then they should move on. I have been advocating strongly on this issue since 2015. I have lobbied the current and former environment ministers to ask what more we can do to take tougher action on waste companies flouting environmental laws.

The odours in Ipswich have been around long before 2015, but they have become a much more significant problem since increasing numbers of people have moved into the new greenfield suburbs surrounding the Swanbank industrial area like Ripley Valley and Redbank Plains. People who live further away in suburbs like Flinders View, Raceview, Silkstone and Booval also experience these odours. As we heard from the member for Jordan, sometimes the odours have even extended as far as Springfield. In response to residents' complaints and concerns, in 2018 the Queensland government set up the Odour Abatement Taskforce, and I thank Minister Leanne Enoch who listened and was responsible for that. The Odour Abatement Taskforce operated exclusively in the Ipswich area and investigated odours reported by residents. That taskforce's investigations led to numerous penalties, statutory notices and legal proceedings against noncompliant operators. In 2019 we reinstated the waste levy after the former Newman LNP government dumped it in 2012—this led to a tsunami of interstate waste being dumped into Ipswich landfill facilities—but it was obvious that we still needed to do more.


Some residents have informed me that they are getting ill and that they are suffering respiratory and skin problems or that they cannot sit outside or have people over for a barbeque. They have to close up their house and have their air conditioner running all day, which has resulted in higher electricity bills. The Ripley Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in Queensland and home to a large number of first home owners and young families. Some of them are very concerned about the odour's

impacts on their children's short-term and long-term health, and this is a fear that they should not have to live with.

Our government has taken those concerns seriously. Queensland Health has been engaged to work with the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation to help advise on the results of air monitoring that is taking place. As part of our odour response, DESI has expanded the use of air-monitoring canisters across Ipswich and, to date, no air sample has exceeded health guidelines. Queensland Health has also established referral pathways for residents to access health advice if they have concerns. Local GPs have been alerted that patients may present with symptoms associated with odours, and the Chief Health Officer has encouraged local GPs to utilise referral pathways for residents experiencing health issues related to the odours. I am very pleased to see that this legislation will place a greater emphasis on human health, wellbeing and safety and that it will emphasise proactive prevention rather than reactively responding to environmental breaches after they occur.

The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation has gone above and beyond in responding to Ipswich's odour problem, and I want to acknowledge the work it has done to try to resolve this issue. It has substantially increased its compliance activities in assessing waste facilities in the Swanbank and New Chum areas which have resulted in multiple fines, enforcement notices and legal proceedings. In December last year DESI filed a restraint order application against composting company NuGrow in the Planning and Environment Court to try to stop NuGrow receiving highly odorous waste. DESI has applied for final orders to have an in-vessel system constructed on NuGrow's site to enclose its composting operations. An in-vessel system—one which is built to best practice guidelines—would greatly reduce odour emissions impacting nearby communities. Some 70 local residents provided witness statements to the department's restraint order application, and I want to thank those community members for taking the time to make that contribution to the process. I also want to point out that the Queensland government recently announced a \$9 million package for the Ipswich City Council to fully rollout food organics and garden organics waste collection, otherwise known as FOGO waste. Part of that funding will help council collect organic waste and send it to a facility that meets best practice guidelines for composting which means that, given there are currently no Ipswich operators that meet those standards, it will have to be sent outside of Ipswich.

This bill is a chance to finally stop the odours in Ipswich. We know that only the Miles Labor government can be trusted to do this. The opposition neglected this issue when it was last in government. It got rid of the waste levy and ignored odour complaints by Ipswich residents. In fact, the LNP's track record on the environment is marked by a contempt for the environment. Do not forget that this is the party that has tried to recommence uranium mining in Queensland. Not only did the LNP scrap the waste levy in 2012; it ruled out a ban on plastic shopping bags—something our government successfully introduced in 2018. The LNP weakened environmental regulations for a number of industries under the guise of cutting green tape, but it was really just a free pass to pollute. The LNP Newman government did not spend a single cent on trying to stop the waste odours in Ipswich. However, it somehow found \$40,000 to give to KFC to install recycling bins at its 43 stores across Queensland, and this is where its priorities lie. The point I am trying to make is that it is more about money for big business while local communities suffer. This bill will build on the numerous initiatives the Queensland Labor government has invested in since 2015 to try and stop waste odours in Ipswich. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.04 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. On 13 February 2024 the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament, where it was subsequently referred to the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee for further examination. This legislation aims to enhance the powers and penalties within the Environmental Protection Act 1994 following recommendations from the 2022 *Independent review of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld) report* conducted by retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge.

As previously highlighted, the primary objective of this legislation is to address environmental challenges and strengthen the framework for protecting Queensland's natural resources. As outlined, these objectives will be achieved through several key amendments to the Environmental Protection Act, starting with the incorporation of fundamental environmental policy principles. These principles include: firstly, that the polluter pays; secondly, the principle of proportionality; thirdly, the principle of primacy of prevention; and, finally, the precautionary principle. By embedding these principles prominently in the administration of the Environmental Protection Act, the legislation seeks to guide the

creation of regulations, environmental protection policies, guidelines and codes of practice towards a more sustainable and preventative approach to environmental management.

I note that a significant change proposed by this legislation is the specification that a failure to comply with the general environmental duty constitutes an offence when such failure is likely to cause serious or material environmental harm. Additionally, this legislation replaces the phrase 'reasonable and practicable' with 'reasonably practicable' throughout the Environmental Protection Act. This alteration is intended to aid interpretation and align the Environmental Protection Act with other Queensland legislation. Importantly, this legislation also seeks to address environmental nuisance by clarifying that certain nuisances such as the release of aerosols, fumes, light, noise, odour, particles or smoke can still constitute serious or material environmental harm despite having prescribed characteristics. This aims to ensure that all forms of environmental interference are regulated to prevent significant harm.

On that note, it must be remembered why this specific legislation has largely been brought into the Queensland parliament. We are debating significant aspects of this legislation because of the failures of the Labor state government which have impacted tens of thousands of Ipswich and western suburbs residents. For years residents all across the Ipswich region and even beyond, including from my electorate of Moggill, have experienced unacceptable odour issues due to substandard waste management practices that have been poorly regulated and poorly investigated by the Labor state government. I wish to add my support to the contribution made by the LNP's shadow minister for the environment, the member for Bonney, and also acknowledge the tireless efforts of Ipswich residents and their associated campaign to force meaningful action by this Labor state government, which for too long has taken local residents for granted.

In turning to other aspects of this legislation, I note that this bill clarifies that an environmental enforcement order can be issued to the holder of an environmental authority regardless of whether the authority authorises the activity causing harm. Another important amendment is the introduction of a standalone duty to restore the environment. This duty mandates that if a person causes contamination resulting in environmental harm then they must restore the environment to its pre-harm condition as far as reasonably practicable.

I also want to briefly acknowledge particular aspects of this legislation and its associated drafting by the Labor government which were raised throughout the committee process. As we have seen far too frequently with other legislation that has been introduced and debated in the Queensland parliament, the feedback received from stakeholders highlighted a deeply held mistrust of the current Labor state government. Important concerns were raised by stakeholders about potential regulatory overreach, which is not surprising given the history of strained interactions between this Labor state government with industry and landholders. Furthermore, the LNP opposition has also received significant feedback highlighting the frustrations of key stakeholders regarding the consistent lack of consultation, punitive treatment and reluctance by Labor to explore new approaches. Understandably, this has only fostered a climate of fear and negative relations.


In concluding my contribution I say that, ultimately, those who damage our environment must be held accountable to ensure the preservation of our natural resources for future generations. While it is essential for the department to address genuine environmental harm, it is equally important to treat industry and landholders as partners and experts. Certainly, they can be part of the solution.

Finally, when it comes to environmental protection in Queensland we all have an important part to play, whether at a governmental level, through the department itself or even as part of not-for-profit and/or community organisations. In that spirit, I wish to briefly acknowledge and also congratulate the Moggill Creek Catchment Group, which was recently awarded the 2024 Brookfield Show Society-State Member for Moggill Community Shield in recognition of its outstanding local environmental and conservation work as well as its ongoing important education initiatives, including its terrific annual Kids Day at the Cottage, which was held last weekend. I was delighted to present the community shield at the Brookfield Show following the official opening by the Leader of the Opposition, David Crisafulli MP, on Saturday, 18 May 2024. It is local, community-driven organisations such as our Moggill Creek Catchment Group and their terrific volunteers, including people such as Sandy Pollock, Dale Borgelt, Jim Pope and Anna Williamson, to name just a few, who are at the heart of local environmental protection. It was an honour to formally recognise their contribution.

I take this opportunity to also acknowledge the Kholo Creek Catchment Group, which held a special World Environment Day threatened species event at Platypus Park last weekend. I took the opportunity to meet with and acknowledge the founder, Mr Paul Grimshaw OAM, who was recently

awarded an Order of Australia medal in recognition of his service to conservation and the environment, including during over 34 years with Queensland national parks.

I wish to thank all stakeholders who contributed to the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee's examination of this legislation. I acknowledge all members of the committee, including the member for Southport as well as the acting deputy chair, the member for Bonney, and the member for Gympie, both of whom graciously stepped up to assist during the absence of the member for Southport. I know that I join with all elected representatives in gladly welcoming the return of the member for Southport to the Queensland parliament.


 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (12.11 pm): I rise to make a short contribution in support of the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to facilitate a more proactive approach to environmental risk management. I formally commend the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation for her hard work on the bill. Of course, it is one of many pieces of legislation that this government has brought to the House to ensure a true balance between protecting our environment and continuing to grow our economy. The bill joins a large number of bills that look to help safeguard Queensland's environment for many years to come. As a package, the amendments in the bill represent a balance between supporting industry and protecting the environment and our communities. Our government is committed to implementing the recommendations from the *Independent review of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld) report* by retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge.

I welcome the amendment to the act to introduce a duty to restore the environment. This duty will ensure future generations of Queenslanders can experience the benefits of an environment that has been cared for and preserved by First Nations peoples for thousands of generations and, of course, now becomes our generation's responsibility going forward. The new duty to restore the environment requires that, if a person causes or permits unlawful environmental harm through contamination, the person must take appropriate action as soon as reasonably practicable to rehabilitate or restore the environment, as far as reasonably practicable, to its condition before the harm was caused. Proactive action to restore the environment when harm does occur is, of course, very important. This will ensure that impacts to the environment are minimised as much as is reasonably practicable. The duty is underpinned by the polluter pays principle and reinforces and complements the general environmental duty.

The general environmental duty has the objective of harm prevention and mitigation, whereas the duty to restore applies if environmental harm has occurred. It places an obligation for the proactive remediation of environmental harm on the person responsible for causing or permitting the harm. This means that a person does not have to wait for the administering authority to issue a notice to start the clean-up or to remediate. This amendment ensures a quicker response to incidents involving contamination. We are ensuring incidents are fixed before they can cause even greater harm or damage to the environment, which I think is a very positive and sound move. The duty-to-restore amendment, along with the many other amendments, will improve administrative efficiencies and ensure the regulatory frameworks within the environment portfolio remain contemporary, effective and responsive.

The bill will amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to replace and consolidate the functions of environmental protection orders, direction notices and clean-up notices into a new statutory tool called an environmental enforcement order. The intent of this provision is to clarify that an environmental authority is not a barrier to issuing an environmental enforcement order to address environmental harm or the risk of environmental harm where such harm is not clearly authorised or regulated by the environmental authority.

We know just how important it is to help preserve our environment. That is what Labor stands for. This is an important bill that will help do just that. It will make sure Queensland's environment is preserved for many generations to come. I commend the minister and her department for their hard work. I commend all of the stakeholders who have worked very closely with the government to ensure this bill comes forward. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.15 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I have listened as a number of speakers from the other side of the House have given a history lesson about the waste levy and the waste problem around Ipswich. I well remember that waste problem because I lived at Deebing Heights and at Augustine Heights in my final years in the Air Force. Occasionally I



would note the odours. I certainly noted them when I drove on the Centenary Highway extension to go to work in the morning at the RAAF base.

It needs to be borne in mind that the Labor Party is not without blame in this matter. Let us cast our minds back to 2018. The council that prevailed in Ipswich at that time was populated by Labor Party councillors and the notorious Paul Pisasale, who, after many years of campaigning by the former member for Bundamba, was finally shown to have been corrupt. That council benefited enormously from receiving waste from other places. It was something that the council did to make money. It was not until 2018 that the Labor government moved to bring in the waste levy. I remember the pious pretences of the then treasurer, Jackie Trad, about how this was a mechanism to stop the dumping of interstate waste in Queensland and it was motivated by the highest of motives. It was all about the environment.

In the weeks and months before the announcement of the waste levy, the Ipswich City Council decided, without telling the people of Ipswich, that they were going to dump into the common waste system the recycled materials that were collected in yellow bins. When they finally owned up to that, I think about a month after they started doing it, it attracted the ire of then treasurer Jackie Trad, who said that, as a result, she was going to bring the implementation of the waste levy forward by six or 12 months. Whatever the timeframe, it meant hundreds of millions of dollars came out of the productive economy of Queensland.

One expects to see incompetence from all Labor administrations, and the Ipswich City Council of 2016 to 2020 was no different. The very next day they came out to say that they would rescind their decision not to have recycling. Did the then deputy premier and treasurer come back to rescind her bringing forward of the waste tax? No, she did not! Such is the insatiable addiction that the Labor government has to putting its hands into the pockets of Queenslanders and taking their money. If my colleagues on the other side of the House decide that they do not like to hear a rude noise from the back of the class when they give a history lesson then I am over it, but it does not matter because I have given them the facts.


One particular aspect of the explanatory notes caught my attention. It states that the bill will clarify that the administering authority may require a person to conduct or commission an environmental investigation about an activity or an event causing harm regardless of whether the activity is authorised by an environmental authority. Let us turn our minds to the words 'causing harm'. Who judges that? The activity might well be allowed. I can understand the good purpose of this particular provision, but I would like to speak up, as I must, about how this kind of power has been used against the good people of Southern Downs.

Quite a few of my constituents have had notices given to them that they are to cease their normal activities on their properties. It might be under different legislation, but it is the same power. For instance, they cannot cultivate it, graze it, clear it or do any of the normal things which they might otherwise lawfully be allowed to do. In one case, which I remember clearly, for a very nice fellow by the name of Linden Charles who lived on Stanthorpe-Inglewood Road, the environment department proclaimed a blue dot on his property which prevented him from doing his normal farming activities on hundreds of acres of his property. It was quite arbitrary and the same requirement prevailed: that he was obliged to get a consultant botanist to prove that this particular threatened species that the department said it discovered existed on his property—it was some sort of native cycad—was not there.


If I recall correctly, it cost this primary producer over \$20,000. At the same time, he was bearing the cost of a lack of productive potential because of the punitive actions of the department. When that report came in, Mr Charles felt quite vindicated because it said that the cycad was there because of the cultivating, grazing and clearing activities on his own lands. The reason it was there was that those activities had assisted in the spread and propagation of this particular endangered species. Do members think the environment department would listen? It took months or perhaps years—I cannot recall the exact details—for that restriction to be lifted. This is the kind of nonsense which I urge the government to put its foot down about, because on that occasion the environment department gave the impression that it forgot where its money comes from—that is, from the private sector. Politicians and people employed by government are effectively paid by the efforts of the private sector.

This member of the private sector was disadvantaged. It seemed that the department doubled down and did not want to know about the science. The Labor government has often talked about how it respects the science but, in this case, the science was not respected. These kinds of provisions need to be exercised with great care. It is an onerous burden for public officials to be able to make orders, require people to incur costs and stop doing what they are doing if they are not entirely certain that that

course of action is in the public interest. Looking back on what happened to Mr Charles, it certainly was not in the public interest because in fact they prevented him from doing the very things which had allowed that particular endangered species to survive. These are the sorts of absurd things that I want the government to hear about. I urge the government to ensure any of the powers provided for in this bill are exercised judiciously and carefully in the general public interest—not just to make the wielders of this authority feel better about themselves.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.22 pm): It is interesting to follow some of those opposite in this debate in that it appears if people break the law they do not want them penalised. I may have misheard, but I was a bit confused by what the previous speaker said. In my region, we are very progressive. Our traditional industries are evolving into new and exciting manufacturing industries. This is a very important bill for my region. We are getting a new state development area spread across two sites. One is at Racecourse Mill—this is an area down the road from residential areas and education facilities—and the other is at Rosella, which is mainly agricultural cane land with some homes peppered amongst it. The racecourse site is down the road from the member for Mirani's neighbourhood. I was a bit surprised that the member spoke against this bill. It would be interesting to find out what the member's neighbours think about his opposition to this bill that will secure the livability of their neighbourhood. The member talks the big talk in here but he never gets back home and explains to his electorate what he has actually said.

With the correct legislation in place, we can develop our manufacturing and business use to meet modern needs without unduly impacting on the lives of people living and working in the areas where these new industries and practices are evolving. This bill will support regulators to be responsive and proactive to changes in industry. It is important that our regulators are responsive and to make sure our environment is safe. The bill will also amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to ensure that environmental values continue to be protected, including the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders in our communities. The amendments in this bill will also facilitate a more proactive approach to environmental risk management to prevent communities from being exposed to harm. That is so important to my community because we want to see new industries. We want to see Queensland grow in the future and the community of Mackay wants to be able to live and coexist with future economic developments in our area. We want to be protected from the risk of increased dust, noise, odours and pollutants. This is what my region needs. I support the bill.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (12.26 pm): I rise to speak on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. In doing so I would like to acknowledge the Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Leanne Linard, committee chair, Aaron Harper, the members of the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee, committee secretariat and Hansard for their work in the examination of the bill. Queensland is a vast, beautiful state. Our greatest asset is our natural pristine environment. It is no secret that visitors come to our great state to see and experience the natural beauty that Queensland has to offer. I represent a vast electorate in Queensland—196,836 square kilometres to be exact. Cook is, hands down, the most beautiful electorate in Queensland, but I am a bit biased. We have the Great Barrier Reef at our doorstep and the only place in Queensland where the rainforest meets the reef. The Peninsula Developmental Road throughout Cape York allows visitors to access the many communities throughout the region. The most northern tip of Australia sits in Pajinka, the home of the Gudang Yahaykenu peoples. The Torres Strait Islands showcase the most beautiful, picturesque islands surrounded by turquoise coloured water.

The tourism industry thrives on our natural environment and we should not take this for granted. While I am proud of this government's work to preserve our natural environment, I am fully aware of the associated risk to the environment. While I acknowledge that the sealing of the PDR means access for my communities, it is also attracting a large number of people to the region every year. The large number of visitors to the region not only opens up the floodgates to the region but also the risk of environmental harm. Increased traffic on- and off-road means that there are major risks where we risk waste being disposed of and not monitored. This is not good for country. I acknowledge that society is always advancing and changing and that we need to make sure we are keeping up with societal change and demands.


As vast and beautiful as my electorate is, it is at risk of future environmental harm. Over the years, local government has expressed its concerns about not having adequate resources to manage and police waste effectively in the electorate. My electorate is so large that managing environmental waste has always been a difficult task and, if anything, has always been in the too-hard basket. The careless disposal of waste is bad not only for the environment but also for the natural biodiversity in Far North Queensland. In order to manage ongoing risk to the natural environment and biodiversity, we

need ongoing environmental legislative reforms to protect our environment for the future. That is why I am proud to speak to this bill today. My priority is protecting our natural environment for the future.

The objective of the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 is to ensure the powers and penalties in the Environmental Protection Act 1994 are contemporary and fit for purpose by facilitating a more proactive approach to environmental risk management with enhanced regulatory responses to manage and restore environmental harm which has occurred. The explanatory notes state that the bill's objectives will be achieved through clarifying and refining environmental policy principles; rationalising statutory notices to ensure compliance with authorities, duties and obligations and to respond to environmental harm events; establishing a new duty to restore the environment and associating existing duties or obligations to offences; and improving evidentiary provisions relating to court proceeding.

The bill amends the Environmental Protection Act to implement recommendations from retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge's 2022 report. I want to acknowledge the contributions by the member for Bundamba and the member for Ipswich and the environmental impact they have had to experience in their community. That is why I feel so passionate about this bill, because I want to prevent future environmental impact to my communities. The review aimed to identify whether the tools available under the EP Act, particularly in relation to environmental nuisance, are sufficiently contemporary to address current and future challenges and make any recommendations for improvement to better regulate Queensland's environment. I will end on that note.

I acknowledge that we are, as I mentioned, an advancing society. We are progressing towards development. I know that economic development is a huge priority for my electorate and creating opportunities that will bring visitors to our region. I talk about the tourism industry. It is certainly going to support long-term economic growth and development in the region. In saying that, I also acknowledge that our environment is our greatest asset, and we should be doing everything to protect our environment. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (12.31 pm), in reply: I start by thanking all members for their participation in the debate on the Environmental Protection (Powers and Penalties) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 but no members more so than the members for Ipswich, Jordan and Bundamba, who have been relentless, focused and united in representing the interests of their communities.

This bill will deliver a range of amendments to the Environmental Protection Act to ensure Queensland's environment is better protected through contemporary legislation. The bill implements the government's commitment to support the recommendations of the independent review of the Environmental Protection Act report titled *Independent review into the adequacy of existing powers and penalties*, which was led by retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge. The independent review was initiated in part due to significant odour nuisance issues being experienced by some residential communities, especially in the Swanbank area.

This bill is just one part of a five-point action plan that our government is implementing to address these issues in Ipswich and to respond to the voices of that community and its three local members. Our five-point plan includes increased compliance activities, community engagement, expansion of air monitoring, modernising environmental authority conditions for composting facilities and the review of powers and penalties under the legislation.

Since debate commenced on this bill, I have also released for public consultation proposed changes to strengthen the regulation of compost activities in Queensland, including enabling the regulator to require composting facilities near residential zones receiving highly odorous waste to have in-vessel or enclosed processing. Consultation on the proposed regulation changes are open until 14 June, and I encourage anyone interested to have their say.

We continue to listen to the Ipswich community and are taking every step we can to ensure the community and environment are protected, including by strengthening our laws. They deserve nothing less. The amendments in this bill will have relevance of course to all of Queensland, ensuring environmental protections help to safeguard the environment across our beautiful state and the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. These amendments focus on providing the regulator with greater ability to take a proactive approach to environmental risk management and prevent environmental harm wherever possible. They also remove impediments to an efficient response to address environmental harm when it does occur.

In recent years environmental impacts from several industries have presented increasingly complex regulatory challenges. These are often linked to growing communities with changing land uses over time, resulting in increased risks associated with coexistence of industrial and residential land uses. Strong environmental protections are critical to deal with environmental issues of today and those that may emerge. The member for Cook spoke of some that may emerge and are currently emerging in her community. This is particularly important for minimising and preventing harm to the community and environment from the risks caused by significant dust, odour and noise. Keeping the environmental protection framework effective and efficient is critical to prevent the community from being exposed to harm.

This bill focuses on enhancing and clarifying the powers and penalties available under the act which will enable a more proactive approach and a more efficient response to cases of environmental harm. The bill does not make fundamental policy changes; it instead clarifies and refines existing provisions, ensuring they are contemporary, effective and efficient. The bill gives greater prominence to environmental policy principles that underpin the act. This reinforces their explicit consideration, providing direction to government, industry and communities on the values underpinning the act and its administration. It should be noted that these principles are not new concepts. They are already considered in decision-making under the act and are part of Queensland's existing commitment through the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment.

I acknowledge the concerns from stakeholders in relation to the polluter pays principle and specifically who is and who is not a polluter, along with the challenges dealing with upstream waste that are difficult to control such as PFAS in sewage treatment plants. I would stress that the general environmental duty defence still applies. The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation would consider what steps are reasonably practicable for an operator to be able to do in relation to managing those sources. There are also other mechanisms to be able to deal with those issues—for example, through the End of Waste Code for biosolids. These existing mechanisms will not be affected by the polluter pays principle. First and foremost, it is important we have the appropriate tools to protect the community and the environment.

In response to a number of speakers who have talked about PFAS, I wish to advise the House that I have been actively working with Commonwealth, state and territory environment ministers to support the phase-out of PFAS in food packaging and other materials to reduce the risk of contamination and stop PFAS at the source. Last year we also passed legislation that will help give effect to national laws to ban manufacturing and use of these chemicals through the general environmental duty.

This bill introduces an offence for not complying with the existing general environmental duty to promote proactive action by operators to prevent environmental harm. General environmental duty is a broad duty that has always applied to everyone, including environmental authority holders, and has been enforceable through statutory notices under the act. The bill does not propose to change the duty.

To provide fairness to environmental authority holders and persons complying with a code of practice under the act, two exclusions from the offence have been included in the bill. In particular, the exclusion applies when the environmental authority provides for the reasonably practicable measures as stated in the duty. The mere existence of an instrument that is not related to the relevant duty would not be an appropriate exclusion to the offence, and the bill therefore clarifies that the instrument must provide for reasonably practicable measures relevant to the act that give rise to the contravention of the duty. This is consistent with the duty itself and provides an appropriate defence.

This bill introduces a new duty to restore the environment where a person permits or causes environmental harm through contamination. This promotes prompt action to restore the environment if harm occurs rather than requiring a compliance notice to direct the action. This bill will update environmental harm definitions so that cases of significant environmental nuisance are not precluded from being serious or material environmental harm. This enables a greater range of enforcement tools and stronger penalties for persistent issues such as odour that are proportionate to the impact on the community.

This bill introduces a new statutory notice called an environmental enforcement order. This will rationalise statutory notice powers, combining three existing notices into a single notice. This will streamline compliance tools, reducing regulatory complexity. An environmental enforcement order requires a timeframe of two business days notice to enter third-party land. This may be perceived as short, but it is subject to discussion with the landholder and I would expect that most people who have had a contamination incident on their property would want it cleaned up as soon as possible by those responsible. Sufficient safeguards already exist in the act to balance the rights of landholders with

protecting the environment from harm. The bill will make it clear that an environmental authority is not a barrier to issuing an order or notice when responding to an environmental harm incident where the harm is not clearly authorised or conditioned for under an environmental authority.

This amendment provides clarity on existing provisions. The bill does not give the minister or the environmental regulator a new power allowing them to amend environmental authority conditions. The power to amend environmental authority conditions has been present in the act since its inception. The bill provides clarity on these existing powers. As the member for Bonney pointed out, this power is already used but not widely. In the last five years, out of 9,000 current licences only five have been amended following compliance action, with a further 12 amended by agreement of the licence holder. It is also important to note that the conditions that can be changed must only relate to the compliance issue, not a broad review of all conditions.

I want to acknowledge the member for Noosa's comments in relation to concerns from the community about older licences and the need to keep conditions contemporary to deal with community expectations. While this bill does not fully implement recommendation 12 of the independent review, we will consider what further changes may be needed to ensure licence conditions remain contemporary and fit for purpose. This would necessarily need to involve further consultation and regulatory impact assessment. Amendments are also made to clarify the procedure under which the administering authority is able to initiate and decide amendments to transitional environmental programs. Improvements to evidentiary provisions relating to court proceedings are included that expand provisions currently limited to criminal proceedings to be available in civil proceedings.

I welcome the opposition's support of this bill, but I would like to correct the record regarding the member for Bonney's contribution. The member accused the government of taking too long to address the issues being experienced by the residents of Ipswich and not making this a priority. It was this government that ordered the Jones and Hedge review; it was this government that brought back the waste levy after those opposite abolished it and allowed Ipswich to become a dumping ground for interstate waste; and it is this government listening to the people of Ipswich and the strong advocacy of the members for Bundamba, Ipswich and Jordan that led to the introduction of these legislative amendments. These actions are in stark contrast to what those opposite contributed, which is writing a few insipid letters.

During his contribution the member called on me to give assurances that the regulator will work in good faith with industry. I can give an assurance to the member for Bonney that the regulator is already working in good faith with industry. I do not think that industry, or indeed any person, necessarily loves regulation and the regulator—particularly when the regulator is currently pursuing significant legal action against some in industry—but this legislation is about protecting the community and balancing competing priorities, and that is the job of government.

The member for Surfers Paradise said that we should have taken decisive action sooner and cited the Swanbank issue. He then quoted industry, which said we should take less action. He then criticised inaction on the part of the government. You have to balance the competing interests of industry and community. That is the great challenge and difficult task of being in government but also the great and challenging task of the independent regulator. I want to acknowledge the significant contribution that the independent regulator makes in this state.

I would like to again refer to the consultation and regulatory impact assessment that were undertaken for this bill. While some members, such as the member for Gympie, suggested there was not adequate consultation on the proposed amendments, I want to point out there was considerable public consultation undertaken by the department. Consultation on the proposals that are reflected in the bill commenced in May 2023, with the government publishing the independent review and its summary response.

This was followed in September 2023 by a detailed consultation paper on proposed amendments to be included in the bill. Stakeholders had an eight-week period during which consultation on the paper was open. During the consultation paper the department of environment hosted six stakeholder information sessions. The consultation resulted in 48 written submissions being received by the department. These were from a number of organisations, including the resources sector, environment groups, local government and other industry groups. All of this feedback was considered in the finalisation of the bill, with care taken through the final drafting to clarify the intent and purpose of the amendments. The department also published a consultation report addressing the feedback raised throughout the written submissions. The department undertook an assessment of the regulatory impacts of the proposals in the bill consistent with the Queensland government's Better Regulation

policy. The regulatory proposals were assessed as either minor or machinery of government in nature or having no significant impacts. Consistent with the Better Regulation policy, a summary impact analysis statement was prepared and has been published on the department's website.

The member for Mirani's dissenting report on the bill stated that the general environmental duty offence contained in clause 13 of the bill would introduce an element of retrospectivity that is not in accordance with Queensland's fundamental legislative principles. There is no part of this bill which applies retrospectively. The Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee considered issues of fundamental legislative principles in the bill and made no adverse findings.

This bill will deliver a range of important benefits to community and industry. It implements our government's commitment to support the recommendations of the independent review led by retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge, and this bill will support our government's commitment to protect Queensland's environment. I would like to acknowledge the work done by retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge, who led this review into the adequacy of existing powers and penalties under the act. I would also like to extend my thanks to all those who met with and made submissions to my department, including members from industry bodies, legal representative bodies and conservation and community groups.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the hardworking staff in my department who worked on this bill and whose important work as Queensland's regulator continues, in particular Rob Lawrence, Claire Andersen, Brad Wirth, Theo Verrills, Lawrie Wade and Kahil Lloyd. Your job is challenging, but your contribution is seen and acknowledged in the service of Queensland not only by me as your responsible minister but by all in the Miles government. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 61, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (12.48 pm): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (12.48 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

## HELP TO BUY (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL

Resumed from 2 May (see p. 1486).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (12.48 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Like housing markets nationally, Queensland's housing sector is under pressure to meet the needs of a rapidly growing and aging population. Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home, and the Miles government is implementing our ambitious Homes for Queenslanders plan to support all Queenslanders to achieve this goal. A key action in that plan is to work with the Australian government to progress enabling legislation to get the Commonwealth Help to Buy scheme up and running as fast as possible. The Help to Buy scheme has one important purpose: to help low- and middle-income Queenslanders to purchase a home. By drastically shrinking the up-front cost of purchasing a home, thousands of homebuyers who would otherwise struggle will be able to gain a foothold in the property market. The Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024 will give Queenslanders access to the scheme as soon as it becomes operational.

Despite the fact that this bill will help open the door to home ownership for thousands of Queenslanders, the LNP and the Greens continue to block the scheme in the federal Senate. Today is a key test for the Leader of the Opposition. Will he back in his buddies in Canberra and stand in the way of more Queenslanders owning their own home? He claims he is all for home ownership and has publicly backed in 'looking' at programs like this, but as soon as it was clear that the LNP were blocking the legislation in Canberra he conveniently went silent. Meanwhile, he hand-picked a candidate in Oodgeroo who called shared equity schemes 'really dangerous'. These are the kinds of people he wants on his team—people who think making it easier to buy is really dangerous.

Queenslanders can depend on the Miles government to have their back. That is why we are introducing this legislation to help Queenslanders buy their own home. On 7 June this year, the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee tabled its report on the bill and made two recommendations. I table the response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 11, 57th Parliament—Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024, government response [\[977\]](#).

A clear outcome of the feedback provided to the committee is the broad support for the bill and the framework it establishes. The Miles government is advocating, and will continue to advocate, to the Australian government about the detailed operational arrangements for the Help to Buy scheme to ensure these settings are appropriate for Queensland and ensure the full allocation of places for Queenslanders can be taken up. In positioning Queensland as the first participating state, Queenslanders will be able to access the scheme as soon as it becomes operational. It will also put Queenslanders at the front of the line for any unused allocations in the first year, on top of the approximate 2,000 allocated places.


Feedback to the committee during its inquiry into the bill also strongly suggested that, while the Help to Buy scheme was a welcome addition to home ownership assistance provided by governments, it needs to be partnered with other targeted policies to help more people into home ownership. The Miles government offers a range of home ownership assistance to help eligible Queenslanders buy their own home.

On Sunday, I joined the Premier and Deputy Premier to announce that we will lift the stamp duty threshold for first home buyers, exempting properties up to \$700,000 from stamp duty with a taper off to \$800,000. The first home buyers grant has doubled to \$30,000 for new homes until 30 June 2025. That is the biggest in the country. This will support eligible Queenslanders to buy a new home, which will make housing more affordable in the long term by growing housing supply.

We have also committed in our Homes for Queenslanders plan to increase the income eligibility threshold for the Queensland housing finance loan to bridge the finance gap for regional Queenslanders who struggle to get home loan finance because of where they live. Our Place—a First Nations housing and homelessness action plan—commits to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to increase their home ownership opportunities as well. We are also making our existing Sales to Tenants program more responsive to First Nations communities to help eligible First Nations social housing tenants to buy the home they are renting.

These commitments build on the existing targeted home ownership assistance programs, including the Pathways Shared Equity Loan that supports eligible public housing tenants to buy at least a 60 per cent share of the home they rent. It was this kind of program that allowed my grandparents to buy their first home. These programs changed the lives and fortunes of families for generations to come, and I am the beneficiary of that. These existing initiatives will continue to operate independently of the Help to Buy scheme and the bill does not prevent the state from implementing new home ownership assistance measures, including shared equity schemes.

I thank the committee for its detailed consideration of the bill and all those who made submissions and appeared as witnesses to inform the committee process. The bill will support one of the central pillars of our Homes for Queenslanders plan and assist Queenslanders to achieve their dream of owning their own home. For many Queenslanders, especially young Queenslanders, home ownership feels out of reach. This government does not want home ownership to be available only to those who have access to the bank of mum and dad. We are determined to keep doing what matters so that the great Australian dream of home ownership can become a reality for all Queenslanders. I look forward to continuing to work closely with the Australian government to ensure the effective implementation and rollout of the Help to Buy scheme, which will operate first in Queensland and is anticipated for later this year. The only thing that is standing in the way of its operation is the Greens and the Liberal National Party. That is something that prospective home owners of Queensland should not forget. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.54 pm): I rise to speak on the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024. The Labor Party operates like a multinational company which has state branches that do everything consistently, do what they are told and even share tag lines. They must put out a catalogue every year: ‘Choose one. Which one suits you?’

**Mr Purdie:** The socialist handbook.

**Mr MANDER:** I take that interjection from the member for Ninderry—the socialist handbook. Unlike the Labor Party, we actually think for ourselves.

**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. The member for Maryborough will cease his interjections. There will be no more warnings.

**Mr MANDER:** Thanks, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate that. We are a party that thinks for itself.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. The member for Logan will cease his interjections.

**Mr MANDER:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate that as well. We will not be opposing this bill because we can think for ourselves. We do not do what we are told by the organisation.

