



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 21 August 2024

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## WEDNESDAY, 21 AUGUST 2024

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Parliamentary Service, Staff Retirements



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise the House of the retirement of three long-serving officers of the Parliamentary Service. Rob Hansen began his career in the Public Service in 1979. Rob has been a committee secretary in the committee office since 9 December 1994—what must be a record 30 years of service to our committees. During his time, Rob has been committee secretary to the Travelsafe Committee, various estimates committees and since 2012 various portfolio committees. Rob was also a clerk at the table from 2002 to 2017 and the project officer for the Queensland parliament's initiatives for our twinned parliaments, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, and spent considerable time in country providing training and advice between 2013 to 2015. As a long-serving and very experienced committee secretary, Rob was an important member of the committee office leadership team. Rob was awarded a meritorious service award in 2005 and is currently on well-earned long service leave and finishes with the service on 18 October 2024.

Andrea Musch started in the committee office on 15 December 1994. During her almost 30 years of service, she has provided executive support to more than a dozen parliamentary committees. From 2006 to 2008 Andrea provided secretarial support to the Clerk and since 2008 has provided executive support to the Deputy Clerk and the Ethics Committee and since 2012 the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. Andrea was awarded a meritorious service award in 2013. Andrea is also on well-earned long service leave and finishes with the service on 25 October 2024.

And Phil belled the cat—our Sergeant-at-Arms, Michael Watkin, started with the Parliamentary Service as a parliamentary security officer on 1 July 1991 and has served 33 years. Michael was promoted to a parliamentary security supervisor in 2001 and appointed to Sergeant-at-Arms in June 2014. Michael was awarded a meritorious service award in 2013. He is taking well-earned leave and will finish with the service on 25 July 2025. Michael has craftily decided his last day of work will be Friday, 13 September 2024, the day after the end-of-session drinks.

Honourable members, I ask you to join with me in wishing Rob, Andrea and Michael happy, healthy and long retirements.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!


#### Visitors to Public Gallery



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to welcome to the public gallery today the delegation from the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, FNQROC, led by chair Angela Toppin, mayor of Mareeba shire. The FNQROC delegation includes the following mayors sitting in the public gallery today: Barry Hughes, mayor of Etheridge shire; Lisa Scomazzon, mayor of Douglas shire; Robyn Holmes, mayor of Cook shire; Trevor Pickering, mayor of Croydon shire; Brett Olds, deputy mayor of Cairns; Dave Bilney, deputy mayor of Tablelands; and Nicholas Pervan, deputy mayor of Cassowary Coast. The delegation is ably supported by Darlene Irvine, FNQROC executive officer. Please make them feel welcome at Parliament House.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

## School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from West End State School in the electorate of South Brisbane, Brightwater State School in the electorate of Buderim, Mount Samson State School in the electorate of Pine Rivers, St Patrick's School St George in the electorate of Warrego and Mountain Creek State High School in the electorate of Buderim.

## PETITIONS

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

### Haigslea-Amberley Road, Schultz Road and Warrego Highway, Intersection

**Mr Zanow**, from 2,647 petitioners, requesting the House to fix the intersection of Haigslea-Amberley Road, Schultz Road and the Warrego Highway [\[1543\]](#) [\[1544\]](#).

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


### Tara Kogan Road, Upgrade; Wambo Creek, Stockyard Creek and Kogan Creek, Bridge Upgrades

**Ms Leahy**, from 387 petitioners, requesting the House to implement a range of measures to upgrade the Tara Kogan Road and the Wambo Creek, Stockyard Creek and Kogan Creek bridges [\[1545\]](#).

Petitions received.


## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Cross-Border Commissioner, Leavers, Mr I

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.35 am): This week we saw those troubling reports of crime on the border of New South Wales and Queensland impacting the people of Goondiwindi. Rightly, locals have called for better collaboration of services across the border. That goes for Goondiwindi to the Gold Coast and right out to Cameron Corner. It is why my government is introducing a Cross-Border Commissioner. Today I can announce that our government will appoint Ian Leavers to the role of Cross-Border Commissioner. His experience on the front line and his collaboration with emergency services and local, state and federal governments make him an ideal candidate for this role. I trust that Mr Leavers will help to break down barriers on the border and support our unique townships now and into the future.

The Cross-Border Commissioner will have a focus on improving the experience and livability of our cross-border communities. It is something those living in those areas have been calling for and something I am proud to deliver. I want to thank the LGAQ and the Goondiwindi mayor, Lawrence Springborg, for their support in bringing this role to life. We listened to their advocacy and to the experiences of those who understand the challenges of living in a border town.


### Environmental Protection

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.37 am): Queensland's greatest assets are our natural wonders—our rainforests, beaches, the Great Barrier Reef and all of our waterways. Those are just some of the reasons people travel from far and wide to visit our great state. Our unique lifestyle is the envy of the world. It is one of the reasons so many people are moving here. In turn, our economy thrives but that economic and environmental prosperity is at risk—at risk of damage from environmental vandalism and climate change. It is at risk unless we do something about it. That is why my government made the landmark move to legislate 75 per cent emissions reductions and 80 per cent renewable energy targets by 2035, it is why we are investing \$26 billion to transition to a clean energy economy, and it is why my government is increasing the size and number of protected areas and national parks in our state.

Since 2020 we have grown the protected area estate by 218,000 hectares. We are investing more than \$260 million in national parks and protected areas—the largest investment in Queensland's history—to preserve the rich and biodiverse areas that are unique to Queensland. At the same time, I want to make sure all Queenslanders can enjoy our great outdoors because there is nothing more quintessentially Queensland than cracking a XXXX while casting a line. It is why we need to strike a balance—a balance between protecting the environment and protecting the commercial and recreational fishing industries. It is why we have taken strong action, delivering the most comprehensive

fisheries reform in Queensland's history—like establishing net-free fishing zones and banning gillnet fishing in the Great Barrier Reef. It means bigger and better fish on the hook. We are also making it easier for boaties to get on the water by building bigger, better and more accessible boat ramps around the state. I will remain focused on preserving our great way of life and our great outdoors.

### Health System

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.39 am): Queensland's health system is one of the best in the country, indeed in the world. In the face of unprecedented demand in our emergency departments, our hero health workers and our investments have been making a real difference. Despite record ED presentations, a 7.9 per cent increase in triple 0 calls and an 11 per cent rise in category 1 patients, 100 per cent of category 1 patients in our EDs started treatment within two minutes.

To drive even better care in our community, it is my government that has delivered seven satellite hospitals in South-East Queensland, in some of our fastest growing communities, near our busiest hospitals. Since they have opened, we have seen more than 110,000 patients at our minor injury and illness clinics. These clinics are open from 8 am to 10 pm every single day, helping to treat anything from cuts and scrapes to broken bones, saving busy Queenslanders a trip to the hospital and taking pressure off emergency departments, and they are completely free, including free parking.

Our satellite hospitals have led to significant reductions in category 4 and 5 presentations at EDs within the same communities. Ipswich ED saw a 24.9 per cent drop in low-acuity patients, and Caboolture and Redlands EDs both saw reductions of 19.8 per cent and 16 per cent respectively compared to the June 2023 quarter. More than 40,000 Queenslanders have also received an outpatient appointment at our satellite hospitals as well as chemo, kidney dialysis and dental care all closer to home. That is important.


Queenslanders know that I will keep satellite hospitals open and in public hands. We will not sell them off or downgrade them because doctors and nurses tell us they are making a difference. Delivering—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, there is nothing that I can hear in the Premier's statement that requires interjection. I would like to hear this statement.

**Mr MILES:** We will not sell them off or downgrade them because doctors and nurses tell us they are making a difference. Delivering health care when and where Queenslanders need it is a priority for me, and that is what we will keep doing because it matters.

### Housing


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.42 am): The Miles Labor government is delivering what matters for Queenslanders. Our government knows that many Queenslanders have been struggling due to housing stress. This has been driven by our record population growth and a change in the make-up of average households. That is why we have been pulling every lever possible to ease housing pressures. This House will be pleased to know we are seeing some easing in the housing market in Queensland. According to the latest ABS data, the number of dwelling approvals in Queensland rose 14.6 per cent in June 2024. This marks the third straight month of growth, and was six per cent higher over the year. The monthly rise reflects increases in approvals for houses, up 15.9 per cent, and attached dwellings up 11.9 per cent.

There was some good news for renters, too. Rented residential dwelling numbers increased in the year to June 2024 to be almost 1,700 higher. The recent June quarter data for Queensland showed an increase of 196 rented dwellings compared with the March quarter 2024. This followed four quarterly increases of between 212 and 746 rented dwellings in the year to the March quarter 2024. This run of increases shows our government's determined effort is working after 10 consecutive quarterly declines.

We have also seen an increase in granny flat dwellings as a result of changes to planning regulations. I know the Premier was instrumental in those changes and he will be happy to hear this update. Bonds lodged for granny flat dwellings have increased from 16 dwellings in the December quarter 2022 to 971 in the June quarter 2024.

I want to thank the Premier for his leadership and I would also like to congratulate the housing minister for her tireless work commitment and laser focus in addressing this issue. There is still a long way to go, but our housing plan, Homes for Queenslanders, and our dedicated funding for housing is making a real difference for our state.

## Renewable Fuel Industry

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.44 am): The Miles government is doing what matters when it comes to developing more sustainable fuel sources for Queensland and the industries of the future. This evening I will be attending the Renewables Fuels Meets Queensland parliament event, and I am looking forward to engaging with representatives from this exciting emerging industry. Queensland is well placed to seize the opportunities in renewable fuels including sustainable aviation fuel, SAF. The SAF industry is poised to be worth \$3 billion annually by 2030, creating up to 15,600 jobs, mostly in regional areas nationwide by 2050, and we want Queensland to get a big share of these jobs.


We are already well on the way to establishing Queensland as a true green, jet fuel hub for the Asia-Pacific region. Last month, I announced \$760,000 in Department of State Development and Infrastructure funding to progress a feasibility study for the new Wagner SAF refinery it is developing in partnership with Boeing and LanzaJet. Importantly, this refinery will include a renewable diesel reduction capability, assisting with decarbonisation in rural areas. Boeing's Chief Sustainability Officer, Brian Moran told me earlier this week there is no better place to be developing a SAF industry than right here in Queensland.