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** The member for Ninderry is on fire today. It was interesting to hear the Premier get up today and talk about his first budget, but it is Blocker’s 10th budget. That is whose budget it is. Blocker’s 10th budget will be announced this afternoon.

We have a housing crisis in this state. The housing crisis has not just occurred haphazardly; it has occurred because the Labor government has been in control of this state for 30 of the last 35 years. There has been a lack of planning and deterioration year after year. Here comes the government in the last quarter of the final—four months before the election—throwing everything but the kitchen sink at the electorate, thinking people will believe any word it says. The ALP’s credibility is totally and utterly shot. This bill is another example.

This bill is obviously giving power to the Commonwealth government to enact its Help to Buy scheme, which is a shared equity program designed to assist Australians to purchase new or existing homes by accessing an equity contribution from the Australian government. The scheme is an initiative, obviously, of the federal Labor government. The scheme will be open to 10,000 eligible Australians each year and is expected to run for about four years. The scheme is fully funded by the Australian government. All states and territories have agreed to progress legislation so the scheme can run nationally. That is something that we agree with.

**An honourable member:** Who’s disagreed with it?

**Mr MANDER:** I am going to come back to that later, because I have plenty of time to explore why there might be disagreement about this. I know that members are all hanging out for that commentary.

The Commonwealth legislation related to the Help to Buy scheme remains before the Senate. As has been mentioned, the scheme was originally announced during the 2022 federal election and it was originally slated that the scheme would begin on 1 January 2023. When did it come to the federal parliament? It was in February 2024. Doesn’t that sound familiar—something is announced and a long time later it is finally introduced into parliament?



The Australian government released draft—I emphasise the word 'draft'—program directions for the Help to Buy scheme in April this year. The program directions will sit alongside the Help to Buy legislation and are designed to assist Housing Australia to deliver the scheme. The draft program directions contain details of the scheme including the scheme's eligibility criteria and the obligation on participants.


Stakeholders have varied views on this bit of legislation federally and how it relates to us here. The Property Council of Australia has expressed its support for the scheme but has called for the Queensland government to do more in supporting those entering the housing market. Hear, hear to that. The REIQ expressed general support for the bill but suggested the scheme may do little to assist those entering the housing market without the proper conditions in place.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mander, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Cameras in Chamber

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise the House that television pool cameras will be filming and press photographers will take photos during the budget address in the chamber.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.00 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

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

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) 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 authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2023, 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025

GOVERNOR

Date: 11 June 2024

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 11 June 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024 [\[978\]](#).

### Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.00 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the financial years starting 1 July 2023, 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024 [\[979\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[980\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[981\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024. The bill provides appropriation for the 2024-25 financial year as well as supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure in 2023-24 and interim supply for 2025-26 to continue normal operations of the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service until the 2025-26 Appropriation Bill receives assent. The government remains committed to the independence of the Legislative Assembly, and this extends to the means by which public moneys are appropriated to ensure its continued functioning. We are therefore adhering to the

current convention that the Legislative Assembly's appropriation be contained in a bill separate from the Appropriation Bill for the other activities of government.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024 seeks supplementary appropriation for the 2023-24 financial year for unforeseen expenditure of \$18.164 million, primarily relating to funding for the Parliamentary Annexe repairs and refurbishment project, and collective bargaining outcomes. As this expenditure exceeds the total amount approved for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service in previous appropriation bills, it requires formal approval by parliament via this appropriation bill. Pursuant to section 35 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009, this portion of unforeseen expenditure was, on my recommendation as Treasurer, authorised by the Governor in Council on 6 June.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2024 will provide necessary funds to ensure the continued operations of the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service. These include advisory and information services to assist the parliament, its committees and members to fulfil their constitutional and parliamentary responsibilities, the services provided by the Parliamentary Library, the committee office, Parliamentary Reporting Service, Chamber and Procedural Services and Security and Attendant Services as well as the provision of accommodation, hospitality and members' entitlements.

This bill provides the necessary appropriation for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the 2024-25 financial year as well as supplementary appropriation for the 2023-24 financial year and interim supply for 2025-26. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.03 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.

**Mr SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 177, the bill is set down for its second reading.

## BUDGET PAPERS

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.04 pm): I table the budget papers for 2024-25.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Appropriation Bills [\[982\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Budget Speech—Budget Paper No. 1 [\[983\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Budget Strategy and Outlook—Budget Paper No. 2 [\[984\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Budget Capital Statement—Budget Paper No. 3 [\[985\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Budget Measures—Budget Paper No. 4 [\[986\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of the Premier and Cabinet [\[987\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Treasury [\[988\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Agriculture and Fisheries [\[989\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services [\[990\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Education [\[991\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Employment, Small Business and Training [\[992\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Energy and Climate [\[993\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Environment, Science and Innovation [\[994\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works [\[995\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Justice and Attorney-General [\[996\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water [\[997\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Resources [\[998\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of State Development and Infrastructure [\[999\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts [\[1000\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Transport and Main Roads [\[1001\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Tourism and Sport [\[1002\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Youth Justice [\[1003\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Corrective Services [\[1004\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Fire Department [\[1005\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Health [\[1006\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Police Service and Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management [\[1007\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Service Delivery Statements—Legislative Assembly of Queensland [\[1008\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Brisbane and Redlands [\[1009\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Central Queensland [\[1010\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Darling Downs [\[1011\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Far North Queensland [\[1012\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Gold Coast [\[1013\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Ipswich [\[1014\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Logan [\[1015\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Mackay-Whitsunday [\[1016\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Moreton Bay [\[1017\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Outback Queensland [\[1018\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Sunshine Coast [\[1019\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Townsville [\[1020\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Regional Action Plan—Wide Bay [\[1021\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Budget Overview [\[1022\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Budget At A Glance [\[1023\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Budget 2024-25: Women's Budget Statement [\[1024\]](#).

## APPROPRIATION BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.05 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The message from Her Excellency recommends the Appropriation Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION 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 authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2023, 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025

GOVERNOR

Date: 11 June 2024

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 11 June 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Appropriation Bill 2024 [\[1025\]](#).

### Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.05 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the

Consolidated Fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2023, 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation Bill 2024 [1026].

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation Bill 2024, explanatory notes [1027].

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [1028].

### **Introduction**

This first budget of the Miles Labor government is focused on doing what matters for Queenslanders, and what matters for Queenslanders the most is cost-of-living relief. Queenslanders deserve the right to make choices about their lives, but in recent times many have been robbed of those choices by the ever-present constraints of global and national cost-of-living pressures. For many Queenslanders, the only choice has been which bill to pay next, but our government is relentlessly focused on doing what matters for Queenslanders so our government has made the choice to reduce that cost-of-living pressure on Queensland families.

We have chosen to deliver nation-leading cost-of-living relief that will give all Queenslanders more choice. In doing so, we have made the deliberate choice to put our budget into deficit to help Queensland households keep their budgets in balance. Delivering a deficit—spending more than the government collects in revenue—is not and should never be an easy choice, but in a contest between the balance sheet and doing what is right for Queenslanders, the Miles Labor government will always be on Queenslanders' side.

Weak governments leave people to fend for themselves. Strong governments make the choice to intervene and invest. Weak governments may offer the promise of lower taxes and lower debt, but they do so by delivering less services and cutting frontline jobs. Strong governments recognise that people are always more important than numbers on a balance sheet. Strong governments recognise that putting fiscal figures over families can lead to communities being ripped apart, in ways that take decades to repair.

The Miles Labor government is a strong Labor government, and our strong budget addresses the short-term pressures being faced by families across Queensland. At the same time, this strong budget also seizes the long-term opportunities that only our state has, to plan and build for Queensland's future prosperity.

### **Cost of living**

The total value of new and existing cost-of-living concessions available to Queenslanders rises by 31 per cent in this budget, to a total of \$11.2 billion. This cost-of-living relief starts with electricity rebates. Together with the Albanese Labor government, our government will deliver electricity rebates of \$1,300 to every household in this state. And for vulnerable Queenslanders we will go further, delivering a total electricity rebate of \$1,672. This means that some vulnerable Queensland households—those households struggling the most with cost-of-living pressures—will be able to avoid paying anything for electricity in the 2024-25 budget year. In total, our landmark power rebates will provide almost \$3 billion in cost-of-living relief to Queensland households and businesses.

One of the Premier's first acts upon being sworn in last December was to freeze the cost of vehicle registration. Today we go further. For 12 months we will cut the cost of registration for all light vehicles by 20 per cent. The total cost of this cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders will be \$435 million. That means a saving of \$126 for a six-cylinder ute, \$85 for a four-cylinder car and \$69 for an electric vehicle.

For six months we will cut the cost of all Translink public transport fares across Queensland to almost nothing. We will cut all Translink public transport fares across Queensland to a flat 50 cents, no matter where you live or how far you travel. The total investment in this cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders will be \$150 million, and for the same period we will halve the cost of travel on the Airtrain to and from Brisbane Airport as we try to make the best of a dud deal that has duded Queenslanders for decades. Fifty-cent fares and half-price Airtrain travel will all take effect from 5 August this year, and our 20 per cent rego reduction will start to appear on renewal notices sent out from 5 August as well.

There is one important cost-of-living measure that does not appear in the budget aggregates. The people of Queensland will also pay no more when it comes to fees and charges. For the 2024-25 financial year, the indexation for fees and charges in Queensland will be zero. That means zero increase on the emergency management levy, introduced by the Newman government, that appears

on council rates bills across Queensland, and that means zero state government impact on council rates bills. If council rates bills rise, that is entirely a matter for those councils.

### **Inflation**

As we deliver these cost-of-living relief measures, we are mindful that we do so in a way that reduces inflationary pressures. Within the Brisbane consumer price index basket used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, roughly one-third is comprised of the transport and housing groups, the latter of which includes energy costs. Queensland Treasury estimates the combined effect of cost-of-living measures from the Miles and Albanese Labor governments will reduce Brisbane's headline CPI growth in 2024-25 by around 1¼ percentage points. That is forecast to reduce Brisbane CPI growth for the year to just two per cent.

### **Housing**

The strong response of Queenslanders and our Labor government to COVID-19 meant we emerged from the pandemic in better shape than almost anywhere in the world, but there was one unforeseeable impact of that time that continues to affect tens of thousands of Queenslanders every day. After international migration ground to a halt when international borders were closed, it has now roared back to life, at a pace that defies economists and statisticians. As secretary of the federal Treasury, Dr Stephen Kennedy, observed last week, this stunning surge in temporary migration took federal Treasury forecasters by surprise. For Queensland, the increase in population in 2022-23 was 60 per cent higher than forecast. This year, population growth is rising so fast that upward revisions are being revised again, almost as soon as they are published.

Those numbers represent tens of thousands more people who need somewhere to call home. That is why the first budget of the Miles Labor government includes a record investment of \$2.8 billion to get more Queenslanders into their own home. The budget will provide more support for renters and those unable to find a home, and as part of the Miles government's Homes for Queenslanders initiative this budget provides for an additional 600 modular homes.

Homes for Queenslanders is our vision for delivering one million new homes by 2046. It is a real plan backed by real investment—a total of \$3.1 billion over five years. This includes the delivery of 53,500 social homes by 2046. Homes for Queenslanders includes a down payment of \$1.3 billion to contribute to the ramp-up to more than 2,000 social homes on average, every year, from 2028 to reach this target.

For Queenslanders looking to buy their first home, we have lifted the threshold for a full stamp duty concession, with immediate effect. The threshold is now \$700,000, tapering to a new cap of \$800,000. While that threshold is still below the median house price in Brisbane, it provides more generous relief than the equivalent threshold in Sydney or Melbourne. This is a thoughtful plan, a detailed plan and a prudent plan to help young Queenslanders in particular find a home that they can call their own, and it is a plan that will not sacrifice the revenue that pays the wages of Queensland teachers, nurses and police officers.

From 1 July we will bring our foreign owner transfer duty surcharge into line with Victoria and New South Wales, and we will raise our foreign owner land tax surcharge from two per cent to three per cent—still more generous than New South Wales and Victoria. This plan will provide \$360 million in cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders while helping 40,000 Queensland families into their first home over the next four years. A fully costed, revenue-neutral plan to help first home buyers without pushing up prices is a policy that Queenslanders would only see from a strong Labor government.

This budget also includes a temporary 20 per cent increase in funding for specialist homelessness services—an investment of almost \$390 million. This will allow for the expansion of the Immediate Housing Response to individuals and couples and more temporary supported accommodation.

### **Health**

Queenslanders know that they can always trust Labor governments to do what matters when it comes to their health care. Through this budget, the Miles Labor government will continue to invest in the health of all Queenslanders. A strong health system supports a healthy population and a healthy population means higher labour productivity and stronger economic growth.

Even in a time of rising cost-of-living pressures, the cost of providing health care continues to rise faster than other expenses, so this budget will once again deliver a record investment in health. Our hospital capacity expansion program now totals \$11 billion over six years. That program will deliver around 2,200 additional overnight beds at facilities across the Queensland health system, including:

- the new Bundaberg Hospital
- the new Coomera Hospital
- the new Toowoomba Hospital
- the new Queensland Cancer Centre
- the Cairns Hospital expansion
- the Hervey Bay Hospital expansion
- the Ipswich Hospital expansion
- the Logan Hospital expansion
- the Mackay Hospital expansion
- the Princess Alexandra Hospital expansion
- the QEII Hospital expansion
- the Redcliffe Hospital expansion
- the Robina Hospital expansion
- the Prince Charles Hospital expansion
- and the Townsville University Hospital expansion.

Through the \$943 million Building Rural and Remote Health Program, we are building a new hospital in Moranbah and healthcare centres in locations as diverse as Tara, Camooweal, Doomadgee and Childers. This budget also allocates \$200 million to redevelop the Cooktown Multipurpose Health Service facility, expanding inpatient beds and adding an operating theatre. Within our hospitals, and from our capital expansion program, \$1 billion will be allocated to optimise patient flow within hospitals, to reduce wait times and improve healthcare delivery.

The 10.6 per cent increase in operating funding for Queensland Health in this budget is well above the historical average of 6.9 per cent. This budget will also support culturally appropriate models of care through the Torres & Cape Health Care Commissioning Fund, known as Torch. This budget will deliver free meningococcal B vaccines for eligible infants, children and adolescents.

For all those members who say they support this budget, they should be proud of the health budget and the important social reforms that it is progressing. This budget will support the Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032, delivering 34 new initiatives to address existing health inequities and provide enhanced gender and trauma informed care. That includes \$21 million to enhance the workforce for termination of pregnancy. This funding shows that, for our government, decriminalising the termination of pregnancy is more than a legal reform. For it to be a real social reform that delivers for all Queensland women then it needs funding, and that is exactly what this budget delivers.

This budget will provide \$18 million over four years to support the operational delivery of the voluntary assisted dying scheme, including support for the Queensland voluntary assisted dying scheme support and pharmacy service. We will also provide ongoing support for our nation-leading pill testing and ketamine trials. These are all Labor budget initiatives and initiatives that, by definition, members will support when they cast their vote in favour of the appropriation.

### **Health Workforce Strategy**

Our government continues to invest in our health workforce to deliver the care our community needs. The new Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032 is backed by a \$1.7 billion investment. It will deliver more than 700 extra doctors, more than 2,600 nurses and midwives, and more than 1,000 allied health staff. This is a huge investment in our staff and the Queenslanders they help every day. The funding will also ensure minimum midwife-to-postnatal-patient ratios, providing patients and families with individually tailored, culturally appropriate maternity care.

We are also expanding and boosting our schemes to attract the health workforce needed across Queensland. Interstate and international doctors who make the decision to take up a job in regional and remote Queensland continue to be eligible for payments up to \$70,000. In addition, in a landmark investment, our government will offer \$40,000 to attract and retain GP trainees across Queensland. These investments will help attract, retain and support a homegrown health workforce that will deliver world-class health care across Queensland.

### **Queensland Ambulance Service**

For Queenslanders unfortunate enough to experience a health emergency, their first connection is often with the dedicated paramedics of the Queensland Ambulance Service. In the last six years, ambulance demand from priority code 1 and code 2 patients has risen over 22 per cent. In the next six years, that demand is forecast to rise a further 19 per cent. This first budget of the Miles Labor government will provide investment for an additional 268 full-time-equivalent personnel in the Queensland Ambulance Service to sustainably meet growth in demand. We will also invest \$30 million in the QAS capital program, which includes replacing aging ambulances and delivering additional new vehicles.

Across vast expanses of our state, the best method of delivering emergency care is often not by road but by air. To ensure all Queenslanders get the care they need when they need it, the 2024-25 budget is continuing to invest in vital aeromedical ambulance services, including:

- LifeFlight Australia, from its bases in Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Mount Isa and Brisbane;
- the Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service and Central Queensland Rescue Service, which operate from bases in Rockhampton and Mackay; and
- the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which provides interhospital transfer services across Queensland.

### **First Nations**

In 2023, this parliament voted to establish the Path to Treaty Act to prepare a framework for treaty negotiations with First Nations Queenslanders. In keeping with that decision, \$40 million has been allocated over four years for the First Nations Treaty Institute. The Miles Labor government is also providing \$56 million over four years for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, which commences on 1 July 2024.

The budget also provides extra funding of \$18 million over four years to help community members tell their stories to the inquiry, through access to extra specialist research and archival officers and additional resources for community and personal histories. These are budget measures I am sure this House will support now and across the forward estimates.

### **Community safety**

Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their home and safe on the streets of our state. That is why our government invests in frontline police and crime prevention. We do so not because we want to win seats in parliament 'off the back of crime' but because Queenslanders deserve to be safe and to feel safe.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. It is not often that I need to call for order during a budget speech. Treasurer, you have the call.

**Mr DICK:** It is why our government invests in frontline police and crime prevention. We do so not because we want to win seats in parliament 'off the back of crime' but because Queenslanders deserve to be safe and to feel safe. That is why our Community Safety Plan for Queensland, announced by the Premier earlier this year, provides an extra \$1.3 billion over five years for community safety measures across five key pillars:

- supporting victims;
- delivering for our front line;
- detaining offenders;
- intervening when people offend; and
- preventing crime before it occurs.

To help build safer communities, we are placing an increased focus on preventing domestic, family and sexual violence. We are placing an extra focus on the safety of women and girls and on dealing with young offenders. The Community Safety Plan for Queensland builds on successful measures that have already helped to deliver a reduction in overall offences in the first quarter of 2024.

Our government is determined to put more police officers on the front line. Like every employer, we have encountered extraordinary challenges in recruitment. A low unemployment rate means a stronger economy, but it also means very high competition to attract employees. Our government will



ensure that Queenslanders have the frontline police they deserve. That is why our government has offered recruitment incentives of up to \$40,000 for new police officers. Our interventions have helped to turn the corner in police recruitment. I am advised by the Queensland Police Service that the academy is full, with the largest number of recruits on record. I am also advised that as those recruits graduate, by the end of this month, we will have achieved a net annual increase in the total number of police, and that growth will continue as more recruits roll through—a significant achievement when unemployment is so low.

This budget supports the recruitment of 900 additional police personnel along with \$48 million to upgrade police stations in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. This budget provides additional equipment to increase community safety, including 3,000 wands for knife detection to support Jack's Law and 1,000 additional tasers.

To support more police boots on the ground, this budget provides more police eyes in the sky. To follow on from the resounding success of our Townsville-based police helicopter, Polair helicopter bases will be established in Far North Queensland and on the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay.

This budget will deliver a 20 per cent permanent uplift in funding for domestic, family and sexual violence service providers across the state. Our government is also investing \$52 million to provide more resources and support for victims of crime, including:

- \$16 million to expand the Victims of Crime Community Response Program;
- \$16 million to increase the capacity of Victim Assist Queensland to process financial assistance applications; and
- \$3 million to enhance the Victim Liaison Service to better connect victims and their families with prosecutors while cases proceed through court.

Locking up more offenders means more detention capacity is required. This budget includes \$628 million over five years for the new youth detention centre at the Woodford Correctional Precinct and continues delivery of the \$885 million Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre.

### **Big Build**

This budget addresses the challenges Queensland families are facing today, but it also plans and delivers for our state's future prosperity. The record extraordinary population growth experienced by our state in the last three years—growth that was not predicted by anyone—means we must step up our investment.

This first budget of the Miles Labor government makes a deliberate choice to continue with the ambition of our Big Build, because it is our ambition for Queensland. States like New South Wales and Victoria are putting major infrastructure projects on hold because they lack Queensland's balance sheet strength. Those southern decisions to delay and cut may help their balance sheets today, but they will cause more expensive problems in the future.

With extraordinary and unforeseeable population growth, our government will forge ahead with our Big Build, because ensuring the provision of essential infrastructure is what matters to Queenslanders. In the four years to 2027-28, our Big Build will deliver \$107 billion of investment in building projects across the length and breadth of our great state. These are projects that will define Queensland's future. They will support our economic and energy transformation while improving the access to essential services and utilities right across the state. This investment will drive generational change, creating more jobs, better communities and stronger regions.

Over the 13 years to 2027-28, our government will have supported over \$226 billion in infrastructure works. In 2024-25, the government will invest a record \$27 billion in building Queensland, directly supporting around 72,000 jobs. This is the largest annual investment in capital works in Queensland's history. A record \$19 billion, or almost 70 per cent of this capital program, will be invested outside of the Greater Brisbane region, supporting around 50,000 jobs.

Almost \$10 billion in transport infrastructure will be delivered in 2024-25, including:

- \$786 million towards the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program in Maryborough;
- \$650 million towards the construction of stage 1 of the Coomera Connector;
- \$514 million to continue construction work on Cross River Rail;
- \$500 million towards the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project; and



- \$308 million to continue stage 3 of the Gold Coast Light Rail, a project our government will not walk away from.

As is always the case in Labor budgets delivered by our Labor government, there is substantial ongoing investment to fund major upgrades to the Bruce Highway and the M1.

### **Clean energy**

When it comes to renewable energy, Queensland has a global head start. We have the sun, we have the wind and we have the space to build industrial-scale generation. Most importantly of all, Queensland has the topography and rainfall to support deep storage pumped hydro. Very significantly, we have a target of 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2035—a target that has bipartisan support at a state level. In order to ensure we capitalise on our natural advantages, we must press ahead to cement our place on the global stage for renewable energy and the industries it will support.

To continue the delivery of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, the 2024-25 Queensland budget includes a landmark capital investment of \$26 billion over four years. Our state's energy transformation will continue to be driven by our other great advantage, Queensland's publicly owned energy companies. In 2024-25, significant clean energy investments include:

- \$712 million for CopperString 2032, connecting Mount Isa and the north-west to the national electricity grid;
- \$801 million by Stanwell for the Wambo and Tarong West wind farms;
- \$500 million for CS Energy's Lotus Creek Wind Farm;
- \$275 million for CleanCo's Swanbank Battery;
- \$936 million to progress the Borumba Pumped Hydro energy storage scheme; and
- \$38.5 million for early works at the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro energy storage scheme with a \$1 billion equity commitment across the forward estimates.

That investment in the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro storage scheme is fully detailed in the budget papers, fully funded and fully supported.

### **Ports and water**

If Queensland is to take full advantage of the opportunities—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** It appears others have not heard that investment in the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro storage scheme is fully detailed in the budget papers, fully funded and fully supported.

If Queensland is to take full advantage of the opportunities our renewable energy revolution presents, we must have the capacity to send more high-end, future economy manufactured goods to the world. Major seaport projects in the Big Build that will be progressed in 2024-25 include:

- \$251 million to complete the Port of Townsville Channel Capacity Upgrade;
- \$360 million for the ongoing expansion of the Cairns Marine Precinct;
- \$116 million for the northern land expansion at the Port of Gladstone; and
- initial works for North Queensland Bulk Ports to progress the Bowen Wharf replacement project.

Major water investments in 2024-25 include:

- \$311 million for the Fitzroy to Gladstone water pipeline;
- \$26 million for the Mount Crosby flood resilience program;
- \$56 million towards the Toowoomba to Warwick water pipeline; and
- \$303 million towards improvement programs at dams including Paradise, Burdekin Falls, Somerset and Wivenhoe.

### **Putting Queensland Kids First**

Investing in the development and education of Queensland children is a direct investment in Queensland's future prosperity. Clinically informed research makes it clear that investing in the first

seven years of a child's life is the greatest opportunity open to us to contribute to their future wellbeing and success. In order to give Queensland kids that opportunity, the Miles Labor government is investing more than \$500 million in our Putting Queensland Kids First strategy. This program will stretch across education, health and communities to support Queensland children from birth onwards.

Putting Queensland Kids First encompasses everything from health development checks to extended free kindy for four-year-olds, particularly in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as supporting behavioural specialists and health practitioners in state schools. It is the most comprehensive package of measures to help children that Queensland has ever seen and it is a signature policy of the Miles Labor government.

### **Children and education**

As a further cost-of-living measure to allow more Queensland children to enjoy a healthy lifestyle, this budget will lift the investment in our successful FairPlay vouchers to \$40 million in 2024-25. This additional investment will increase the total number of vouchers from 50,000 to 200,000 and increase the value of each voucher to \$200 to address rising costs. Fifty thousand FairPlay vouchers will continue to be reserved for vulnerable households in the greatest need of support.

To ensure that Queensland children are able to get everything they can out of each day at school, this budget allocates \$15 million for subsidised school breakfasts and lunches. \$15 million is a small price to pay to ensure Queensland children are ready to learn each day. Decades from now, there will be a direct benefit to the health of our economy if we focus on the health and nutrition of schoolkids today. With a record investment of nearly \$21 billion in education, this budget will improve the lives of young Queenslanders and set them up for the future.

Our investment of almost \$1.3 billion in school infrastructure in 2024-25 includes:

- \$342 million for new facilities at schools experiencing the fastest enrolment growth;
- \$273 million to upgrade facilities at existing schools;
- \$167 million for the Building Future Schools program to deliver world-class learning environments for students;
- \$144 million as part of the strategic land acquisition fund to acquire land for new and expanded schools; and
- \$117 million to continue the rollout of our successful school halls program.

This budget will deliver the schools, teachers and student supports that matter to Queenslanders. Importantly, this budget allocates \$1 billion over five years to deliver more teachers and teacher aides to help every student realise their potential, including priority cohorts such as students with a disability. To help recruit teachers to remote and regional Queensland where housing pressures can be greater than they are in the south-east, we are investing \$45 million over three years to subsidise teacher accommodation.

### **Training**

Just as education can set up a child for life, training can set up a young Queenslanders for their career. In the biggest skills and training reform in almost a decade, the Miles Labor government will fund one million training places for Queenslanders. As our economy transitions and evolves, the ability to upskill and retrain to take advantage of emerging opportunities has never been more important.

The Good Jobs, Great Training: Queensland Skills Strategy 2024-2028 will invest an additional \$203 million over two years to address skills needs and workforce priorities across every region of Queensland. Working with the Albanese Labor government, we will continue to offer Free TAFE for around 200 courses—a program that has already enrolled almost 82,000 Queenslanders.

Our 50 per cent payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees will be extended for a further 12 months to 30 June 2025 and first-year apprentices this year in the housing industry will have access to a \$1,000 rebate on their work tools through our \$4 million Free Tools for First Years program.

### **2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games**

The forward estimates contained within this budget bring Queensland to just over four years from the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Together with the federal government, we are providing for a total capital expenditure of \$7.1 billion for the Brisbane games, to be delivered by the Games Venue and Legacy Delivery Authority.

In keeping with our government's response to the Sport Venue Review, the venues infrastructure program includes the upgrading of the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre, the refurbishment of the Gabba and Suncorp Stadium, and the construction of the Brisbane Arena. Through this budget, over \$560 million is allocated to works that are now in procurement, including \$42 million for the Brisbane Aquatic Centre and \$142 million for the Sunshine Coast Indoor Sports Centre.

### **Economic and fiscal update**

In the face of persistent inflation and an uncertain global outlook, the fundamental strengths of the Queensland economy endure. Queensland's economic growth is forecast to strengthen from 2.3 per cent in 2022-23 to three per cent in both 2023-24 and 2024-25. This growth will be driven by a rebound in exports as capacity constraints unwind and increased public final demand, reflecting our government's deliberate decision to continue to fund public infrastructure investment.

Once again, this budget is about choices, and the Miles Labor government is choosing to stay the course and to invest in Queensland's future growth and prosperity. With inflation forecast to finally start easing, growth in consumption is expected to recover to around pre-pandemic averages in 2026-27.

Queensland's economy is projected to continue to grow solidly at 2½ per cent in 2025-26, sustained by continuing growth in domestic activity as household consumption regains its strength. For the first time in Queensland's history, gross state product has exceeded half a trillion dollars. That means the Queensland economy is larger than that of Finland, of Portugal or of New Zealand.

As Australia's growth state, Queensland has been the engine, driving employment growth across Australia. As at April 2024, Queensland had recorded the largest employment growth of any state or territory since March 2020—a total of 366,900 people. That employment growth is equivalent to the entire population of the Sunshine Coast. With inflation moderating, real wage growth is expected to continue across the forward estimates, further helping Queensland families deal with cost-of-living pressures.

Queensland's place as the growth state of the Commonwealth has placed greater pressure on housing here than it has in any other jurisdiction. That is the finding of Professor Hal Pawson from the University of New South Wales in his analysis done for the Queensland Council of Social Service. Thankfully, the easing in the Commonwealth's migration program is expected to take some pressure off housing supply in coming years.

### **Fiscal**

After forecasting a deficit of almost \$2.2 billion for the current 2023-24 financial year, the Miles Labor government now expects to return an operating surplus of \$564 million. This surplus has been achieved through careful management of improved revenue, including royalties and taxes. This estimated actual surplus represents Queensland's third operating surplus in succession, but it is forecast to be the last in the current sequence.

For 2024-25, a deficit of \$2.6 billion is forecast—a deficit that ensures we can help more Queensland families keep their budgets in balance. If a deficit is the price to be paid to provide nation-leading cost-of-living relief, then that is a price we are willing to pay. In 2024-25, growth in taxation revenue will be offset by an expected decline in royalties and by expense measures including our record cost-of-living relief measures and increased investments in housing, health and community safety. The deficit is forecast to fall to \$515 million in 2025-26.

A targeted \$3 billion savings plan over four years to 2027-28 will be applied, to ensure returns to surplus from 2026-27. Despite these two forecast deficits, Queensland remains well positioned compared to our peers, as the projected net debt-to-revenue metric for 2023-24 has fallen materially over recent budgets. Queensland's 2024-25 estimated net debt-to-revenue ratio of 31 per cent compares very favourably to our peers, given that the same ratio is 88 per cent for New South Wales and 163 per cent for Victoria.

Queensland's credit ratings are all stable, with S&P Global and Fitch at AA+ and Moody's at Aa1. That stable outlook is the recognition by ratings agencies that Queensland, under the Miles Labor government, will continue to be able to service its borrowings. In the fiscal Olympics, as the 2032 host, Queensland holds a higher credit rating than this year's host, France.

### **Conclusion**

This first budget of the Miles Labor government sets out our fully costed, fully detailed and fully accountable plan for the next four years. It delivers what Queenslanders deserve, and Queenslanders

deserve nothing less than unprecedented action on cost of living. This budget answers the questions about how our government would proceed over the next four years.

As comprehensive as this budget is, it is not the final word on what happens next to Queensland, so let me end where I began: with the choice facing Queenslanders. It is no secret that on 26 October Queenslanders face a choice. Queenslanders will be asked to make a choice about their future, not to express an opinion about the past.

**Opposition members** interjected.

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

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, that was your interjection? You can leave the chamber under standing order 253A for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Coomera withdrew from the chamber at 2.45 pm.*

**Mr DICK:** Let me end where I began: with the choice facing Queenslanders. It is no secret that on 26 October Queenslanders face a choice. Queenslanders will be asked to make a choice about their future, not to express an opinion about the past. This budget makes clear the values and the plans that the Miles Labor government will be putting forward when Queenslanders are asked to make that choice. Queenslanders deserve nothing less from anyone who seeks to lead our great state.

### First Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.46 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.

**Mr SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 177, the bill is set down for its second reading.

## REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.46 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

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

MESSAGE

REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

*Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68*

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


A Bill for an Act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the First Home Owner Grant and Other Home Owner Grants Act 2000, the Land Tax Act 2010 and the Payroll Tax Act 1971 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 11 June 2024

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 11 June 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [[1029](#)].

### Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.46 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the First Home Owner Grant and Other Home Owner Grants Act 2000, the Land Tax Act 2010 and the Payroll Tax Act 1971

for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Cost of Living and Economics Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [1030].

*Tabled paper:* Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes [1031].

*Tabled paper:* Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [1032].

I am pleased to introduce the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill includes a number of amendments to implement revenue measures I announced in the 2024-25 budget relating to transfer duty, payroll tax, additional foreign acquirer duty and land tax. The bill achieves these objectives by amending the Duties Act 2001, the Payroll Tax Act 1971 and the Land Tax Act 2010. I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

#### Leave granted.

The Duties Act currently provides transfer duty relief for eligible first home buyers. In the 2024-25 Budget, I announced an increase to the transfer duty concessions for first home buyers purchasing a home or vacant land on which to build their first home, to provide additional support for first time buyers aiming to enter the housing market.

The threshold for the first home concession will increase from \$500,000 to \$700,000, and phase out at \$800,000. The threshold for the first home vacant land concession will increase from \$250,000 to \$350,000 and phase out at \$500,000.

This will mean the maximum relief available will be \$17,350 for buyers purchasing their first home, which is an increase of \$8,600. For buyers purchasing vacant land on which to build their first home, the maximum relief available will be \$10,675, which is an increase of \$3,500.

These changes will commence from 9 June 2024 (inclusive), in order to allow eligible first home buyers to enter into transactions immediately.

The Payroll Tax Act currently provides a 50 per cent rebate for wages of apprentices and trainees. The rebate expires on 30 June 2024. In the 2024-25 Budget, I announced an extension of the rebate until 30 June 2025. The Bill amends the Payroll Tax Act to extend this rebate for return periods in the 2024-25 financial year.

The Duties Act currently imposes an additional duty surcharge at a rate of 7 per cent on relevant transactions liable for transfer duty, landholder duty or corporate trustee duty, where a foreign person acquires certain residential land in Queensland.

The Bill amends the Duties Act to increase the rate of additional foreign acquirer duty to 8 per cent for relevant transactions where a duty liability arises on or after 1 July 2024.

Under the Land Tax Act, a 2 per cent surcharge rate applies to absentees, foreign companies and trustees of foreign trusts in addition to the general rates of land tax.

The Bill amends the Land Tax Act to increase the absentee surcharge and foreign surcharge to 3 per cent from the 2024-25 financial year.

The Payroll Tax Act provides a 1 per cent discount on the rates of payroll tax for regional employers. The discount is currently available to any eligible regional employer, irrespective of size. In the 2024-25 Budget, I announced that the eligibility criteria for the regional rate discount will be amended to exclude extremely large businesses.

This will mean that businesses that pay taxable wages of more than \$350 million on an annual basis will not be eligible for the discount from 1 July 2024.

Extremely large businesses typically have substantially greater financial capacity to contribute to state revenues compared to smaller regional employers. The amendments will mean that these extremely large businesses will pay payroll tax at the standard rates contained in the Payroll Tax Act, consistent with other businesses of a similar size across the State.

Importantly, the other eligibility requirements for the regional rate discount will remain the same and the discount will continue to be available to support smaller regional employers.

Finally, on 19 November 2023, I announced the amount of the First Home Owner Grant would be doubled for eligible transactions entered into between 20 November 2023 and 30 June 2025, to provide additional support for first home buyers in Queensland buying or building a new home. The Commissioner of State Revenue has been administering this under an administrative arrangement to ensure the benefit of the increased grant could be delivered to eligible applicants as soon as possible.

Administrative arrangements allow legislation to be administered on a particular basis, generally pending legislative amendment. These arrangements are only implemented in relation to taxpayer beneficial changes and allow the Government to deliver these benefits to taxpayers in a timely way. Administrative arrangements are usually published when they are made to provide transparency and retrospective legislative amendments generally follow to provide greater certainty for taxpayers.

The Bill retrospectively amends the First Home Owner Grant and Other Home Owner Grants Act to give legislative effect to the administrative arrangement providing the increase in the amount of the First Home Owner Grant. The amendments clarify that, for eligible transactions entered into between 20 November 2023 and 30 June 2025, the amount of the First Home Owner Grant is \$30,000.

This will provide applicants with certainty about the increased grant amount and is consistent with the Commissioner of State Revenue's administration of the First Home Owner Grant.

It will also ensure appropriate revenue protection measures are in place to protect the integrity of this beneficial grant program and ensure applicants can access existing objection and review rights with respect to the increased grant amount.

#### Conclusion

Speaker, this Bill delivers several important 2024-25 Budget revenue measures, and makes another amendment that is necessary to support the administration of Queensland's revenue laws.

I commend the Bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.47 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 Cost of Living and Economics Committee

**Mr SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Cost of Living and Economics Committee.

### Declared Urgent; Order of Business

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.48 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 173, the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill and not stand referred to a committee and be set down for its second reading to enable the bill to be passed through all remaining stages at this week's sitting.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


Sitting suspended from 2.49 pm to 3.17 pm.

## HELP TO BUY (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1967, on motion of Ms Scanlon—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (3.17 pm), continuing: Before the debate was adjourned, I was talking about some of the stakeholder views on the federal government's policy. The REIQ suggested that under the scheme the number of places offered to Queensland is insufficient. They cited the need for 2½ thousand homes to be allocated to Queensland each year. The UDIA and the HIA offered their broad support of the bill and shared equity programs generally. Tellingly, some stakeholders noted that there is limited information available from the Commonwealth at this point in time and, therefore, providing feedback is difficult with the restricted information that is currently at hand. In their written submission, the REIQ said—

It is difficult to provide detailed feedback on the scheme as the Australian Government has released little detail of how the scheme will operate.

In their written submission, the Property Council said—

Initiatives such as the Help to Buy scheme are welcomed, however we wish to reiterate that boosting housing supply is an imperative factor that requires utmost priority to support this scheme. With finer details of the scheme yet to be formally announced ...

The LNP members of the committee wrote a statement of reservation that is attached to the committee report. The statement talks about how the scheme should be expanded in numbers as well as parameters so that more people would be eligible. It is not that we disagree in principle with the scheme but, given the situation with the current housing crisis, it is important that as many people as possible can take advantage of this Commonwealth program.

How will the program work practically? The machinations and the functioning of the scheme are yet to be finalised, including the eligibility criteria requirements. That is currently being finalised by the federal Labor government with consultation ending nearly 1½ years after the scheme was meant to be in operation, despite an initial promise by federal Labor to deliver the scheme in January 2023. It is now June 2024.

There are concerns about the number of place allocations that Queensland might receive through the scheme. Again, that number has not been finalised. The statement of reservation states—

The number of place allocations for Queensland in the Federal Government's Scheme is inadequate and fails to offer Queensland its fair share.

Under the Scheme, it is proposed that Queensland would be provided with 2,000 place allocations each year, over a four-year period. There are 10,000 place allocations in the Scheme nationally each year.

The committee heard evidence that Queensland is responsible for 25 per cent of all housing sales nationally so why are we not getting 25 per cent of the allocations? The allocation to Queensland from the Commonwealth government should reflect what Queensland needs. The LNP members of the committee made that point very clearly.

All of these points sound very familiar. In housing, under Labor what happens federally is passed down and happens locally. There are plenty of promises but very little delivery. There is limited if any consultation and no detail given. That is the track record of the current state Labor government when we talk about promises that were made but have not been kept. The Griffith University student accommodation proposal was one of the great announcements that came out of the Housing Summit. Two hundred units were to be made available for the homeless. Over eight or nine months, they spent \$2 million and on countless occasions reassured people that everything was under control but then the program spectacularly collapsed. We found out afterwards that a phone call had been made to Andrew Fraser, the chancellor of the university, basically saying, 'We need an announcement for tomorrow. What can you do for us?'

If it were not true, it would be comical. Then the government made an appeal for available land. The Catholic Church very generously offered 90 parcels of land. On how many parcels of land that it offered has any construction occurred? None. It has gone dead. It is crickets. They have heard nothing.

The government's \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund, announced three years ago—do not forget that it was doubled at the Housing Summit—has not yet built a home that has somebody in it. This is a \$2 billion program. It might as well be a \$5 billion program if there are not to be any results out of it. At the Housing Summit again the then premier said that the Department of Housing would work with Australian War Widows Inc. to use properties offered by that organisation. How many of those properties have been used to house Queenslanders? Nobody knows, but I suspect it is none. The Palaszczuk-Miles government promised a QBuild Rapid Accommodation Apprenticeship Centre at Eagle Farm, having the capacity to produce one prefab home per week and 80 last financial year. When the deadline came it had built only two.

**Ms Scanlon:** You sacked all the staff.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection. We are talking about the current situation, where a promise was made by the current government. How many people are living in granny flats since that grand announcement nearly two years ago? Where is the increase? When asked, the government could not even provide any figures.

Over two years the Help to Home program, meant to deliver a thousand homes through headleasing with a budget of \$40 million, has delivered just 62 homes. The Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 promised to have more than 750 build-to-rent apartments completed by late 2023. There are zip, zero, none. Build-to-rent projects in the Valley, Newstead and the CBD still are not complete. In fact, one of the projects will not be complete until 2027. The land audit promised at the Housing Summit was meant to take three months. It took twice as long as promised, and nearly a quarter of the land identified for residential development had been ruled out. A key announcement in last year's budget was that of an extra 500 social homes through QuickStarts. There has been nothing quick about this QuickStarts announcement. Almost a year on, the government still had not worked out where the homes would even go let alone poured a slab.


**Ms Scanlon:** That's not true.

**Mr MANDER:** I take that interjection because we asked the minister a question on notice and it was said that they did not know where they were going to be; they had not been decided yet.

Between 2015 and 2022, Queensland was the only state where community housing went backwards, with billions of dollars of federal funds going interstate and not to our state, because this government has a philosophical aversion to the community housing sector playing a bigger role than it does at the moment.

We support the principles behind the federal Labor government's Help to Buy program, but is it any wonder that our coalition colleagues have questioned it when there is no or not enough detail? How can we support something when the detail is not there? It is also difficult to believe any of the promises that are made when there are constant delays in delivering this program.

As I said initially, we will not be opposing this bill. It is important in a housing crisis that we have every option available to us to make sure people are housed. I walked through town last night and found it incredibly distressing. I refer to the hoarding diagonally opposite the Capri Hotel, where most members stayed during parliament's renovations. There are six or seven people sleeping in that 40-metre section. It is absolutely appalling that people have to live in those types of conditions in the middle of our city, no more than 500 metres from this parliament. We have to do everything possible to find roofs to put over these vulnerable people's heads.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.27 pm): It is a pleasure to stand to talk on this bill. It is a pleasure to be the first government member to speak after the Treasurer delivered an outstanding budget. I look forward to talking more about that. It is also a pleasure to follow the member for Everton. I will deal with a few issues he talked about. The first is the delay of the scheme. The LNP voted against the scheme in the federal parliament. They voted to delay it. The same scheme that Amanda Stoker said was 'dangerous' they voted to delay.

It is interesting that the member for Everton criticises the federal government for a lack of detail when he represents the roaring vacuum of policy that is the Queensland LNP. There is nothing there. There are no policies and there is no detail. It is ironic that the member should criticise the federal government for a lack of detail. It is ironic that he criticises the modular home program. He should talk to the workers at Eidsvold, Gympie or Cunnamulla about their new homes in those areas. It is not right to criticise these new homes that are housing Queensland workers. What I found most interesting was that he spoke with disdain about us throwing everything at the electorate—that this was just us throwing everything at the electorate. Along with free kindy we have: free TAFE—200 courses; 50-cent fares on trains, buses and ferries; \$1,000 off electricity bills; \$200 vouchers for kids to play sport; \$1,000 for apprenticeships—

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

**Mr WHITING:** I am getting to my point.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Bancroft, I will ask you to take a seat while I listen to the point of order.

**Mr MANDER:** My point of order is on relevance. This has absolutely nothing to do with the bill.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I will urge you to come back to the bill.

**Mr WHITING:** I was just getting to my point. My point is that the member spoke with disdain about us throwing everything at the electorate. Now we are delivering support for more Queenslanders to own their own homes. If this is throwing everything at the electorate, I can tell him that they like it and they want more of it. If we are giving working class people more cost-of-living relief and a chance to own their own homes, they will take it every day.

It was a pleasure to chair the committee that examined this bill. We found that the Help to Buy scheme effectively complements the raft of actions in the Homes for Queenslanders plan to deliver safe, secure and affordable housing to Queenslanders. I will remind the House what is in this plan and what we are doing. Remember that it had an additional initial investment of \$3.1 billion. It aims to deliver one million new homes, including 53,500 new social homes, in Queensland by 2046. Homes for Queenslanders is already putting roofs over the heads of Queenslanders. The member for Everton criticised that the Housing Investment Fund has not built anything. What I can say is that—

**Mr Lister:** How unreasonable of him!

**Mr WHITING:** Listen to this. This is important. Over 600 Queenslanders are now in homes because of the Housing Investment Fund. They are the NRAS homes that we have bought.

**Mr Mander:** You didn't build any new ones.

**Mr WHITING:** Over 600 Queenslanders—



**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** How can you criticise 600 roofs over the heads of Queenslanders? You have no idea. Why are you in this role? You are a disgrace.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I withdraw.

**Mr Millar:** That's not like you.

**Mr WHITING:** Oh, it is like me. Wait till I get going!

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members, there will no quarrelling across the chamber. Member, I understand you have just withdrawn that unparliamentary comment. You have the call.


**Mr WHITING:** Under the Homes for Queenslanders plan, people have moved from tents and cars into temporary accommodation. That is because of the uplift of funding that has happened under Homes for Queenslanders. We can say to those residents who make their way to my office that under this plan we have the resources to make sure they are offered some temporary or emergency accommodation solutions. Everyone gets that chance. Everyone gets that offer. I want to thank Jenelle, Nicolina and Huxley in my office who are daily dealing with people coming into my office asking for assistance. Without that particular assistance I do not know what we would have done, so I thank the minister for that.

We have seen the number of residents in our local parks dwindle in recent times. Under the Homes for Queenslanders plan, we have seen an unused aged-care facility in Rothwell converted into 18 dwellings. What I love about that is that people will go from living in tents and cars to living in this temporary accommodation. They will get wraparound services to help them deal with the issues happening in their lives and to help them transition into permanent accommodation. Once again, this is under the Homes for Queenslanders plan.

As we have heard this week, the first home buyers grant has been doubled by the Miles government to \$30,000 for new homes. That is a great initiative and is a wonderful cost-of-living measure. Others will speak about the changes to the eligibility threshold for some transfer duty concessions which will once again save Queenslanders a great amount of money.

I will end by saying that I want to congratulate the minister and the Premier for the Homes for Queenslanders plan for what it is delivering not just in my area but across the state. What we are doing with this bill is relatively simple. We are referring legislative powers to the Commonwealth parliament to deal with a specific issue. The benefits of this referral are straightforward. The Help to Buy scheme is a good scheme from the federal government and we want to support it. It will get more Queenslanders into safe, secure and affordable housing.

During the committee hearings, the submitters focused on the design of the scheme. We collated those opinions. What we have said to the minister and to the Premier is advocate and liaise with the federal government to talk about the design of that scheme so we can see more Queenslanders in the future be eligible for it. We would love to see more places in this scheme flow to Queenslanders. I know that the minister and the Premier will do this, but I am appealing to them to be parochial in advocating for more places in this scheme. I have every faith they will do that. They are fierce advocates for this state. They do want to see more Queenslanders get into safe, secure and affordable housing. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.34 pm): I am pleased to speak on this bill before the chamber. It was a pleasure to be the deputy chair of the committee that held the inquiry into this bill, which essentially enlivens or allows for a federal government shared equity scheme. It was a pleasure to be the deputy chair on the committee. With my colleague the member for Burleigh, we completed a statement of reservation to try to assist the House in understanding some of the deficiencies in the bill and what we believe are areas that would improve the bill. I will come to those shortly.

I would like to place on record my thanks to our shadow minister for housing, Tim Mander, the member for Everton, for his guidance in our deliberations around the bill and some finer points of the shared equity scheme. I can tell the House that the conversations we had around the interconnectedness of the housing crisis and the problems were in-depth. We identified, as we did

through the inquiry, that for the very large number of Queenslanders who are in rental properties who would like to own their own home the biggest impediment for them is the ability to get sufficient equity to be able to transition into home ownership. What is very clear about that interconnectedness is that when somebody moves from the rental market into the home ownership market they rarely go back to the rental market. What happens is that the place that they were renting becomes available for others to rent while they move into a home ownership position, whether that be building a new home or buying an existing one.

I recognise the \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund that the government has put in place. I note that no new houses have been built through that scheme. I recognise that a number of houses have been purchased through that scheme. In fact, there are about a dozen—I think it might be nine—in the Plainland and Laidley area that have been purchased under that scheme. I can tell the minister that when the government buys those houses it does not add to the rental pool in our community. It means that the house is then owned by the government and the renters who are in that house are displaced, unless they qualify for government housing. It is not actually adding to the pool of houses in our community. It might be an additional investment by the government in the community, but it is not adding to the housing stock. I would encourage the minister to build some houses there if that is what she wants to do so that they are actually adding to the stock.

As I said, the statement of reservation that we put together—again, I pay tribute to the member for Burleigh on his work on that statement of reservation—highlights three different areas and they are all related to the second recommendation of the committee. We feel that it is not strong enough and it does not set clear enough guidance to the federal government on what we expect here in Queensland.

The first area, as was rightly identified by the REIQ, is that 25 per cent of residential property sales in the nation occur in Queensland. At the moment this scheme accounts for only 20 per cent. We believe that we should be fighting for 2,500 place allocations. I note that the chair spoke about fighting for that. I think that is an important thing that could have been in the report. The next area of deficiency is around the levels of income that people have to have to qualify for this scheme. I know there are going to be further negotiations, but the scheme as it stands now talks about \$90,000 per annum for a single applicant and \$120,000 per annum for joint applicants.

As I said before, there is clear evidence that the biggest impediment to people getting into home ownership is acquiring sufficient equity for a deposit. In their submission the REIQ suggested a much higher threshold than that: \$170,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for couples. I note that suggestion. There are probably a lot of people out there who had a good time after leaving school or university and have not put money aside for a deposit to build a home, but they will get to the point where it is important and they will set about saving for a deposit. When this report was done, the median price for a house in Brisbane was \$700,000; now it is over \$830,000. When the report was done, people needed \$170,000 in equity to avoid paying mortgage insurance and what have you. Now there are a lot of people who will not qualify because of the \$90,000 and \$120,000 per annum for joint applicants. As we outlined in our statement of reservation, I believe that should be higher because this bill should not restrict opportunities for those people. As I said, they might have been having a good time for five or 10 years after finishing school or university but they are now ready to move into home ownership. By unlocking that opportunity they will move from the rental market into the home ownership market, and then they will be able to assist in the housing crisis because that rental property will become available.

Because of the way the scheme is written at the moment, only banks can offer funding to eligible participants. As we heard, the financial services sector believes that all mortgage brokers and financial services people should be able to assist in unlocking this equity scheme, and I think that would be a fair thing to do. As our statement of reservation identifies, another area of concern is the complex nature of accessing the scheme. There are a number of steps in that process and, as we have heard before, the devil is in the detail. It would be sensible to allow mortgage brokers and other financial people as well as banks to help applicants through the process to access the scheme. As it stands, the scheme will allow people with a two per cent deposit to get eight per cent from the federal government through a shared equity market and then qualify for the other 90 per cent through one of the banks. We feel it should not be restricted to banks. As I said before, other mortgage brokers and what have you should also be allowed to assist.

It is clear that South-East Queensland and the rest of the state are experiencing a housing crisis, and we should be doing everything we can to assist with that. It has been 14 months since the bill was introduced, but I know there are complexities to work through. We would love to see the detail so we can move forward with certainty. As the shadow minister said, the LNP will be supporting the bill

because we want to do whatever we can to assist Queenslanders in the housing crisis. I would ask the minister to look at the suggestions in our statement of reservation—whether it be through her own efforts in Queensland or in approaches to the federal arena—to see an increase of 2,000 to 2,500 eligible homes in Queensland so we can not only get our fair share but also see income thresholds lifted to unlock more opportunities for Queenslanders to get into home ownership.

As we all know, owning property is a wonderful thing. The right to own property is one of the LNP's values. We want to see that as many people as possible are able to get into home ownership. As our leader has rightly said, it is his bold ambition to take Queensland from being the state with the lowest home ownership level to No. 1 in the country.

**Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.44 pm): The member for Lockyer said they want to do 'everything we can'. I have written that down because I will come back to that a little bit later. I was on the committee, and I recognise the good work of the committee in recommending that the bill be passed. This is an important bill that will allow for the federal government's Help to Buy scheme, once it passes, to help everyday Queenslanders. We know that there will be 10,000 eligible Australians each year over the four-year period the federal scheme is expected to run, allowing for a two per cent deposit with an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent for the purchase of new homes and 35 per cent for the purchase of existing homes.

The member for Lockyer mentioned the statement of reservation. He paid tribute to the member for Burleigh's work on the statement of reservation. Seeing as the LNP have already said they will support everything in our bill, I would like to say thank you to 'Comrade Hart' and 'Comrade McDonald' for always being so supportive of the government. We appreciate that, comrades. Good on you! The comrades to my right—that is the first time that has ever been said—did mention in their statement of reservation, 'We wish to place on the record the LNP's commitment to'—

**Mr HART:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at being called 'comrade' and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): My understanding of personal offence is that it needs to be directed to the individual. I did not hear the comment, but I will get advice. I have taken advice. I believe it was directed at someone and I will ask the member to withdraw. I also remind you to use proper titles.

**Mr SMITH:** I withdraw. I will not go fishing anymore. In their statement of reservation the LNP said—

We wish to place on the record the LNP's commitment to an ambitious and visionary 10-year target ...


Where is it? I have looked all over the place. I have looked in drawers and cupboards everywhere. Where is the big vision that is coming? There is nothing there. Where is it? We have not seen anything. In fact, they are so visionary that the member for Burnett actually said that our plan is too much for housing. They are so visionary and ambitious that they are withdrawing from our Homes for Queenslanders plan. Recently we delivered two modular homes in Bundaberg, in the suburb of Walkervale. It was \$1.3 million for the entire package including manufacturing, the purchase of the land, installation and all of the services that went with that. The member for Burnett said that each one of those module homes cost \$2 million—he was wrong—and then the member for Burnett tried to say that even the \$1.3 million price tag was too much, yet the member for Lockyer says the LNP will do everything they can—everything they can except pay the market price—to ensure they are getting Queenslanders into homes. That is the LNP here: they do not know what to do. They have already been dealt a blow by the captain's pick. I cannot wait for the budget speeches when we get to hear about how they are supporting things such as VAD and termination of pregnancy. I know that the three members in the back right and the member for Oodgeroo will be very excited by that.

We know that our Homes for Queenslanders plan is already delivering for Bundaberg locals. In fact, we have already announced that we are delivering an extra seven units in Bundy South. St Vinnie's is delivering 60 units for our QuickStarts program to ensure we are providing roofs over the heads of everyday Queenslanders and their families. As part of our 600 modular homes plan we have also made the commitment that more than 35 modular homes will be delivered to Bundaberg.

That plan is incredibly important to the people whom I represent. I go out and speak to the people who are living rough, who are sleeping rough. The member for Bancroft recognised his electorate officers and I want to recognise mine as well for the incredible work they do every single day engaging with the department, engaging with people who are vulnerable and facing homelessness and working hard for them. That is what good Labor governments do. We represent everyone across the divide, no

matter how much they earn or do not earn, no matter how hard or easy life is. We make sure that we listen to every single Queenslander and provide for them. We are providing the housing that is needed.

What do we have from the LNP? They have a bold, ambitious, visionary 10-year plan that we cannot even find. They have a plan but they are not going to tell us. It is a great plan but they will not tell us what the plan is. They have a plan to talk about a plan. Over there, they want to talk about glossy brochures. What about their glossy brochures from the referee? All we know is that a Labor government is delivering for Queenslanders day in, day out and the LNP never, ever will.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.50 pm): It is always fun to follow the member for Bundaberg and the member for Bancroft because they give me so much ammunition to use against them. I am growing increasingly concerned with the bills that this government are bringing into the House. Instead of making things better, they are trying to patch up a broken system. We see that with their continual attacks on investors and on people who provide rental properties who have a right to manage their own properties. They are just making everything worse.

We have seen the government continually creating a big black hole, or a massive problem, and then trying to overcome that in the short term by providing some sort of subsidy and leaving behind massive hand grenades for the next government. I fully support a housing equity scheme that assists people into the market, but I think it needs to be done properly. The biggest problem with this scheme—

**Mr Hinchliffe:** There's a federal election next year. Run there.

**Mr HART:** Maybe the member for Sandgate would like to read the recommendations of the committee chair. This is the report of the committee chair and then there is a statement of reservation provided by the member for Lockyer and me in the back of it. We all agreed to recommendation 2, which reads:

That the Queensland Government continue to liaise with the Australian Government on the parameters of the Help to Buy Scheme to ensure that the volume of participants and places for targeted groups, purchase price caps, participant income levels and buy-out provisions are appropriate for Queensland.

If we are going to get our fair share in Queensland—the federal government has allocated billions of dollars for the 10,000 places in its plan—then we need to get this right. We need to get this right. The biggest problem we have at the moment is that we do not know any details about the plan. If the Minister for Housing would stop playing politics for five minutes, she could actually talk to her federal colleagues about providing some details to my federal colleagues so that they could make an informed decision on this particular bill. Like me, my federal colleagues know that Labor governments mess up everything that they try to do. Just allocating \$2 billion or \$3 billion to a project is not enough. It is not all about money. It should be about outcomes. We have already heard from our shadow minister today that, while the \$2 billion housing fund has purchased houses, it has not actually constructed any yet. That is the outcome that we need to see.

The member for Lockyer hit the nail on the head—buying houses off somebody else and putting them into this scheme does not add to the pool of houses that are available. It does not provide houses for the people who are living in their vans and on the streets. I was surprised, I must say, when the member for Bancroft said that homelessness was dwindling in his electorate. Maybe they have come to my electorate. I will table these photos of some people living in their vans in the Minister for Housing's electorate.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of photographs depicting vans parked in a Gold Coast park [\[1033\]](#).

They are very close to her office. I am sure she would feel just the way I do when I see people living in their vans and on the street in my electorate—I want to do something for them. As I said, I fully support a home equity scheme. In fact, I designed one a few years back that we might be able to use, and I would be happy to share some details with the housing minister, if she were at all interested.

We need to get the parameters right. With the income threshold being set apparently at \$90,000 for a single person and \$120,000 for a couple, I fear that we may be setting up some of these people for failure in the future. If they cannot afford something that we encourage them into because their income is low, they may have an issue with paying their mortgages in future and then we just make the whole situation worse. If those thresholds were lifted a bit, then those people would be more stable and more likely to succeed in this process. I think that is something that we need to do.


Currently, there is a cap on the purchase price of \$700,000 in a capital city or regional centre. I did a bit of a scout around my very small electorate on the Gold Coast, which takes in Palm Beach, Varsity Lakes and Burleigh. The minister might be surprised to know that the average price of a house in Palm Beach is \$1.68 million, not \$700,000. The average price of a unit in Palm Beach is \$995,000.

There might be a one-bedroom, one-bathroom, one-car-park unit somewhere in Palm Beach for \$700,000, but I would struggle to find it if I were looking for one now. It is the same in Burleigh—the average price is \$1.4 million for a house and \$927,000 for a unit, and Varsity Lakes is pretty similar. The government has had a number of talkfests and solutions have supposedly come out of them. As I said right at the start, no real results appear to be coming from this.

I take exception to some comments that the member for Bundaberg made about my good mate the member for Burnett. The member for Burnett worked in QBuild for 30 years, so he might know what goes on in QBuild. He is a registered builder so he would have quite an idea on how much it costs to build a house. If the member for Burnett comes in here and tells us that a tiny house costing \$750,000 is not the best way to spend the government's money to achieve an outcome, then I believe the member for Burnett. I do not believe the government and I do not believe the renter, the Minister for Housing, who has no life experience whatsoever.

This government continue to attack negative gearing. They attack investors. By the look of the budget that was handed down today, we are going to see more taxes, even though we continually hear promises that there will be no new taxes under their government. No, that was the federal leader of the Labor party—'No new carbon tax under a government I lead'. We cannot believe anything this government say. They continually come into this place trying to rewrite history. They continually try to blame those on this side of the House for their failures.

I say to the members on the other side that I am going to support this bill because it is federal money and, if we can get it right, maybe it will do some good and we can actually get some houses built. Maybe when the federal government changes again next year and we get a decent government in, we will see that come to fruition. Bring on October 2024. There are two very good reasons I want that to come around quickly. One is that I will be retiring, so this will be one of the last speeches I give in this House. The other one is that we have the opportunity to show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (4.00 pm): We will sure miss the member for Burleigh in this House. He is entertaining, as always. He goes off messages always and gives me a lot of material for my reply.

This bill is very telling. It is quite a simple bill. We are referring powers of the state under the Australian Constitution to the federal government to enable this program. Probably the most famous referral of power by a state was under the Liberal Kennett government in Victoria. He could not put up with workers and did not want to deal with workers—and I see the member for Ferny Grove—so he just got the whole industrial laws and gave them over to the federal government: 'Those pesky workers. We can't handle them anymore. We don't need to deal with them anymore.' They did the referral of powers for all the industrial relations in Victoria.

This bill is telling with regard to the strategy of the LNP leading up to the election. They will agree to everything that Labor is putting forward and do something different. There is nothing more telling than their candidate for Oodgeroo, who spoke publicly about this bill in the federal parliament and said it was really dangerous. That is their candidate for this state election. Again, we are seeing it firsthand. They will say one thing in here and vote one way in here, but we know that they are going to do something completely different when—

**Ms SIMPSON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance to the legislation. The legislation is a housing bill, not a federal jurisdiction.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Maroochydore, there has been a broad-ranging debate. As I have heard it, the member for Capalaba is still on message. I will listen, however, to his contribution.

**Mr BROWN:** For the benefit of the member for Maroochydore, we are debating a bill handing over powers to the Commonwealth government. I cannot believe she has been in this House for so long and she does not even know the basics. These are the basics of this bill.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** I take the interjection from the member for Maroochydore. We are referring powers to the Commonwealth government. We are talking to a Commonwealth government bill. I could not get any more relevant to this bill if I tried. Thank you for your own goal. Going back to the point—

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Maroochydore, that was not appropriate to call out. I am going to warn you under the standing orders.

**Mr BROWN:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I withdraw my comments about defamation unconditionally.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice. Member for Maroochydore, I am going to ask you to withdraw in an unqualified way.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I withdraw.

**Mr BROWN:** Thank you—and that is the shadow minister for integrity. She is staying quiet now. I will get back to the point.

The candidate for Oodgeroo said that this legislation is really dangerous. That gives us an insight into their strategy. They agree to everything in here leading up to the election and do something completely different after the election. We just have to see the contributions by their federal colleagues relating to this bill in the federal parliament. They are teaming up with the Greens to block this. They do not believe in this.

They say one thing in here. They say that the minister needs to pick up the phone and get onto our federal colleagues. They need to pick up the phone to their federal colleagues. The member for Everton is the shadow minister and his seat is right in the seat of the federal opposition leader. They share the same constituency. I would think they would see each other at functions all the time, so the member for Everton could just say, 'Hey, Peter, can you let this bill through because we agree on it?' but they are not willing to do that.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** I take that interjection. The member for Lockyer said that they are doing everything they can do. They are not doing everything they can do because they are blocking it with the Greens right now. It is our state Labor government that is putting forward this legislation to ensure that, when that legislation is passed, we can hit the ground running and have 2,000 Queenslanders in a house, with a roof over their head, as part of a broader plan. Those opposite come in here whingeing about each point of the plan, but if they keep whingeing and going against each point of the plan then the plan cannot come to fruition and those people cannot be housed.

The federal LNP is teaming up with the Greens. The member for South Brisbane has this week been talking about campaigning against affordable housing in her own electorate.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** I will take the interjection. You gave the member for South Brisbane your preferences.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Direct your comments through the chair, member.

**Mr BROWN:** I will take the interjection because it was the LNP's preferences that got the member for South Brisbane over the line.

**Mr Watts:** Tell us about the other Greens preferences across the state.

**Mr BROWN:** I take that interjection as well.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** They do not like being reminded of what actually happened in the past. They have learned from their mistakes because they now say they will put the Greens last. However, when their federal colleagues go down to Canberra they team up to block housing legislation time and time again.

It is this government which has a comprehensive plan when it comes to housing. Each plank of our plan has been talked down by those opposite, but have they come up with any solutions of their own? Is there anything in their little blue booklet? No, there is not. All we see is whingeing and whining, saying they are going to vote for it but their federal colleagues are going to block it. We know they are going to do something completely different after the election. We know what they did last time. They wanted to sell off all our public housing to the private sector. They wanted to give all of Logan's public housing over to the private sector, and it was this Labor government and the member for Springwood who blocked that because we believe in public housing and we know about those opposite. The member for Everton says there is going to be a grand plan that comes out before the election.

**Mr Mander:** You should see it.

**Mr BROWN:** I take the interjection from the member for Everton. I want to see it. I want to see where you say you are going to privatise public housing.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, I am going to caution you. I am going to warn you if you continue to interject.

**Mr BROWN:** I do want to see the plan. Queenslanders want to see some policy from this opposition. We have the member for Broadwater saying they are going to wave through the budget and they agree wholeheartedly with it. We have the member for Everton saying there is going to be a plan. I want to see that plan because it is going to include privatisation of our public housing. They are going to sell it off and do what they did last time and build absolutely zero. Public housing went backwards under the LNP. They had silly policies like the three-strikes policy. When it comes to this type of legislation—


**Mr Watts:** What has the Labor government done?

**Mr BROWN:** I will take the interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. We have done plenty.

**Mr Watts:** How is the list going? Tell us about the numbers.

**Mr BROWN:** We have 600 people housed at the moment under these schemes. We need to ensure we are doing more and more. You cannot house the homeless by doing nothing but whingeing and opposing pieces of legislation like this, especially when they are down in Canberra. We need to make sure we get this going for the 2,000 Queenslanders it is going to support. I wholeheartedly commend this bill to the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Before I call the member for Hinchinbrook, I will issue a general warning to members that the quarrelling across the chamber is getting a little bit too much. I am happy for a little bit of banter, but I will start issuing warnings if people continue to interject without those interjections being taken.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.09 pm): I hope I do not say anything in my contribution to increase that quarrelling across the chamber. I rise to give my contribution to the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024. Queenslanders are looking for somewhere to live. The housing crisis does not just affect Brisbane, Townsville, Mount Isa or Cairns, it is across the whole state. Even regional towns like Ingham and Cardwell are facing the housing crisis right now where people are finding it more and more difficult not only to find a house to buy but also to find a house to rent. I understand the legislation before us, which has been scrutinised by the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee, will go some way to helping some people get into the housing market. This bill is essentially designed to try to ease the crisis here in Queensland when it comes to housing, and the KAP will be supporting this legislation.

This bill relates to the Commonwealth Help to Buy scheme which was announced in the 2022-23 federal budget. The bill's objective is to refer legislative power to the Commonwealth parliament to enable the passage of the Commonwealth Help to Buy Bill 2023 and support the constitutional basis to establish the scheme. If passed, Queensland will be the first across the nation to pass this legislation.

It seeks to assist 10,000 eligible Australians each year to access the scheme, including up to 2,000 here in Queensland. Homebuyers will need to have a minimum of two per cent deposit with an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent of the purchase price for a new home and up to 30 per cent for existing homes. There have been some concerns raised around that where it has been said perhaps people who only have a two per cent deposit may actually not be able to pay back the loan in years to come, especially when we are unsure where interest rates will land and as they rise and fall throughout the 25 to 30 years of that loan.

It has also been said, and I want to make people aware, that the more you have to borrow, the more you have to pay back. I hope there is an education program around this when people are engaging with the scheme, knowing that you only need a two per cent deposit to gain eligibility for the scheme. It is fantastic for those trying to enter the market and get off the rental merry-go-round, but the reality is you still need to pay back the remaining 98 per cent of the loan. That is a lot of money for some people, especially when you are looking at a housing crisis not only in Brisbane but also in regional Queensland.

I will refer to a couple of things that the KAP has pushed for over the last term to try to bring down the problem with the housing crisis across Queensland, especially in regional Queensland, and that is to extend the first home owner grant to existing properties in regional Queensland, to try to bring people from the city to those places right now where previously there was an excess of housing on the market.

However, it is now tightening up in regional Queensland as well. If we can try to bring people to the regions to try to alleviate the problems here in Brisbane, we see that as a way forward.

There has been some commentary around this in the media over the last week—and I know we will be speaking to the Appropriation Bill soon—but providing relief from stamp duty here in Queensland is something that the KAP supports, not only for purchasing a property but also for insurance premiums. If we can try to bring down the insurance premiums in Queensland, maybe we can put a bit more money in people's back pockets as they are saving for the now two per cent deposit. However, it would be great if people had a 10 to 20 per cent deposit before buying their first home.

We need infrastructure in place to enable access to housing developments which are stranded right now—landlocked from infrastructure like roads, overpasses and intersections. Ensuring the correct infrastructure is in place will assist property developers who are trying to develop properties for an affordable price. One of the biggest problems with infrastructure charges being completely lumped onto a developer is that a property which should be going for \$150,000 to \$200,000 to build a new home on needs to be bumped up to \$250,000, just so those charges are covered. If the Queensland government is trying to find ways to open up the housing market, working with developers in the private sector would be quite beneficial.

If we draw down on Townsville—the Hinchinbrook electorate takes in the northern beaches of Townsville—it is the largest city in regional Queensland. Sorry, member for Cairns, we are a little bigger than you at the moment. Over the next 10 years, the population is expected to grow from 200,000 to 260,000. That is a massive growth over a 10- to 20-year period. We are seeking to have another 500 ADF staff deployed to Townsville in the next 12 months, but there is simply nowhere for them to live. As we have already heard in the budget introductory speech, there will be a lot of money spent over the next 12 months on the Townsville University Hospital. They are expecting 500 staff to staff that University Hospital upgrade. Once again, we ask: where are all these people going to live?


In the first quarter of this year, the average value of a new home in Townsville was \$449,000. This is a 57.5 per cent increase, higher than it was pre-pandemic. We need to find ways to bring down the cost of building a house. It is great that we will pass this legislation hopefully today, with the support of the KAP, to ensure we can get people into the Australian dream, into buying their first home, but we have to find ways to bring the price of building properties down. Right now across Townsville, young people buying a first home are up for between \$500,000 and \$700,000. I know that sounds quite cheap compared to properties down here in Brisbane or on the Gold Coast, but the fact is young people are expected to spend more on a property than ever before, and that needs to be addressed.

We are also seeing, as of March this year, dwelling approvals in Townsville down 29 per cent from where they were in the previous year. Once again, this is not because people do not need a house; they just cannot afford to build one.