We are also progressing partnerships to develop two further renewable fuel plants, one with Ampol at Lytton and one with Jet Zero at Townsville. In addition to this, funding from our Industry Partnership Program is supporting the development of a new processing facility in Central Queensland to grow and process SAF feedstock.

This is all part of our effort to help pioneer practical solutions that promise a cleaner, greener, aviation future. Our approach demonstrates it is possible to reduce emissions while at the same time strengthen our economic position and great lifestyle. The Miles government also has a strong record supporting green hydrogen, battery production and pumped hydro opportunities with the aim of delivering emission reductions.

Our total reduction in emissions is greater than any other jurisdiction, with a 35 per cent reduction on 2005 levels, enabling us to meet and beat our own 2030 target by eight years. Over this period, the Queensland population has grown from around 3.8 million to 5.6 million, with the economy also growing by 63 per cent. By investing in renewable fuels, we are supporting jobs and the renewable energy economy of the future, while also helping to protect Queensland's natural environment.

## Health Workforce Strategy

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.47 am): More and more Australians are choosing Queensland to call home. In fact, by 2032, Queensland's population is expected to surpass six million and our government is committed to continuing to provide world-class health care to Queenslanders, old and new, no matter where they live. To do this, we need to recruit, retain and train a robust health workforce. That is why we launched the Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032, backed by a \$1.7 billion investment. The strategy charts a path to recruiting the additional 40,000 healthcare staff our system will need over the next decade in both clinical and operational roles.

This strategy builds on our proud record of bolstering our frontline health workforce. Since 2015, we have hired over 24,000 frontline health workers. Our medical workforce has grown faster than every other state, and we have delivered an enterprise bargaining agreement that makes our nurses and midwives the best paid in the country. In 2020, we said we would hire an additional 9,735 frontline health workers in this term of government, and we have smashed that goal earlier than expected.

Building on this success, we are taking steps to build a pipeline of homegrown talent including in specialised areas like anaesthetics and imaging. We are collaborating with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to support up to 20 GPs and rural generalists in completing an advanced diploma in obstetrics, complemented by a rural generalist training mentoring program. I was privileged to meet one of the talented GPO trainees, Dr Katie Bird, in Townsville recently.


Our Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme is another incentive under the strategy that is seeing enormous success. Despite relentless criticism from those opposite, the scheme has attracted over 1,300 health workers to Queensland since it launched in July last year. This includes obstetrician Dr Clayton Grieve from Gladstone Hospital and clinical nurse Hayley from Cairns—both of whom have made the jump thanks to our scheme. What is more, Queensland Health's ongoing bold recruitment drive is successfully enticing international healthcare workers to call Queensland home, with more than



7,000 expressions of interest received during a four-month campaign. To date, 123 candidates have been offered roles across the state including in Townsville, Cairns, Mackay, West Moreton and the Sunshine Coast.

We are helping to fix a decade of federal LNP cuts to Medicare by securing the future of our primary care workforce. Our junior doctors will soon have access to a \$40,000 incentive to train as general practitioners, helping to build a pipeline that will keep our communities healthy across the next decade. We continue to advocate for increased Commonwealth supported places for medical students in our universities to ensure a sustainable pipeline of homegrown talent. These investments demonstrate our government's commitment to backing in our frontline health workforce and build upon our free TAFE initiatives for nurses and mental health workers. Our mighty doctors, nurses and allied health workers support Queensland when they need it most, and only a Labor government will continue to support them.

### Housing Supply; Homelessness


 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (9.51 am): From the biggest energy rebate in the country to our hugely successful 50-cent fares, we are doing what matters for Queensland—supporting renters, helping first home buyers, boosting social housing and working towards ending homelessness. We have cut red tape and we are funding infrastructure to help build more homes faster. We are doing that through programs like our Incentivising Infill Development Fund. The name is not catchy—it is not a slick slogan or a catchy punchline—but it is \$350 million that is clearing the way and getting projects off the ground.

Industry told us that they had projects ready to go—all they needed was a little bit of extra support. We are picking up the bill for infrastructure charges to pay for critical things like roads, parks and sewerage, and we are taking care of the application fees to make it cheaper to build and cheaper to buy. That means more money in the pockets of homebuyers. We have started off with 60 projects in the first round of applications. When they are finished, that will be another 1,872 new homes. Today I can announce that another 20 projects will receive funding, bringing forward another 1,870 homes in places like Brisbane, Logan, Moreton Bay, Ipswich and the Sunshine Coast.

We have been inundated with new applications. I reckon that is a pretty good sign that we have got this one right. The Planning Institute of Australia thinks so, too. Queensland state manager Nicole Bennetts said that the rapid uptake shows strong private sector appetite. They want to build the right homes in the right locations—close to hospitals, close to train stations and bus stops and close to where people want to live and work. We will make sure we use every square inch of land and get value for money for Queenslanders. The Incentivising Infill Development Fund is not a catchy slogan or a small target.

While I am on my feet, I want to address reports in the media today. Our team have been out at McCormick Place offering people accommodation since last week. While one person has accepted, I am advised that the other people have chosen not to take up that offer. The Premier's commitment has been made clear, that anyone experiencing homelessness be offered accommodation. Our teams are ready to help. The sector asked for a 20 per cent increase in funding—we have delivered that. We have also created a dedicated fund to ensure we can pay for accommodation for anyone experiencing homelessness. We will continue to do outreach and offer support to people right across Queensland.

### Small Business


 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.53 am): Just as everyday Queenslanders are, we know that Queensland's small businesses are doing it tough with national cost-of-living pressures. We absolutely acknowledge that changes in discretionary spending hit the cash flow of our small and medium businesses hardest, so more help is on the way. The new Miles Labor government is delivering what matters for Queensland with the biggest cost-of-living relief package in this nation's history. This is real, practical help for small businesses that need it. With ongoing economic challenges such as inflation, a tight labour market and an uncertain global environment, it is understandable that Queensland businesses are continuing to feel these pressures. Our cost-of-living measures are aimed at lowering business operating costs and putting more money into the pockets of Queenslanders to spend at their local small businesses.

It does not stop there. We have extended a vital lifeline for our small businesses so they do not go bust. Free financial counselling and wellness coaching is available through Queensland to continue to help small businesses tackle challenges and find solutions with free, one-on-one targeted support.

Queensland's small businesses can also access one-off relief payments of up to \$5,000 to help address immediate needs via the Small Business Support Service fund. Our small businesses are better off with Labor's procurement policies that give them a bigger slice of the government procurement pie. There is no better place in the country to be a small business owner, operator or worker than Queensland.

We can provide record support for our small businesses because we are making multinational mining companies pay their fair share of royalties—something that is opposed by the LNP and their leader. Their leader described making mining multinational companies pay their fair share as 'a bad plan', 'it was a dishonest plan, it broke the trust of the industry' and then promised the coal lobby 'what we take to the election at the end of the year, you will be able to take to the bank'—a reverse Robin Hood, taking from the people and giving to the rich, handing back billions to multinational mining companies and short-changing our small businesses. Make no mistake: the LNP are the biggest threat to Queensland's small businesses in a generation.

### Hervey Bay, Police Incident; Police Resources

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.56 am): Before I touch on other matters, I want to speak of an incident that occurred yesterday that highlights the dangers police confront in their daily efforts to protect the community. The incident demonstrates the importance of the government's investment in the best protective equipment for police.

Queensland police have described the scene confronting two police officers in a Hervey Bay residence. It will be alleged that when officers entered the home an armed man lunged at the officers with a weapon. The man then allegedly stabbed at the officers in the chest and abdomen areas. Police say that the officers were protected by their integrated load-bearing ballistic vests. I wish the best for these officers and thank them for their service and their courage.


The protective vests that the police officers were wearing were funded by this government. These protective vests have won an international award. As local police have said, it is only through good fortune that we are not talking about the death of one or more police officers here today. In stark contrast, when the Police Union asked the former LNP government to fund these vests, the LNP refused. We owe our police a great debt of gratitude for their efforts in protecting the community. The Miles government has shown time and again that we will invest in the protective equipment our police need.

Queensland leads the nation when it comes to police recruitment. This is off the back of the Miles government's record investment—an investment that will deliver approximately 3,000 extra police personnel. I am advised that there is a record at the academies right now: over 700 recruits undergoing training at police academies across the state. It is a record number and it is a record investment from the Queensland government in supporting the Queensland Police Service.

The number of serving police officers combined with the number of recruits in training is also the highest ever, and police advise that by the end of the next year the combined number will exceed the government's election commitment to deliver 2,025 extra police personnel. Earlier this month police conducted an open day in Townsville. The number of people who registered for the open day was nearly double this year compared to last year with over 1,000 registrations. The police open day in Brisbane also attracted a record crowd, showcasing the future of policing with more than 4,000 people attending the open day.

Queensland continues to lead the nation when it comes to police recruitment. We are building the biggest and best policing agency in the nation. That is what Queenslanders deserve because it enhances community safety. Our record shows that we back the police 100 per cent.

### Ekka


 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.00 am): The 2024 Ekka, although beset by rains, was a great success. I know that many in this House spent time at the Ekka and 345,000 Queenslanders passed through the gates. I thank President Justice David Thomas and CEO Brendan Christou for another spectacular Ekka. Ekka also saw the launch of the DAF bred strawberry, the Stella, named after the late Stella Young, with 85 per cent of strawberries grown in Queensland and more than 50 per cent nationally being DAF bred. Ekka always needs strawberries and strawberry sundaes.