With regard to submissions on the bill, I refer to the HIA submission. To remind people, HIA represents 60,000 builders across Queensland. They said, despite record interest rate rises in a short period of time, the median house price in Brisbane and across the state is still up by 63 per cent since March 2020. This is over a four-year period. The HIA also recognises that finance is a huge hindrance to many being able to access the property market, but they also noted the eligibility requirements for this scheme may be detrimental because of putting unwanted economic stress onto those people. The HIA also flagged that this places very high financial obligations on those participants.

The REIQ, in their submission, noted that Queensland has the lowest level of home ownership compared to all other states and territories. The fact is we need to get more people into their first home. We need to ensure we are making it cheaper, but we also need to ensure we are protecting those who are wanting to enter the market in making sure it is affordable.

Bringing down the cost of living is imperative. Bringing down the cost of insurance, electricity and general living expenses in Queensland is imperative if we are to help young people get into the market, as this legislation seeks to do, but they must be able to afford to pay the house off over the next 25 to 30 years. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (4.18 pm): It gives me great pleasure to speak to the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill. I really want to congratulate the minister on her initiative. I know that Queensland is first cab off the rank, so to speak, in enabling this state-Commonwealth partnership, and the minister has been absolutely relentless in addressing what is a real crisis for so many Queenslanders.




This bill, today's announcements about stamp duty, the further investment in the Homes for Queenslanders plan and the policy changes that have been introduced to support the rental market address those critical needs in so many ways. I do not think any of us could talk to people in our communities and not know what a huge stress and concern this issue is for people. When you knock on doors, you hear of cost-of-living pressures and see the absolute distress that people are in. This is why the announcements today from the Treasurer around the budget are so critical. I speak to older people who have adult children who they have hopes and dreams for. If they themselves are going okay with cost of living, the next thing they say is: 'I'm so worried about my kids. I'm so worried about whether my kids will ever be able to buy their own home. I'm so worried about whether my kids will even be able to afford to rent. I'm so worried. They have to move home with me.' These practical measures will not help every single person who wants to get into the housing market, but they will help. We are targeting as many different people at as many different points on the housing and accommodation journey as we possibly can.

The Commonwealth government is expecting this system to deliver to 10,000 eligible Australians each year for four years. They will need a minimum two per cent deposit, with an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent of the purchase price of a new home. The shared equity arrangements will be administered and monitored by Housing Australia. I will not go into all of the details because many other speakers have described what the bill is all about. What a great message of hope it is for people who want to get into the market. The announcement today about stamp duty sends a great message as well. First home owners will not have to pay stamp duty on purchases up to \$700,000, with the threshold increasing from \$500,000 and then phasing out on values up to \$800,000. These are absolutely great messages.

I have been listening and the LNP are saying that they will support this bill, which is great to hear. What I would like to know is: is the Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Treasurer or the deputy opposition leader going to ring their federal counterparts and ask them to support this bill? It is sitting there, stuck in the Senate, because the LNP and the Greens will not support it. Amanda Stoker will be coming into this place—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms FARMER:** We are not scared, but you should be very scared. Amanda Stoker says that Labor's Help to Buy scheme is really dangerous. I would like to know who has spoken to Amanda Stoker about what her position will be. I would like to know if the member for Whitsunday has spoken to Andrew Wilcox, who says, 'I don't know anyone who wants to skip hand in hand with the Australian government down the path to the first front door they have ever owned.' Well, I know hundreds of people who would like to do that in my electorate. I would like to know whether the members from Wide Bay will speak to Colin Boyce, who said, 'The Help to Buy bill doesn't provide solutions.' Who are these people? They can say all they like in this House. They can say that they will support people to get into the housing market. What I want to know is: when are they going to pick up the phone and put their money where their mouth is and say, 'This is a solution. You have to do it. This is where we stand. Come in behind us'?

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (4.24 pm): As we have heard, this bill is a very specific referral of constitutional powers from Queensland to the Commonwealth to allow them to deliver their Help to Buy scheme. This scheme is designed to assist Australians and Queenslanders to become home owners through shared equity, with a contribution of up to 40 per cent made by the Commonwealth government in exchange for a proportional interest in the property. It is proposed that the scheme will help 40,000 participants over four years across Australia. That is 10,000 a year, or for Queensland 2,000.

There is general support from organisations such as the Grattan Institute and the Property Council of Australia, although the REIQ did not support the scheme as they felt it would achieve little given its size. John Quiggin, a professor of economics at the University of Queensland, said there were three key issues with the scheme. First, subsidies to homebuyers are generally undesirable since their main impact is to benefit existing home owners as when you facilitate more purchases without increasing the supply of homes the price of housing will increase. The Per Capita's Centre for Equitable Housing agreed, however predicted that a relatively small-scale program such as is this will have a relatively small inflationary risk.

Second, that eligibility is limited to 2,000 places a year gives the scheme an undesirable 'lottery character' as Professor Quiggin described it. With around 30,000 first home buyers in Queensland in a year, 2,000 per year will not be sufficient to meaningfully increase the levels of home ownership. Third, Professor Quiggin argued that the top priority for public expenditure should be the construction of more

social housing. I acknowledge that there is a lot being done; however, as I have said before, we still have a lot to do.

As we have seen in inquiries, including into youth justice reform, a lack of stable housing—or any housing at all—is a key contributor to offending and reoffending. In addition domestic violence can emanate when housing is not available to facilitate a separation. I hear this a lot in my own community, where residents are staying in a household in a toxic relationship that is escalating because there is nowhere else for them to go. As we have heard often, unaffordable house prices and rents impact mental health, relationships and physical health. A small program like this would be better targeted to specific groups in need including our youngsters; however, in areas like my electorate—although we are appreciative of the stamp duty initiative—there is nothing in that price range anyway. As much as these initiatives are appreciated, the reality on the ground being experienced in many electorates is vastly different.

Those in need are not only those impacted by domestic violence but also a lot of women aged over 55 who, after divorce or separation, find that the property settlement is not enough to re-establish themselves—and, of course, they are not eligible for first home ownership assistance. I have a lot of constituents who are very vulnerable. They have worked their whole lives, yet they are couch surfing. We really need to target these groups.


Whilst we understand that the scheme's design is a Commonwealth responsibility, it highlights the very limited contribution being made to the housing crisis by the Commonwealth government. This has been demonstrated by this small scheme, the housing accord and the construction of 2,000 houses over a five-year period for Queensland, with the Social Housing Accelerator identifying another 600 houses over that five-year period. With Q Shelter in 2022 projecting a shortfall of 174,000 social houses in Queensland moving forward to 2036, this is significant.

Although much is being done, so much more must be done. As the Grattan Institute submitted, making housing affordable for all Australians and Queenslanders requires drastic reforms. At a minimum, they recommended that the Commonwealth government increase the size of the Housing Australia Future Fund to \$20 billion. This would support subsidies for social housing of \$1 billion a year, up from the current \$500 million a year.

When you consider that we have Australians who make, in interest alone on their wealth, nearly \$2 billion per year in comparison to what we are spending, we have to think about relevance. We also have to understand that this is the result of multiple decades of failings of all levels of government. Going back 30 years, seven per cent of our housing was social housing and I think we are now below four per cent. That has greatly contributed to our housing crisis because we did not stay in that seven per cent range as the population increased. We have raised this previously as well as many other issues, including construction costs that are impacting all of our infrastructure projects including housing. As the Property Council of Australia submitted, the reality is that rapid escalation in the Queensland construction market has pushed the price of building a new two-bedroom apartment in Brisbane to over a million dollars. There are multiple causes for these cost increases including the recent best practice conditions for construction. I am informed by local businesses that the conditions within that include double time payments for early starts. These are driving up their costs, in some cases by 100 per cent, ultimately making them uncompetitive and also unviable.

The committee recommended that the government liaise with the Commonwealth to improve the scheme through changes to scheme design, ensuring the number of participants and places for targeted groups, purchase price caps, participant income levels and buyout provisions are appropriate for Queensland. I commend the committee on that. Once again, even though 2,000 homes are inadequate, every little bit helps. Everyone just has to do a bit more.

Finally, I would really like to thank the minister, the committee, the secretariat and all those who made submissions and appeared at the hearings. Let's ensure the Australian dream—and we all had it when we were growing up—is realised and again becomes achievable for all Queenslanders.

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (4.31 pm): I rise in support of this bill. This is a bill that is going to make a real difference for everyday Queenslanders who are looking to secure their home. It is going to help locals in Ipswich and Bundamba because this is more than just a piece of legislation; it is a lifeline for people who have been looking to break into the housing market. We know that the purchase of a home is likely to be the biggest purchase that is ever made in most people's lives. This bill and what it enables will literally change the lives of many Queenslanders. It is backed by our Homes for

Queenslanders Plan. That is a comprehensive plan backed by proud Labor funding, which is already delivering when it comes to housing in Queensland. We have been proud, as part of the announced budget, to lift the stamp duty threshold for first home buyers from \$500,000 to \$700,000. That follows the recent doubling of the first home owner grant.

We have other measures that are helping Queenslanders into homes quicker, things like targeted home ownership support for First Nations people and increasing regional finance support. We have certainly increased social homes in Queensland. Just in my Bundamba community over the last couple of years we have had three new complexes in Redbank, one in Bellbird Park, one in Goodna and one in Redbank Plains. It is fantastic to see this additional social housing stock coming into my community and communities like mine right throughout Queensland where we are getting more people into secure homes. Our housing plan also includes rental assistance as well as more funding and assistance for those in need of emergency support to get them into secure accommodation. The measures in this bill will complement and dovetail very well with our fully funded and considered evidence-based plan that is delivering more homes for Queenslanders and getting more Queenslanders onto that pathway to owning their first home.

While here in Queensland the Miles Labor government has proudly been doing the heavy lifting, the federal LNP in Canberra had years and years in government to address this issue—years and years to help Queenslanders and Australians right across the nation—but they did not do anything. In fact, they made it worse. They cut the National Rental Affordability Scheme and they are still at it, even in opposition, by voting with the Greens to block the very scheme that will be enabled by this legislation. I implore the opposition members in this House to talk to their federal colleagues and tell them to stop blocking critical legislation that will enable Queenslanders to get into housing quicker, legislation that will enable Queenslanders to own their first home quicker.

Previous speakers have made mention of the current LNP candidate for Oodgeroo, who thinks that the Help to Buy scheme is dangerous. We know from media reports that, if successful, that particular candidate might go straight into the cabinet of a future LNP government.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Who's the Labor candidate?

**Mr McCALLUM:** Indeed I take the interjection from the member for Nanango, who is not in her correct seat.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): That is noted. Member for Nanango, you know the rules.

**Mr McCALLUM:** If that particular candidate is going to go into a future LNP government, what portfolio might that particular candidate hold? Let's hope it is not the housing portfolio because she will wreak cuts on housing here in Queensland. This bill means that Queensland will lead the nation.

**Mr Mander:** Have you wiped him off already? Is that a concession speech?

**Mr McCALLUM:** I take the interjection from the member for Everton—probably coming for his seeing as housing went backwards the last time he was the housing minister in Queensland. We will keep on delivering for Queensland on this side of the House because Labor always delivers for Queensland and Queenslanders will know it when it comes to the election in October.

I return to the bill. This bill means that Queensland will lead the nation. We will be the first state to roll out this scheme. It delivers on our commitment to tackle housing affordability head-on. This is about cooperation between different levels of government for the greater good. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (4.37 pm): I rise to speak on the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill. This bill aims to enable the federal Labor government Help to Buy scheme by dealing with constitutional arrangements and powers. That scheme was announced two years ago in the 2022-23 federal budget. It is supposed to deal with yet another aspect of the housing options which are being denied to Queenslanders, that of home ownership. The scheme is fully funded by the Commonwealth and seeks to assist low- to middle-income earners buy new or existing homes by dealing with barriers such as saving for a deposit and servicing loans.

While I welcome initiatives to increase home ownership, this shared equity scheme has taken a long time to come to fruition. It was first announced during the 2022 federal election campaign with Labor promises that it would start in January last year. Eighteen months later Queensland is the first state to introduce legislation to ensure uniformity across the country. This bill highlights just how badly Labor is in dealing with the housing crisis. It is quick on the announcements and promises but slow to act; delivery is an afterthought. The governing legislation was only introduced into the parliament in

February. It is still to be debated in the Senate and the consultation on its draft program directions about eligibility criteria was only completed last month. There are already concerns about the federal government's scheme, the practicality of the program and the lack of detail about how it will work. The government is still to work out the details of something that was promised to be in operation 18 months ago.

There are also concerns about how effective it will be when there are existing schemes in other states which are already unsubscribed. It points to Labor's inherent lack of urgency about dealing with housing matters. Eligibility requirements will rule out many people from accessing the scheme. A person must have an income of less than \$90,000 for a single applicant or \$130,000 for joint applicants, be purchasing the home to live in, must not currently own a property in Australia or overseas, have a two per cent deposit and be an Australian citizen over 18 years. The LNP is concerned that the income threshold is questionable considering the current property value-to-income ratios.

Under the scheme, only 2,000 places out of 10,000 will be available to Queenslanders. When 25 per cent of all Australian housing sales are in Queensland, the offer of 2,000 places is inadequate. There are also concerns that the possible price caps of \$700,000 in the capital cities and \$550,000 for the regions does not reflect the current housing market. Last week we learned that Brisbane had surpassed Melbourne and Canberra to be Australia's second most expensive capital city to buy a home. Queensland regional cities have recorded annual house price growth above 10 per cent.

Buying a home is the single largest investment for most people in their lifetime. Home ownership remains one of the most highly desired goals. It is empowering, helps people build equity and gives a sense of security, safety and belonging. According to the 2021 Census, in the Gympie electorate 42.7 per cent, or 8,934 people, owned their own home outright and another 32.4 per cent, or 6,770, owned with a mortgage. Included in those statistics about those who owned a home with a mortgage are those who own through a shared equity scheme. Across the state, 29.1 per cent own their homes outright, 34 per cent own with a mortgage and 23.1 per cent rent. The Australian statistics are split almost equally three ways, with an average of 31 per cent owned outright, 35 per cent with a mortgage and 30.6 per cent who rent.

Queensland has the lowest rate of home ownership in the country. Over the 50 years from 1971, the percentage of those who own their own home has fallen from 70 per cent in 1971 to 64 per cent in 2021. This decline is three times greater than the national figure. The Help to Buy scheme again highlights the plight Queenslanders face in the housing crisis. Last week a report to the Australian Council of Social Service said that Queensland's problems have been created by historic policy inaction and complacency on housing. A critical lack of housing supply is stopping young people, working families and seniors from buying a home.


The REIQ has 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 policy spanning years of successive Labor governments has directly resulted in increased housing and renovation costs. It is almost 4½ years since the government promised a timber action plan. In 2019 the government promised to undertake a two-year study to identify sustainable future options for timber supply. We are still waiting. Meanwhile, contracts and—

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr PERRETT:** I take that interjection from the member for Scenic Rim: it does affect the cost of housing and it is something that is of concern to many Queenslanders, particularly as we need additional houses. Meanwhile, contracts for native timber logging will cease at the end of this year. A severe shortage of timber is pushing up renovation and building costs, as I mentioned. In the middle of a housing crisis, the government is unable to understand the contribution of its anti-forestry and its anti-timber agenda. It is complicit in exacerbating the crisis. As a result, Queenslanders are paying more for housing, rent and renovations. When people are struggling with the cost of living, with increased government charges, excessive power prices, living pay cheque to pay cheque while at the same time the government has overseen a critical lack of housing supply and it has failed to release land to build, the last thing they need is spin, platitudes and trickery. I do not oppose the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Before I call the next speaker, I advise the House that, due to sitting without a dinner break, there will be no relief from warnings that have been incurred since lunchtime. Therefore, any member who finds themselves warned under the standing orders will hold

that warning until the House rises this evening. At the moment, the only member is the member for Maroochydore. I hope that I do not have to add any to the list.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.44 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill. I support it because it is a bill that will make it easier for Queenslanders to own their own home. It is especially important for young people and low-income earners in Ipswich who increasingly feel that home ownership is beyond their reach. Improving housing affordability for them and boosting housing supply are things the Miles government is committed to. Under our \$3 million Homes for Queenslanders plan, we have set an ambitious target of building a million new homes by 2046, including 53,500 new social homes. We are delivering a \$160 million renters relief package, a \$350 million infill fund to deliver more affordable housing in well-located areas where people can live close to their jobs and amenities, and a 20 per cent boost for homelessness services.

Another key part of our plan is our ongoing commitment to help Queenslanders into home ownership. We want to ensure Queenslanders can realise the great Australian dream of owning their own home. Home ownership provides long-term stability and it is a step towards wealth and financial security in retirement years. For many low- to middle-income earners who have been priced out of the Queensland housing market, home ownership is increasingly out of reach. In this tough housing market, if you do not have the bank of mum and dad to rely on, you miss out. Over time this has been widening the wealth inequality gap between those who own property and those who do not. This is not the fair go, egalitarian Australia that we envision for the future.

The Miles government is making it easier for Queenslanders to get their foot on the property ladder by participating in the Australian government's new Help to Buy scheme, which was announced in 2022. Help to Buy will bring down one of the barriers to home ownership: saving for a deposit. The scheme will address this by operating as a shared equity program to help low- to middle-income earners buy new or existing homes with a two per cent deposit. This complements other schemes we have announced, like the doubling of the first home owner grant to \$30,000 and abolishing stamp duty for first home buyers purchasing homes worth up to \$700,000.


In Ipswich, low- and middle-income earners are finding themselves increasingly priced out of the local housing market. Over the past few years, thousands of people from interstate and from Brisbane have moved to Ipswich—they are only human—for its affordability. Local people are finding themselves priced out of both the housing and the rental markets. Saving for a home deposit can now take up to a decade or more. In any case, by the time a deposit is saved the price of housing is likely to have gone up again. It is no wonder some people have given up the home ownership dream.

The Help to Buy scheme will give people an opportunity to take that first step on the housing ladder by slashing that deposit barrier. Homebuyers on the Help to Buy scheme who can save a two per cent deposit will receive an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent on the purchase of a new home and 30 per cent on an existing home. Because Queensland is the first participating state to help legislate Help to Buy, Queenslanders will be the first to be granted access to the scheme should the Help to Buy Bill pass in the federal parliament. Some 2,000 eligible Queenslanders each year will have access to the scheme once it is up and running. A total of 8,000 Queenslanders will benefit over the four years of the scheme.

Queensland's home ownership rate is lower than the national average. That is why this government is committed to Help to Buy and other initiatives like the first home owner's grant to help people purchase their homes sooner. It is imperative that not only the opposition here today support the Help to Buy scheme but also the LNP and the Greens in the federal parliament support the scheme. Unfortunately, what we have seen is the federal LNP and the Greens say that they vow to oppose it. They want to oppose the Help to Buy scheme when it goes before the parliament. When they do that—if they do that—they will effectively lock out 8,000 Queenslanders from owning their own home.

I want to make sure that people in Ipswich who are currently priced out of home ownership can get access to this scheme. Owning your own home is a way out of the financial insecurity and instability that comes with long-term renting. I know that there will be a massive demand in Ipswich for Help to Buy given the popular uptake of our first home owner grants. Since 2016, 6,798 first home buyer grants, worth \$115 million, have been paid to homebuyers, helping them to buy their first home in Ipswich. The combination of the first home owner grant, the stamp duty exemption and now Help to Buy will mean that first home buyers in Ipswich can purchase a house that they can call home. I commend this bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Before I call the member for South Brisbane, I have another statement to make. The Speaker has pointed out that I was incorrect in advising the House that there would be no reset of the warnings. I will read the following statement: I remind members of a previous statement provided by the Speaker regarding warnings given to members under the standing orders. Given the changes to the sessional orders, there will be three separate warning lists each day. The warning list will restart each day after the luncheon adjournment and also after 6 pm or the dinner break each night. Please disregard my earlier statement. I apologise to the House.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (4.50 pm): This bill exists to facilitate the federal government's Help to Buy scheme in Queensland. The scheme aims to help about 2,000 Queensland households a year to break into the housing market—a housing market where house prices have been heated up by tax concessions for investors and the rapidly rising cost of rent. The scheme will provide up to 40 per cent of the purchase price of a new home and up to 30 per cent for an existing home. A potential buyer must have at least a two per cent deposit. In Brisbane the median house price is over \$800,000 so that is about \$16,000.

What does this look like? Through a housing lottery, a tiny number of people with a good amount of savings will receive a handout to buy their first home. The scheme will do nothing to bring down the cost of housing. In fact, it will do the opposite. The government will not fix the housing crisis by giving a lucky few the cash to break into an inflated housing market. You cannot tackle the housing crisis with schemes that push up house prices.

While both state and federal Labor are unwilling to take measures that will actually bring down the cost of housing, like capping rents, winding back negative gearing and capital gains tax concessions or building enough public housing, the housing crisis will only get worse. Our federal colleagues have made a very reasonable offer to the federal Labor government. The Greens are willing to come to the table if Labor scraps negative gearing and capital gains discounts, caps rents and builds enough public housing. That is very reasonable. If Labor takes action on tax handouts from property investors, which is a genuine step towards fixing the rental and housing crisis, the Greens are willing to come to the table too.

I will start with tax handouts for property investors. Tax handouts such as negative gearing and capital gains tax discounts drive up the cost of housing, drive up the cost of rent and make it easier for big investors to buy their seventh property than for a first home buyer to buy their first. In fact, tax handouts to property investors will cost the federal budget \$39 billion in foregone revenue. Those tax handouts turbocharge housing prices by allowing property investors to pay way more for a house than a first home buyer. If the housing minister wants to see this housing lottery scheme come to life, I ask her to get on the phone to her federal colleagues and tell them to phase out tax concessions for investors, tell them to cap rents and tell them to increase funding for public housing. This scheme will drive up the cost of housing even further. By helping 0.2 per cent of homebuyers, the scheme will drive up the cost of housing for the other 99.8 per cent of people who want to buy a home. Like every other Labor housing policy, this one benefits existing property owners.

When our federal Greens colleagues asked the government representatives why the scheme was so minimal in terms of who will be eligible, they were told that to expand the scheme would have too much of an inflationary impact on house prices so, if the scheme was expanded to help the other 99.8 per cent of people who are eligible, housing would become substantially more expensive. Federal Treasury did no economic modelling on the impact of this scheme and even declined to appear at the Queensland parliamentary inquiry into this bill. However, a number of other economists have stepped in to explain the inflationary impacts of the scheme.

John Quiggen, Professor of Economics at the University of Queensland, contributed to both the Queensland parliamentary inquiry into this bill and the Senate inquiry into the federal scheme. He said—

- subsidies to home buyers are generally undesirable, since their main impact is to benefit existing homeowners.
- The fact that eligibility is limited to 2000 places a year gives the scheme an undesirable lottery character
- The top priority for public expenditure should be the construction of more social housing

In the Senate inquiry, economists lined up to critique the scheme with responses ranging from complete underwhelm to forensic take-downs. The chief economist at the Centre for Independent Studies, Dr Peter Tulip, said—

When you stimulate demand, it puts up prices and makes housing more expensive for everybody else.

...

We have a housing affordability crisis, and this makes that problem worse for the majority of people entering the market.

The University of New South Wales' City Futures Research Centre submitted—

Like all demand-side assistant measures there will be some inflationary impact.

Mr Matt Grudnoff, a senior economist at the Australia Institute, said—

The Help to Buy scheme, like many previous housing affordability schemes from both major parties, is a policy to boost the financial position of a particular group ... The problem with these kinds of policies is that they simply increase demand for housing, and this increases the price of housing. The result is that it makes housing less affordable.


We have seen this happen with similar schemes, the first home buyer grants and the coalition's HomeBuilder program. The Commonwealth Productivity Commission has said that there is no strong case for the government to provide this kind of assistance. In 2022 they clearly stated that giving money to homebuyers increases the amount they can borrow which increases house prices and reduces housing affordability. The Productivity Commission said that the government should keep the money it would spend on the first home buyer grants and stamp duty concessions unless they are specifically targeted at groups that are marginalised in the housing market. With this money it should directly support people who are homeless or experiencing rental stress that is putting them at risk of homelessness. By inflating the cost of housing, this bill will do nothing for the housing crisis expect to make it worse.

Over the past five years, across the country renters have paid an average of \$106,000 per household in rent. That means renters are effectively paying rent equal to someone else's house deposit every five years. In effect, a renter ends up paying off someone else's mortgage while often coping massive rent increases that make it nearly impossible for them to save for a house for themselves. In addition, they can face the huge costs associated with moving house. Renters face precarity and are always on the brink of unbudgeted blowouts if they have to move house multiple times a year so, on top of skyrocketing rents, they cannot save for a house deposit.

The rental crisis is also having flow-on effects for other parts of the economy. I note that today's budget contains measures for a Night Life Economy Commissioner. Nothing is going to save live music when young people cannot afford to go out because their rent keeps going up and up. The housing crisis and uncontrolled rents are spiralling out of control and ruining other things that make Queensland so special. By helping renters and restoring some rights to the thousands of Queenslanders who rent, this government would be providing a much more meaningful support to prospective homebuyers than is contained in this bill.

Every week, fewer and fewer people are able to afford secure and appropriate housing and there are scores of measures that this government and its federal counterparts could take to fix that now. However, there are three measures that are absolutely essential to addressing the housing crisis. The first is freezing and capping rent increases. The next is ending the billions of dollars that Australians pay each year in tax concessions to investors. These include negative gearing and capital gains tax discounts. Finally, we need to build enough public housing.

This bill will likely be one of Labor's last chances to address the rental crisis in this term of government. The stage 2 rental reforms passed just a few weeks ago are chock-full of measures that the Greens have been pushing for, but they exclude some key measures: capping rents and giving tenants a guaranteed right to a lease renewal. The minister said she wants no potential first home buyer to forget the Greens' position on this bill; neither do we. I want every first home buyer to know that the Labor governments at both federal and state levels have wilfully driven up the cost of housing. The federal government continues to give handout after handout to investors, driving up the cost of property. Now, in a pathetic attempt to bandaid over their own failure, Labor is throwing in their lot behind a scheme that will drive up the cost of housing and give only a tiny number of people access to home ownership while continuing to support unlimited rent increases and tax handouts for investors.

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.59 pm): I hear there are lots of people looking to buy or rent houses in Woolloongabba; wouldn't that be good? I rise to support the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024. This bill will support those who want to buy their own home, specifically our low- and middle-income earners. Owning a home should not be out of reach for young people or lower income earners. Our Homes for Queenslanders plan is part of the work we are doing with the federal government to get the Commonwealth's Help to Buy scheme up and running as quickly as possible.

The Commonwealth scheme aims to support up to 10,000 eligible Australians into home ownership through an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent for a new home and 30 per cent for an existing home. Homebuyers will need a minimum two per cent deposit to take part in the scheme. Up

to 10,000 households nationally could benefit each year, meaning about 2,000 Queensland households a year over the next four years. Deposit costs will be less and repayments easier to meet. For this to happen, states and territories need to refer matters to the Commonwealth. This bill will do just that and puts Queensland in the box seat as the first state to participate.


I commend the Minister for Housing on taking this initiative forward, because it will mean Queenslanders will be able to access the scheme as soon as the Commonwealth has it up and running. We know that incentives such as this make a massive difference to people. We have already doubled the first home owner's grant to \$30,000 for new homes until 30 June next year—the most generous in Australia. It is estimated that that will support about 12,000 into a home before the deadline.

I was with the then premier, the then deputy premier and the Treasurer when we announced that scheme at a display village in Spring Mountain. I recall the Treasurer and I walking through one of the display homes where we met Sandy, a woman in her 40s who worked for Health. We were having a chat about how lovely the display home was. She recognised the then deputy premier and the Treasurer and said, 'Oh, what are you doing here?' We announced the fact that we had doubled the first home owner's grant to \$30,000. She actually paused and said, 'Are you serious? That can't be right?' I said, 'Yes, we just announced that today.' She said, 'I've been looking at this display home. It is one that I really wanted, but I just didn't have quite enough money to get over the line to purchase it. Your announcement today will mean that I can actually buy this house.' This was a single mother in her 40s who was able to buy that home. That is what these incentives and these schemes do.

Increasing the threshold for first home owner concessions on transfer duty, from \$500,000 to \$700,000, will see 10,000 buyers supported to unlock their first home. Again, we know that will make a significant difference. This is one of a suite of arrangements to help Queenslanders into their own homes including the Homes for Queenslanders plan, the Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan, and our Sales to Tenants program.

This bill is firmly aimed at helping Queenslanders who very much want to own their own home. It is for our young people, for families such as those in my growing electorate of Jordan—for families in Spring Mountain, Greenbank and Flagstone—and for our community. In fact, it is for anyone who dreams of a place to call their own, because owning a home is not just about real estate; it is about having a place to raise a family, about putting down roots and about becoming part of a community. This is about housing affordability and accessibility.

I know that it is a difficult concept for some whose prevailing attitude to property ownership is more 'How many can I buy?' rather than 'How can I buy one?' It is disappointing that this legislation is not being supported by the Liberals or the Greens in Canberra. I implore those opposite to get on the phone, perhaps do something useful and get their pals to pass the federal legislation. We want to make sure all Queenslanders have a safe and affordable place to call home. We know that this bill will pave the way for thousands into home ownership. It has the capacity to change the trajectory of tens of thousands of lives across generations, just as it is doing for someone like Sandy. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.04 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House following the Labor member for Jordan, who is part of the government—

**Mr Sullivan:** As being a minister.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection. The backbench member would like me to defer to the member for Jordan as 'the minister'. I am pleased to follow the minister. There is such arrogance and hubris in this House. The minister, who is part of the cabinet along with the supposed 'new' Premier, called increasing stamp duty for first home buyers a 'thought bubble'. The minister, who was part of the cabinet, actually rubbished it and said, 'What a ridiculous policy from the LNP, helping out big business.' Is helping people trying to get into a home a thought bubble, member for Jordan? I think not. This is trying to relieve the pressure for Queenslanders, because Queensland has the lowest rate of home ownership in the nation. Why? Because we have had the Palaszczuk-Miles government—not a 'new' government—for a decade. It is hubris and arrogance for those opposite to think that any idea put forward by the LNP is a thought bubble.

**Mr Sullivan:** Like the Bradfield scheme? How did the Bradfield scheme go for you?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection. I am more than happy to talk about the Bradfield scheme. Come in, spinner! It was former premier Palaszczuk who announced the Bradfield scheme. She announced it to stop the LNP talking about it. What happened with her budget costings? There was a big fat zero, because it is the Labor government in this state which refuses to build water projects.



Look at Emu Swamp. Where is that dam? That is right: Emu Swamp, just like the Bradfield scheme, became nothing because of the Palaszczuk-Miles government.

We are in the middle of a housing crisis. Queensland has the lowest percentage of home ownership in the nation. I refer to the statement of reservation by the honourable Jim McDonald and the honourable Michael Hart, who—

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection. They are taking offence to them being called 'honourable' because those members have not been ministers.

**Mr O'Connor:** The 'honourable' Jim.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I am more than happy to call him that.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): The member for Bonney will cease his interjections.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Recommendation 2 of the committee report is really interesting. The members for Lockyer and Burleigh said—

While we agree with the intent of Recommendation 2 in the committee's report we believe that it does not go far enough.

Interestingly, in relation to income thresholds, the member for Jordan talked about low- to middle-income earners wanting to get into their first homes. I agree: anyone who is a low- to middle-income earner would love to get into their first home. But the income thresholds for participants of this scheme are also questionable. Further, the statement of reservations states—

We believe they need to be increased from \$90,000 for single income households and \$120,000 for joint income households. As the former assistant treasurer knows, that probably does not reach into middle-income earners.

**Mrs Gerber:** Police officers earn \$110,000.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that great interjection from the member for Currumbin. The average income for a police officer is \$120,000.

**Honourable members** interjected.

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

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** If there is any more talking across me when I am on my feet, those members will be warned instantly. Member for Nanango, I did not think you needed protection but the House is becoming disorderly. We will have fewer interjections, thank you.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Thank you. I so wanted to take the police minister's interjection, but I will move on. It was wonderful to see the police house in Blackbutt freshly painted. That would make them feel a lot happier in that house. It was lovely to see that fresh coat of paint. I thank the police minister. I am really happy to see that happen. I plead with the police minister to put the Blackbutt Police Station at the top of the list. It did not make this budget, so I am going to keep going. Next year I ask the police minister to put it at the top of the list.

We are in the middle of a housing crisis. I want to talk about a Nanango housing issue that I have talked about in this House numerous times. A state government owned home in Nanango has sat empty since 2020. I am talking about a vacant doctor's house. I have written to the housing minister. I have written to the public works minister. I have written to the health minister. It is unacceptable in the middle of a housing crisis in a regional town like Nanango where people are screaming for homes that this former doctor's residence has been sitting empty since that local doctor retired from Queensland Health. I have been calling this out for over two years, but the large four-bedroom home remains empty.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As fascinating as this treatise on a local issue from the member for Nanango is, it has nothing whatsoever to do with the Help to Buy bill. I ask her to come back to the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, you were straying away from the bill. There has been a wide degree of latitude allowed by speakers in the chair. We will continue on that basis while I am in the chair. However, you are a significant way from the long title of the bill. Please return to it.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** The member for Miller is correct. When we are talking about Help to Buy—and we are talking about the delegation of Commonwealth powers bill 2024—without a doubt, the sooner we can get people even into a government home the better. They can start saving money. They can get out of their car. They can get out of their tent. They can live in a home with a roof over their head. They can have a house to live in.


I will go on. There are 10 Seqwater homes in Somerset Dam village that have been sitting empty since 2010. It is unacceptable that 10 Seqwater homes have been left vacant for so long. We have so many vulnerable people. Nearly every Labor member who has spoken has talked about the need for more homes and the need to get people into homes. That is why we are talking about this bill. We are talking about the Help to Buy scheme.

I have also found out from the answer to a question on notice that there are another three government employee housing homes in my electorate that have sat empty for 18 to 24 months. The reason I talk about this in this House constantly is that the people of regional Queensland, the people of my Nanango electorate, deserve to have a roof over their heads. Whilst we are talking about the Help to Buy bill, I note again that one of the priorities for the LNP is securing our housing foundations. It is about getting people into homes. It is about making sure, as the member for Jordan said—

**Mr McDonald:** We're listening.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** We are listening. I take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. The latest Census data shows that Queensland has the lowest rate of home ownership at 64 per cent. Each and every one of us in this House wants to see that percentage increased. Again, I put to the House: why are we here? We are here because we have had a decade of a Labor government that has refused to invest in the housing foundations that enable people to get into their own homes. That is why we are here today.

I note the opposition members who put in that very well written and very well thought out statement of reservations because they raise some really important points. I particularly note the income thresholds. It is extremely important to note that not everyone gets to live on a member of parliament's wage or even a minister's wage. You need to be out there listening and talking to people in areas like the Nanango electorate, to people who are living in tents who really do need a roof over their head. They see the vacant houses not just for one year but for over two years. That is why I am encouraging everyone I speak to, particularly within my electorate, to show Labor the door on 26 October 2024.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (5.14 pm): I rise to support the Help to Buy bill. This is another way in which this government is helping Queenslanders get into housing. We know there is a nationwide housing crisis. It is accentuated here with very strong interstate migration. This bill will allow people in the low- to middle-income brackets to get into home ownership where otherwise they might not. I note the contribution of a previous speaker on the government side about a middle-age woman who said this is the sort of thing that makes the difference for her being able to own her own home or not.