For the farming sectors, Ekka is a key opportunity to showcase the diversity of agriculture. This includes internationally with industry promoting the sector to: China's Consul General Dr Ruan Zongze, who was able to experience the great food, fibre and foliage that was on display; Jo Martin, 'Queen

Bee' of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association, who was a hive of activity and a sweet success; Brendan Taylor of AgForce Grains, who assisted in highlighting sorghum to the Consul General—it was also a special year for AgForce on their 25th year as a peak body for agriculture—Michael Murray from Cotton Australia, who was threading the importance of fibre and cotton in everyday life; and Eric Danzi of eastAUSmilk with the fake cow milking demonstration gave a few cheesy moments. Of course, there was also Jo Sheppard and QFF with their advocacy and celebration of agriculture event, and the member for Bancroft stood in for me at that event. I appreciate the member doing that during my time of illness.

The Queensland government DAF stall was tremendously popular with keen interest in what role the government plays with regard to growers, fishers, forestry, biosecurity and everyday Queenslanders. The Rural Press Club breakfast is always a key highlight of any Ekka, and David Harris of AACo gave a great overview of the industry and the role that this 200-year-old company plays in the industry. We announced at the DAF stand at the Ekka stronger measures to assist our farmers, which continues the Miles government support that backs in our farmers. As the agricultural sector knows, it is only the Miles government that is doing what matters for Queensland farmers.

## Manufacturing

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.02 am): The Miles government is doing what matters for Queenslanders, and that includes for our manufacturers in Queensland. We back our manufacturing sector because we support good, secure local jobs in Queensland. The Miles Labor government has expanded our manufacturing programs to help deliver energy efficiency measures and reduce energy costs and emissions. Our first round of our Manufacturing Energy Efficiency Grant Program has awarded 35 grants to local manufacturers, with these projects expected to achieve total electricity savings of 488,526 kilowatt hours per annum. This is a reduction of 398 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions, saving businesses in Queensland almost \$126,000 annually. That is right, \$126,000 per year off the cost of doing business in Queensland.


This is about lowering energy bills and helping manufacturers move towards a low-carbon future in Queensland. There are businesses like Rockcote on the Sunshine Coast, which used their \$11,164 grant to replace their fluorescent lighting with LEDs at their Yandina factory, saving \$11,052 off their electricity bill annually and, importantly, reducing carbon emissions by 20 tonnes. Rockcote completed the changes in June and are already noticing the energy savings. They have also noticed significantly improved lighting within the workshop and offices, creating a safer and more productive working environment for their employees. Results from a recent staff survey showed a 92.3 per cent satisfaction rate for the new LED lighting within their workplace.

Blask Engineering in Inglewood were awarded almost \$25,000 to replace three aging welders with new energy efficient Fronius welders. They have been operating since February and Blask are now reaping the energy savings. They have also seen an increase in production time because of the new equipment that we supported them with. The new welders are expected to save 5,264 kilowatt hours of energy. That is a saving of \$1,969 per annum on energy costs and a five-tonne reduction in carbon emissions.

The Leader of the Opposition cannot be trusted to deliver the business support that our manufacturers need in Queensland because he could not even be trusted to run a business. These cost-of-living measures are delivering real results for our manufacturers, and I am thrilled to say there is so much more to come with an announcement on our next round coming soon.

I am proud to be part of the Miles Labor government which is helping our local manufacturers to ensure the manufacturing sector continues to grow in Queensland as well as helping our manufacturing sector to be more efficient in their businesses. When it comes to backing our manufacturers in Queensland, the Miles Labor government always delivers.

## FairPlay Vouchers

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (10.05 am): New Premier Steven Miles is doing what matters for Queenslanders by putting Queensland families first—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, Minister. Do honourable members know what I do not like? I do not like interjections at all, but I would like to hear the minister on his feet. Minister, please feel free to start again.

**Mr HEALY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. New Premier Steven Miles is doing what matters for Queensland by putting Queensland families first in helping to address the cost of living through the FairPlay program and this has turned out to be an enormously successful program. FairPlay helps to contribute towards the cost of sport and active recreation membership, registration and participation fees for Queensland kids.

Since 2019, FairPlay has been so successful for eligible families that from July this year, the Miles government opened up the program to all Queensland kids aged between five and 17, with vouchers worth up to \$200. That is a significant investment because we recognise the importance of this. Through the state budget we expanded the program by \$33.5 million to become a \$40 million boost for families right across Queensland.

Today I am pleased to inform the House that the take-up in this round has been nothing short of spectacular. In fact, it is been so successful that while the program was expanded to make 200,000 vouchers available to Queensland families, we have listened and expanded this further due to overwhelming demand. So far, more than 237,000 vouchers have been issued, with almost 50,000 already redeemed. That means 50,000 Queensland kids are now set to get on the cricket field, on the netball or basketball court, or to take part in abseiling or even orienteering.


**A government member:** Soccer.

**Mr HEALY:** That is true, soccer—we could rattle them all off if we needed to. Many of these kids might not have otherwise had the opportunity to be involved if not for FairPlay. This is such an important initiative and I can tell honourable members that we are a government that gets it.

It is important to note that up to 50,000 vouchers were guaranteed to those under the previous eligibility criteria for those kids whose parents, guardians or carers hold an eligible concession card or have a referral agent, which is just as important. In the current round, more than 33,000 vouchers have been issued to these families who are doing it particularly tough. Prior to this round, FairPlay had seen more than 210,000 vouchers, worth over \$30 million, redeemed by those eligible Queensland families, making an enormous difference in their life and injecting positive influences in their life.

Every child should have the opportunity to play sport and be active, and FairPlay is helping to make that possible for families right across the state.


### Cost of Living

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerst—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (10.08 am): The Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queenslanders, delivering cost-of-living relief and supporting those who need it most. On top of our record cost-of-living measures, including taking \$1,000 off every Queensland household's power bill, delivering 50-cent fares and reducing rego by 20 per cent, my department is delivering key measures to support Queenslanders in need. The Miles government is focused on increased investment in frontline agencies to support Queenslanders who need it most, including those experiencing financial hardship and food insecurity. We are continuing to invest in our network of 128 state funded neighbourhood centres, which are inclusive and welcoming spaces for everyone, providing vital services to support the cost of living and addressing social isolation and loneliness.

We are investing \$3.57 million over the next two years in OzHarvest and SecondBite that will support more Queenslanders in accessing these vital food recovery and distribution services. We are providing an additional \$2.88 million over the next four years to support Foodbank Queensland in establishing a new distribution hub in Townsville and expanding warehouse capacity here in Brisbane. We are investing \$3.3 million across 195 emergency relief services across Queensland to support those in immediate financial crisis. We know that, while immediate support is needed, including emergency relief, Queenslanders also need support with their longer term and often complex financial situations. Our investment of \$2.2 million to continue the Queensland Financial Resilience Program will help these longer term solutions, providing financial counselling in priority areas across Queensland—something that I imagine is particularly important for Queenslanders who may have been impacted by, let us say, unscrupulous business operators in our state, particularly those we have been hearing about over the last couple of days.

The Miles Labor government is doing what matters, delivering these critical cost-of-living measures, supporting those in need and providing relief for those who need it the most. Only a Labor government will continue to invest in and strengthen the community services sector. I look forward to updating the House on the positive impacts of this important investment.


## Forensic Science Queensland Advisory Council

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.11 am): I am pleased to advise that appointments have formally been made to the inaugural Forensic Science Queensland Advisory Council established under the new Forensic Science Queensland Act 2024. It is paramount that Queenslanders have confidence in our justice system, and that is why on 6 June 2022 an independent commission of inquiry into forensic DNA testing was established to restore the integrity of Queensland's forensic services. The commission, led by retired judge the Hon. Walter Sofronoff KC, called for the development of a new legislative framework, including the establishment of a non-executive advisory board to oversee the performance of the forensic DNA laboratory.


The Forensic Science Queensland Act 2024 commenced on 1 July this year. The act creates a new framework for forensic service delivery and formally establishes the Forensic Science Queensland Advisory Council to consist of up to 11 members with expertise in forensics services, law, policing and victim support. The council is tasked with monitoring and reviewing the policies and procedures of Forensic Science Queensland as they relate to the administration of criminal justice within this state. The council will continue the work of the interim advisory board, providing strong accountability, transparency and governance oversight to support the continuation of forensic services reform in Queensland.

The council will be chaired by the eminent Ms Julie Dick SC, former president of the Childrens Court of Queensland and District Court judge. Ms Julie Dick SC comes with a wealth of knowledge relating to the reforms necessary within the forensic services base having also co-chaired the interim advisory board with Mr Sofronoff. The council's membership will include 10 other members with representatives from key criminal justice stakeholder agencies including the Queensland Police Service, Legal Aid Queensland and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The council membership was promoted nationally and internationally, yielding significant interest with a total of 45 applications received. I am pleased to note the high calibre of applicants, with many distinguished Australians and overseas experts putting forward their application. I welcome the new members of the council. The advisory council will hold its inaugural meeting in the coming weeks.

## ABSENCE OF MINISTER


 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am): I rise to advise the House that the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice will be absent today as she is in Canberra fighting for Queensland's fair share at an education ministers meeting. As such, I advise the House that the honourable Minister Grace will take questions on behalf of Minister Farmer during question time today.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am): Pursuant to sessional order 2(3), I advise the House that the automatic adjournment for today's sitting will commence at 9.45 pm.

## PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

### Crime and Corruption Commission, Report

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (10.14 am): I lay upon the table of the House the Crime and Corruption Commission's covering letter and report titled *Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee: section 314 Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000: assumed identities—annual report: 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024*. The committee received the report on 26 July 2024 and I am tabling it within 14 sitting days of receipt as required.

*Tabled paper:* Crime and Corruption Commission: 2023-24 Annual Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on authorities for assumed identities relating to criminal activity pursuant to section 314 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 [[1546](#)].

## NOTICES OF MOTION

### Mental Health Services



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House:

1. notes that:
  - (a) every Queenslander has the right to high-quality mental health care, regardless of their income level or where they live; and
  - (b) in 2022, the federal Labor government halved the number of Medicare subsidised psychology sessions from 20 to 10;
2. calls on the Queensland government to tax big corporations to:
  - (a) ensure every Queenslander can access 20 free psychology sessions each year; by—

**Mr Kelly** interjected.

**Dr MacMAHON:**—

- (b) directly employing additional clinical and registered psychologists in the public health system.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I just remind members that interjections during notices of motion are unparliamentary and disorderly, member for Greenslopes.