We are the first state to legislate. We are the first cab off the rank. It will allow at least 2,000 and very likely more than 2,000 Queenslanders to benefit from the Help to Buy scheme, with the support they get from the equity injection from the government to get a deposit together to get into home ownership, whether it is 30 per cent for existing dwellings or 40 per cent for new dwellings. It is not a tiny figure. I reject absolutely the contribution today of the Greens MP the member for South Brisbane, Amy MacMahon, in saying that it is a tiny figure. Firstly, it is not. More than 2,000 people is a substantial number of Queenslanders who will benefit by getting into their own homes. Secondly, apparently if something is in the category of 'tiny' we should not help people. That seems to be the implication from the member for South Brisbane which I utterly reject. We are here to help all kinds of people in every single way we can. That is what government is about. It is not about making excuses to defend ideological positions like we are seeing from the Greens party.


I note the ABC report on 5 June, only six days ago, that quoted the member for South Brisbane, Amy MacMahon, as saying that she doubted claims that building more homes would drive down the cost of rent. We have here a Greens MP opposing the building of more houses in a housing crisis. It has to be noted that this is an absurd position. The Greens party have to stop opposing housing. They talk about housing. They criticise housing. Yet they keep opposing housing, whether it is this bill, whether it is housing developments in their own electorates, whether it is the Woolloongabba priority development area. That PDA prioritises high-density housing right next to a new heavy rail station near the CBD and next to bikeways. Where else would you put it? Yet we have the Greens party out there making excuses and opposing it. In the Woolloongabba PDA, in the inner city, 20 per cent of the 14,000 dwellings will be social and affordable housing, and the Greens party are opposing it. It is disgraceful. They do not practise what they preach. I will stand up every single time to call out that hypocrisy.

People need housing. We are attacking the housing crisis in every single way. There is no silver bullet solution. We have a consistent record. This bill is an example of that. Yet they are ganging up against this Help to Buy bill which will help low-income people into housing. It is being opposed by the

LNP and the Greens party in a gang-up. That is an absolute disgrace. I expect it from the LNP, but the Greens party should be condemned for playing politics with housing when this bill will help more than 2,000 Queenslanders into homes who are on low to low-middle incomes. That is what this Labor government is about. It is about helping people out of the rental market and into the housing market through schemes like Help to Buy, not opposing them and having a contorted ideological position opposing both this bill and the priority development area in Woolloongabba which prioritises housing.

We need to build as many different kinds of housing as quickly as we can in this housing crisis—full stop. We need social and affordable housing and 20 per cent of the Woolloongabba PDA will be social and affordable housing. We need all kinds of housing and the sooner the better. What I say to the Greens party is: stop opposing new housing. Stop opposing new ways, like this bill, of getting into a house and stop opposing new housing developments in your own electorates to curry favour with the neighbours, and start backing people having a roof over their head. People are starting to see through that hypocrisy.

The government's position has been very consistent. Our Homes for Queenslanders policy is broad. It is the most thorough and strongest housing package of any state or territory. It is well acknowledged by people in the field. We are proud of our record. We will keep working on this and we will be throwing everything at it. This bill is part of our response to it. It is only part of our comprehensive housing package under Homes for Queenslanders.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.19 pm): Queenslanders cannot trust this state Labor government. Those opposite have an absolutely appalling record when it comes to housing, and Queenslanders know it. While this government is trying to convince Queenslanders to forget the past we remain in a crushing housing crisis, and the blame for this lies squarely at the feet of the Palaszczuk-Miles government. The bill being debated here today—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe there has been a Speaker's ruling about how governments should be referred to. I do not believe the member for Currumbin's contribution is consistent with that Speaker's ruling and I ask you to bring her back to that ruling.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Currumbin, you are to refer to governments by their correct titles. I believe the description of the previous government and the current government was in breach of the Speaker's ruling.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** Yes, if I was that former minister I would be embarrassed too. The Palaszczuk government—now the Miles government—has been in charge of the cabinet table for the last 10 years, but the former minister wants us to forget about that. He wants Queenslanders to forget about the past because 'we're a new government'. What a load of rubbish!

Queensland has its own state Help to Home scheme, which is designed to help registered community housing providers deliver safe, stable accommodation in their local communities while tenants search for longer term housing solutions. Yet of the 1,000 homes that the state of Queensland's Help to Home housing scheme is meant to produce, guess how many homes this Labor government has built: 64 out of 1,000. That is their record on Help to Home. This is another announcement, and while the housing minister is patting herself on the back for bringing in this bill, they are failing in their own state-based Help to Home scheme.

This is just a fraction of the laundry list of failures from those opposite when it comes to housing. Does anyone remember the Housing Summit? The government put a call out to our community sector asking who had any land. The Catholic Church came back to them and very generously offered 90 parcels of land. Mr Deputy Speaker, how many homes do you think have been built on this land to date?

**Mr McDonald:** Zero.

**Mrs GERBER:** Absolutely zero; I will take that interjection. That is this government's record on housing. They come into this chamber and pat themselves on the back for introducing a bill when their record on delivering housing for Queenslanders is absolutely abysmal. There is Labor's \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund which, after two years, has not delivered a single new home for Queenslanders. There is a litany of promises here that I can go through. There is the promise of 80 pre-fab homes. Guess how many Labor has delivered? Only two. There is also the disgraceful record they set in relation to social housing. For two years straight we have spent less per capita on social housing than any other state or territory. That is absolutely disgraceful.

In order for this bill to achieve its objective of facilitating the federal government to get Australians into home ownership, the state government needs to hold up their end and deliver supply. They need to hold up their end and deliver on housing, yet on the Gold Coast residential lot approvals are down 52 per cent. This means that young parents in my electorate who are looking for a home to raise their family cannot find one because Labor has not approved land for housing. This has a flow-on effect for renters. Renters on the Gold Coast are paying 64 per cent more each week under this Labor government. I know this is not breaking news for my community because my community is living through this housing crisis.

Then there is Labor's abysmal record when it comes to social homes. Since Labor was elected in 2015 our communities have lost nearly 100 community housing homes. We are the only state in Australia where this has happened. This means that people like Matthew, whom I spoke about in this House earlier this year, are not able to live safely with a roof over their head and cannot get into a social housing home in Queensland. Thankfully, I can update the House. Matthew, who was sleeping on a bench out the front of my office, has now found a home, but it is no thanks to this state government. This state Labor government left him on a social housing waitlist and he could not get into a social home in Queensland. The community sector in New South Wales stepped in and they have housed him in New South Wales because this state Labor government has abysmally failed when it comes to delivering social homes for our most needy and vulnerable Queenslanders.

As I said, this bill helps the federal government enact their Help to Buy scheme. We are told that this scheme is expected to assist 10,000 households each year and it will run for four years. However, contrary to what the former minister just said, this is not Queenslanders' fair share of this fund. This is only 20 per cent of this fund. Queenslanders' fair share of this fund is 25 per cent, but did this Labor government go in to bat for our fair share from the federal government? No, they did not. That has left Queensland with 500 fewer homes than we should have.

The REIQ recommended that the fund be able to be administered not only by banks but also by mortgage brokers, and that has not happened under this bill. Further, I note that the fund is capped both by income and housing price. The expected eligibility criteria is that it will only be available to people earning less than \$90,000 per annum purchasing a home for \$700,000. The median house price on the Gold Coast is between \$850,000 and a million dollars. That is right; for us on the Gold Coast this scheme would not be available. That means that our nurses, teachers and frontline workers who are desperately trying to get into a home—who might look at this scheme and think 'wow'—are not eligible for it in the area they have grown up in, that they have lived in and that they are raising their families in.

When it comes to income caps, as it currently stands, only applicants earning less than \$90,000 will be eligible for this scheme. Mr Deputy Speaker, do you know the average salary for teachers, nurses, police and hospitality workers? It is between \$90,000 and \$100,000 and for police officers it is \$110,000, so these people are excluded from this scheme because of the caps the Labor Party government has placed on them. The REIQ has recommended that these caps be increased. The REIQ has recommended that the cap in relation to the price of housing and the cap in relation to income need to better reflect what is happening right now in our markets. They need to be increased, and I agree with the REIQ in this regard. While of course the LNP will not be opposing this bill, disappointingly for my community this scheme may not help the hardworking police, teachers, hospitality workers and frontline staff who are so desperate to get into the housing market because of these caps. I would implore the government to look at these caps and increase them to better reflect both housing prices and the average salary of our frontline workers.

Only the LNP has the right priorities for Queensland's future, and that includes securing our housing foundations. As we have seen, this state Labor government is full of announcements but zero action when it comes to solving our housing crisis. It was the LNP's policy to raise the stamp duty threshold for first home buyers, and that was absolutely rubbished by those opposite. The Premier said it was a 'thought bubble' and now, four months out from an election, we see this desperate, tired third-term Labor government adopt our policies and try to say they are new. Labor is more concerned about securing their political future than housing security. The LNP's priorities include putting Queensland back on top of the housing ladder by prioritising infrastructure partnerships with local government to unlock more land for housing, unleash the community sector, and set KPIs and deliver social housing projects on time and on budget.

Only the LNP will spend every dollar of the Housing Investment Fund on building new homes. Only the LNP will get more first home buyers into homes. Southern Gold Coasters deserve so much better than what they are getting from this tired, stale, third-term Labor government—a Labor government that are trying to convince Queenslanders that they are new. They have been here for 10

years. They have had 10 years to fix these crises but they have failed to do so. They come into this House and announce LNP policies, dressing them up as their own. The only way we are going to solve this housing crisis is if we show Labor the door in 2024.

**Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.30 pm): Housing security is one of our most urgent priorities and it is a topic that resonates deeply with people in my electorate. The Premier has been very clear with Queensland about the demand pressures that we are facing. South-East Queensland's population is likely to increase by 2.2 million by 2046, requiring 900,000 new homes to be built by then. We have a window of opportunity right now to contribute to Queensland's housing mix. If we miss that window, hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders will face the consequences.

Here is the challenge we face: Brisbane's median house price has soared to nearly \$840,000, while median unit prices have reached nearly \$500,000; the escalating costs in Queensland's construction market have pushed the price of building a new two-bedroom apartment in Brisbane to over \$1 million, making apartments that were traditionally affordable increasingly out of reach; Queensland's rental vacancy rate is alarmingly low at 0.9 per cent, leaving many older Australians who rent at risk of living in poverty during their retirement; and, home ownership is becoming unattainable for many younger Australians, forcing more individuals to rent well into their 30s and 40s.

This housing crisis is not going to be fixed by slick slogans or brochures. It will not be fixed by protests, data-harvesting petitions or political stunts. It will not be fixed if members of parliament object to housing developments in their electorates rather than engaging in the challenging but necessary work of taking constituents on the journey to understand why the suburbs they love—maybe the suburbs they have grown up in—might have to change a little to ensure that other people, including our children and our grandparents, are able to, like them, have a home.

Any responsible government is obligated to find and fund a range of diverse housing solutions to help all Queenslanders. In February this year, our new Miles Labor government announced our Homes for Queenslanders plan—a comprehensive housing plan backed by an initial and additional investment of more than \$3 billion. This is the greatest investment in housing we have seen in Queensland's history and the greatest of any state or territory in Australia.

It is our plan to ensure every Queenslander has access to safe and secure housing. It is our plan to deliver one million new homes by 2046 that will include: 53,500 new social homes; a \$160 million Renters Relief Package; a \$350 million infill fund to deliver more housing, particularly more affordable housing; and a 20 per cent funding uplift for Queensland's hardworking specialist homelessness services. This bill forms part of that plan. It supports the federal government's Help to Buy scheme, which would help 10,000 more low-income Australians to secure home ownership each year, including many older Australians who are approaching retirement.

A shared equity program, Help to Buy helps low- to middle-income earners buy new or existing homes by accessing an equity contribution from the Australian government. If buyers can contribute a two per cent deposit, they will be eligible to receive an equity contribution up to 40 per cent on the purchase price of a new home and 30 per cent for an existing home. In order for the Commonwealth Help to Buy Bill to be enacted, the states must first pass legislation. I am incredibly proud that Queensland will be the first to pass this legislation.

This bill and our Homes for Queenslanders plan have been celebrated by housing stakeholders, but not everyone agrees with our bold plan. The federal Liberal member for Dawson stated—

I don't know anyone who wants to skip hand in hand with the Australian government down the path to the first front door they have ever owned. A coalition government does not want a stake in your family home.

What an absurd statement that fails to recognise that, without government assistance, some buyers may never achieve home ownership for their family. I was disappointed to learn that the Greens member for South Brisbane has now objected to a plan to create an additional 14,000 homes in her electorate, with 20 per cent of those homes safeguarded for social and affordable housing. She was quoted by the ABC as stating—


Building these tall towers aren't going to solve the housing crisis ...

No single measure will address Queensland's housing needs, and if the Greens members continue to oppose every housing solution we put forward, as they do, and, in particular, oppose the development of housing in their own electorates then the Australian dream of home ownership is going to slip further away. The fact that this housing measure has been held up by the LNP and Greens federally is extremely troubling to me and to the residents of my community who expect more from their leaders.

On 26 October we will find ourselves at a key moment in housing policy in Queensland. Our government has developed a plan alongside stakeholders, fully budgeted and commenced. If Labor is not in government after the next election then we will fail to meet Queensland's pressing housing needs now and for generations to come. I am going to give the final words to Q Shelter, the peak body addressing housing needs and homelessness in Queensland, which said—

With the largest single investment in the state's housing and homelessness system to date, and a range of measures that address immediate and long-term issues, the Homes for Queenslanders housing plan presents a powerful once-in-a-generation opportunity for Queensland.

I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (5.35 pm): Queensland has the lowest rate of home ownership in the nation, at just 64 per cent. Under Labor, fewer Queenslanders than ever before have the chance to get into the property market. Our decrease in home ownership has happened at three times the rate of other jurisdictions across our nation.

The LNP wants to back aspirational Queenslanders to achieve the dream of home ownership. There are a lot of those aspirational Queenslanders in the community I represent on the inner northern Gold Coast, where we have even lower home ownership rates than the already abysmally low Queensland rates. In my electorate, just one in four people own their home outright, compared to 29 per cent statewide, and around 27 per cent own their home with a mortgage, compared to around 35 per cent statewide.

The Help to Buy shared equity scheme is all about making it easier for low- and middle-income homebuyers to buy a new or existing house. They will need a minimum two per cent deposit and the federal government will then provide an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent of the purchase price for a new home or up to 30 per cent for an existing dwelling.

I want to make a contribution to this debate on behalf of the aspirational young Queenslanders who are struggling to get into the property market. I want to thank our committee members—the 'honourable Jim', the member for Lockyer, and the member for Burleigh—for their excellent contribution to the committee's final report. It was my favourite 1½ pages of the whole report, so I thank the members for providing that. They put a lot of work into it and I appreciate it.

In that contribution, the Liberal National Party was advocating to make the Help to Buy scheme better meet the needs of Queenslanders. We are not just going along with what the federal Labor government are putting on the table; we are fighting for our state's fair share. Our members also asked on record some very reasonable questions about the income thresholds for participants in this scheme. These are also concerns raised by the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, who suggested particular levels that they believed the threshold should be increased to. It is disappointing to see a Labor government throwing cash around without any means testing on practically everything they can, yet when it comes to a scheme which will help thousands of Queenslanders achieve the dream of owning their own home they are silent towards their mates in Canberra.

The discussion around income thresholds is important, because the housing crisis is so bad in Queensland that even one high-income earner is struggling to get into the housing market. The housing minister regularly mentions that she is a renter. I am not going to criticise the minister for doing this because I do not have to. The minister's own assistant minister, the member for Pumicestone, shared her thoughts on members of this House who parade their credentials as renters, calling these MPs 'self-indulgent ... wealthy lifestyle renters'. The member said—

With so many people in Pumicestone and right across Queensland genuinely suffering rental stress, this poverty cosplay is deeply offensive to people in my community and other marginalised communities across Queensland. I call on those members to apologise for this offensive behaviour.


I do not often agree with the member for Pumicestone but, member, you absolutely nailed it with those comments.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Direct your comments through the chair, member.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** The member absolutely nailed it with those comments. I can imagine it is quite an awkward relationship with the housing minister, given her views on MPs who undertake this kind of, in her words, 'poverty cosplay'.

The Help to Buy scheme should be open to as many Queenslanders as possible, so it is disappointing to see federal Labor allocate one-fifth of the places in the scheme to Queenslanders when the committee heard evidence that our state is responsible for one-quarter of the nation's housing sales. If our allocation was lifted to reflect the needs of our state, it would mean an extra 2,000 Queenslanders

would be able to access the scheme over the four years it will run. It is a shame the Labor members of the committee and the Labor government have not stood up to their federal mates to get Queensland's fair share out of this program. There are details that we do not know about with this proposal, but we will not be opposing this legislation because if this scheme is done right it can contribute to easing Queensland's housing crisis. The Liberal National Party is the party of home ownership in Queensland. The only way we are going to ease the housing crisis that Labor have created is to show them the door in October '24.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.41 pm): It is always nice to come in after the 'chief minister for nimbyism' over there, who is apparently opposed to social housing and everything—

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

**Mr KELLY:** Of course, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is probably beneath me to go for those personal attacks, but the member engaged in those personal attacks. It is the sort of thing I have come to expect from the Greens who want to attack people personally. I do not care how many houses people own and I do not care what choices people make around housing. This bill is about helping some of the lowest income Queenslanders get into the housing market. I would have thought that would be something that every single person in this chamber would get behind. Sadly, the member for Bonney is probably going to get on a unity ticket with the Greens and set up the commissioner for nimbyism—the commissioner for stopping everything anywhere. That is what is going to happen, member for Bonney.

The Greens have form. I am surprised at the LNP, but the Greens have form. Just today, in the Brisbane City Council there was a vote going on about the Stones Corner precinct plan. That is a plan that is going to ultimately lead to more housing. It is a great location with a lovely park that has been redone and it has good public transport thanks to our Labor government. It is a really fantastic location crying out for density development and we have started to see some of that happening, and this plan would really speed that up. What did the Greens do? Did they vote for the plan? No, they abstained from the vote. They could not even vote against it. They could not take a position in relation to that. I should not be surprised at the Greens, but I am absolutely shocked at the LNP and their behaviour federally in not backing the Help to Buy scheme.


I met a young couple when I was out doorknocking last Saturday. I was talking to them about the fantastic changes we have made to make renting fairer for young Queenslanders. They were not really interested in talking about that, although they were pleased with what we have done. What they really wanted to talk about was how we are going to help them get into a house. I took them through some of those policies, and I have got even more after today to talk to them about. There are even more policies to help young people get into a house. When I took them through the Help to Buy scheme and explained to them that it was being held up federally by a combination of the LNP and Greens, they were absolutely shocked and disgusted. They thought it was disgraceful that a program that will help some of the lowest paid people in our state to achieve that dream of becoming a home owner was being held up.

This program will also take demand out of the rental property market. If you want to stand around and say there is a housing crisis and that rents are going up, wouldn't you be trying to look at every single thing you could do from an economic perspective to put downward pressure on rents. One of the best things you could do is either get supply into the market or take demand out of the market. This bill will take demand out of the market. It is an excellent bill in that respect, so why would people who claim they are so committed to renters do that?

It is probably the same reason they are opposing the plans in Woolloongabba that will lead to more social and affordable housing as well as more housing stock overall. Instead of saying, 'Yes, that's a great proposal'—as I have done in Stones Corner, where I have looked at the plans and said, 'Yes, we need more housing and this is a good place to do it. This has got the transport links and the amenities. People are crying out for it so let's get this done'—their response has been, 'No, we're going to stop that from going forward.'

This Help to Buy scheme is going to help young people particularly who want to get into the housing market. I also note it is going to help people with disabilities and older women, which I think is fantastic. By helping those people into the housing market, they will develop equity in those properties over time and that will give them economic agency and independence. That can only mean good things for those people.

This is an example of how at every level the Labor Party is committed to ensuring that people can buy their first home. When you buy that first home and you work your way through paying your bills, maintaining that property and getting ahead on your mortgage payments if you can, you suddenly gain economic independence and you are empowered, and that is what the Labor Party is all about. It is about empowering people. With those few words, I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.45 pm): I rise to make a contribution on this bill. I have heard members on both sides of the House speak about the implications of the housing crisis in their electorates. I have heard government members speak about what they perceive themselves to be doing about it, and I have heard the LNP opposition make a very cogent case for how the government have failed in their stated objective of getting more Queenslanders into homes.

This bill is worth supporting and that is why the LNP opposition will be doing that. If it is run well, it does offer the prospect of getting low-income people and perhaps middle-income people—although more likely low-income people—into their own home, and that is a worthy objective. I think the references that have been made to the federal opposition not agreeing to a blank bill or a blank cheque—not agreeing to support something without the detail behind it—are entirely correct and proper. When you consider that the state government here has a lamentable record of actually delivering when money is appropriated for housing, I can hardly blame them.

I heard the member for Everton speak earlier. He is obviously very across this and he is very good at pointing out where Labor has failed. I asked him if I could have some of the notes he spoke from. He has an excellent list from which, in the matter of a minute or so, you can lay down an appalling catalogue of failure on the part of this particular Labor government.

We heard about the Griffith University debacle where \$2 million was spent with absolutely nothing to show for it. There were supposed to be 90 parcels of land made available by the Catholic Church, and how many of those have now been converted with the state government into somewhere someone can live? None. I introduced Killarney Memorial Aged Care to the department, and I thank the minister at the time for allowing that. Killarney Memorial Aged Care had a very good proposal for low-cost housing for the people of Killarney. They had the designs ready to go—

**Mr Stevens:** They're not in the union.

**Mr LISTER:** I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Mermaid Beach. They are not in the union. I suppose you have to be in the club to expect something from this government. They had a mature and well-developed proposal to develop low-cost housing for people in Killarney. They needed a partnership with the state government. Those negotiations went nowhere. There was just no appetite or interest at all from the government.

**Mr Power** interjected.

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

**Mr LISTER:** There is an example where that failure to engage with the community sector has actually hurt people in my electorate. The \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund—that is the figure which was arrived at after the second Housing Summit, which I have heard members on all sides discuss in the course of this debate—was supposed to provide 5,600 affordable homes. We have heard that none have appeared. I heard some—

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr LISTER:** Yes, the tooth fairy. I have heard some hairsplitting by members opposite who say, 'No, there are 600 people who now have a roof over their head.' You do not house net more people by simply purchasing a property and converting it into housing for government purposes; you make no dent whatsoever in the housing crisis by doing that. We had the example of members of the Palaszczuk government being at the QBuild apprenticeship centre at Eagle Farm—I remember seeing fanfare and lots of social media clips of the luminaries of cabinet, most of whom are still the luminaries of cabinet—and talking about these modular homes, granny flats and so forth. The member for Everton made the point that only two of them have been delivered when 80 were supposed to have been delivered last financial year.

**Mr Stevens:** Only two grannies.

**Mr LISTER:** Only two grannies. I think grannies are not the only ones who are smarting over that, because the taxpayer is obviously paying a lot of money for that sort of mucking around. Those funds should be going to creating properties for people to live in. I hope that this scheme will help people in



my electorate of Southern Downs have access to the possibility of getting their own home. That is a great thing.

**Mr Stevens:** If they can get water from the Emu Swamp Dam.

**Mr LISTER:** I take that interjection from my old friend the member for Mermaid Beach. I know that Emu Swamp Dam is a topic that keeps many of us awake at night. Yes, if we are to have more houses we will need water for those houses, particularly on the Granite Belt, so I would urge the government, as part of its elaborate Housing Strategy, to prioritise Emu Swamp Dam as well.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly):** Member, I have given you a lot of latitude, but that is going just a little too far.

**Mr LISTER:** Fair call, Mr Deputy Speaker. In my electorate of Southern Downs a shortage of housing has great impacts, not just the moral and social impacts. All of us have had somebody come to us and say, 'Hey, I've been renting a house for 15 years and it has been sold'—or the owner wants to redevelop or subdivide or something like that—and I have nowhere to go. I can't afford anywhere else.' We have all, as MPs, spoken to constituents like that. That is one side of it. The other side of it is government policy. In Warwick in my electorate of Southern Downs you cannot rent a house for love nor money, and that is largely because of the demand for housing that has sprung from the MacIntyre Wind Farm.

In all sorts of areas we are finding that the economy is being distorted by spending on things that are too expensive and on the wrong things, and that kind of thing is putting people out of homes. Those people who do not have a home now and have no prospect of getting into social housing are not necessarily going to benefit from this particular bill.


Lastly, it impacts the delivery of services in electorates like mine. It can be hard enough to get a teacher, a police officer, a nurse or an ambo to a posting in some of the farther west parts of my electorate—Goondiwindi, Talwood, Millmerran, Cecil Plains. I have had principals of schools tell me that the—

**Mr Power:** Are you going to mention that in the budget there are funds put aside for housing for teachers in rural areas?

**Mr LISTER:** I take the interjection from the member for Logan. He talked about housing for teachers in rural areas. I have studied the budget. In the time I have had to look at it, I have not identified any in my electorate, but hope springs eternal. If you are the principal of a school and you have managed to get a fine teacher recruited, the system has made them available and they want to come to your school—you might be a teaching principal and you have only one other teacher to help you in the running of a school with 10 or 20 students—if that teacher says, 'I'm sorry, I would really love to take that posting up—it is a dream posting—but I can't find anywhere to live,' that means that school goes without a teacher. It is the same for the local police station, the local ambulance station, the hospital and so forth. These have real impacts in my electorate of Southern Downs. We need to have an increase in the supply of houses rather than just a scheme which enables people to access the pathway to home ownership. This is not a concept that is lost on any of us in this House, as I say, but there has been an enormous number of announcements—a glittering expose of social media talking about—

**Mr Stevens:** A plethora.

**Mr LISTER:** A plethora of social media talking about announcement after announcement, investment after investment, dollars after dollars, but nothing has been built. I say to the government: stop talking and start building.

 **Ms McMILLAN (Mansfield—ALP) (5.54 pm):** I rise to make a contribution to the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024. Queenslanders, like many people around the world, face increasing housing costs in a tight housing market. Queensland's housing market is under pressure to meet the needs of a rapidly growing and aging population. Queensland has also experienced a record number of people migrating from interstate. My electorate of Mansfield is not immune. A record number of young families are moving to my electorate to access outstanding schools and the quality education they provide. The schools in Mansfield are the pride of our community, and I am honoured to be leading this community given my extensive experience in school leadership over 15 years. It is harder for young families and young people and those on low incomes to achieve the dream of owning their own home, including in my electorate. Everyone deserves a safe and secure home, and the Miles Labor

government is implementing its ambitious Homes for Queenslanders plan to support all Queenslanders to achieve this goal.


A key action in the Homes for Queenslanders plan is to work with the Australian government to progress enabling legislation to get the Commonwealth Help to Buy scheme up and running as fast as possible. There is one priority of this bill: to help low- and middle-income earners to buy a home. The bill will provide the constitutional basis for the Commonwealth Help to Buy scheme to run nationally. The Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024 will put eligible Queenslanders in the front seat to access this scheme as soon as it becomes operational.

Help to Buy is a shared equity scheme. It means the government will chip in and share the risk at the beginning of a loan. It will contribute up to 40 per cent of new homes and 30 per cent of existing homes. Those accessing the scheme would only need to have a two per cent deposit, which means buyers could potentially be in a home in months, not years.

On 7 June 2024, the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee tabled its report on the bill and made two recommendations: that the bill be passed and that the Queensland government continue to liaise with the Australian government on the parameters of the Help to Buy scheme to ensure the volume of participants and places for targeted groups, purchase price caps, participant income levels and buy-out provisions are appropriate for Queensland. The government accepted both of these recommendations.

Sadly, not everyone agrees with the content of this bill. Former Liberal senator Amanda Stoker says that Labor's Help to Buy scheme is 'really dangerous'. Queensland has come to expect nothing less of the LNP after the provision of social homes went backwards under their watch from 2012 to 2015. The LNP government sent social housing back by 428 homes. The LNP sacked over 1,600 QBuild workers. That is 1,600 people who could have been building homes and supporting disaster recovery, their employment terminated by the LNP.

The Miles Labor government believes that every person deserves access to a safe and secure residence that they can call home. In this current housing context, all levels of government must activate every lever available to them to ensure access to safe and affordable housing for all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.58 pm): Anyone saving for a home knows that every dollar counts. I still remember exactly where I was when I received the call that my offer on a home had been accepted, and as house prices—

**Mr McDonald** interjected.

**Ms PUGH:** Thank you. I take that interjection; it is a proud feeling for any person. As house prices increase, it is getting harder to save a deposit and many young people feel like they will never get into the market. While young people like my little sister, Izzy, and her fiancé, Mal, save for their first home, they are also paying rent which, as we all know, makes it even harder to save that 20 per cent deposit. If you do not have a 20 per cent deposit, most of the time you will need lender's mortgage insurance, LMI, which is more money on your home loan and takes even longer to pay off. Sadly, this is usually paid by people who do not have access to what has colloquially become known as the 'bank of mum and dad'. A recent article in the *Conversation*, an online newspaper publication, noted that if the bank of mum and dad were, in fact, a real financial institution it would be somewhere between the fifth and ninth largest mortgage lender in the country. If you do not have parents who can help you, you are locked out of accessing this lender, and for some it is significantly affecting their chance to own a home.


The Miles government does not think that home ownership should just be for people with access to the bank of mum and dad. I should declare that my dad and I have been helping Isabella and Malcolm look for a home on the outskirts of Brisbane in the greater western suburbs and Ipswich region and every time we go to a house with them, we see a lot of young couples looking at the same house. There are tens of dozens of families coming through these properties. Some of them have children, some do not, but all of them have one thing in common—they just want to achieve what most of their parents were able to achieve at a similar age: a home of their own. We know that Queensland is experiencing record levels of interstate migration. That is part of the reason Queenslanders especially will benefit from the Help to Buy scheme that has been promised by the federal government.

The Help to Buy scheme, as we have heard from previous speakers, is a shared equity scheme. This means that the government will chip in and share the risk at the beginning of the loan when, for most people, repayments will be at their highest as they have the highest principal to pay down as they have a loan for a large part of the purchase price. For some young families who took out loans when

interest rates were at record lows, repayments have surged. We know that those families are struggling. We also know that over the life of the loan as those families do pay down that debt, those repayments eventually decline. Families do want the safety and security of owning their own home because it means one day they will pay that debt down and they will own that asset. That is why home ownership is a dream that so many of us hold onto.

The Help to Buy scheme contributes up to 40 per cent for new homes and 30 per cent for existing homes. It is a shared equity scheme and the government shares that risk at the beginning of the loan. Those accessing the scheme would only need to have a two per cent deposit, which means that buyers could potentially access and purchase a home in months, not years. Shared equity schemes like Help to Buy are not new, they do exist in overseas countries. In the UK there is a similar scheme that has helped hundreds of thousands of people into home ownership. We want to make sure that all Queenslanders have the same opportunity at home ownership. It is a dream that many people share and something which is passed down from generation to generation. It is something that I want for everybody in my family and for my children as well. For that reason, I commend the bill to the House.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I remind the House that it is after 6.00 pm so the warning list has been reset. I do not want to refill it again any time soon. I call the member for Nicklin.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (6.03 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Homes for Queenslanders plan. In February this year we announced this nation-leading plan. The plan works across the entire housing system and it is backed in by a budget commitment of \$3.1 billion. This is the largest investment in housing in Queensland's history. Homes for Queenslanders commits to delivering one million new homes by 2046, including more than 50,000 new social homes, a \$160 million renter's relief package and a \$350 million infill fund to deliver more housing in underutilised areas.

One of the central pillars of Homes for Queenslanders is helping first home owners into the market. Today, we are delivering on that core commitment by legislating for the Help to Buy scheme. For many Queenslanders, especially young people, home ownership feels like a dream that is slowly drifting further out of reach. For too long the housing crisis has been something we have had to tackle alone as a state government, with little more than empty announcements during a decade of LNP federal government. Now the adults are back in charge federally, we can finally get on with the job of working and collaborating between different levels of government to help the next generation of Queenslanders with the great Australian dream of home ownership.

In order for the Commonwealth Help to Buy Bill to be enacted a state must first pass referral legislation, and Queensland will be the first to do so. The fact that we are the very first state to sign onto the Help to Buy scheme means that Queenslanders will be able to access places in the scheme as soon as it becomes operational. The bill refers legislative power to the Commonwealth parliament for the purpose of Help to Buy and provides the constitutional basis for the scheme to operate in Queensland. The bill also includes a provision to allow a state to declare a displacement provision. This simply means that where the Commonwealth act is inconsistent with the government's bill it will not override the provisions of our bill.

This bill will help to get Queenslanders back on track towards the Australian dream of home ownership. After a whole generation has grown up being told they may never be able to buy their own home, it is a no-brainer—or at least it should be—that we need to get people into houses. We are busy pulling every lever possible to get Queenslanders into homes. The other mob and the Greens are looking for every excuse not to do so. Now that we are raising the stamp duty threshold—about the only commitment we have heard that resembles a policy—there should be no justifiable reasons left to oppose this bill. I am very happy to support all of our housing commitments and return to an Australia where you can have hope and aspiration. I look forward to the opposition and the Greens voting with us on this bill. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (6.06 pm): I, too, rise in support of the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill, the Queensland legislation that is necessary to enable the federal government's Help to Buy scheme. Our Miles Labor government believes that home ownership should not be restricted to those who can access the bank of mum and dad. So many people in Pumicestone have told me they would love the chance to buy their first home through the Help to Buy scheme. With house prices still rising, saving for a deposit is daunting and first home buyers tell us every day they feel their dream of owning a home is slipping further away.

Shared equity schemes like Help to Buy are not new. In the UK a similar initiative has helped over 350,000 people achieve home ownership, but, time and time again, the LNP has talked down

shared equity schemes like Help to Buy. Amanda Stoker, the LNP's hand-picked candidate for Oodgeroo, called Labor's Help to Buy scheme 'really dangerous'. Andrew Willcox, the member for Dawson, declared 'a coalition government does not want a stake in your family home'.


The LNP are deeply divided on this issue. You could feel their distaste in the contribution from the LNP's housing spokesperson. As usual, the member for Everton offered nothing but criticism: criticism of the federal Help to Buy scheme, criticism of our Miles Labor government's Homes for Queenslanders plan and especially the Housing Investment Fund. I enjoyed the irony of the member for Everton criticising any other party for a lack of detail—this is coming from the man whose leader backed our entire budget sight unseen.

Then, there was the irony of the member for Everton criticising the federal government for delays in the scheme when it is his federal LNP leader, Peter Dutton, and his mates the Greens who are working together to block and delay it. All this is coming from a man who describes his only housing policy as 'unleashing the community housing sector'. This is code for selling off social and government housing. Will the LNP leader call on Peter Dutton to support the Help to Buy scheme and bring home ownership in reach for more Queenslanders? He should, but we know he will not because he is too scared of popping his head above the parapet. The LNP leader is presenting the tiniest of targets on housing, as he does on every other issue.


The LNP and the Greens love to talk down our groundbreaking Homes for Queenslanders plan. We have all heard the LNP bleating about the Housing Investment Fund, completely ignoring the more than 600 Queenslanders who are already living in homes delivered by the HIF. The LNP say that they will limit the HIF to funding only new construction projects. That means they are rejecting our measures to buy affordable homes before they come off the NRAS, ended by the federal LNP, saving tenants being kicked out on their ear. That means the LNP are rejecting our work purchasing and repurposing unused aged-care centres and hotels and refurbishing them to provide secure homes for marginalised and vulnerable people, and they are rejecting our work repurposing homes slated for demolition due to large infrastructure projects and moving them to sites where they can be let as affordable housing.

The LNP never acknowledged that by the end of this financial year under the Housing Investment Fund almost 2,000 more homes would be contracted and ready for construction to begin. They blather on about wanting more housing, along with the Greens, and then oppose our Homes for Queenslanders plan and oppose new housing developments in their own communities. We heard that just last week the member for South Brisbane protested against the development of 14,000 new homes in her community, some of them ideally positioned on top of a train station. Then, of course, the member for Bonney is on the record trying to block new builds in his community, showing himself off as a true blue-ribbon NIMBY.