### Crime Statistics



**Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (10.15 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes:

- (a) In the decade since the Palaszczuk and Miles Labor governments came to power, 53 of 55 crime categories and victim numbers have increased, costing Queenslanders their lives, livelihoods, and hitting their hip pockets through higher insurance premiums and security measures.
- (b) Increases have included:
  - Townsville robberies up 287 per cent and stolen cars up 103 per cent;
  - Bundaberg stolen cars up 282 per cent;
  - Rockhampton stolen cars 226 per cent;
  - Gold Coast stolen cars up 60 per cent;
  - Brisbane stolen cars up 150 per cent;
  - Mackay stolen cars up 149 per cent;
  - Cairns stolen cars up 73 per cent;
  - Sunshine coast stolen cars up 100 per cent;
  - Hervey Bay stolen cars up 260 per cent; and
  - Maryborough stolen cars up 282 per cent.
- (c) These increases follow the watering down of laws by the state government.

And calls on the government to put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

### Parole Board, Former President



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.16 am): My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. After forgetting during estimates, the minister has now confirmed that she was advised of the referral of the former Parole Board president in a meeting on 12 June. On what day was the former Parole Board president referred to the CCC?

**Ms BOYD:** I have tabled a statement in the parliament and written to the committee on this matter. Both of those documents are on the public record and outline the responses to the matter that the member has raised.

### Parole Board, Former President

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the Minister for Corrective Services. Can the minister tell Queenslanders why the former Parole Board president was allowed to resign on his own terms, entitling him to a pension for life, rather than being stood down pending a CCC investigation?

**Ms BOYD:** I thank the member for the question. The president of the Parole Board tendered a resignation that actually ended up happening earlier. He tendered a resignation on the 12th and we brought that forward to the 4th, so I think the basis of the question that the member alleges is not actually factual.

### Miles Labor Government

**Ms PEASE:** My question is of the Premier. Can the Premier please outline how the Miles Labor government has a clear plan for Queensland's future, and is the Premier aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Lytton for her question. Everyone on this side of the House is listening to Queenslanders and delivering for them a comprehensive plan for our state's future—a \$1.3 billion community safety plan that is preventing crime, the Putting Queensland Kids First plan that is intervening early and a housing plan that, as we just heard from the Deputy Premier, is delivering more homes for Queenslanders and delivering relief for renters.

We are delivering a comprehensive record-breaking cost-of-living package with \$1,000 off everyone's energy bills, almost free public transport, free kids sport through the \$200 vouchers that the sports minister was talking about earlier, a plan to deliver more competition into our petrol market and a 20 per cent cut to car registration. It is a very comprehensive cost-of-living plan. We have a health workforce plan that the health minister just talked to us about. We are seeing record numbers of Queenslanders treated on time, more elective surgery, more outpatient appointments and more care delivered closer to where Queenslanders live. These are comprehensive plans that are doing what matters for Queenslanders. They are comprehensive plans that are fully funded and fully costed. They are plans that are already working and already delivering for Queenslanders.

Our plans are also public plans that we talk about, that we release and that are on websites. They are not hidden away like the LNP's plans. They are not hidden behind the slick slogans of the Leader of the Opposition, who refuses to explain the role he played in delivering hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer funds to a company he then went on to work for. His plans are hidden away. He refuses to say why he gave \$200,000 over in a settlement but supposedly did nothing at all wrong. That is hidden away just as the plans of the LNP are in the hope that Queenslanders will not notice them.

On this side of the House we listen to Queenslanders, we develop plans, we release those plans and those plans deliver for Queenslanders across all of the policy areas that Queenslanders tell us they want to see more action on. We are delivering record action on cost of living, record investment in the community safety area, record investment into more homes and record investment into more health care closer to home, including in our satellite hospitals.

### Parole Board, Former President

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. The minister has now confirmed that she was made aware of the CCC referral in a meeting on 12 June with the commissioner and departmental staff. Diary records show that she met with the former Parole Board president after being informed of his CCC referral. I table correspondence to the CCC with respect to this issue.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 29 July 2024, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Bruce Barbour, regarding the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee budget estimates hearing conducted on 26 July 2024 [[1547](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 1 August 2024, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Bruce Barbour, providing further information regarding the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee budget estimates hearing conducted on 26 July 2024 [[1548](#)].

Why would the minister knowingly meet with the head of a statutory body under a CCC investigation without any departmental staff present?

**Ms BOYD:** I thank the member for the question. As I have said, I have tabled responses to these matters in the parliament.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Members, I have given guidance previously that when I believe the minister is being responsive to the question asked I would like to hear the answer. Members to my left might not like the answer that is being provided. However, I still need to hear it.

**Ms BOYD:** I have tabled a statement on this matter and I have also written to the committee to clarify the record. Both of those documents are public records that address the concerns raised by the member.

**Mr Bleijie:** No, they don't.

**Ms BOYD:** Yes, they have. I answered it in estimates.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Ms Fentiman** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. The Minister for Health will cease her interjections. Member for Kawana, you are clearly not directing your comments through the chair. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms BOYD:** I spoke at length in the estimates committee hearing in relation to the nature of that meeting that I had with the former president of the Parole Board. Mr Speaker, what became really obvious in that estimates committee process is that the member for Kawana had that allegation, he had that knowledge and he had not referred it on anywhere. My question is: why didn't the member for Kawana refer on the matter, the allegation, that he was aware of? As a former attorney-general, surely the member for Kawana agrees that he has a duty to refer such matters. I want to be really clear around this: given that these matters have been referred to the CCC, I have no further comment on them.

### SET Solutions

**Mr HUNT:** My question is of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on what the former director of SET Solutions owes the people of Queensland and on any other risks to Queensland?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Caloundra for his question. He asks me what the former director of SET Solutions owes the people of Queensland. The LNP leader, the former sole director of SET Solutions, owes the people of Queensland an explanation. Yesterday the LNP leader, the self-described 'premier elect' of Queensland, addressed the House about his time as the sole director of SET Solutions. In that statement to the House, the LNP leader did not deny that he avoided his \$112,000 tax bill. The LNP leader did not deny that his \$200,000 in payments was hush money. The LNP leader did not deny that he ran SET Solutions while it was insolvent. I will say that again: the LNP leader had the opportunity yesterday when he, in fact, rose and spoke in the House but he did not deny that he ran SET Solutions when it was insolvent.

When the LNP leader addressed the issue of SET Solutions, he once again used his trademark carefully crafted misdirection. The LNP leader said that he came into the company on the promise of capital from someone. Who was the person who made that promise of additional capital? Who was the secret benefactor? Have they ever made a political donation to the Leader of the Opposition? Has that person ever donated to the LNP? If the LNP leader claims to have 'met his' obligations then why was he forced to pay \$200,000 in hush money? That is \$50,000 for every month he was the sole director of SET Solutions.

The people of Queensland deserve to know what the Leader of the Opposition did that was so bad that it required him to pay \$50,000 for every month that he was the sole director of SET Solutions. Where does someone find \$50,000 a month? Did the secret benefactor bankroll that payment? Is the Leader of the Opposition still in the pocket of the secret benefactor—\$50,000 a month? What is the big secret—\$50,000 a month? It must have been really bad. The LNP leader wants to be the next premier of Queensland and the people of this great state deserve a detailed explanation from him.

### Parole Board, Former President

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. The minister says that the former Parole Board president originally proposed a resignation date of 12 July and, in discussions with her office, agreed to bring that date forward to 4 July. What was so special about that date and why was the minister's office negotiating the exit date of a statutory officeholder under CCC investigation instead of standing him down?

**Ms BOYD:** I thank the member for the question. In relation to the matters, I have already made public statements.

**Opposition members** interjected.



**Ms BOYD:** I have already made statements in relation to this. They are a matter of public record. **Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Nanango and member for Everton, I am having difficulty hearing most of the people on their feet because both of you are continually interjecting. You are warned under the standing orders. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

**Ms BOYD:** I do. It became apparent last night during the parliamentary proceedings that the member for Burdekin was very much confused and confounded by the estimates process and by the information that was given there. Let me be really clear: the information that relates to the substance of the member's question is a matter of public record. I have stated that I had been in conversation with Crown Law prior to having conversations with the former president of the Parole Board. It has become really obvious, though, that the LNP do not like to answer questions. They are happy to ask them; they do not like to answer them. It has become obvious through this process—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Despite popular opinion, I do not like the sound of my own voice. I am calling the House to order. I expect that the House will come to order. I will start warning members if I cannot hear the member who is on their feet. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

**Ms BOYD:** I do, thank you. It has become very obvious that the LNP would prefer to play politics with matters than follow correct process. It has become really clear through this particular process that the LNP do not want to actually play within the guidelines. The CCC is the correct place for these matters to be dealt with. They should not be ventilated in this place or in committee.

The LNP came along to an estimates hearing knowing full well that they were in receipt of allegations that they had not referred to the CCC. They have a public interest to refer matters to the CCC but they did not do that. One would wonder why, but it has become very obvious that the LNP would prefer to play politics with these matters than see the public interest properly served. That is the way they do business. It became very obvious that the LNP love one thing—that is, attacking public servants. We saw that day after day during estimates.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was about the specific date and why the minister was negotiating an exit date in the first place.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, there is validity to the point of order. I will ask you to return to the specific question. I appreciate that you are dealing with the question in broad terms, but I ask you to come back to the question as asked.

**Ms BOYD:** There were discussions about bringing forward the exit date so we could get fresh leadership in the Parole Board. I am really pleased to report to the House that that position is being advertised right now. I encourage anyone who is interested in that position to apply, because we believe in a robust parole system here in Queensland—a transparent and proper process. I am focused on and dedicated to ensuring that we have a Parole Board—

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

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

**Ms BOYD:**—here in Queensland that functions to the best of its ability.

*(Time expired)*

## Housing

**Ms PUGH:** My question is of the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queenslanders looking for housing, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. Last night in my office we were having a chat about housing for Queenslanders and how important it is that we provide housing not only in the inner suburbs of Brisbane, such as in the member's electorate of Mount Ommaney, but also in all of Queensland. As the nation's leading growing state, Queensland is facing enormous demand for new housing to meet the needs of our growing population. Why would you not come to Queensland? People are speaking with their feet and moving here. The Miles government is helping to meet this demand through our Homes for Queenslanders plan. The Minister for Housing is doing an excellent job. We know that, with growing demand, we need to grow the supply of housing.

The member for Mount Ommaney asked if there are any risky alternatives. The LNP gutted the state's public developer—Economic Development Queensland—the last time they were in government. We have strengthened it. We brought it back and now it is delivering in spades. It is at the forefront of efforts to make sure these sites are being developed for homes.

To date, EDQ has issued development approvals for over 60,000 dwellings across the state's 35 priority development areas, PDAs. Recently I declared Queensland's newest PDA: Waraba in the Moreton Bay region. Waraba will cover almost 3,000 hectares of land and deliver 30,000 dwellings for approximately 70,000 people. To put that into perspective, that is almost the size of Mackay. We will build infrastructure there. We will invest \$100 million to help create this new city. I turned the first sod there. We estimate 17,000 local jobs will be created. We have turned the first sod to develop the critical water infrastructure. They were all there, ready to go. The water and wastewater infrastructure will connect Waraba's homes of the future to the water grid. That is what the Miles government is delivering. It is not gutting one of our prime developers. It has established PDAs through EDQ to create the homes of the future.

EDQ has also received a development application for close to 900 build-to-rent homes on the Gold Coast. I know that this month the housing minister and member for Gaven visited Lumina, which is in the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct, where homes will be aimed at frontline health workers and students. I thank her. I know that she is very excited about the planned 878 new homes, of which more than 175 will be affordable housing.

### **Parole Board, Former President**

**Mr MICKELBERG:** My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. Can the minister confirm that allowing the Parole Board former president to resign rather than be stood aside pending an investigation ensured he cannot be stripped of his \$210,058.80 lifetime yearly pension?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, I will allow the question. It is very similar to a previous question; however, I would argue there are some minor differences. I will allow the minister to answer in the manner in which she sees fit.

**Ms BOYD:** As I said in the previous answer, arrangements were made to consult Crown Law about this particular matter. The Parole Board former president actually resigned sooner than initially forecast, and I am not aware of any other matters.

### **Health System**

**Mr BROWN:** My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister outline how the Miles government is delivering more investment in our health system, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Capalaba for the question. He is a huge supporter of the massive investment we are making at the Redland Hospital which will mean more beds and more staff to cater for the growing community.

We are committed to supporting our amazing health system, which is why this year's budget includes a record \$28.9 billion investment. This record investment is only possible because we bring in the revenue needed to provide these world-class services. It would seem that that is in stark contrast to the Leader of the Opposition. This is a man who ran a business that could not meet its costs and could not pay its debts.

**Mr Dick:** Never explained any of it.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I take that interjection. The member for Broadwater has never explained any of this. He has some serious questions to answer. He came in here yesterday and said, 'I'm going to address these matters.' All he said was that nothing has changed since 2018. That is just so odd, because a lot has changed since 2018. A 2019 PwC report found that the company was trading whilst insolvent while he was the sole director. We have also found out since 2018 that there was a \$200,000 settlement with liquidators. This is despite the Leader of the Opposition saying, 'I've got no mark against my name. I've done nothing wrong.'

We have all heard the excuse that he came into this company with a promise of a major capital injection which did not eventuate. As the Deputy Premier has said today, who made that promise to him, when did it become apparent that that capital investment was not forthcoming and why did he continue to operate the business for months when he knew that capital investment was not coming?

He also has not answered questions about the trainees, the staff and the creditors who were left behind when he cut and ran from the company. What happened to the hardworking trainees who signed up to get a certificate to further their career, who handed over their hard-earned cash to a company that was trading whilst insolvent and that left them high and dry? What about the mum-and-dad small business owners here in Queensland who have been left high and dry? What about St John Ambulance, which was owed money from the Leader of the Opposition's company?

Do members know what really goes to the character of this man? It is that he has not apologised to any of the small businesses, the staff or the trainees and he has not been up-front with Queenslanders, whom he wants to vote for him to become premier of Queensland. He will not apologise and he will not answer questions—shifty.

### **Parole Board, Former President**

**Ms LEAHY:** My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. The minister admits she negotiated an exit date for the former Parole Board president of 4 July. Was the minister aware if he had resigned just one day earlier he would have lost an additional \$30,008 per annum in his pension because 4 July was exactly the date which entitled him to the extra money?

**Ms BOYD:** I thank the member for the question. She is correct: the initial date that was offered was the 12th. That was brought forward to accelerate the filling of the position of president of the Parole Board. It is a really important role that feeds into public confidence. One of the things I was determined to do was ensure that we have a Parole Board that operates in the best manner it possibly can.

The matters that related to the Parole Board former president's departure I discussed with him. The former president of the Parole Board Queensland and I had a meeting in relation to parole decisions and the acting arrangements not following the cascading order. These are things we have put on the public record already. The acceleration of his resignation—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The minister was asked a very specific question around the timing of the former Parole Board president's resignation. The minister is trying to answer everything else other than that actual question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Unless I am sitting in a different parliament, member, I did hear a specific response to that question. The minister has more time on the clock to be relevant to the question as asked and I would ask her to do so.

**Ms BOYD:** I appreciate that fulsome answers are probably foreign to the LNP. I am happy to continue to answer questions on this all day because on this side of the House we turn up and answer questions. We do not run from the media. We do not obfuscate questions. We address questions. The former Parole Board president's resignation is something that I have talked about at length.

**Ms Leahy** interjected.

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

**Ms BOYD:** A statement has been tabled. I have written a letter on the matter. It is on the public record. This question has been asked and answered a number of times. I am happy to answer the same question from those opposite time and time again.

### **GST Revenue**

**Mrs McMAHON:** My question is of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on Queensland's GST revenue, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any risks to this revenue?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Macalister for her question. I can inform the House that Queensland is expected to receive \$1.5 billion in GST revenue in 2024-25. People may not like paying tax but Queenslanders understand the importance of taxation, including company tax and GST, except the LNP leader.

The LNP wants to ask questions about the exit date of the former president of the Parole Board, but why does it not ask about the exit date of the sole director of SET Solutions? When did the LNP leader leave as sole director of SET Solutions? What did the LNP leader know? What did the LNP leader do? Why did he have to pay \$200,000 in hush money? Why has the LNP leader never talked about his exit from SET Solutions? Queenslanders know the importance of paying tax, except the Leader of the Opposition.

The LNP leader had been a director of SET Solutions for five days when the Australian Taxation Office sent him a legal demand for \$112,000 in unpaid taxes. Did the LNP leader pay that bill? No, he did not. The LNP leader never paid that tax bill. Instead, the LNP leader used SET Solutions to sponsor the North Queensland Fury Football Club where he was a Fury foundation member. A North Queensland Fury Football Club Facebook post made a week after the LNP leader received the legal demand from the ATO shows SET Solutions was a sponsor and was offering \$5,000 to the club.

The LNP leader made that decision and his decision was not to pay his tax bill. The LNP leader decided to give money instead to his own football team. According to the liquidator's report into SET Solutions, which came after the liquidator trawled through the wreckage of that company, the LNP leader had not just dodged that tax bill, but the Australian Taxation Office was owed not \$112,000 but was owed a grand total of \$772,000. The ATO was owed more than three-quarters of a million dollars—\$772,000.

That money could have funded an additional 3,800 FairPlay vouchers to help kids in North Queensland and Far North Queensland play football. How can a man who wants to be the premier of Queensland be trusted when he cannot be trusted to pay his tax bill?

### **Parole Board, Former President**

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. The opposition has been provided with information from a whistleblower that a long-term Labor staffer was romantically involved with the former president of the Parole Board and allegations of misuse of allowances. Can the minister confirm this?

**Ms BOYD:** If the member for Maroochydore has details of allegations I would strongly recommend that she refer them to the appropriate place to be dealt with in the appropriate way.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, I cannot hear the minister which means that there are far too many interjections. I assume you would like to hear the answer, as do I.

**Ms BOYD:** Any allegation like that is concerning and it should absolutely be dealt with through the appropriate avenues and there should be an investigation. As I have made very clear on the public record, the allegations around the former president of the Parole Board that have been referred to the CCC are not allegations known to me. I was not the person who made that referral. I have not had substantive allegations in relation to the former president of the Parole Board come to me in order to refer them.

The member for Maroochydore obviously has allegations and she should refer them, just like—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Algester and member for Lytton! I call the member for Hervey Bay. My apologies. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

**Ms BOYD:** I do. Thank you, Mr Speaker. If the member for Maroochydore has allegations, she should refer them to the correct place. There is a process that is gone through in this place that is right, and that is what should happen.

As I have said on the record many times, I have never had details of allegations that actually warrant my referral. They are not known to me. By all means, allegations should follow the proper course. I do not have that information, but I encourage the member for Maroochydore to go through the proper processes with allegations that she receives rather than politicising issues, as the LNP do quite regularly and as the member for Kawana did when he came into the estimates hearing with allegations that had not been referred through the proper processes. Instead he came into estimates to politicise those matters.

That is not information that is known to me. I do not have the details of allegations around the former Parole Board president. If the LNP did their homework and read the information, both the transcript of the estimates process and the statements I have made since, they would know that.

### **Consumer Protection**

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Can the Attorney outline how the Miles Labor government is doing what matters to protect Queensland consumers, and is the Attorney aware of any risky alternative approaches?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Hervey Bay for his question because I know he understands the importance of protecting consumers in Queensland, and that includes mum-and-dad businesses, small businesses across this state, that are sometimes left high and dry because of dodgy business practices.