My message to the Greens and the LNP is clear: stop kowtowing to the anti-housing coalition of chaos in Canberra and call on your federal colleagues to pass the Help to Buy scheme that will help low- and middle-income Queenslanders buy their first home. I commend the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.10 pm): I rise to speak to the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024. The bill's objective is to facilitate the effective operation of the Australian government's Help to Buy scheme in Queensland. The scheme will be open to 10,000 eligible Australians annually and is expected to run for four years. Homebuyers will need a minimum two per cent deposit, with an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent of the purchase price for a new home and up to 30 per cent for an existing home. We are going to be the first state in the country to legislate the Help to Buy scheme. It is important that the LNP stops putting up barriers at every turn. Help to Buy will open the door to home ownership for thousands of Queenslanders later this year. For the program to happen, it will need to be passed at both state and federal levels.


At this point I would like to talk about the hypocrisy and duplicity of the Greens party, which only has catchphrase solutions to complex problems. The Greens say they want more effective, affordable housing and then oppose efforts to deliver it. Every Greens policy proposal is a policy that will never be implemented. Their currency of trade is to have their proposal rejected, knowing very well that their policies are unachievable. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (6.12 pm): I rise to support this Help to Buy bill that will help first home owners to get into the market. It is a shame to see throughout this debate the LNP and the Greens combine to oppose easy access to home ownership. I do not understand why they are opposing what

this bill proposes, which is cooperation between different levels of government. When it comes to housing issues that we face as a community, surely that is a good thing.

As the previous speaker, the member for Toohey, spoke about, there are protocols when it comes to different states taking the first step. I am proud that, if this bill passes, Queensland will be the first state to enshrine this scheme in legislation, in partnership with the federal government. Over the years we have come in here and debated—and I mean no offence to many transport ministers—heavy transport motor vehicle bill No. 17, or whatever it might be. We have done that each and every year because we are the host state of what is a COAG agreed legislative provision. Why on earth are those opposite opposing such an agreement when it comes to something as important as housing?

I am proud that we are the first state to do this. I am proud that we are making access for first home owners easier. People in my electorate need that. I do not want people, even from my generation, who grew up in Stafford to have to choose between renting a unit in Nundah or moving to North Lakes. I want people to have an opportunity to live and breathe where they grew up. My wife and I only own our home because we each individually owned townhouses in the area, in the inner north. It is public knowledge that we are a mixed family. We were each single parents with kids and combined our townhouses into what is now our family house. There are very different ways that people can get into the housing market, whether as renters or as homebuyers, and this bill supports people to do that. I commend it to the House.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (6.15 pm), in reply: I thank members for their contribution to the debate. There is no clearer example of how unfit and unprepared the LNP is for government than the debate on this bill. From the frankly bizarre contribution from the member for Burleigh, who effectively suggested that unless you are a 63-year-old white male you do not have the experience to be in this House, through to the unhinged rants from the member for Everton, who in one breath called us socialists and then in the next breath said they are going to support the bill—I thank those opposite, comrades—it is clear that they have not learned a single thing since their slash-and-burn approach to housing policy in this state. The member for Everton has the audacity to come into this House and talk about social and affordable housing in this state when he was the housing minister who sent social housing backwards by 428 homes. That is particularly—

**Mr Hart:** More rubbish!

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the member's interjection. It is not rubbish; it is factual. It is especially alarming when we think about the fact that the Leader of the Opposition is keen to appoint the member for Everton to have another crack at it.

I would now like to address some of the specific matters raised by members during the debate. We heard a lot from those opposite about how the problem with the Help to Buy scheme, and why the LNP in Canberra opposed it, is allegedly because of the lack of detail. Frankly, that is fundamentally untrue because the Queensland LNP MPs in Canberra made it clear that they have a basic ideological problem with the shared equity scheme. Honourable members do not need to take my word for it; they can take the word of the member for Bowman, who said—

This housing scheme, unfortunately, will not offer homeownership but rather home co-ownership with the government.

...

We've got serious concerns about the shared-equity model. ... Shared-equity schemes are not the solution to help Australians into their own homes.

Then there was the member for Herbert, who said—

This bill should be scrapped, and the Albanese Labor government needs to set up policies that get out of your way, not in your way.

...

The coalition wants a smaller government. ... They don't want to force people to go into partnership with the government to buy their home.

Then there was the member for Dawson, who said—

I don't know anyone who wants to skip hand in hand with the Australian government down the path to the first front door that they have ever owned.

...

A coalition government does not want a stake in your family home.

Those are the words of the LNP.

As I highlighted in my second reading speech, the Leader of the Opposition's hand-picked candidate for Oodgeroo called the Help to Buy scheme 'really dangerous'. Let's be honest: this is not about the detail; it is about the policy. The LNP have been clear that they do not support shared equity schemes, and it is typical of this opposition not being up-front about what they actually think. They are focused on a tiny target, not actually being up-front with the people of Queensland.

We also heard the members for Burleigh and Gympie, among others, indicate that the LNP does not think those earning under \$90,000 should have access to this scheme. Just to be clear—

**Mr Hart:** Where did I say that exactly? Actually, I'll be writing to the Speaker about that.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the member's interjection.

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

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the member for Burleigh's interjection and I recommend that he go back and look at what he said on the record.

**Mr Hart:** I recommend you go back and have a look at—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, cease your interjections. They will come through the chair.

**Ms SCANLON:** I am happy to stand up on my record compared to the member for Burleigh's any day of the week. This is a scheme entirely designed for low- and middle-income earners. An early career teacher or nurse or police officer would be excluded from this scheme in the view of some of those opposite.

There was a series of reflections about the cost of housing, and it is one thing I will agree on: we need more affordable housing in this country and the best way to drive down prices to ensure that we have affordable housing is to build more homes. In particular, the member for Burleigh indicated the significant cost of housing in his electorate. It is unfortunate, though, that the member for Burleigh and other Gold Coast colleagues have then been opposed to building more houses in their own electorates. In one breath they say, 'We need more supply,' and then when there is supply proposed in their own backyard they say, 'No, not here.'

This bill is just one of many measures as part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan. What I note with interest is that often when bills come into this House relating to housing all I hear from members of the opposition is references to the REIQ. They do not seem to ever want to talk about Tenants Queensland or any of the other organisations in the housing sector. They do not want to talk about the fact that the Property Council backed in our housing plan. They do not want to talk about the fact that the Queensland Council of Social Service described our plan as nation leading. They do not want to talk about any of those things because we know they think that our plan is too much—and that is what they have said—and that is code for cuts. As I said, this is one of many measures. We also have our first home owner's grant. We have doubled that to \$30,000 for new homes. It is the most generous in the country, and today the Treasurer confirmed that we are also lifting the stamp duty threshold to help more young Queenslanders get into the market.

We also have our Housing Investment Fund which members of the LNP have raised a number of times today, and I want to be really clear: the Housing Investment Fund is housing hundreds and hundreds of Queenslanders through the purchase of National Rental Affordability Scheme homes. We would not have had to buy those homes to keep them affordable if the LNP in Canberra had not decided to end that scheme.

**Mr Hart:** It was a 10-year program. Tell the truth!

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the member for Burleigh's interjection. It was a time limited program and the LNP decided to not continue it, so I make the point that because it had decided not to continue it those people would have been subject to the private market—not affordable housing rates—unless we had stepped in, and those opposite are opposing that. If they do not support us using the Housing Investment Fund to buy National Rental Affordability Scheme homes, they do not support those homes being affordable. We are doing that because we think it is the right thing to do, but at the same time we are also building more homes. We have hundreds of homes under construction right now. In fact, we

have nearly a thousand homes under construction right now both through the Housing Investment Fund and a whole range of other funds that the LNP conveniently does not want to talk about because it does not suit its political narrative.

Just last week—and I mention this because I hear the member for Everton frequently talk about how those opposite are going to unleash the community housing sector despite the fact that we are doing a whole range of things to support the community housing sector and there has never been more money available under our government—the Brisbane Housing Co. topped out on one of its HIF projects in Chermiside, and there are hundreds of homes under construction. That demonstrates that we have homes under construction under the Housing Investment Fund. Every time those opposite criticise the Housing Investment Fund and the timeframes, they are actually criticising community housing providers. That is what they are doing. As I said, we are building social homes through a number of our funds. I know that is an unfamiliar concept to the member for Everton because he saw social housing in this state go backwards by 428 homes and took the extraordinary step—

**Ms Enoch** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:**—I take the member's interjection—to cut the social housing construction program by 90 per cent. That is their record. I note that the LNP in Canberra has also attempted to block the Housing Australia Future Fund, so I find it very interesting that those opposite talk about the HIF but stay silent on the Housing Australia Future Fund. I look forward to seeing their comments in support of some of those projects that are coming out that are no thanks to their colleagues in Canberra, who spent months and months blocking that bill from going through the parliament and voted against it when it came to the Senate.

On the issues raised around the operation of the scheme, operational details are a matter for the Australian government and will be established in the program directions made under the Commonwealth legislation, including the eligibility criteria such as income thresholds, property price caps and what happens if a scheme participant's circumstances change. The Miles government has been advocating strongly to the Australian government to ensure that this scheme helps as many Queenslanders as possible. What I find hypocritical is the LNP having the audacity to lecture me about advocating to the federal government, which I do, and I raise those issues publicly because I will stand up for Queensland any day of the week. Where on earth were those brave soldiers when the LNP was in government over the last 10 years when it discontinued the National Rental Affordability Scheme, when the coalition axed the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, when it voted against the Housing Australia Future Fund? Those opposite were silent—silent—and then they have the audacity to come in here and tell me that I need to advocate to the federal government when that is exactly what we are doing.

The Miles government understands that owning a home is still a vital part of the Australian dream, but for many aspiring home owners, particularly low- and middle-income Australians, it has become increasingly difficult. That is why we are committed to using every tool at our disposal to make sure that that great Australian dream of home ownership remains in reach for all Queenslanders. This scheme will work alongside our other initiatives and programs to help more Queenslanders into safe and secure housing, and supporting the rollout and delivery of the Commonwealth Help to Buy scheme is a crucial step towards our goal of ensuring every Queenslanders has a place to call home. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (6.26 pm): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (6.27 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 20 March (see p. 745).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (6.27 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

When this bill was introduced on 20 March, the Queensland statistician's population counter estimated our population at around 5.56 million. In just under three months there are now around 38,000 more Queenslanders, with the same population count estimating a population closer to 5.6 million. That is around the population of Gladstone being added to our state since mid-March. This continued growth is evidence that Queensland is where people want to be. It also presents challenges, including the pressure it places on housing supply and affordability. Responding to those challenges falls to all tiers of government and across all parts of the housing sector. This bill will enhance the ability of Queensland's land use planning and property development agency Economic Development Queensland, EDQ, to work across government and with industry to increase the supply of diverse and affordable housing.

Before turning to the details, I want to acknowledge the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, ably led by the member for Logan, for its thorough consideration of this bill and for its report tabled on 10 May 2024. I also thank all those who made submissions, those who appeared as witnesses and served as departmental officers. The committee made just one recommendation without reservation—that the bill be passed. I welcome the bipartisan outcome from the committee.

When I introduced this bill into the House in March, I said that the bill would put EDQ in a better position to facilitate and deliver more homes for Queenslanders faster. To achieve this, it is important that EDQ's role and functions are clear, especially in priority development areas, PDAs. PDAs and their associated development schemes regulate the supply of diverse social and affordable housing within them. Therefore, it is imperative that upon PDA declaration the full benefit of EDQ's expanded remit can be achieved and there is clarity around how the area will transition from local government to the PDA planning framework.

Earlier today, an amendment for consideration in detail was circulated relating to transition arrangements contained in the Economic Development Act that establish how development applications and approvals under the Planning Act 2016 will operate once a PDA is declared. I will move to amend sections 44 and 45 and introduce sections 246, 247 and 248 to the Economic Development Act to provide local government and industry with certainty about how current applications and approvals that have already been made or decided under the Planning Act apply where a PDA has been declared. After targeted consultation with relevant councils, it became clear that clarity was required in the act to avoid confusion for developers and local governments where a developer seeks to make changes to an existing Planning Act approval after the PDA is declared. These amendments really are about clarifying that.

Development applications under the Planning Act made before declaration of a PDA will continue to be assessed under the Planning Act. The amendment clarifies that any change, currency extension



or cancellation application currently lodged with council under the Planning Act will be valid and continue to be assessed under the local government planning scheme. Existing approvals under the Planning Act will also continue once a PDA has been declared. However, from the date the act commences, only minor change applications and cancellation applications to existing development approvals will be assessed under the Planning Act once a PDA is declared and currency extension applications will not be considered. This means that, once a PDA is declared, a proposal for a major change to an existing development approval granted under the Planning Act will be assessed as a new application under the Economic Development Act. I will also move consequential amendments to clauses 32, 39 and 61 of the bill to ensure consistency throughout the act as a result of these amendments. These amendments are consistent with the purpose of the bill, which is to provide operational refinements to existing powers for better clarity for industry and stakeholders.

I now move to key elements of the bill discussed at committee. This bill will support an increase in the supply of quality social and affordable housing where it is needed across the state by: amending the main purpose of the act to specifically include the provisions of diverse housing, including social housing and affordable housing, while acknowledging the role of EDQ in delivering commercial and industrial land to market; providing for the ability to condition the provision of social and affordable housing within a PDA or to accept payment of a monetary contribution in lieu of social housing and/or affordable housing; and enabling EDQ to enter into agreements with third parties, such as community housing providers, to deliver social and affordable housing projects. This bill also introduces a place renewal framework to enable a place renewal area to be declared in key areas within PDAs.

Finally, to ensure EDQ is well positioned to continue to deliver on the Miles government's priorities, this bill: removes EDQ from within a government department but retains its accountability to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland; introduces a new skills-based board to provide EDQ with greater access to industry expertise and strategic guidance; expands the minister's existing directions powers to include distributor-retailers and the ability to request the transfer of infrastructure charges collected within a PDA after a PDA declaration; gives the Minister for Economic Development Queensland acquisition powers for the delivery of critical infrastructure within PDAs and within a declared place renewal area where there is a barrier to progressing outcomes; enables EDQ to recover costs for the services it provides, supporting EDQ's ongoing financial sustainability as a self-funding statutory body; provides for EDQ to undertake investment activities such as owning property assets to facilitate economic development and development for community purposes; and ensures the Economic Development Act reflects the government's commitment to valuing, protecting and promoting First Nations knowledge, tradition and culture and ecological sustainability.

EDQ already sets targets for social and affordable housing within PDAs, but these amendments provide the ability for EDQ to impose conditions as part of the development approval. They also improve government's ability to plan the location and require delivery of social and affordable housing within PDAs while giving EDQ and industry more flexibility for how those obligations are met. Requirements for each PDA will be tailored based on need and location, with EDQ to undertake financial analysis to understand the implications of imposing conditions.

These provisions will not only support the delivery of quality and appropriately located social and affordable housing within PDAs but also provide flexibility to industry on how they will meet those conditions. I think it is really important that that flexibility is built in. This includes supplying the required social or affordable housing dwellings, providing payment of a monetary contribution in lieu of the housing or entering into a housing agreement with EDQ to adopt an alternative pathway for delivery. The payment of any monetary contribution in lieu would be used to provide social and affordable housing elsewhere in the same local government area. This could include transferring the funds to the department of housing for a capital works project, working with a developer to deliver an alternative private or community housing project or EDQ undertaking a housing project itself.

The final pathway to meeting a housing condition is a housing agreement. This concept is a voluntary agreement that a developer could enter into with EDQ if they had an alternative way to deliver their social and affordable housing obligations rather than delivering the conditioned housing themselves or providing a monetary contribution to EDQ, as I have outlined, thus providing even more flexibility.

EDQ's criteria for what qualifies as affordable housing will be provided through an amendment to the Economic Development Regulation. Through the committee process, stakeholders asked EDQ to engage them while preparing this criteria and consultation is underway.

I want to clarify that this bill or the proposed regulation will not immediately change social and affordable housing arrangements within existing PDAs. Any proposed changes to those arrangements would need to be through amendments to existing development schemes that are subject to the usual public notification.

This bill also provides for a place renewal area to be declared within a priority development area. Amendments to the introduction of place renewal areas are important because there are large-scale housing and/or infrastructure projects in some of our PDAs that need stronger coordination between government and the private sector. This is about EDQ working across industry and government to solve challenges within a PDA and deliver increased value and a better place-based outcome for the precinct—for example, attracting and retaining business and investment, consolidating land parcels and accelerating development, and enhancing public spaces.

The declaration of a place renewal area and commencement of the framework would not replace or duplicate the statutory planning processes under a PDA or the applicable planning instrument. The development scheme or interim land use plan would continue to regulate land use matters within a declared area, with the place renewal area complementing the existing planning instrument by addressing coordination matters. Development application assessment would also not be delayed as the statutory planning process continues to apply regardless of whether there is a place renewal area declared within a PDA. A place renewal area also does not replace or disrupt existing commercial agreements.

To support housing, this bill also allows the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to compulsorily acquire land. As outlined in my introductory speech, this ability is intended to be used only as a last resort. The bill provides limited circumstances in which the acquisition provisions can be used. The first is to provide infrastructure for the benefit of a PDA. This enables the MEDQ to deliver critical infrastructure, and the provisions are similar to powers currently held by local governments and utility providers.

The second circumstance is to give effect to a place renewal framework within a place renewal area. The bill provides safeguards to ensure that land acquisition powers are used appropriately and as a last resort. The minister must be satisfied that acquiring the land is in the public interest, and any acquisition of land must align with the main purpose of the Economic Development Act. Further, the process for acquiring the land in this bill is consistent with established processes under the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, ensuring fair compensation to landowners.

Finally, to ensure the provision remains a reserve power, section 169 of the Economic Development Act will be amended so that the MEDQ cannot delegate its land acquisition powers. This is a power of last resort, and the intention will always be to try and reach agreement with a landowner via negotiation first.

I now move on to amendments relating to operational refinements to the functions and powers of the Economic Development Act. This bill would enable EDQ to direct a local government or distributor-retailer to transfer infrastructure charges collected within a PDA after a PDA declaration. During the committee process stakeholders supported the transition from a local government planning and distributor-retailer regime to a PDA regime, but there were concerns raised regarding the financial impact this could have on entities that had allocated the funds they expected to collect within the PDA to unrelated projects located elsewhere in an LGA or network.

This amendment aims to ensure that, where an area is transitioning from the local government planning framework to a PDA, the infrastructure charges collected in the area are allocated to infrastructure projects that service the new PDA. There are several safeguards included in this bill to protect the financial sustainability of local governments and distributor-retailers in relation to this new provision such as the limited scope of this power as outlined at proposed sections 117C and 117E.

Another safeguard is the ability to direct the relevant local government or distributor-retailer to provide information related to the infrastructure charges. This will provide EDQ with the opportunity to review all relevant information before a direction is issued about infrastructure charges. For example, if a local government or distributor-retailer is relying on the infrastructure charges to pay off infrastructure already delivered in the area, or proposed to be delivered in the area, a decision can be made that the charges would remain with them. As these provisions target development approvals transitioning from a local government planning regime into a PDA, it is expected that there will be a minimal number of development applications to which the new provisions will apply.


Another proposed operational amendment is to sections 127 and 128 of the act. Current ministerial directions powers related to the provision and maintenance of infrastructure within a PDA

which now apply to government entities and local government will also apply to distributor-retailers. A ministerial direction is used as a last resort when matters cannot be resolved by negotiation. In recognition of the complexity of these matters, the bill also introduces another step before a ministerial direction is issued that gives a directed entity the opportunity to respond to a potential direction and raise any concerns before the minister decides whether to issue the direction. This establishes a process to resolve any concerns and to consider any possible financial impacts a ministerial direction may have.

A further amendment to section 128 is included to act as a circuit breaker in the rare circumstances where there may be inconsistencies between a PDA development approval issued by EDQ and a water approval issued by a distributor-retailer. As PDA development approvals require water and sewer infrastructure to be designed and constructed in accordance with the SEQ Water Supply and Sewerage Design and Construction Code, which are the same standards used by distributor-retailers, EDQ will ensure its approvals meet appropriate safety standards. EDQ will work with distributor-retailers to prepare a document such as a guideline which will outline how the process will work.

In closing, this bill provides new avenues for the delivery of social and affordable housing and ensures EDQ is in the best position possible to facilitate this delivery. Through these amendments, EDQ forecasts over the next five years that it will deliver an additional 1,300 homes, increasing the forecast to 3,700 homes for Queenslanders, and approve a further 15,000 homes in PDAs—double what is forecast without these changes—facilitating a total of around 29,000 homes for Queenslanders.

Through our Homes for Queenslanders policy, the Miles government has made it clear that every Queenslanders should have a safe, secure and affordable place to call home. This bill directly supports two of the key pillars of this important policy—to build more homes faster, and to boost our social housing big build. The new Miles Labor government is committed to using every lever at our disposal when it comes delivering the services Queenslanders need. This bill is another way we will be able to deliver more homes faster. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.46 pm): As I commence my contribution to the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and as I have before, pursuant to standing order 260, I place on record that there is a partial rezone of the principal place of residence that Sally and I have been undertaking for 4½ years with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council. It is still there and is still waiting. I want to declare it, as I have on a couple of occasions before in terms of this debate because it is planning related. We have had a housing crisis, Minister, for a long time.

The minister who just concluded her remarks said that the Miles government is committed to fixing the housing crisis and so forth, but one must express an opinion about the past to see where we are going in the future. I know that there are those opposite, particularly the Treasurer, who do not want people to look at that past, particularly the last 10 years, but I suspect that to look at our housing crisis one must express an opinion about the past, which I will do. I also take the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure's point that the committee worked through this legislation in a bipartisan way and there is no statement of reservation. That is not to say that I will not be critical of the Palaszczuk-Miles government for creating the housing crisis that we have seen over the last 10 years.

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Speaker has made a very clear ruling about references to governments and previous governments in terms of how they are referred to. The member is a very experienced member of this parliament. He is deliberately flouting the Speaker's ruling. I request that you consider his contribution.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order, members! Member, I remind you that in any comments in regard to any government you have to either reflect the Miles government or the Palaszczuk government.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I withdraw. There are not too many members I take more pleasure in responding to in terms of an interjection or a point of order than the member for Miller. I understand his hesitation and that maybe he gets a bit jittery when the word 'Palaszczuk' is mentioned in this parliament—

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Kawana is making personal comments that I find offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the member for Miller finds your comments offensive; do you withdraw?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. The member for Miller was a minister in this place, but because of his severe incompetence he is no longer a minister in this place and he deserves to be sitting where he is.

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the comments from the member personally offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** Further to that point of order, the interjections from those opposite are also deeply offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I ask you to withdraw your comments.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. I hold all former ministers of the Palaszczuk government responsible for the housing crisis that we have. I hold all current ministers of the Miles government responsible for the housing crisis that we have. The Treasurer may want to direct Queenslanders not to remember the past 10 years, but we will remind Queenslanders of the past 10 years because we would not be debating more legislation dealing with and tackling the housing crisis if it were not created by former ministers and current ministers of the Miles government in the first place. That is the reality. That is what we are debating today.

When we travel the state and talk to stakeholders, the property industry and the property sector—the ones who are building these houses for the future and making sure young Queenslanders can live the dream of owning their own home—they are clearly telling us that they are sick and tired of the kneejerk reactions and legislative agenda of the Miles government. They have seen it time and time again. We debated it a few weeks ago with the housing affordability and availability legislation. The government had to rip out half of its own bill because it did not consult properly. Then we see amendments here to clarify the position. If only the minister and the government had talked to the stakeholders before the bill was introduced, the minister would not be having to clarify the position with legislation. If they did it right at the start and consulted with industry, we would not be in the situation where we are having to debate legislation after legislation.

The Housing Summit was held in October 2022. Nearly two years later we are now debating legislation to do with the EDQ, Economic Development Queensland. It is like they have just established EDQ that it needs all of these additional powers. EDQ has been there for 10 years. If they only realise now, on the eve of an election, that EDQ need these additional powers, what on earth has the minister been doing? They have taken their eye off the ball. That is what they have done. It has led to the housing crisis that we have in the state right now.

We have a situation now where the state government do not cooperate or collaborate with councils. They demonise councils across Queensland. That is the feedback we get from councils. The mayor of Moreton City released a statement recently about Caboolture West. He said that the state government keep putting the burden on local government, without the additional infrastructure, without the additional planning required. The state government say, 'There is a population increase and because we are 'big brother' Labor state government we require you to do it, local government, without any additional resources.' It is time to reset that partnership. We need a government in this state that collaborates and cooperates with local governments, not one that acts against them and demonises them. We need a government that listens to them.

Despite planning Caboolture West for 20 years, just two weeks before the turning of the first sod for the first 700 lots Unitywater threw a spanner in the works which could have derailed the whole project. Once the developer got that in hand and got it sorted that night with Unitywater, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries then put mapping out across all of Queensland which could have derailed that whole development again. I was at the turning of the first sod. The Minister for Housing was there. She spoke about the government's commitment. Caboolture West has taken 20 years of planning. People ask me: would it be any quicker to do it under the Labor government in 2024? Probably not, because there has been this frenetic legislation, this kneejerk legislation, this legislation to fix things. They have taken their eye off the ball. The only reason they are debating this legislation now, four months before an election, is that there is an election. I can understand why the Treasurer wants Queensland to forget the last 10 years of government.

**Mr McDonald:** Rewrite history.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. I can understand why the government want to rewrite history, but 10 years of successive Labor governments matter to the people of Queensland in terms of the housing crisis and the causal effect of the housing crisis and all the other crises that Queenslanders are dealing with at the moment.

We have seen lot releases decrease over the last 10 years under the Labor government. The answer to a lot of these issues is supply, supply, supply. What was the first thing the Labor government did when they were elected in 2015? They tore up the contract for the Logan Renewal Initiative, which would have created thousands of additional dwellings in Queensland. Now, 10 years later, this government is partnering with the community housing sector. We were doing that 10, 11, 12 years ago, but the Labor government were philosophically opposed to partnering with the private sector and they were philosophically opposed to partnering with the community housing sector.

Now this legislation that we are debating today, believe it or not, actually empowers the MEDQ, which is the corporation sole for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to enter into contracts and agreements with community housing providers. What does that sound like? That sounds like the Logan Renewal Initiative. They are getting the ministerial power through this bill to do what should have been done years ago. If they had had those plans in place for the last 10 years, we would have Queenslanders who are currently living under bridges and in parks living in houses. They would be in affordable housing. They would be in social housing. They would be renting or, better still, they would own their own home if the Labor government had not taken their eye off the ball and created this mess.

Even the LGAQ is recommending that the bill we are debating today not be passed because of the issues and the unintended consequences. As an opposition we have to make a call when we read the bill and when we read all of the submissions, and we realise this is in the prism of an election in four months time. We will not vote against the bill today. We will allow passage of the bill but we will express the concerns that the industry and the local government have.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** They want to interject. Have they read the Local Government Association of Queensland's submission? This is the association that represents local governments across our electorates. The Labor Party is continuing to demonise local governments in this state.

The former mayor of Logan, Mr Power, had the courage to write articles in his local newspaper about the housing crisis in his city. He wrote about how the Queensland government, the Labor government, are continually requiring councils to make sure they supply X amount of land for release and have density—whether it is medium density, heavy density or soft density. They were putting all of those requirements and burden onto council. The councils say, 'We cannot afford it anymore.' That means that the state has been putting the obligations and the burden on the council but not funding the councils appropriately to deal with that additional burden.

As I said, we had the Housing Summit in October 2022, and this bill comes out of that, apparently. The EDQ needed these additional powers to deliver more housing. We have heard from stakeholders that there is still much uncertainty in the industry about how these provisions work and about how the provisions in the housing affordability and availability bill that we debated last sitting work. The minister spoke about the objective of 'housing supply, affordability and diversity: create additional pathways for EDQ to facilitate delivery of social and affordable housing'.

The minister has so much power in the state at the moment with respect to planning, PDAs and all of the other additional powers at their disposal, so why have they not been using them to release land supply in the state? I was at the Gold Coast last week, just before we preselected Bianca Stone to run in the seat of Gaven. She was at parliament last night for a women in leadership function. It was great to see her and the other great women candidates we have running against bad Labor ministers across the state. It was great to welcome a few of them to parliament last night. I was on the Gold Coast at a press conference when I was asked about the golf course the planning minister had considered calling in, but the minister for planning has put a ULDA on it and indicated to the media that she may intervene in that court case to protect state interests. What are the state interests? The state interest is pursuant to the bill we passed three weeks ago, the availability and affordability act. The state interest check was affordable and social housing.

This minister is happy to ride roughshod over communities and councils, as they have been doing for 10 years, and not take them into consideration. In the last week she has tried to say, 'I'm not calling it in. We're going to look at it,' but she has put a ULDA on it with a state interest check, which means that green space is gone. That is the Labor Party plan. As I said, in this bill we can see that the purpose

of the EDQ Act is changing to diverse housing, social and affordable. It allows ministers to sign with third-party housing providers. If only they had been partnering with the community housing sector for the last 10 years, which they have started doing in the last 12 months, I might add. Well, it is not enough, Minister. It has only started in the last 12 months because the Queensland Labor Party have realised they have an electoral problem.

**Mr Stevens:** Polling!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. They have an electoral problem and you can see it. In our communities it is hard to watch because, no matter where I have travelled across the state as deputy leader and shadow minister, people are now living in parks, in their cars, on our streets and in tents. Tent cities are being set up. People are living under bridges. The housing crisis is real. It is a sad reflection on the Labor government, which has been in power for 10 years and could have and should have done something about it, but it has refused.

Now we have a Treasurer who is so arrogant that he is directing Queenslanders: 'Don't look at the past 10 years; look at the future.' No. We will remind Queenslanders of what Queensland has been like under the Labor government. We will remind Queenslanders that the housing crisis has been caused by Labor government and Labor ministers. I think Queenslanders know it. I think Queenslanders are seeing through the spin. They are seeing through the electoral spin portrayed by the Labor Party government. I would say to honourable colleagues that I do not think Queenslanders are buying it—particularly now, when the Treasurer has the affront and audacity to say to Queenslanders—

Queenslanders will be asked to make a choice about their future, not to express an opinion about the past.

I value Queenslanders' opinions. I think their opinions are going to be pretty harsh on the last 10 years of this Labor government, and I look forward to them expressing that opinion at the upcoming election.

The bill also talks about conditioning of PDA approvals for social and affordable housing. It talks about an element of retrospectivity, and stakeholders have obviously raised concerns about that—if you have a situation where you have a PDA that has either commenced or is going through the process or has been approved and then suddenly Big Brother, the state Labor government, comes along and says, 'By the way, we want to increase your targets of social and affordable housing in the PDA.' When they have gone through the approval process, they have negotiated with the state, the developers have done a deal with the state through the PDA process and then suddenly, because maybe the Labor Party thinks money grows on trees for the government, but in the private sector it does not—

**Mr Stevens:** It's a magic pudding.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. There is no magic pudding in the property sector, but the Labor Party think they can afford all of this. It is not the case, and stakeholders have raised that as an issue today.

The minister says there will be payments in lieu if the EDQ comes in and says, 'You have to provide this. Change it.' We are not talking about new or negotiated PDAs; I am talking about existing PDAs that have been negotiated in good faith. Stockland's submission to the committee talks about Aura. They say they are meeting the housing targets already put and enforced by the state government under the current PDA. I want to put on the record the concerns of many stakeholders in that regard, particularly relating to retrospectivity. It does not matter what retrospectivity we debate in this parliament, the Liberal National members of parliament always have a level of caution with respect to retrospectivity because it does have—

**Mr Stevens:** Except for the Jackie Trad report.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take that interjection—except for the release of the Jackie Trad report. I fully endorse retrospectivity on that. I will deviate from my—

**Mr Stevens:** But it is considered.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It is considered retrospectivity. I will deviate from my ordinary policy on retrospectivity for the Jackie Trad report because that is in the Queensland interest. Release it, Minister. You have probably seen it. Just release it—or you can leak it.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. I did go on a website today called Labor Left. They have their own faction. All of the photos on there were Jackie Trad, not the current leaders of the Labor Left.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** Member for Kawana, can I please remind you to stick to the long title of the bill.

**Ms Grace:** Oh, you are obsessed. It's an obsession.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the minister. My obsession is about transparency and accountability and openness. The bill also talks about place renewal areas and frameworks. It establishes a new concept: place renewal frameworks in areas within PDAs. It looks for urban renewal. It talks about a collaborative governance arrangement. If only the Labor government had been collaborating for the last 10 years. All of a sudden, four months before an election: 'Let's collaborate with local governments. Let's collaborate with the private sector. Let's collaborate with the community housing sector.' If only the Labor Party had been collaborating for the last 10 years.

The bill goes further and talks about compulsory land acquisition, which does ordinarily follow a similar provision passed at the last sitting with the housing availability and affordability act, particularly with respect to trunk infrastructure and easements. It allows the MEDQ, which, as I said before, is a corporation sole, to have reserve powers to acquire land for the purpose of providing infrastructure and services to the PDAs and to give effect to the place renewal framework, which we have not seen, which could be done by regulation. It also allows investment activities in property assets, which is a first for EDQ, Economic Development Queensland. This legislation allows them to invest in property assets. There are obviously concerns from the private sector with respect to competition with the property and private sectors, so I want to express the concerns that have been repeated by the stakeholders who have put submissions in to the committee with respect to those concerns about competition with the private sector. Government should be allowing and facilitating the private sector to release land and—

**Mr Krause:** Enabling.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. The government should be the enabler for the private and not-for-profit community housing sector and not necessarily in competition. I have to say again—I know that the Treasurer is not going to like it because I am looking at the last 10 years—if you go on the Labor Party record, ain't much going to happen. I say to stakeholders that possibly competition will not be much of an issue because I do not think they are going to do too much, particularly in the next few months.

The bill also allows EDQ to charge for services and changes of corporate structure. I did want to address a couple of the submissions and put on record those stakeholders' concerns, particularly those of the Local Government Association of Queensland. Their submission states—

Overall, while the intent behind the Bill (to progress actions identified in the Queensland Housing Summit Outcomes Report and to deliver more housing supply across the State) is understood and supported in principle, a range of concerns have been raised by Queensland councils—both with regards to what is, and is not, included in the Bill. As such, the Bill cannot be supported in its current form.

The LGAQ represent every local government across Queensland and they are saying that the bill ought not proceed.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday—obviously, when all of this was happening, councils were also in caretaker mode and not able to properly give advice to the government on this element. It also says in their submission—

A central tenant of the Bill is to provide for EDQ's ongoing financial sustainability. While this intent is understood, the LGAQ does not believe EDQ's financial sustainability should come at the expense of local governments' financial sustainability.

No doubt the shadow minister for local government, in her contribution, will talk about the financial sustainability of local governments where the state keep telling local governments to do more with less and put more burden on the councils. I quote again—

Despite the LGAQ raising concerns regarding the Economic Development Act 2012 and its impacts on councils, including in a previous submission on the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, unfortunately no efforts were made to proactively engage with councils, or to seek their input regarding what should be included in the current Bill prior to its introduction to Parliament.

The Bill should have been taken as an opportunity to partner with local government to address challenges in our shared efforts to deliver housing for Queenslanders. Rather, the Bill serves EDQ's interests with little regard for impacts on councils, ratepayers, or genuine solutions to the housing crisis.

If you are the housing minister sitting over there listening to that, it must be pretty hard to take considering they are saying that they are taking people with them on a journey through the housing crisis and that they have been working on this for so many years since the Housing Summit. That is not according to the LGAQ, Minister for Housing and Planning. The Property Council of Australia talks about the retrospectivity element in their focus, particularly on a place renewal framework. They state—

Further, retrospectively changing the affordable housing requirements within an existing PDA development scheme will have a significant impact of the commercial viability of the private sector's planned development projects and further stall housing supply.