As I said yesterday, I am very proud of the Office of Fair Trading and the work they do to protect consumers. Just recently a portable building provider based in Toowoomba allegedly took more than \$1.3 million from Queenslanders for tiny homes, cabins and granny flats that were never provided. Christopher Terrance Edards and his company Chace Roofing Sheds and Patios Pty Ltd appeared in court on Monday facing 38 charges for failure to supply under the Australian Consumer Law. We are talking about 19 customers who allegedly paid between \$20,000 and \$217,000 for products that never eventuated. I think everyone in this House would agree that this is not acceptable. Our hearts go out to those hardworking Queenslanders who have, in all likelihood, lost money they could ill afford to part with.

We know when it comes to another business that the Leader of the Opposition was involved in that over 175 creditors were owed money of over \$2 million—\$2.7 million. I saw the comments from the Leader of the Opposition yesterday firstly saying that the company was in 'substantial trouble' when he came in. Did he know that the company was potentially insolvent or at risk of insolvency? Did he follow the law in relation to that if it was at risk? Did he seek safe harbour or did he just keep trading and found a new owner and passed it on? Was he transparent to that new owner?

He tried to play politics. He said, 'We're just talking about things that have been publicly available for several years.' No, they have not. They became public in July and August this year through ABC articles. Where were Queenslanders to find the \$200,000 worth of payments? Where were Queenslanders to find that the Leader of the Opposition, as the sole director, then engaged his consultancy firm and billed them for \$72,000? Yet the Leader of the Opposition says that he did this work—brought in new ownership and streamlined costs—all the while never taking pay himself. Is he talking about as a director or the actual consultancy company? He might not have accepted pay, but he was certainly billing them. If he did not accept pay, we know why. It was because they had no money. That is why. There are lots of questions to answer around this consultancy. It is so similar to Scott Driscoll and what I saw in my local community.

*(Time expired)*

### Homeschooling

**Mr DAMETTO:** My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice. Bullying, academic concerns and 'wokeism' are the three top reasons parents are removing their children from mainstream education. Homeschooling enrolments have risen in Queensland by 229 per cent over five years. Will the minister outline what is being done to address this problem in Queensland schools?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. What we have seen since COVID—and I think many states have seen—is that there has been an increase in homeschooling. When we look at the statistics we can see that it is happening across the public system and the private system as well. It is not just happening across the public education system.

There are many reasons why parents homeschool. One reason is for travel, as some of my friends are doing at the moment. It can be for social reasons. Another reason is that they believe their child may not be safe at school. What we do as an education department is ensure that being safe at school and being able to attend school in a safe environment is what our principals and hardworking teachers strive for every single day.

What is also obvious is that a lot of this—and this was in the article this morning—does not happen only at school. Unfortunately social media can reach our children anywhere any time, and a lot of this is occurring on social media outside of school. Phones are being given to children. When I was education minister we banned phones during school hours. That is showing significant improvements in behaviour in school and it is showing significant improvements in concentration on school work. That is one of the actions that we have taken as a government.

We have also led the nation with Bullying No Way. We have promoted that bullying is not accepted in our schools. Our teachers are professionals. Our principals are professionals. Where they can address this matter it is their obligation to do so with the support of the education department. In addition to that, we have now employed psychologists in schools, giving children who may be suffering from bullying the ability to see another trained professional to take the burden off our hardworking

teachers and principals. We have also included GPs in schools and wellbeing hubs in schools. We have also ensured that Respectful Relationships training is upgraded and spreads from their first year in prep right through to senior.

As always with these issues, the education department and our staff cannot do it alone. We also need the community to step up. We need parents to step up. We need other providers to step up because we know that what is happening outside comes into our schools.

### **Help to Buy**

**Mr SKELTON:** My question is of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is doing what matters to support home ownership through the Help to Buy shared equity scheme, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for Nicklin for the question. I know that he, alongside everyone on this side of the House, is focused on doing what matters—supporting Queenslanders to get the great Australian dream. Across Australia the average value of a house has risen 453 per cent in just three decades—that is across the entire country. One of the first things our new Premier did in his role was to launch our Homes for Queenslanders plan. A key part of that plan is about helping first home buyers. One of our first initiatives is doubling the first home owner grant. We are lifting the stamp duty threshold and we are backing the Help to Buy shared equity scheme, which could be supporting thousands of Queenslanders right now.

Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition will not stand up to his mates in Canberra, delaying thousands of Queenslanders getting support. We have already passed this legislation. There is a solution. It is set—S-E-T—and ready to go, but we know that the Leader of the Opposition is not well known for his ability to stand up, particularly when set solutions are on the table—not to his buddies in Canberra or, frankly, on his own track record. We know the Leader of the Opposition cannot hack scrutiny. He is happy to dish it out but short on taking it. I am not really sure why he is so sensitive. We are just asking some very simple questions.

What is the go with the donor who later got a contract from the Newman government? What has happened to the hundreds of creditors, small businesses and families, including some in my electorate? Have they been paid? What is with the \$200,000 worth of payments made after the Leader of the Opposition made a statement to this House suggesting ‘there’s nothing to see here’? Why did the Leader of the Opposition never declare what appears to be a very significant liability on his register of interests? He did not reckon it was worth a mention. Who is the secret benefactor who promised the ‘big capital injection’? These are really simple questions. Why do liquidators suspect that the company the Leader of the Opposition was the sole director of was trading while insolvent? That feels like a really easy question to answer. Frankly, it all feels a bit ‘how ya goin’. There is a murkiness around these matters. As I said, all we are doing is asking questions that Queenslanders deserve to know the answers to, because if the Leader of the Opposition cannot answer them I think it begs the question whether he is really fit to run this state.

### **Regional Queensland, Roads**

**Mr ANDREW:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. With reference to many recent road accidents and fatalities in my region, will the minister advise when some of the \$66 billion in mining royalties the government has raked in over the last 10 years will be sent back to the regions where they came from to fix up the absolutely shocking state of Queensland’s disintegrating rural and regional road network, mainly the Bruce Highway? It is a goat track.

### **Speaker’s Ruling, Question Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mirani, I am going to rule the question out of order. It started as a question, but it turned into a statement and it did not finish with a question.

### **Training and Skills, Investment**

**Mr WHITING:** My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Can the minister explain how the Miles Labor government is doing what matters to support training and small business, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

**Mr McCALLUM:** I thank the member for Bancroft for his question. Labor is proudly putting money back into the pockets of both Queensland small businesses and our students through things like our \$250 million Small Business Strategy and our \$370 million Skills Strategy. We are getting support where it needs to go, not funnelling it to dodgy registered training organisations.

Yesterday right here in parliament we learned about a \$320,000 grant from the Newman government which the member for Broadwater was a minister of. That \$320,000 went to SET Solutions—the very same company he was later sole director of. The program guidelines are very clear. That money was supposed to provide support services to overcome barriers for learners and the funding could only be used to support students. I have a copy of the guidelines right here. I will read from them: ‘What outcomes are expected?’ Training outcomes are expected: certificate I, II, III and IV. Queensland learners are supposed to get their qualifications, not be left high and dry after the company goes bust. What do the program guidelines say about funding? What can project funds be used for? ‘Funds can only be expended on costs directly associated with the delivery of strategy support services.’ Funding from other sources must be disclosed. The guidelines then go on to say that all projects must be fully acquitted and any unexpended or surplus funds returned to the department.

This raises a number of questions that keep on mounting up for the Leader of the Opposition. Was this \$320,000 from the Newman government that went to SET Solutions fully acquitted in line with program guidelines? Every single cent of Queensland taxpayers’ money—every single dollar—should have been appropriately accounted for and acquitted. These are the questions that need to be answered. Unfortunately, they are not being answered by the member for Broadwater because every member in this place knows that he does not like to answer questions and does not like to provide detail.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Buderim and the member for Currumbin are both warned under the standing orders.

### Satellite Hospitals

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Premier. The Labor government announced a Gabba upgrade with no analysis. It announced state owned petrol stations without modelling. Last night there were reports the government had not finalised locations for so-called satellite hospitals despite an announcement to be made in four days. Is this another example of the third-term Labor government putting its electoral survival over patient survival?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for her question. On this side of the House we are very proud of our satellite hospitals. They are taking care of Queenslanders every single day. Those opposite have never supported them. In fact, the member for Mudgeeraba has consistently led the charge against our satellite hospitals. We built them, they are open, they are operating right now, they are benefiting Queenslanders and they are very popular. It should not surprise anyone that we are considering what the next wave of satellite hospitals will and should look like. I am sure those opposite are eagerly awaiting the announcements we will make about future satellite hospitals because we know—

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

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

**Mr MILES:**—that Queenslanders could use more of these satellite hospitals. We want to see more Queenslanders benefit from having these satellite hospitals, delivering more care closer to home with free parking, providing services like minor injury and illness clinics which we know are driving down low-acuity presentations at our nearby hospitals. With regards to dialysis and chemotherapy services, which oftentimes they would have to travel to a tertiary hospital to get maybe three or four times a week, now they can drive or catch public transport to a nearby satellite hospital and get those hospital level services in their local neighbourhood. For things like specialist outpatient appointments—

**Mr Powell** interjected.

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

**Mr MILES:**—instead of having to pay \$15, \$20 or \$25 to park at a big tertiary hospital, they can see their specialist in their local community with free parking. It is no surprise those opposite do not support satellite hospitals because they have never supported any of our investments into hospitals. In 2015 we inherited no planning for new or expanded hospitals—none at all. In fact, the only big hospitals those opposite worked on were started by previous Labor governments. Since then, never have they gone to an election promising a new or expanded hospital—not in 2017, not in 2020 and, at least not yet, not in 2024. We will continue to deliver new and better hospitals for Queenslanders.

### Health Workforce

**Mr RUSSO:** My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is doing what matters for health workers, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Toohey. I know how much he loves meeting the dedicated health heroes at our new Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital as well as QEII Hospital and seeing the huge expansion that is happening there.

The Miles government has a plan to deliver the health workforce that Queensland will need over the next decade, including with our Workforce Strategy and our Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme. We know that health is ultimately about people and we will always do what we can to support Queenslanders, whether they need care or they are the ones delivering care to other Queenslanders at their time of need. This contrasts with the approach of those opposite, particularly the Leader of the Opposition—whether it is the poor trainees who did not get to complete their certificates to help them in their career advancement, or the staff of SET Solutions who were left behind and perhaps did not get paid their superannuation, or the mum-and-dad small businesses that were left owed millions of dollars.