**An opposition member:** It doesn't sound good to me.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. If I were the housing minister sitting over there and listening to the Property Council of Australia, which, incidentally, know a little bit about the property industry and represent the people who build these things, I would advise them to take heed of their caution.

Here is the other thing—the Caboolture West development has taken 20 years to get off the ground and only recently had the first sod turned. The minister and I were there. AV Jennings have pulled the pin on that development. AV Jennings are prepared to pay a penalty of upwards of \$17 million to not proceed because—

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the honourable member for Scenic Rim—it is too hard to deal with this state Labor government.

**Ms Grace:** It's rubbish. You're making it up. It's rubbish.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Making it up?

**Ms Grace:** Yes, you are. You are making it up. It's absolute rubbish.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the minister. If the minister is saying that AV Jennings have all of a sudden in the last week recommitted to build the 2,500 homes—

**Ms Grace:** No. The reasons why. Don't paraphrase. The reasons why.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The reasons why.

**Ms GRACE:** You're making that up.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the further interjection from the minister. The minister has confirmed that AV Jennings have pulled the pin on the development and the minister is debating as to why they have pulled the pin. I would say to the minister that they have pulled the pin because it does not financially stack up for them to commence it. That is the reason why. They cannot deal with the Labor government. For 20 years, Caboolture West has had a PDA. They have not sorted out the trunk infrastructure. They have not sorted out the roads in and out. They have not sorted it out and AV Jennings are prepared to pay a \$17 million penalty because they are pulling the pin on it.

What does that mean? Over 2,500 families will not have a home. That element of AV Jennings' build which is on the western side of the development was the affordable housing section of the development. It is not proceeding. Four months before an election, in a 20-year, long-term plan scheme, you have big developers, builders—

**Mr Nicholls:** One of Australia's most experienced and practical developers.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Clayfield—one of Australia's most experienced and practical developers are pulling the pin on a development four months out from an election in a housing crisis. This Labor government would have people believe that they know what to do and that they know better than the industry. Not according to the LGAQ. Not according to the Property Council of Australia. I read earlier from Stockland's submission, which also knows a little bit and is building a lot of houses across the state.

**Ms Grace:** In PDAs. In our PDAs.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection—and Caboolture West is a PDA that AV Jennings has just pulled out of. AV Jennings pulled out of a PDA.

**Ms Grace:** Not Stockland.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Okay, Minister, let me read from Stockland's submission to this bill—

Application of conditional social and/or affordable housing provisions: The Bill proposes to retrospectively impose a new framework and criteria for the delivery of social and affordable housing, and Stockland does not support this. Such provisions will create investment uncertainty and significantly impact the viability of projects.

If these developers and industry are not building them, who is? There is no ghost out there building these projects if this industry is not doing it. What fanciful world do the Labor Party live in? If they are creating financial uncertainty and viability for these projects, no investor will come to Queensland to build and carry through with these projects. Stockland continues—

This is particularly the case for projects that Stockland has in the Caloundra South and Ripley Valley PDAs, where social and affordable housing targets—



Are you ready for this?—

have already been set and are being successfully being delivered at the current time.

They are meeting their obligations. No matter where you look, the Labor government in Queensland have failed in the housing space. They have failed in the planning space. It reminds me: who was the planning minister?

**Mr Stevens:** The new Premier.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take all the interjections from LNP members. The planning minister was Premier Miles. He was the planning minister who saw the reduction in Queensland of land supply and lots released. He was the planning minister. In fact, I think he was the local government minister at some stage as well, wasn't he? He was the local government minister which the Local Government Association are saying, since 2018—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms Grace:** You are completely making it up.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order! Member for Kawana, you have the call.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection—making what up, Minister? The fact that Steven Miles was the local government minister or that he was the planning minister? Pull a point of order. Correct me if I am wrong. Was he not the planning minister responsible for the housing crisis? Was he not the local government minister responsible for the housing crisis? Was he not the deputy premier, who now says, 'I have just released a video that is going viral; check it out.' I cannot say it with a straight face. 'I am Steven, your new Labor Premier,' like he has not been here for 10 years, like he had nothing to do with the Labor government administration for the last 10 years, like he had nothing to do with Annastacia Palaszczuk as her deputy premier, like he had nothing to do with outcomes when he was the planning minister. 'All new. I'm new. I don't know any of these people.' He is dismissing and distancing himself from everything to do with the Labor government in the last 10 years, particularly Treasurer Dick.


It was not his first budget today. Treasurer Dick has delivered a few budgets. Five budgets before and now—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, your time has expired.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Seriously! No! Keep it going!

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

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (7.17 pm): All across Australia and New Zealand, and across the developed world in Europe, there are struggles post-COVID with the production and demand for new housing. We have seen high prices and these strains. It takes a serious, careful, determined approach to actually deal with these problems. Instead, it is really disappointing to follow someone who sees this as an opportunity for theatrics, for a confused mishmash of misinformation, with very little analysis of the actual bill that we have in front of us. That is disappointing. It is disappointing that this cannot be taken seriously by the opposition and that we cannot structurally examine this bill.

It is such a misrepresentation to talk about our commitment to the community housing sector. I have seen some fantastic projects—for example, the fantastic Marblewood Apartments, partnering with the Churches of Christ, that the member for Springwood, Minister de Brenni, along with Minister Enoch officially opened. Just the other day, the housing minister and I were facilitating a partnership with The Lady Musgrave Trust to provide housing for domestic violence survivors who are rebuilding their lives in partnership with YFS.

Why would you misrepresent that? Why would you misrepresent these serious things? It is because you are not serious about serious issues. This is all about cheesy politics. I want to talk about retrospectivity. This is something that came up in the determined and serious work we did as a committee. I want to recognise the deputy chair and others on the committee, because we took it seriously. We asked these questions about retrospectivity because we read about it in some of the submissions. The department said that would only happen where there was an amendment to a relevant development scheme. Where a developer was seeking an amendment to the scheme that could be beneficial to the developer, they could enter into an agreement about social and community housing.

In this confused mishmash, I am trying to work out if there are any policies over there. Is there a rejection of an agreement to work on social and community housing goals and affordable housing goals? It would seem that was the implied policy. Is there a policy to not work constructively with the community housing sector, as we have done, but instead go back to their policy of completely privatising social housing and moving it away from the government zone altogether? I am confused because it was not taken seriously. Everything was flittered around and not put into the framework of a policy. That shows the difficult problem faced by governments all over Australia, New Zealand and, indeed, the developed world. It takes serious and constructive hard work, not flippant politics and theatrics.


I rise to speak in support of this bill not just as the chair of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee but also as the member for Logan, where so many families are moving to. The acts that this bill amends have been vital to providing housing for thousands of young families seeking to establish for themselves a secure home for their children and their family. In my electorate I have both Yarrabilba and parts of Flagstone, which I share with the member for Jordan, and also the council areas of Park Ridge and Logan Reserve. These areas are vital for young couples starting their families and getting that housing supply. We have helped get thousands of young families into these EDQ developments.

These new structures mean we are going to see many more families being able to create this great piece of certainty with a new home for themselves. We are taking this seriously; we are not being flippant or making it about politics or talking about silly things that have nothing to do with the bill. We are taking the task in front of us seriously, but I do not expect to see that from some members opposite. I know that the deputy chair will do that, but that will be in stark contrast to the shadow minister.

The committee took this so seriously that there is no dissenting report to the committee's report. Many of the suggestions that were put forward to give powers to EDQ to facilitate these community goals are powers that the opposition leader, a former minister for local government, actually stripped away from EDQ. We are putting them back because we have these important goals. The things that were taken away by a flippant and unserious opposition who were all about theatrics and politics have to be put back by our government because we have these goals about achieving social and community housing.

These acts have ensured that Yarrabilba has the services that families need. After we built the state school, we also had plans in place as part of the EDQ development—that the shadow minister was so against—to put in place the Yarrabilba Community Centre. We have seen the recent expansion of the performing arts centre. We have invested in TAFE, which is also in the community centre. I want to recognise the TAFE minister, who was out in Yarrabilba witnessing that community growth as part of the deep commitment that these ministers have to seeing these areas thrive. This is a serious commitment with a determined policy, not theatrics, mishmash and misinformation. We built The Buzz, which I just spoke about. We have the ambulance station and the fire station that were invested in by the ministers. Catholic Education has a partnership with our investment and the developers to develop San Damiano College and St Clare's. We are building jobs in Flagstone that are sorely needed for people who want to travel further.

I urge members to not listen to the misinformation but to carefully read the report that we have put in place. I thank all of the members of the committee who took their job seriously and put those questions. We certainly put that serious question about retrospectivity and got serious answers from the department. The aim of this bill is to enhance EDQ's capacity through governance, resourcing, commercial and operational structures in order to increase housing supply, affordability and diversity. We want to see win-win situations where good planning, development and governmental support mean that, through this process of EDQ development, we can get social and affordable housing and get thousands of Queenslanders moving into new homes, creating great families and creating a great Queensland future.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.25 pm): I rise to speak on this bill in relation to coming up with solutions for the housing issues. As the chair of our committee rightly said, we have not put in a statement of reservation and the LNP will not be voting against this legislation because any effort to satisfy the lack of housing in Queensland will be supported. This is not a problem that has popped up today, four months from the election; it is a problem that has been in the making for a number of years.

I can guarantee that a big part of the problem that is now being recognised federally is that the enormous immigration to Australia we have had from those COVID years and prior has created the need for more housing right across the board in Queensland. We should have seen that. There were people in charge of planning. The new Premier was, as the shadow minister correctly said, the minister for planning and the minister for local government and he should have seen that this was coming. We

have put nearly a million people into Queensland since 2015, so that tells us that we need more housing and we need more affordable housing. It is very difficult to get affordable housing when there are enormous pressures on the demand side. This forces prices for real estate right through the roof, it forces rent on those capital investment properties right through the roof and it puts people out into cars and tent cities, which is totally unacceptable for our Australian way of life and our Queensland way of life as well.

The chair was correct that this bill will assist in revisiting some priority development areas that have provided difficulties for the development of those areas. We did have some complaints from submitters in relation to the compulsory acquisition of properties—that basically there were no appeal rights. Another issue for submitters on this bill was about getting an unbiased decision-maker on whether it should go ahead or not.

The bottom line is that this bill will not solve our housing problem before 26 October. One gets the horrible feeling that this bill is a kneejerk reaction to a problem that has finally hit the radar—and I do not know whether that happened through polling or what. This problem has been building for years and it has been exacerbated by the planning for this state. Even the Gold Coast city council is now having difficulties getting its city plan passed. Again, it is the state government which is causing road blocks to what the Gold Coast city would like to see in the development of its own city.

It has a right, as the duly elected representative of the people of the Gold Coast, to put forward the plan that they consider is appropriate for development of the future and not be overridden by the state on what the state want to jam in to 'sardine city' along the Gold Coast Light Rail route which basically will not create any affordable housing. It is very expensive land down there. They will be very expensive units when that land is built on down there, so it does not address the affordable housing issue one iota.

The minister's considered call-in of the Arundel project was absolutely a total smack in the face for Gold Coast city council that had rejected that proposal of 380 very rich, high-end houses being built on private, open space. That golf course at Arundel was deliberately let in by the Gold Coast city council, back when the development for houses was to be built around it, and they were sold on the basis that they were getting a golf course which would be open space. It had koalas, and it was the lungs and the breathing area for the people living in that Arundel area. For the minister to call that in from Melbourne developers, 3 Group, amazes me because it was not about affordable housing; it was about Melbourne developers, probably friends of Daniel Andrews, who have come up here and tried to push their way into the Gold Coast for a development on that particular site.

The minister should reconsider. There are development proposals for the site that will work. You only have to look at the Lakelands golf course and the Surfers Paradise golf course with a couple of high-rise unit blocks on them that basically cater for affordable housing. I was in the Mermaid Beach electorate for the opening of a retirement village last week, and basically the retirement people are looking at it, as Parkwood have a fantastic retirement village for the population down there. However, it is not an area for development of high-residential type houses which will cost millions of dollars and will not address the housing issue one iota.


While I am talking about the shortage of land, as the minister said, on the Gold Coast, we have 10,000 hectares of cane land, with a green hand right across it, that the government will not touch. I tell you why they will not touch it. They will not touch it because Surfers Paradise is near water, Broadwater is near water, Hope Island is near water and Sanctuary Cove is near water. They go rolled gold blue LNP. That is exactly why the Labor Party will not touch those particular lands in the cane field, near the beautiful Moreton Bay, in forms of development because it does provide a wonderful area for future development of wonderful housing estates, as we have in Sanctuary Cove, Hope Island and other areas.

What they have done is they have failed to plan. Four months out from an election is not a time to put your plan in place to fix everything. As the Treasurer said today, 'Do not go on our previous record of nine years, please give us another go.' I do not think the Queensland public will fall for the tricks of Labor on 26 October because basically they have known that these problems we have today with the housing crisis have been caused by the lack of proper planning and proper allowance of development for the area.

Coming in now at this late stage to try to address the issue through this particular bill, which will assist in some developments around Queensland, I have no doubt—that is why we are supporting the bill—is not the answer. There will be nothing built because of this between now and 26 October. Even

though the areas covered in this particular bill are applicable and will be utilised in the future, it is not the answer or the panacea for the housing crisis we have in Queensland.

Proper planning and proper development, including development in the right areas, and not in the high-residential areas of the multimillion-dollar properties along the Gold Coast Light Rail, is the answer to the housing problem. Proper planning and proper development in concert with councils, because they are the ones that know for their local communities what the best outcome is for their longer term planning and livability of the city is the way to go for any future government from 26 October. I am hopeful that Queenslanders will recognise that and show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (7.35 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. From the outset, I state that I represent a part of Queensland which is doing its fair share of heavy lifting in terms of providing housing for Queensland in accordance with the Queensland government targets. Logan is a place where housing for South-East Queensland is one of the most affordable, and we have our fair share of social housing as well. Considering obviously the previous speaker has no interest in affordable housing in his patch, we are more than happy to welcome Queenslanders and families making their first start in an affordable home in Logan. I am very proud to represent those people whom the other member would reject from his area.

This bill amends the Economic Development Act 2012 and specifically looks at Economic Development Queensland as the state's land use planning and property development agency and provides some amendments and some guidance on how they can assist with some of the outcomes from the Housing Summit. As the shadow minister had mentioned, the Housing Summit was back in 2022, but it is not like nothing has been happening on the recommendations from there.

A key action of the 2022 Housing Summit was for EDQ to drive new housing supply by establishing the delivery of social, affordable and diverse housing in the context of urban renewal precincts. The Housing Summit report was delivered in November 2022. Since that time, EDQ has been engaging with key stakeholders on ways to deliver on that recommendation. Considering the number of stakeholders it involves and the fact that local government does have a key role to play in this space, this is not something that can be made up overnight. It was in mid-2023 that stakeholders were engaged to seek views on a number of the proposals. Earlier this year there was targeted consultation on these proposals, consultation with organisations such as Q Shelter, REIQ, LGAQ, the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors and a whole range of others. If the shadow minister is interested, it was in the department's briefing to the committee which outlines the amount of work that has been happening specifically for this bill since 2022.


This bill amends the Economic Development Act 2012 by creating additional pathways for EDQ to facilitate delivery of social and affordable housing by facilitating investment activities undertaken by EDQ and establishing place renewal areas to lead coordinated and integrated urban renewal through a place renewal framework. I speak to this bill specifically because my electorate is the exact type of area that is in need of a coordinated urban renewal framework.

Beenleigh is a town over 150 years old. The historic layout of the town remains with the railway tracks through the middle and now under the town square. For some reason, our forebears in Beenleigh decided that every roundabout should have five entry points and ever since then, TMR has been scratching its head on how to undo those. The high street precinct still remains. However, the centre of commerce has moved further and further away from the centre of town. Malls are developed in the suburbs and medium- to large-scale developments eat into our green belts around the city. I believe very much in infill development and I have made no secret of the opportunity that Beenleigh represents as a satellite urban commuter hub.

On the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail and on the M1 we represent the opportunity for population growth in an area that is well serviced by transport and other services; however, Beenleigh is stagnant. Multiple land investors have bought up in the CBD for small, piecemeal developments. There is no coordination between developments and many remain hoarded up and surrounded by fencing, waiting for someone else and their money to kick off renewal. We are at a stalemate. The high street has seen retailers and hospitality venues closed and replaced with pawnbrokers and employment services. This is a place in need of urban renewal and it is a place in need of direction.

Council has released multiple visions for Beenleigh. I have participated in a number of round tables and consultation events to deliver master plans for Beenleigh—even before I was elected—yet very few of the outcomes are ever delivered, because it requires commercial investment—other

people's money, not council's—to realise the gleaming towers envisioned in those documents. They wait and they hesitate. In fact, the only entity investing in building in Beenleigh is the state government—schools, police stations, ambulance stations, train stations, roads and social housing—but we need to do more. As I said, Beenleigh represents a key area for this growth to happen, so I welcome EDQ's further involvement in urban renewal in Queensland. I would welcome such a framework in my own area to kickstart renewal and investment. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (7.41 pm): I am pleased to contribute to the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. As a member of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, I thank all committee members but in particular the secretariat. Given the timeframes of bills being pushed through the House and the enormous amount of work that is being undertaken by the secretariat, I acknowledge their contribution to the report that was tabled.

The Queensland Housing Summit, held in October 2022, made a series of recommendations, one of which was the reform of Economic Development Queensland to further strengthen its remit to deliver more housing supply across the state. It begs the question: why was this not seen sooner by the Queensland government, why was this legislation not brought forward and why did it take a housing round table and a significant crisis in this state to see reform put forward in this House, almost a decade since Labor came to power?

To achieve its objectives, the bill proposes to amend the Economic Development Act 2012 to increase housing supply, affordability and diversity by creating new pathways for EDQ to facilitate development. We on this side of the House recognise that there are important levers that governments need to pull to facilitate development, to de-risk development and to ensure supply and diversity of stock across communities, particularly in the regional communities of Mackay and the Whitsundays. It is also important that we see this bill deliver investment powers and activities that will allow the Minister for Economic Development to make significant decisions. There will be enormous powers associated with this, and the committee asked many questions of the department to ensure the new structure they have proposed as part of the bill will provide the agility and the flexibility that both the minister and the government of the day need to facilitate the objectives of the bill by adjusting the corporate structure and maximising a skills-based board. I note that many submitters were concerned about the make-up of the board and what they see as the expertise that is required to see EDQ align with commercial development that delivers social and affordable housing.

Many members before me spoke about the opportunity that governments have when it comes to community and social housing and that it is a very serious issue. I would like to highlight, in particular, some of the concerns that were raised by submitters including the Local Government Association of Queensland. It is important to know that in the case of many PDAs across this state—including the one I led as deputy mayor and chair of the planning committee of Mackay Regional Council—it is the council that takes the significant risk of community consultation and engagement when it embarks upon a PDA. It is extensive community consultation, and it is expensive. It is an investment in the local community because those regional councils understand what their community needs. Government decided to undertake a major reform in a period when local councils were in caretaker mode. Throughout that time we saw a significant change in local government leadership across this state. Even EDQ recognised that capacity in local councils would need to be built further to understand what the opportunities are in the review of the PDAs to facilitate greater investment in social and community housing.


I heard the chair talk about this being a serious issue. Community and social housing in our regions is a very serious issue. When I was elected to this House I had held positions on our local community housing board, Mackay community housing company Connect Housing. I sought meetings with then minister Enoch, who had failed to sign off on agreements between the local council, the community housing provider and the state that we have since seen Minister Scanlon sign off. It has taken almost a decade. In that time there has been an opportunity cost—a loss of opportunity by the community housing provider to embark upon renewal and investment. The price of construction has skyrocketed and we have not seen what the community housing sector could have delivered in my region of Mackay had this Labor government not been dragged kicking and screaming—they were so risk averse—to invest and collaborate with the community housing sector. I am, frankly, tired of the lip-service that has been paid by those opposite—in particular, the new Premier, the former state development minister who oversaw an area that the current minister has now taken swift action on. The opposition supports this bill because we know that these are some of the levers that government can pull to help to facilitate development in regional areas.

I will highlight some of the concerns that were raised, in particular around third-party agreements to deliver social and affordable housing. The Planning Institute of Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia certainly support third-party agreements. This is about enhancing EDQ's ability to ensure affordable and social housing targets can be met and it can be facilitated as part of development within PDAs. They raised, along with LGAQ, that it is important that EDQ not be a competitor with industry. It should complement industry, be a facilitator, de-risk where it can and provide investment surety and security.

In regional areas like mine, across Mackay and the Whitsundays, there is a lot of opportunity, including projects like Whitsunday Paradise, Hidden Valley Estate, older developments in Cannon Valley and in the northern beaches, at Shoal Point Waters. There are retirement villages that want to go into my community of Bucasia but the trunk infrastructure investment is an impediment to council, private development and sustainable development. We need to partner with the state government. We need investment by state government in very expensive pieces of infrastructure like drainage and transport corridors, ensuring they can keep up with growth and facilitate development and livability.

I urge Economic Development Queensland, and the minister who oversees the organisation and their board as part of their new structure, to identify where there are failings when it comes to planning instruments and local government infrastructure plans. We have seen a failure in regional plans that have not kept up to date to facilitate development. When we look at many of the planning schemes and the PDAs that have been sitting around this state for decades without development occurring, one has to ask why. This government has not invested in strategic economic infrastructure such as roads, drainage and flood mitigation in areas where there is a high need for housing, where there is industry, like the mining sector of the Bowen Basin, and where there are tourism jobs, like in my region of the Whitsundays. We have not seen planning, development and investment by this state government keep up with the demand we are feeling across our region.

This legislation will also introduce place renewal areas and place renewal frameworks. It will allow the compulsory acquisition of land, and I note the concerns of my colleague and the deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach, and those which were raised by many around compulsory acquisition, the significant direction of powers and in particular the direction around infrastructure charges and what that means to industry. This Labor government has failed to deliver on its responsibility of social and community housing. When we look at the data and the waitlist it is evident. We can look at the legislation that is being passed right before an election because no-one had the foresight to pass this legislation years before, when levers could have been pulled by Economic Development Queensland to help facilitate and fast-track social and community housing. It is not the fault of those in the department; it is the lack of leadership by those ministers and the now Premier who have failed Queenslanders.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.51 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 as a fairly new member of the committee. I thank my committee colleagues at the outset and in particular our chair, the member for Logan, and our deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach. He will always be the 'member for mermaid' to me although his correct title is the member for Mermaid Beach.


The report notes a number of objectives to be achieved by the bill and those include to increase the housing supply, affordability and diversity to create additional pathways for EDQ to facilitate the delivery of social and affordable housing while aligning with government targets and priorities. It also includes investment powers to include undertaking investment activities in property assets as a function of the Minister for Economic Development Queensland and amendments for operational efficiencies to implement measures to deliver operational efficiencies for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland's existing functions.

In my own community of Mount Ommaney and specifically in the suburb of Oxley we have a perfect example of one of the EDQ priority development areas—PDAs—and the development opportunities it can provide for communities. The community of Oxley is no longer a greenfield site but there was an old school that was disused as a school site for 20-odd years. However, in the intervening years it served numerous other purposes, including as a police training ground, before the facility was no longer used for any of those purposes and it became a PDA site. They have done a fantastic job with the PDA and we are now starting to see the fruits of that including moving the much loved but terribly flood affected Yuingi kindergarten out of the flood plain and onto higher ground on the same site so it no longer floods. It is providing 80 new houses for people to move into as well as aged care and retirement living. There is also going to be full bushland restoration on part of the site and the provision of lots of parkland.

There is no doubt that EDQ and the PDAs that they work on have a really important role to play in building homes for Queenslanders, both for people who already live here and, of course, as has been noted by previous speakers, the large number of people who are moving to Queensland because where else in the world would they want to live? It is the best place to live, to work and to raise a family. This bill will enable the government to—

**Mr Crandon:** Coomera.

**Ms PUGH:** I am going to take that as an interjection. Indeed, it is the best place to live, work and raise a family. However, I disagree that that would be Coomera; I think it is Mount Ommaney. With that small disagreement aside, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.54 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and report No. 4 of the 57th Parliament of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee. I say congratulations to the minister for finally getting around to doing something just a few months out from the election. She is doing something that could have been done 10 years ago. Let's remember the last 10 years. Let's remember what happened over that 10-year period. Let's remember the Logan Renewal Initiative that was cancelled by this government a decade ago. Today we find ourselves in this position of a lack of housing. No-one saw COVID-19 coming. No-one saw the epidemic coming. No-one saw any of that occurring. What we did see coming, because the stats are there, was the population moving into South-East Queensland in particular and, indeed, into the northern Gold Coast.

I asked the Queensland Parliamentary Library to do some figures for me based on what the projections were a decade ago, what they were five years ago and what they are today, and they are literally identical. We saw this coming more than a decade ago. In fact, the library went back as far as 2011. We knew we were going to have this issue; we knew we needed more housing. However, those opposite cancelled the Logan Renewal Initiative, which was the starting point. It was intended to be used as practice, if you like, to establish whether or not it was going to work. Indeed, other states of Australia have taken on that initiative and have rolled it out successfully, but it was cancelled by this government. That was no surprise because this government is all about going slow. This government is all about coming out of the blocks very slowly and there are classic examples of that on the northern Gold Coast.

In 2017 we were promised the Pimpama train station. We are not getting the Pimpama train station before 2025 at the earliest. That will have taken eight years. Two years ago that train station was estimated to cost \$40 million; it is in the QTRIP at \$40 million. That train station is now going to cost \$170 million because of the slowness out of the blocks by this Labor government—by the Palaszczuk government before this government and by this government.

It was also them who took years to come out and do something about exit 49. I am bringing up these projects because they are all part of the issue we have, which is a lack of infrastructure development on the northern Gold Coast. That is my patch and that is where I am going to focus my attention. In relation to exit 49, the money was in the federal budget in May 2019. We are not going to see that exit completed before the end of this year, 2024, at the very earliest. It will have taken five years to build an overpass. It will probably be more like 2025 by the time it is completed, once again, because this government is slow out of the blocks.

The government says that this bill came out of the Housing Summit in October 2022, 21 months ago. In October 2022 we were halfway through the four-year term and here we are now, 21 months later and four months before the next election, and they are finally getting around to doing something. They are finally getting around to pulling together Economic Development Queensland and making the changes needed for EDQ to deliver increased housing supply across the state.


Those opposite could have been doing things over the last 10 years, but 21 months ago they held the Housing Summit and they are only just now starting to realise that they had better look like they are doing something about this. The government failed to plan and plans to fail in that regard, and it certainly plans to fail on the northern Gold Coast. There has been an explosion of development on the northern Gold Coast in the fastest growing region in Queensland based on Pimpama. There are 53½ thousand electors—35 per cent over quota—and over 100,000 residents on the northern Gold Coast. Those opposite knew that this was going to happen more than 10 years ago and they failed to plan, but they failed to plan in delivering the infrastructure as well.

I take on board what my colleague the member for Mermaid Beach said. He often raises the idea of using the canelands as a place to build more residential development and so forth. There are a lot of people on the northern Gold Coast who would say, 'Yes, that's a great idea,' but they would also say

'not before you provide the infrastructure, not before you provide the additional road infrastructure, not before you provide the east-west connectivity over the M1 and upgrade the roads getting to the M1 and'—God forbid—'build the second M1, the Coomera Connector'. There is nothing planned north of Shipper Drive for the Coomera Connector to be able to deliver any housing construction considerations in and around the canelands until the Coomera Connector is built. The previous minister is on record on ABC Radio saying that that section of the second M1 is 10 to 15 years away. This is typical again—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Coomera, I would ask you to remain relevant to the bill under debate at the moment—the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

**Mr CRANDON:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. Just to finish on that topic, before we can provide any additional housing on the northern Gold Coast—and that is what this is all about—we have to provide the infrastructure, and that is where this government has failed. It has failed the people of Queensland. It has failed the people of the northern Gold Coast. It failed the people of Logan City when it cancelled the Logan Renewal Initiative a decade ago. It has failed us. It has continued to fail us over these years, and here we are four months from an election. The people of Queensland are not fooled. They know what this is all about. They know that this is all about those opposite looking like they are doing something. Today we had the Treasurer begging the people of Queensland to forget about the last 10 years. They will not forget about the last 10 years, and the opportunity is there for the people of Queensland on 26 October 2024 to show Labor the door.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (8.02 pm): We know that this government works for property developers, and this bill is yet another example. Labor truly believes that for-profit property developers will save us from the housing crisis and this bill is just the next measure designed to speed up the approvals process to help make developers as much money as possible. In reality, property developers who are chasing profit have helped cause the housing crisis. Priority development areas, which are covered in this bill, are a planning tool that this government has developed to help it manage large, often very controversial development projects. PDAs provide a streamlined approvals process for property developers that further cut the community out of having any meaningful say in the future of their communities.

We have been critical of PDAs for a number of reasons. Community consultation is extremely limited. There is an initial period of consultation on the draft development scheme and, once this broad development scheme is approved, development can occur over many years with no required additional community consultation for any developments in the PDA. There is limited transparency about how decisions on PDAs are made. Local planning rules can be overridden. There are no third-party rights of appeal.

Let's take a look at one other example of a PDA: the Toondah Harbour PDA. This Labor government approved the development of units on a Ramsar listed wetland—wholeheartedly approved this project—and this was only stopped after years of community campaigning and the federal environment minister stepping in to stop the project.

This bill allows the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to compulsorily acquire land with new powers. At the moment, the minister relies on other entities to acquire land required for priority development areas. This bill allows the minister to acquire land directly and can confer rights or interests in land to other entities, and that entity may derive a measurable benefit from the action taken on that land. What could these other entities be? This could be another public sector entity like the local government or it could be a local public sector entity like a community housing provider, but there is nothing in the bill that prevents the minister from conferring these rights to a private entity—acquisitions that could be handed over to a private entity. It was not too long ago that this government was planning to acquire homes backing onto Raymond Park and then turn that park into an Olympics warm-up track. Thanks to the amazing community campaign, the park and those homes are now safe, but these new rules would have made it easier for the Labor government to literally bulldoze over the community.

Let me touch on affordable housing, because there is nothing in this bill that guarantees that affordable housing will be built in priority development areas. Under this bill, the definition of 'affordable housing' is 'housing that is affordable to particular types of households under criteria prescribed by regulation'. The draft regulation provides some guidance on what is classified as 'affordable', but there are some huge loopholes that could leave any priority development area, including the Woolloongabba Priority Development Area, with zero social or affordable housing, including the use of offsets. Developers will be able to make a payment in lieu of affordable housing or enter into a voluntary housing agreement with EDQ that can include land outside of the PDA. If the plan here is to include affordable



housing near transport and within priority development areas, why are offsets being included? With access to offsets there is no guarantee that there will be any affordable housing in any priority development area.

In referring to the Woolloongabba Priority Development Area, my critique of this plan is well known and on the public record. This PDA has a lot of potential, particularly given that the core of the PDA is public land where the government could be delivering beautiful new parkland and thousands of new public homes, but instead, based on the current plan, we are going to be getting 80 per cent of the dwellings in the PDA that are unaffordable and we are likely to get paved walkways and plazas in areas where the government has suggested there might be parkland and the community voice is cut out. The community has been given two months to have its say on a 106-hectare section of Woolloongabba and East Brisbane. This two months has just been extended from an initial six weeks. That is all the government was going to give the community to have its say when the plan dramatically changes the character of the neighbourhood.

There has been no mail-out to community members, residents or businesses within the priority development area or surrounding the priority development area. You can live in the priority development area where there are plans to drastically rezone your area and you will have gotten nothing in your letterbox to let you know that this is coming or to invite you to the consultation that has been taking place. In fact, people have been saying that my office has been doing better consultation on the PDA than the government has been. The community has been asked to provide feedback on the PDA plans, but there are crucial documents and bits of information that we do not yet have access to. There are no details on what is included in the developer charge and offset plan and we do not have the finalised guidelines for affordable housing, so people are being asked to give feedback on a plan that is partial in nature.

The Woolloongabba PDA includes plans for what the government describes as open space. For the publicly owned land around the Cross River Rail station, the government will be targeting 50 per cent of this area to be allocated for open space purposes, and a number of new mini parks are described as privately owned, publicly accessible open space. There is an important distinction between green space and parkland and open space. Open space is defined as green space and public realm and public realm is defined as any publicly accessible streets, pathways, cross blocks, links, arcades, plazas, parks and open spaces, key civic spaces and any public or civic building and facilities.

When the plan talks about 'open space' that can include buildings, paved areas, roads and pathways. I remind the government that in 2020 the community was promised that half of the Cross River Rail station site at the heart of this PDA would be parkland. The government said that no less than 50 per cent of the new Gabba station site would be reserved for parkland. This has been reneged on. Now we are told we are getting open space that can include roads, walkways and public buildings.


The plan also includes a 20 per cent target for developments over 10 storeys to be social or affordable housing. Rather than a binding mandated level of public housing, the PDA gives developers a target, it gives developers the choice of either social or affordable housing and it gives developers the option of offsets. Without mandates for public housing and with access to offsets, what can we expect to see? Developers will be able to wriggle out of delivering any affordable housing with offsets, developers will have the choice of affordable or social housing and, in essence, the 20 per cent target will mean that 80 per cent of housing in the PDA will be unaffordable. With no limits on rent increases, the PDA could result in new developments that are unaffordable to most local residents and unaffordable to local healthcare workers and teachers.

The PDA plan includes a huge amount of new population growth and new dwellings but does not include a plan for new schools. In fact, not only does it not include a plan for new schools; the existing school, East Brisbane State School, remains at risk from whatever future plans the government makes for the Gabba stadium. With no new schools and the existing school at risk, what is the government planning for the future of the kids who live in this area? That is on top of the fact that in this neighbourhood public infrastructure is also stretched thin. We have a lack of green space. We have a lack of safe pathways, walkways and pedestrian access. We have crowded schools.

When I have conversations with locals about the priority development area, people say that the government cannot even keep up services for the population that we have now so how can we trust them to deliver the services for this kind of population growth? Given that this community just spent three years fighting for a park and a school, why should they trust the Labor government?

Finally, this plan backs in the idea that somehow developers are going to save us from the housing crisis, but we know that a developer's main goal is profit. We know that developers hold back

supply to keep prices high and they do not even try to hide it. The Meriton CEO told the *Australian* newspaper, 'I am holding a lot more than I am selling at the moment, and as the value of property goes up, the value of what I have kept rises.' Big developers are sitting on a huge backlog of land that is zoned for housing but they will not be building new housing on that land any time soon. That is a deliberate choice that is designed to maximise their profits from skyrocketing house prices, driving up the costs of houses and rent. Labor and their friends in the real estate world claim that developers will build more if only councils and the state government would approve more developments faster and hand over more public land. In reality we know that developers will not do anything to genuinely bring down the cost of housing and this government supports that.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (8.12 pm): I think this debate and the previous debate demonstrate very clearly that we have a very lazy, weak, tired, out-of-touch opposition that has run out of opposition ideas to opposition with. We used to get an A speech and a B speech, but now we only get an A speech and it is not a very good A speech. I would probably give it a B, to be honest. Their speechwriters cannot even come up with two versions of a speech. You have to search really hard to find that original voice. You have to work really hard. They come to life when they are not on their feet but when they get to their feet it is just: 'Blah, blah, blah. Here's the words that have been put in front of me.' They have plenty to say when they are not on their feet but they have nothing to say when they are on their feet. However, sometimes, if you listen and you work, you can find the original voice and something to rebut.