This is a Leader of the Opposition who describes himself as being a voice for victims, but he refuses to address the victims that he left behind. Why will he not stand up and answer questions about this so those victims can have some closure? They deserve answers, as do the people of Queensland. He says that the number of victims is a measure that matters, but he is refusing to be up-front about how many victims were left behind. These are businesses in Queensland like the Carrara Catering Services, the Boundary Hotel, the Bracken Ridge Tavern, the Hamilton Hotel and the Springwood Hire A Hubby. These are small businesses providing great services in our community that deserve answers from the Leader of the Opposition. He refuses to front up to the media—

**Mr Dick:** They think it's funny.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier. Those opposite—who knew nothing about all of this until the ABC's investigation was released—are now laughing at the fact that small businesses in their electorates have been left high and dry by the Leader of the Opposition. As I said before, this goes to the man's character. He should stand up, be up-front, meet those victims and actually tell Queenslanders what his involvement was with a company that he traded whilst insolvent, with \$200,000 worth of hush money to liquidators. Be up-front, be strong and come clean before you ask for Queenslanders to vote for you to be Premier.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I give a reminder that members will address the chair rather than addressing members directly. That goes for all sides of the House.

### Southern Downs Electorate, Crime

**Mr LISTER:** My question is of the Premier. Is the explosion of crime happening in my electorate of Southern Downs proof that Labor's soft-on-crime approach to the youth crime crisis has not worked?

**Mr MILES:** I thank the member for Southern Downs for his question. As I acknowledged in the House yesterday, the spate of cross-border crimes over the last week or so in Goondiwindi is very concerning. That is precisely why we have expedited the appointment of the Cross-Border Commissioner in order to be able to coordinate activities on both sides of the border. I was pleased this morning to announce the person the government intends to appoint to that role, Mr Ian Leavers. I am advised that he is available and likely to commence in that role next Monday and will be on the ground in Goondiwindi next week coordinating our efforts alongside New South Wales. I have also indicated that the Police Commissioner has deployed additional resources there to keep the community safe. It is important that we respond quickly when incidents like this occur, and that is precisely what we have done.



### Police Resources

**Ms KING:** My question is of the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queensland by investing in more frontline police services, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mr RYAN:** Thank you, Speaker—generous as always. I thank the member for her question. I have to say that I have known a lot of members for Pumicestone, and this member for Pumicestone is the best member for Pumicestone that the Queensland parliament has ever seen. This member for Pumicestone has advocated strongly for her community and her region, particularly when it comes to community safety.

We see in Pumicestone and the broader Moreton Bay region an increase in police resources. We see a new PCYC being delivered at Caboolture. We see a mobile police beat deploying to Bribie Island and Beachmere. We see additional resources for the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland, which has a particular focus around waterside communities like Pumicestone. We also see a brand new pilot, the police outreach pilot in Beachmere, operating from the Beachmere hub which is already very well received by the local community. I have to acknowledge the member's advocacy in that regard.

Of course, we see nothing from those opposite when it comes to community safety for the Pumicestone community. It follows the Leader of the Opposition's small-target strategy and lurking in the shadows. I want to make a particular point, and I am going to adapt the words of the next president of the United States to make that point. Many of you may know that before I was elected to parliament I was a corporate litigation lawyer representing clients like the Commonwealth of Australia and the deputy commissioner of taxation. In that role I took on dodgy people of all kinds—fraudsters who ripped off consumers, workers and taxpayers; cheaters who broke the rules for their own gain; and dodgy business directors who traded insolvent—so hear me when I say this, Speaker: I know the Leader of the Opposition's type. I know his type. I know what they do to avoid liabilities and I know how they do it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those comments. I ask the minister to withdraw.

**Mr RYAN:** I withdraw the offensive comments.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired. Before calling the Leader of the House, I wish to commend the members for Southern Downs and Mudgeeraba for not being on the warning sheet for the first time together in a long time. Unfortunately, the members for Kawana, Nanango, Everton, Bonney, Warrego, Currumbin, Buderim, Toowoomba South and Glass House are all on a warning and those warnings apply through to 1 pm.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.17 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That so much of standing and sessional orders are suspended to enable the reordering of the remainder of the estimates reports debate to be as follows:

- Cost of Living and Economics Committee (Appropriation Bill) report
- Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee report (remainder of debate)
- Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee report
- Community Support and Services Committee report
- Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee report.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL****APPROPRIATION BILL****Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)****Appropriation Bill**

Resumed from 20 August (see p. 2555).

**Cost of Living and Economics Committee**

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question is—

That the report of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee be adopted.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (11.18 am): I would like to thank the chair and members of the Cost of Living and Economics Committee for the opportunity to appear at their estimates hearing. My first budget as Premier is doing what matters for all Queenslanders. It includes a record \$11.2 billion in relief and concessions to Queenslanders. Every household is saving at least \$1,000 off their electricity bill. Seniors Card holders, pensioners and veterans will save over \$1,300, and most will not pay a bill this year. Small businesses are getting \$650 off their power bills in partnership with the Commonwealth. We have already seen 50-cent fares getting Queenslanders back on board public transport. Motorists are saving 20 per cent on their rego fees. We have abolished stamp duty for first home buyers on homes up to \$700,000 and doubled the first home owner grant. We have \$200 FairPlay vouchers that are helping kids participate in sport, and 99 schools are being funded to provide healthy free food to help kids learn at their best.

We are not stopping there. When I heard from the RACQ that lack of competition among big petrol companies is hurting Queenslanders, I responded. If elected in October, I will ban raising the fuel price more than once a day and cap increases at five cents a litre and we will establish publicly owned fuel stations working with the independent retailers. We will use planning and development powers to facilitate land for independents and smaller retailers to increase competition. That goes for both fuel and food.


I know what I pay at the checkout is going up. Queenslanders everywhere told me the same. The ABS data shows that food prices are rising faster than inflation. That is why we set up the supermarket pricing inquiry, and I think the greater scrutiny has helped. Last week at the Ekka, I announced that we will establish the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner to advocate for our farmers on their often unequal relationships with suppliers and the big supermarkets.

Nothing is more fundamental to the cost of living than having a job. This year alone, the Big Build is supporting over 72,000 jobs. Over four years we are putting a record \$107.2 billion towards infrastructure because I am committed to building up Queensland. As the national economy slows, now is not the time to cut back investment. Now is not the time to deny Queenslanders the hospitals, roads and new energy we need. My first budget as Premier includes \$26 billion to deliver our Energy and Jobs Plan and our commitment to reaching 80 per cent renewable energy and 75 per cent less emissions by 2035. We are investing over \$37 billion in a stronger transport network, including the new direct Sunshine Coast rail line, the Coomera Connector and Gold Coast Light Rail. Over \$6 billion is going towards the Bruce Highway, including the Cairns Southern Access corridor, Mackay Ring Road, Rockhampton Ring Road and Dohles Rock Road to Anzac Avenue.

We are delivering 3,300 new hospital beds and building new hospitals at Bundaberg, Coomera and Toowoomba. We are expanding hospitals in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Hervey Bay, Redcliffe, Ipswich and Logan. The overall health budget is increasing by a record 10.6 per cent to fund more doctors and more nurses. We already have an extra 1,320 health workers attracted under our incentives. Our seven satellite hospitals are bringing health care closer to home for millions of Queenslanders. This has led to significant reductions in low-acuity patients at our major hospital emergency departments. Despite what those opposite say, we know Queenslanders love our satellite hospitals. Data does not deliver more health care; more services and healthcare workers deliver more health care.

We are supporting the largest housing construction program since the Second World War by investing \$3.1 billion in our Homes for Queenslanders plan. There is an extra \$1.28 billion over five years for our community safety plan and the Putting Queensland Kids First plan supports children from their earliest years to give them the best start in life.

I would like to thank the Deputy Premier for his work on a budget that presents a clear choice for Queenslanders—a choice between our clear and detailed vision for Queensland and those opposite who are doing their very best to avoid outlining any plans. Queenslanders deserve more than a small-target opposition and an opposition leader short on detail. Only a Labor government will keep building Queensland, provide real cost-of-living relief and do what matters for Queensland.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.22 am): I rise to make a contribution and I want to start by saying the estimates were categorised by failure of the government to deal with the big four crises that are impacting this state. One of them is around the ability to deliver projects on time and on budget, and that is highlighted by the Gabba. The Premier at one stage in the media provided commentary that he did not believe he was the infrastructure minister at the time—that was corrected—but he still has not confirmed why the \$1.2 billion figure was never shared with Queenslanders. We know as a result of a leak from the cabinet that it was told many months before and yet the government continued to parade a figure of \$1.2 billion without visibility and transparency.

I want to talk about housing. We found out that the committee involved with a review being done into housing has barely met. The director-general and indeed the Premier could not say how frequently that committee had met. We spoke about millions spent on Griffith University emergency housing.

In terms of the cost of living, the Premier failed to detail the cost of two jets to fly to the same location at similar times. I am unsure why that information was not able to be shared by the Premier because the Police Commissioner, to his great credit, came with that information a few days later. I am not sure what the Premier was expecting. I am not sure what the Premier was expecting the Police Commissioner to do. Of course he was going to share it. All it did was delay the inevitable, and it showed the tactics of this government and its inability to deliver what matters.


I want to turn to crime. Right now Queenslanders need to know about the focus on crime more than at any other time. Nothing will change in Queensland until government changes, and what is happening at Goondiwindi at the moment shows a crisis of the making of this government—weaker laws, fewer police, and as a result the heart and soul of communities are being ripped apart. We are seeing it unfold on the streets of Goondiwindi. For the government to come in here and try to parade the number of officers that were allocated to the station in full knowledge that it was operating at half capacity and it took brave whistleblowers to come forward shows you the depths of the Queensland crime crisis. Nothing will change until government changes. My commitment by the end of the year is Adult Crime, Adult Time. That is our commitment to the people of Queensland.