I will start with the member for Mermaid Beach, who said that this bill is not a panacea. I agree because this is not the only thing that we are doing in relation to housing. It is one of many things that we are doing in relation to housing. Just today in the budget changes to stamp duty were outlined and, of course, our Big Build will mean we will be building more social housing. This is not the only thing that we are doing. I say to the member for Mermaid Beach that no-one has ever suggested that there would be one silver bullet fired to solve all of the problems in relation to housing. This is one of many things that we are doing.

The member for Whitsunday asked why we did not act on this 10 years ago. Ten years ago we had to solve a very different crisis. It was an LNP crisis. When we came to power we did not have a housing crisis. Ten years ago we had an LNP crisis. Thousands and thousands of public servants had been sacked. We had no infrastructure built.

**Mr Crandon:** You knew the people were coming and you cancelled the initiatives.

**Mr KELLY:** Again, they have plenty to say when they are not on their feet but when they are on their feet they just read the speech written by the speechwriter.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.


**Mr KELLY:** I wish they had had this much to say when they were on their feet.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): I am sorry to interrupt you, member for Greenslopes, but please take your seat. Member for Coomera, your interjections are not being taken and they are disorderly. Please desist.

**Mr KELLY:** Ten years ago we had an LNP crisis and that is the crisis that we responded to. No infrastructure was being built in the state except for 1 William—a big building for themselves. Lots of public servants were sacked and lots of people were unemployed. What has happened to unemployment rates? We now have a skills shortage. Of course, there was no action on climate change and now we see serious action on climate change.

Wasn't it great to see Colin Boyce, the former member for Callide, on *Four Corners* last night? Wasn't that a stellar performance by the former member and a former candidate for the Greens? What a duo comedy act it was last night.

This bill will do something that the Greens do not seem to understand. It will increase housing supply in our state. If you increase housing supply in our state then you make it more affordable for people to either buy or rent a house. That is the key point that I want to make in relation to the bill. The member for South Brisbane was absolutely irrelevant when speaking to the bill. She talked about everything but the bill. When someone comes up with an idea about how to get more housing into her community, does she welcome or support it? No! She says that it is a bad idea. Just today in the Brisbane City Council, the LNP administration put forward an idea for the Stones Corner precinct renewal project. The Greens did not even take a position but abstained, demonstrating once again that they do not have courage. They have plenty to say but they do not have any real ticker when it comes to delivery and implementation. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (8.17 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak on the bill. Planning for and the delivery of housing is one of the most significant issues our state is facing. I never thought we would see what we have seen in recent times. We see people living in tents. We see working people homeless. They are people who should be able to afford a house but cannot access one because of a dire shortfall in available housing.

Over the past 10 years, we have also seen a population increase matched perversely and inversely by a situation where less housing has been released to market. At the heart of that are issues around planning and delivery. This government has the ability to put legislative frameworks in place. It has the ability to drive programs to align infrastructure plans to enable housing developments and other developments to come out of the ground, but we have not seen that happen at a rate that would match the need of the community. That was happening even before COVID disrupted the way that people lived their lives, but it was not a substantial disruption in that people were already moving to Queensland. While the population was increasing, there was a decrease in the actual supply to market and now there is a crisis.

Unfortunately, there is the very real situation where what we see now, which is so dire, will actually get worse. This government wants to live in denial by saying, 'Don't look at the past 10 years. Don't look at our record. It doesn't matter. Just look at what we are going to do now.' That just does not cut it, because the government is still passing regulations that make it harder to deliver good housing. It is still passing changes—let alone the National Construction Code—that add cost to all housing. It is still bringing about complexity and difficulty at a time when it should be coordinating and breaking down the barriers to delivering more affordable housing.


The answer to affordable housing is supply. It is not a definition; it is supply. The government still does not get it. We have a government in denial. It has in fact been the large reason there has been a lack of supply. It has failed to work with local government to deliver and enable the infrastructure that would also help those houses come out of the ground.

Unless we see proper whole-of-government coordination and a recognition that every time it stipulates a new regulation it slows thing down and hurts somebody, we will see more people living in tents, because that is what this government has presided over. The government has failed and failed. It is an absolute disgrace to see people in such dire circumstances. The crisis has had a long lead time. In the past 10 years we have seen the government fail to listen and laugh it off every time it introduced a new regulation that added cost and delay. We will not forget.

Caboolture West—my colleague the member for Kawana outlined it earlier—is a prime example of a government that had all those years to plan the infrastructure but failed to even set aside the road corridors. This is the work of government—whole departments—yet it failed to carry out basic planning over one of the areas that has long been set aside as a future growth area. There was nothing other than lines on maps around the broad area that was the future growth area and there was no infrastructure planning. This has been reflected right throughout Queensland.

This government can table legislation. I do not say that it has bad intentions, but it has no ability to deliver and act in a timely way and to respect the fact that this inaction, overregulation and lack of willingness to work with local government and industry have been the primary roadblocks to the timely delivery of housing.


Planning is only good planning if you work with people to enable things to be built. Otherwise, it is a pipedream. People do not have a roof when there is only a pipedream. That is a legacy of a bad Labor government that over the past 10 years has failed to deliver and now is presiding over the worst housing crisis we have ever seen in this state. We should learn from Caboolture West. It is the seeds that indicate that the plans of this government are plans to fail because it cannot build anything. Show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (8.24 pm): I rise to commend this bill to the House. We are taking more actions to get more houses on the ground in Queensland. Under this bill, EDQ will get a new operating model to deliver more affordable and social housing across Queensland. EDQ will get additional pathways to deliver social and affordable housing in our great state. It will be able to undertake more investment activities in property assets and will be able to establish place renewal areas in place renewal frameworks to help deliver more housing. EDQ will be able to lead coordinated and integrated urban renewal. It is a great way to get more houses on the ground. These actions will be very welcome. I know that they will kickstart some crucial urban and residential developments.

I will outline some more actions that will complement the raft of actions in the Homes for Queenslanders plan. That plan will deliver safe, secure and affordable housing to Queenslanders. Under the Homes for Queenslanders plan, as we have heard, there is an additional investment of \$3.1 billion. We aim to deliver one million new homes including 53,500 social homes in Queensland by 2046. Homes for Queenslanders is already putting roofs over the heads of Queenslanders. Over 600 Queenslanders now are in homes or have been kept in homes because of the use of the Housing Investment Fund.

Saying that these homes do not count, that these people are already there and they are not new homes, is a fallacious argument. These are NRAS homes that will continue to house renters on less than market rent. These are residents who will not have been evicted when these properties were sold to the private market. They have not been kicked out in favour of private owners or people who can pay double the rent. They have stayed in their homes and have kept on paying reasonable rent. That is keeping roofs over the heads of vulnerable Queenslanders.

I commend the Miles government for its actions on homelessness under the Homes for Queenslanders plan. People have moved from tents and cars into temporary accommodation because of the uplift to these emergency services. I also commend the Miles government for the action it has taken today on duty concession thresholds. As we have heard, first home buyers will pay no duty on homes valued up to \$700,000, up from \$500,000, and will be eligible for savings of up to \$17,000. I conclude by congratulating the minister and the Premier on delivering these actions that help put more homes on Queensland soil for Queenslanders to live in. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (8.27 pm): As we know, addressing housing and homelessness is a must. This bill is another aspect of those efforts. After many years of warning signs that were ignored by all levels of government over multiple decades, the Queensland Housing Summit was held in October 2022. One of the many actions of the summit's outcomes report was to strengthen the remit of Economic Development Queensland to deliver more housing supply across the state, including new social and affordable housing in the context of urban renewal and precincts. The provisions in the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 propose to deliver EDQ a new operating model as part of strengthening its remit.

In addition, the bill provides the Minister for Economic Development Queensland the flexibility to fund, deliver, facilitate and/or supply affordable housing by providing a power to enter into an agreement with a third party to develop and operate affordable housing. It also expands the power of the minister in relation to priority development area development approvals specifically in relation to social and affordable housing.

While I acknowledge that speed is critically important in addressing our housing crisis, I agree with stakeholders who called for greater consultation by the minister and EDQ in relation to their expanded powers under the bill. While the Planning Institute of Australia supported the amended purpose of the act, it recommended that the bill be amended to add that the powers under the ED Act be exercised in a balanced manner which advances the public interest. This is really important. As I raised in response to the recent housing availability and affordability bill and the related changes to the Planning Regulation which allow development applications to bypass local government, these kinds of powers should be used sparingly and with great consideration and community consultation.

The bill also introduces a new concept of place renewal areas within PDAs with the purpose being to 'establish a governance framework to bring together government, community and industry stakeholders to deliver thriving and sustainable precincts that will generate increased social, environmental and economic value'. That all sounds wonderful. However, what does that really mean? The department states that it 'will allow the MEDQ to take a place-making and leading coordination role across a precinct' allowing EDQ 'to take a proactive leadership role in the urban renewal of an area to facilitate and coordinate precinct-wide outcomes'. For the home seekers out there, what does that tangibly mean in delivering affordability?

Stakeholders expressed their support, with Studio THI, an urban renewal NGO, submitting that this will 'increase EDQ's ability to drive sustainable place-based urban outcomes and accelerate the delivery of critical policy (such as housing diversity and affordability) in partnership with other government agencies, community housing providers and industry'. That is a mouthful, and again I am trying to understand how I can relay to those who are in desperate need of affordable housing how the affordability will be delivered through this. Some stakeholders raised concern that place renewal areas


would not address the issues related to social and affordable housing as intended, instead saying these were 'an imperfect compromise'.

This bill has also raised concerns that the minister 'may' seek advice from any third party, body or person in assessing and deciding a PDA development application and is not required to consult with anyone. We need some clarification regarding this. There are also many questions. Will the expanded powers being provided through this bill be exercised in a balanced manner which advance the public interest? Ultimately, will this bill deliver what is needed, including the innovation required to deliver affordable housing to meet community expectations, without overriding local governments?

There have been so many aspects identified over the years and via the Housing Summit to address affordability such as a reduction in taxes and charges and construction costs, which I raised earlier, and better utilisation of public housing and land. I feel sometimes what we are doing is taking what can be simple and making it much more complex than it needs to be. However, as I said in relation to an earlier bill, every little bit counts and it helps, even if it is difficult to ascertain what that help actually is in terms of affordability. I do want to thank the minister, the department, the committee and their secretariat, and all those who gave time to provide feedback on the bill. We do appreciate what is being fought for.

It is now time to end the 'blame game' and move forward. However, as I have previously requested, including of the commissioner, as part of increasing the capabilities of the public sector, a full analysis needs to be undertaken of the last 30 years—yes, 30 years. Earlier I mentioned that 30 years ago across Australia we had seven per cent social housing; now we are under four per cent. This is a critical part of what is being experienced. We need to understand what happened over those three decades—how we arrived at this crisis, including what happened to the forecasting amongst this. We need to do this in order to avoid it going into the future and also in other realms.

May we now make tangible, lasting changes that ensure parliaments of the future—because we are not going to be here forever—are not grappling with the failings of the past or potentially of present decisions we are now making so that Queenslanders can all enjoy a stable roof over their heads without having to go without, including food, to do so. This is now what we must focus on.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (8.33 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and, in particular, the social and affordable housing provisions. Queensland is booming. Today our Queensland population stands at 5.56 million people. Queenslanders, like many people around the world, face increasing housing costs and a tighter housing market. Queensland's housing market is under pressure to meet the needs of a rapidly growing and aging population.

Queensland has also experienced a record number of people migrating from interstate. By 2046, we will need around one million new homes to house our growing population. We will also need to provide more social and affordable housing so that everyone can have a safe and reliable place to call home. The success of the Queensland government's response to COVID-19 and the more than 368,000 jobs created since COVID also brings its challenges, and one of those challenges is the pressure placed on housing supply. Following the Queensland Housing Summit held in October 2022, a specific action listed in the summit outcomes report was for Economic Development Queensland to strengthen the remit of EDQ to deliver more housing supply across the state including new social and affordable housing in the context of urban renewal and precincts.

Using the Queensland Housing Summit outcomes as a basis, EDQ identified the following objectives to address the housing shortage: achieve an increase in housing supply, diversity of housing typologies and provision of quality social and affordable housing at scale across the state which is informed by need; build the capacity of government and the housing sector to deliver social and affordable outcomes in a flexible manner tailored to specific opportunities; leverage government intervention to maximise industry capability, alternative delivery models and funding sources; deliver a range of housing outcomes within accelerated timescales; and define social and affordable housing outcomes with a supporting set of quantitative targets that support broader statewide strategy and prioritisation and in consultation with the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

This bill is about the Miles government building on the role of Economic Development Queensland—the Queensland government's land use planning and property development agency—and putting it to even better use to deliver more homes for Queenslanders faster. The bill will improve EDQ's ability to plan the location of diverse housing and require the delivery of the social and affordable


housing targets set within priority development areas. At the same time the bill gives EDQ and the development industry more flexibility around how these obligations are conditioned and met to ensure the right type of housing is delivered when and where it is needed.

Additionally, the bill enables the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to enter directly into agreements with third parties, like community housing providers, to deliver social and affordable housing projects. This will make it easier for EDQ to work in partnership with the housing portfolio on delivering new social housing projects like the proposed new West Tower development at Southport.

Importantly, the bill also addresses the matter of infrastructure provision to support the delivery of new houses by giving the Minister for Economic Development Queensland the ability to acquire land specifically to facilitate infrastructure provision. This new power, which is similar to powers already available to local governments and distributor-retailers, will enable the government to step in as a last resort and assist to get critical infrastructure delivered where it is needed to service new houses.

These changes, coupled with other changes proposed in the bill, will support EDQ in delivering an additional 1,300 dwellings over the next five years, as well as approving a further 15,000 homes in priority development areas. By implementing the changes in this bill, EDQ will be better placed to fast-track sustainable and affordable places that people can call home.

I commend the minister for her work on this very important bill. I thank the chair of the committee for his leadership as we progress this bill through the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (8.38 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. Introduced by the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure on 20 March 2024, the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill seeks to amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Planning Act 2016 and the Public Sector Act 2022. As per the explanatory notes, the overarching objective of this legislation is to strengthen the remit of Economic Development Queensland and provide it with the tools needed to address Queensland's housing shortage. A housing affordability and availability shortage, I might add, that has only got worse the longer this state Labor government has been in power.

To achieve the stated objectives, and as per the explanatory notes, this legislation will amend the Economic Development Act in the following key areas: firstly, in addressing housing supply, additional pathways will be enabled for Economic Development Queensland to facilitate the delivery of social and affordable housing whilst aligning with government targets and priorities; secondly, in relation to investment powers there will be the inclusion of undertaking investment activities in property assets as a function of the Minister for Economic Development Queensland.

This legislation will also establish place renewal areas to enable Economic Development Queensland to lead coordinated and integrated urban renewal through a place renewal framework. There are also amendments to enable operational efficiency by implementing measures to deliver operational efficiencies to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland's existing functions. There will also be amendments to Economic Development Queensland's corporate structure, with adjustments made in order to optimise its broad capabilities across both planning and development activities.

Whilst I acknowledge that various aspects have been specifically highlighted and addressed by previous members, I want to briefly address the amendments for operational efficiency, specifically those pertaining to priority development areas, PDAs, and broader planning priorities. I note that, as per the examination of the Queensland parliament's Cost of Living and Economics Committee, the committee report states—

An amendment is proposed requiring the MEDQ to consult with the Planning Minister prior to the making of a declaration regulation for a PDA or PPDA to ensure that this aligns with the government's planning priorities.

I acknowledge the support provided by the Planning Institute of Australia for the addition of consultation being required with the planning minister and its calls for a more collaborative approach. I also want to acknowledge the committee's statement—

A number of stakeholders also submitted that it should be mandatory for communities to meaningfully contribute prior to the declaration of PDA's.

This is an incredibly important point given the significant community issues that have resulted from problematic PDAs that have occurred under the watch of various state Labor governments. By way of just one example, the Ripley Valley PDA continues to draw significant criticism and community concern, particularly as it relates to ongoing community engagement, communication and consultation

given the potential and proposed impacts associated with Scott's Farm, which includes the planned resumption of land. Scott's Farm has been in the hands of the Scott family since 1893.


Further evidence of this Labor government's failure to listen was brought to my attention by Belinda Lowe of Scott's Farm. She advised of various attempts by representatives of Scott's Farm to contact the Labor government and various departments, all of which were not followed up, including: emails to the offices of the then Queensland premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk; the then deputy premier, Steven Miles MP; as well as the Labor member for Ipswich in 2022. There were also written requests to Economic Development Queensland in 2023 and emails to both the current Labor Minister for Education and the Labor Minister for State Development and Infrastructure in March of this year.

The failure of this Labor state government to not actively engage with Scott's Farm and the Scott family, including listening to and addressing their concerns, has led to overwhelming community outrage over Labor's refusal to act. As a result of the Labor state government's failure there has been a change.org petition that has garnered almost 9,000 signatures along with a Queensland parliament petition that is approaching almost 4,000 signatures calling for the removal of Scott's Farm from the Ripley Valley PDA. The farcical nature of the Labor member for Bundamba, who is a minister in the Labor government, and the Labor member for Ipswich, who is an assistant minister in this Labor government, signing the Queensland parliament petition in essence against their own Labor government is breathtaking, because to resolve any local concerns these Labor members should be actively consulting and working with representatives of the Scott family to address these matters as soon as possible.

In returning to broader aspects of this legislation, the fact of the matter is that the Queensland housing crisis is a direct result of this third-term state Labor government's almost decade-long failure to plan and deliver new housing and improve housing affordability. Labor will always blame someone else or some obscure external factor rather than accept responsibility for their failures. Such blame-shifting and repeated policy failures only reinforce the genuine scepticism that Queenslanders have when it comes to trusting this state Labor government to actually solve and resolve Queensland's housing crisis. Labor simply cannot be trusted. Those who are living with homelessness and a lack of housing affordability are certainly telling all members of this parliament that Labor simply cannot be trusted. In an effort to appear to be doing something about the housing crisis, Queenslanders have seen from this Labor state government a round table, a Housing Summit, followed by another round table, with further dot point plans and promises. All of this, yet Queenslanders continue to struggle through a Queensland housing crisis the likes of which our state of Queensland has never seen before.

Just last month, new figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed that total dwelling approvals for the month of April in Queensland were 20 per cent below the monthly 40-year average and 25 per cent below the 10-year average. I also note there were stakeholders who, having examined this legislation, expressed their views and concerns in relation to associated issues, including rental properties and rental affordability. These concerns are valid, particularly given the devastating impacts Queensland renters are experiencing as they seek to find a roof during the current housing crisis here in Queensland.


This was made abundantly clear by the Real Estate Institute of Queensland's residential vacancy report for the 2024 March quarter, which revealed that the vacancy rate in Queensland was a paltry 0.9 per cent. This is what happens when we have governments here in Queensland that fail to plan and deliver for Queensland's growing population—a growth rate which this Labor government has overwhelmingly promoted whilst ignoring the obvious housing and infrastructure demands that such growth brings. In contrast, it is only the Liberal National Party which is committed to fixing Labor's housing crisis because it is our priority to secure Queensland's housing foundations.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (8.45 pm): I rise to very proudly support the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This bill will support Economic Development Queensland, EDQ, to deliver more homes, and we need more homes faster. The bill will focus on: housing supply, affordability and diversity; the introduction of a place renewal area; EDQ's corporate structure; and operational refinements to existing functions and powers.

What we are talking about is delivering 1,300 new dwellings, and that is not insignificant. The main focus of this bill is social and affordable housing. The bill amends the Economic Development Act 2012. It will enable MEDQ to enter into agreements with third parties to deliver housing projects. We want to work genuinely with providers. Having heard a lot of the contributions in this debate, I cannot help but speak about: the hypocrisy of the LNP which, from the time they came to government to the time they finished, went backwards when it came to social and affordable housing; the hypocrisy of the

Greens when it comes to calling for more public and affordable housing yet federally voting against the funding that we need; and the hypocrisy of individual MPs who call for more housing but protest against housing being built in their own electorate. I will tell you this, Mr Deputy Speaker: if you want more housing, send them to Stafford, because we have delivered homes in Kedron, Alderley, Chermside and Chermiside West, and there are more on the way.

As leaders, we should be responsible, bring our community with us and enable the bureaucratic processes to go through so we can do so. For young and old, we have a beautiful community with great transport, great health services and a great lifestyle for our local families. As I said in my first speech, our community is identified by having, in one street, social housing, affordable housing, retirees, first home owners and, up the hill, multimillion dollar homes with city views. That is not suburb by suburb; that is all within 1,500 metres. I think my community is stronger for it. This bill goes along the lines of that pursuit, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (8.49 pm): I rise to speak on the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill has its origins in the housing crisis which is crippling Queensland. The bill seeks to expand the main purposes of the Economic Development Act to include the provision of diverse housing such as social and affordable housing.

The government says the objective is to give Economic Development Queensland, or EDQ, the tools it needs to address the housing shortage through various amendments dealing with housing supply affordability and diversity, investment powers, renewal framework, increasing operational efficiency and EDQ's corporate structure. This bill is significantly increasing the power and role of Economic Development Queensland. EDQ will simultaneously have control of approving and policing developments while also acting as a developer itself. This approach can be fraught with conflicts of interest and potential issues about conflicting roles.

As EDQ will be able to return dividends to the state, there is also the risk that decisions could be clouded by financial returns rather than based on the best outcome for everyone. Expanding the main purpose of the Economic Development Act to include the provision of diverse housing, such as social and affordable housing, raises several potential conflicts. EDQ is part of the department of state development. Under this bill, major housing policy and activities will be effectively steered by the department of state development. Where does this leave the department of housing? It opens the door to issues such as duplication of effort, increased inefficiencies and conflicts in policy direction or intent. Which department—or, rather, which factional colleague—will have precedence in overseeing housing policy?

As with almost every piece of legislation introduced by the government, stakeholders have raised concerns about limited time for consultation, ambiguity, confusion, differing infrastructure standards and whether costs will be passed on. Utility providers raised concerns about existing customers having to cross-subsidise growth areas. Local government will be required to hand over collected infrastructure charges. Where do they—or, rather, ratepayers—stand when some of those charges have already been spent or allocated? In a cost-of-living crisis, which has been exacerbated by this government, the last thing Queensland needs is costs being passed on. The housing institute of Australia has described this bill as 'fundamentally flawed and, if legislated, will increase the risk of new housing in Queensland'. It is concerned that conditions to deliver social or affordable housing, or, alternatively, a monetary contribution, will ultimately be paid by future homebuyers.

The housing crisis has been caused by the government's failure to plan and deliver. There is little to show after a round table, a housing summit, another round table, countless plans and dot points, dozens of media events and visits in high-vis vests and hard hats. Queenslanders have been given false hope and broken promises from ill-considered thought bubbles and kneejerk and haphazard responses.

The government has cynically repeated false promises to deliver and yet 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. Today's budget was a reminder that, for two years in a row, the government has made the same budget announcement about 1,200 new social and affordable homes. It cynically repeated the same commitment from the previous year, which had never been delivered. Two years ago, the Treasurer declared that a unit block 'would not be appropriate' for Gympie residents who were expected to sleep rough in tents or cars.

Rents are skyrocketing and houses are at a premium because the Labor government has not released enough land for new houses and is demonising and driving away landlords. You need timber




to build homes, yet the government has systemically undermined or ignored Queensland's homegrown timber and forestry industry. Last month, the REIQ chief executive said that the rental market will still heavily rely on everyday citizen investors choosing to rent out their properties. 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 and 3.5 per cent. A tight market is between zero 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 or in tents or are couch surfing, when families are being split and forced to live apart, the last thing they need is badly thought out legislation, spin, platitudes and trickery. I do not oppose the bill.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (8.56 pm): Queensland is the place to be. People are pouring into our great state after COVID because we have kept people safe, we continue to grow our economy, we are developing new and innovative industries and there are good jobs here. With all this unprecedented growth, there is pressure on our housing. This is a responsible government and Premier Miles is ensuring all the levers available to government are pulled to ensure we can, as fast as possible, build safe and secure housing for everyone who wants to call Queensland home. Every lever needs to be pulled so that we can do this in Queensland, including engaging EDQ and delivering the powers that they need so that we can realise Queensland's housing needs.

There needs to be a mix of housing solutions to meet the complexity of the housing issues Queensland is facing. To meet the current demand, all levels of government need to be at the table with the private sector, community housing groups, property developers and real estate agents, all to manage the housing issues facing our state. Our Labor government held housing summits in Brisbane to drive solutions. On the back of these, the Greater Whitsundays community held summits in Mackay for the wider Mackay-Isaac-Whitsundays region to identify our own set of issues that we face in each of our communities and possible solutions that would meet the needs of our community. Our local summit developed our very own housing playbook.

I would like to put on record my sincere thanks to all of the housing provider organisations, the council representatives from across Mackay, Isaac and the Whitsundays, the developers, the real estate agents and the construction companies which all contributed to the local discussions. The outcome showed that there is no one-size solution that will solve the housing shortage, but, as a community, we can build on our strengths to ensure that we cater for everyone.

From the Brisbane-based Housing Summit, one action was to expand the remit of EDQ to drive the delivery of social and affordable housing in the context of urban renewal and housing precincts. I am excited that this bill is aimed at increasing the supply of quality social and affordable housing across our state where it is needed. This bill provides flexibility for regions to build the type of housing best needed to cater for demand and need. We have already seen the success of the flexibility shown by the Miles government's approach to delivering housing, with prefab houses being trucked out of the Gold Coast factory. We need homes for Queenslanders to be built faster to meet our big build social housing agenda. I support the bill.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (8.59 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contribution on this bill. In my opening marks, I emphasised that this bill is about increasing the supply of quality social and affordable housing where it is needed across Queensland, while building capacity for the government and the housing sector to deliver tailored housing outcomes. By enhancing the remit

of EDQ, this bill directly responds to the Queensland Housing Summit and gives EDQ the powers and abilities to facilitate and deliver much needed fast-tracked housing.

Is this the answer to all of the housing woes? Obviously not. Are the housing woes only in Queensland? Everybody knows it is not only in Queensland; it is all around Australia and all around the world. Therefore, the nonsense coming from those opposite about a failure to plan is basically saying that the whole world failed to plan, because post COVID we have seen situations economically, housing-wise and in a number of other areas that were never anticipated. To come in here and say that we are alone in these challenges is an absolute nonsense, but that is the broken record that we hear from those opposite. As Q Shelter said in their submission on the bill—

Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) is a vital tool in our view and important in the delivery of more housing supply across the state including new social and affordable housing.

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

I will address some of the issues raised during the debate and I will start with our record. Over the last 10 years, the government has declared 13 PDAs. Over the life of all PDAs, EDQ has approved 62,236 dwellings and lots, with 36,000 commenced. ABS data records that on average we have approved, commenced and completed more homes per quarter than those opposite. As the member for Stafford said, it is pretty galling to sit here and hear them talk about social housing. When they were in government, they went backwards in a really short period of time.

I must admit that I look at those opposite and I shake my head. Can I first acknowledge what a shame it was that the member for Kawana did not read the committee report, as the member for Logan pointed out, or even listen to my second reading speech where I made the following assurance—

... the proposed regulation will not immediately change social and affordable housing arrangements within existing PDAs. Any proposed changes ... would need to be through amendments to existing development schemes that are subject to the usual public notification.

The member for Kawana said that elements of the bill apply retrospectively. That is not correct at all. The committee was advised that existing PDA arrangements cannot be changed unilaterally by EDQ or the minister. Once again, he was making it up. No changes to existing PDA development schemes about social and affordable housing are proposed. That was basically said, too. Changes to any aspect of a finalised planning scheme would be subject to a statutory process of consultation, which is exactly what happens now. When a local government changes its neighbourhood plan, it goes through a process to change it. They are never locked in forever. That is a normal way that governments do business, but not according to the member for Kawana.

We had a bipartisan committee report that made one recommendation—that the bill be passed. There was not even a dissenting report. The only recommendation was that the bill be passed.

Meanwhile, some members raised AV Jennings and Caboolture West, as the member for Kawana did. That area is not even a PDA. In fact, so many of the things that have been raised are not related to PDAs. All we hear from those opposite is bleating, yet they fail to put one plan forward about how they are going to deliver the housing that we need in this state.

I go now to the member for South Brisbane, who was also very disappointing. This is going to deliver social, affordable and diverse housing in their own backyard, yet they are opposing it left, right and centre. As a journalist recently said, they are not house trained enough to ever be put in charge of anything. The member for South Brisbane said that buildings over 10 storeys need to comply with social and affordable housing requirements. Actually, the public consultation said that anything with more than 10 dwellings needs to have social and affordable housing. Our commitment was that 50 per cent of the Cross River Rail precinct would be open space. The member raised concerns about EDQ having land acquisition powers, but the bill says that only the minister can use these powers.

We do have challenging times with housing not only in Queensland but also right around the country. What do we see? There is blocking of the Albanese government's efforts to support more public housing, no alternative policies and campaigning against more housing in their electorates. It truly is a situation of nimbyism—not in my backyard. They want more of everything but just not in their

backyard. They are about shouting from the sidelines. They are not a serious party dedicated to providing a roof over the people who need it most.

**Mr Bleijie:** Well, don't preference them.

**Ms GRACE:** You did it last time. I will take that interjection.

**Mr Bleijie:** Only one seat.

**Ms GRACE:** No, in every seat. You did it in my seat, too. Have a look at your how-to-vote card.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin):** Direct your comments through the chair please, members.

**Ms GRACE:** Have a look at the how-to-vote card. It was in every single seat.

**Mr Bleijie:** It was not.

**Ms GRACE:** It was. Consultation on the draft Woolloongabba plan was announced by me in this chamber. I issued a media release and I wrote to the member for South Brisbane directly. Commencement of consultation was reported prominently by the *Courier-Mail*. Since then there have been around 6,400 impressions across the department's social media platform, close to 4,000 views of the draft Gabba plan video and around 1,200 downloads of the draft master plan. The draft master plan has been reported on the ABC website, as tabled by my colleague the Minister for Housing earlier today. We are out consulting and we are open to all consultation and input. I want people to have their say.

As I have previously stated, the Miles government is committed to using every lever at our disposal to identify solutions to the current housing challenges and implement them. This bill is about pulling one of those levers, EDQ, and putting it to even better use to deliver more homes for Queenslanders. In implementing these changes, EDQ has committed to continue to work with all partners on how they will be operationalised in practice. Working with partners is an essential component of how EDQ goes about its business. The bill also reflects a very clear commitment of the Miles government—that every Queenslanders should have a safe, secure and affordable place to call home.

In closing, I would like to again acknowledge the work of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee and thank stakeholders for their engagement on this bill. This government is implementing its policies. This government is implementing its visions. The Labor Party is the only party that will deliver what we need in this state. There is nothing coming from those opposite at all when it comes to a vision on housing for this state. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 25, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



**Ms GRACE (9.10 pm):** I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

**Ms GRACE:** I move the following amendment—

#### 1 After clause 25

Page 54, after line 24—

*insert—*

#### 25A Replacement of s 44 (Existing development applications and change applications under Planning Act)

Section 44—

*omit, insert—*

#### 44 Pre-existing applications under Planning Act

(1) This section applies if—

(a) an area is declared as a priority development area; and

- (b) before the area is declared, any of the following applications were properly made under the Planning Act in relation to premises in the area—
    - (i) a development application;
    - (ii) a change application;
    - (iii) an extension application;
    - (iv) a cancellation application; and
  - (c) immediately before the area is declared, the application had not lapsed or been decided under that Act.
- (2) Despite the declaration of the priority development area, the Planning Act continues to apply in relation to the application as if the area had not been declared.

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

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes to Hon. Grace Grace's amendments [\[1034\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Grace Grace's amendments [\[1035\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



**Ms GRACE** (9.10 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

**Ms GRACE:** I move the following amendment—

**2 After clause 25**

Page 54, after line 24—

*insert—*

**25B Replacement of s 45 (Existing development approvals under Planning Act)**

Section 45—

*omit, insert—*

**45 Particular development approvals under Planning Act**

- (1) This section applies if—
  - (a) an area is declared as a priority development area; and
  - (b) a development approval under the Planning Act for development on premises in the area—
    - (i) was in effect immediately before the declaration; or
    - (ii) is given for an application mentioned in section 44 after the declaration.
- (2) Despite the declaration of the priority development area, the development approval continues in effect for carrying out the development.
- (3) However, only the following applications under the Planning Act may be made to the development approval—
  - (a) a change application to make a minor change under that Act;
  - (b) a cancellation application.
- (4) To remove any doubt, it is declared that, for applying subsection (3), the Planning Act continues to apply in relation to the application as if the priority development area had not been declared.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 26 to 31, as read, agreed to.

Clause 32—



**Ms GRACE** (9.11 pm): I move the following amendment—

**3 Clause 32 (Amendment of s 77 (Exemption for particular development approvals and designations under Planning Act))**

Page 59, lines 4 to 6—

*omit, insert—*

Section 77(1)(a)—

*omit, insert—*

- (a) a development approval under the Planning Act for development on premises in a priority development area—
  - (i) given for an application mentioned in section 44; or
  - (ii) continued in effect under section 45; and

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 32, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 33 to 38, as read, agreed to.

Clause 39—



**Ms GRACE** (9.11 pm): I move the following amendment—

**4 Clause 39 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 6, div 4)**

Page 72, after line 29—

*insert—*

*Note—*

See sections 44, 45, 247 and 248 for when a development approval under the Planning Act may or may not be changed after a priority development area is declared.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 39, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 40 to 60, as read, agreed to.

Clause 61—



**Ms GRACE** (9.12 pm): I move the following amendment—

**5 Clause 61 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4)**

Page 95, line 4, after 'Transitional'—

*insert—*

**and validation**

Amendment agreed to.

**Ms GRACE:** I seek leave to move amendments outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

**Ms GRACE:** I move the following amendments—

**6 Clause 61 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4)**

Page 99, after line 4—

*insert—*

**246 Validation of particular extension and cancellation applications under Planning Act**

- (1) This section applies if, before the commencement—
  - (a) an extension application or a cancellation application was made or purportedly made under the Planning Act in relation to premises in an area; and
  - (b) the area was subsequently declared as a priority development area.
- (2) The application, and anything done in relation to the application, is taken to be, and always to have been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if new section 44 had applied to the application at the time it was made.

**7 Clause 61 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4)**

Page 99, after line 4—

*insert—*

**247 Validation of particular applications and decisions under Planning Act**

- (1) This section applies if, before the commencement—
  - (a) an area was declared as a priority development area; and
  - (b) a change application, an extension application or a cancellation application was subsequently made or purportedly made under the Planning Act in relation to premises in the area; and
  - (c) the application was decided or purportedly decided under that Act.

- (2) The application, and anything done in relation to the application, is taken to be, and always to have been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if the priority development area had not been declared.

**8 Clause 61 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4)**

Page 99, after line 4—

*insert—*


**248 Continued consideration of particular applications under Planning Act**

- (1) This section applies if—
- (a) before the commencement, an area was declared as a priority development area; and
  - (b) before the commencement, a change application, an extension application or a cancellation application was subsequently made or purportedly made under the Planning Act in relation to premises in the area; and
  - (c) immediately before the commencement, the application had not lapsed or been decided under that Act.
- (2) Despite new section 45, the Planning Act continues to apply in relation to the application as if the priority development area had not been declared.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 61, as amended, agreed to.


Clauses 62 to 66—

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (9.13 pm): I take the opportunity to correct the record in relation to my earlier contribution. When I said that the planning minister had issued at Arundel Hill a ULDA, what I meant was a TLPI. I was talking about the Urban Land Development Authority, which was the old EDQ. I correct the record.

Clauses 62 to 66, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.14 pm): I move—


That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.14 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.15 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Zanow