Let me return to estimates where, during consideration of the health portfolio, we spoke about the new hospital plan that has blown out by over a billion dollars despite not delivering one single extra bed. Queenslanders need to know that we are committed to a world-class health system. We are committed to making sure the so-called satellite hospitals are properly named and properly resourced. That is our commitment to heal the Queensland health crisis. We will make sure that hospitals are built on time and on budget. That is important to the opposition because it is important to Queenslanders.

I want to finish with the matter of integrity. You would expect that the estimates hearings were a long time ago based on the following information that I am to speak to right now. The government said there was nothing it could do about the militant behaviour of the CFMEU. Do members remember that? Minister after minister said there was absolutely nothing that could be done. After immense pressure, after a change in approach from a brave sector that has stood up and called out the militant behaviour, we have seen the government in recent days scrambling to try to grab little bits and pieces, but they are not prepared to take the responsible action to make sure workers are well paid, they are safe, their contracts are adhered to and that productivity returns to job sites. That is our commitment.

Finally, in my remaining 30 seconds, I want to flag that the CCC report into the Jackie Trad matter still has not been furnished. What we saw yesterday shows that the protection racket will continue.

One final thing we uncovered is that, based on a failure to answer, we suspect there is a WhatsApp communication between Gary Bullock—the man who, by doing a deal with the CFMEU and others, installed this Premier as Premier—and the Premier, and he does not believe those records should be public. That is wrong; they should be, and there are many questions to answer in that regard.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.27 am): I am very pleased to contribute to this debate on the estimates report for my portfolio and for other portfolios of government. What a hide the Leader of the Opposition has to come in here today and talk about integrity and transparency, the cost of the Gabba and the cost of housing initiatives. He had the hide to talk about integrity when he will not answer the people of Queensland on the most fundamental and basic questions on the \$200,000 in hush money he paid. That would have remained secret from the people of Queensland if it had not been for the ABC. He has an absolute hide to come into this House and lecture the government on government expenditure, on government programs and on government integrity when he will not hold himself to that same standard.

I want to thank the members of the committee for their careful scrutiny of the budget through the estimates hearings. I want to thank the chair in particular and the government members, but, sadly, it was an opportunity missed by members of the LNP. For example, in the hearing and in the report we saw the shadow Treasurer take issue with expenditure on the due diligence process involved in the work to attract companies like PsiQuantum to Queensland—even though these costs are in line with standard market and commercial practices for the size of this transaction.

We make no apologies for ensuring we perform due diligence when engaging with companies to protect taxpayer funds, because we know that some companies are dodgy with their own money and would be dodgy with public money. That is why we apply due diligence. If we were to not perform due diligence, we could end up in a situation where we provide, say, \$320,000 in taxpayer funds to a company that might be failing to meet its obligations to the Australian Taxation Office. We are not going to do that; we will apply due diligence. Unfortunately, there are some company directors in this state who would hide the true state of their finances from creditors and from the state and federal governments. They could even be trading while insolvent. We will not engage with those companies. We will apply the appropriate due diligence and we will spend the appropriate funds to ensure we protect future government funds in Queensland.

In contrast to the LNP, our government is committed to being up-front and transparent with Queenslanders. When our government makes commitments, we tell Queenslanders how much those commitments will cost and how we will pay for them in the budget context. We are being up-front and transparent with Queenslanders about the challenges our state faces, especially the challenges that come from our growing population. I draw the attention of the House to the words of the Leader of the Opposition when he promised to establish a parliamentary budget office. The member for Broadwater said—

I don't fear having a microscope put over what I say I'll do, when I'll do it and how much it will cost.

Unless, of course, he is the sole director of SET Solutions.

This is an election year and, in the context of the budget estimates, it is important that everyone in this parliament tells Queenslanders how they will pay for their commitments. The LNP have \$10 billion in unfunded election commitments. They are not being up-front, honest, transparent or accountable with Queenslanders on how they will pay for them. Somehow those commitments will have to be accommodated within the budget, but the failure of the LNP leader to meet his own budget standards of transparency poses a genuine budget risk to Queenslanders.

**Mr Watts** interjected.


**Mr DICK:** The member for Toowoomba North is interjecting. This is a man who could not even comply with the law of this state during COVID and was sacked from the frontbench as a result. The LNP leader is not being up-front with Queenslanders about his approach to the budget.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): It is no longer question time. The level of interjection is too high. A number of members have already been warned. I did not take note of who was interjecting then, but I will have no hesitation in throwing out any members who have already been warned. Anyone who interjects in that fashion will find themselves on the warning list.

**Mr DICK:** The LNP leader is, frankly, not being up-front with Queenslanders about his approach to the budget. He is hiding how he intends to pay for his \$10 billion in election commitments. The Leader of the Opposition needs to stand up today and come clean with Queenslanders on many issues. That includes how he will pay for \$10 billion in extra election commitments.

Our government is making sure that everything we do—everything we commit to for Queensland—is part of a fully detailed, fully accountable, fully costed and fully funded plan for Queensland. You cannot say the same for the member for Broadwater and the LNP. We stand by our commitments. They are fully funded, fully costed and fully accountable. You cannot say the same thing for the member for Broadwater.


 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.33 am): As the Leader of the Opposition says, the battlelines for the October state election are drawn. The question is: do Queenslanders feel better or worse off on the four big challenges facing Queensland—youth crime, health, cost of living and housing? A secondary question is: has this government, after 10 years of chaos, crisis and mismanagement, finally completely abandoned the priorities of the Queensland people? What budget estimates has proven, once again, is that this government has now completely abandoned the priorities in terms of what Queenslanders expect of them.

We know all about the billions of dollars of promises. The Treasurer has spoken about promises. Estimates revealed again that Pioneer-Burdekin will be at least \$24 billion. Not a single dollar of that is funded beyond the \$1 billion in the forwards. There is no funding for the project that has to be delivered as the foundational cornerstone—the battery of the north—by 2035. That has to be funded in the next nine or 10 years. Not a single dollar of that \$24 billion is funded—and that is in today's dollars, let alone what is yet to come. Then we had the Gabba, a billion dollars plucked from thin air; and QSAC, \$1.6 billion, again plucked from thin air and which is liable to grow in the future.

There are, of course, billions of dollars of promises, but I want to focus on the smaller amounts. I have often said that this Treasurer has failed in his fundamental obligation to the Queensland people to appropriately manage the spending of his ministers. He has failed. It is in the little amounts where the failure is the greatest. I think of the \$170,000 spent on jets by the Premier for his own personal accommodation. I think of the \$153,000 spent on the supermarket inquiry—the Premier's own vanity project that has not led to anything of any substance to improve the cost of living for Queenslanders. I think of the arts minister: \$126,000 on flights, chauffeurs, museums and galleries. I think of the \$70,000 that the Premier spent heading to Boston when those deals were already signed—unnecessary trips. I think of those smaller amounts that betray the mindset of a 10-year government that has lost touch with the Queensland people.

The Treasurer himself referenced it during the estimates process: PsiQuantum, a deal that was revealed during the estimates process; \$495,000 to Deloitte, the government's favourite consultants; and \$1.4 million to Allens Linklaters. That is nearly \$2 million in costs when we know that deal is dripping with secrecy. It excluded Australian technology and Australian startups. It is dripping with Labor lobbyists. It is dripping with a lack of accountability for half a billion dollars to the Queensland taxpayer—half a billion dollars. Add all of that together and it shows the betrayal of the Queensland people—the smallest amounts that feed into the largest amounts. The cost blowouts across this government are legendary across the board.

We say that it is time to return to a responsible and appropriate discussion of the Queensland budget that this government simply has not delivered. I waited 17 seconds for the Under Treasurer of Queensland to find his own CV in the Treasury pack so he could read his CV to me. He was obviously petrified of what the Treasurer—for whom he previously acted as chief of staff—must be thinking. In that 17 seconds while I waited for the Under Treasurer to read his CV, I thought of how far we had fallen since Sir Leo Hielscher was the under treasurer in Queensland—when there was accountability and before the number of political staffers had blown out, from 175 in 2015 to 264 over the last four years. The number of political staffers in this government tells you everything about their priorities. It is time to return discipline to the Queensland budget.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (11.38 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Cost of Living and Economics Committee's report on the Appropriation Bill. I am pleased to report to the House that the committee recommends that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill for the committee's area of responsibility be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly.

This estimates process provided a record time for the examination of the budget. Never before have the opposition had so much time to ask questions about the detail of the budget. In total, there were 351 minutes, almost six hours, of questions that were put by the opposition—that was over 70 per cent of the time allocated for questions—and crossbench members. That is why it was so disappointing—and no doubt we were all disappointed—that so many of the 131 questions put by the opposition were more concerned with political pointscore and going over issues that had already been canvassed in the House on multiple occasions.

The estimates process should be a unique opportunity to examine the future expenditure for the next four years laid out in the budget. However, it is disappointing that the member for Broadwater's first 17 questions and interventions were not about the expenditure in the budget but about a single political point about a flight in the past which had been raised in this House previously on more than four occasions. Why would he throw away such an opportunity? The statement of reservation in the committee report states—


Effective service delivery comes a distant second in competing with political objectives and Queenslanders continue to be let down.

I think this is actually a secret attack on those first 17 questions from the member for Broadwater. Indeed, his 17 interventions and questions before he retreated in a huff were all about political objectives. This shows the member for Broadwater puts service delivery at a distant second. Indeed, the people of Queensland continue to be let down by the member for Broadwater and his failures.

I asked the Premier and the Treasurer what I think the people of Logan would want to know about: the key issues of the future. People in Logan want to know about public transport and road congestion. In response to my question to the Premier, he reminded us that he has been focusing on these since he was a teenager getting the Petrie train from outer suburbia right up to today. He gets it. He wants to help out a bit. He pointed out that a full train can take 600 cars off congested roads and that our 50-cent fares represent a saving of \$6 for a teenager from Yarrabilba or Jimboomba going to TAFE, work or uni. That is why I said he gets it and he takes action. He spoke of the extra investment we are making into our bus network. That includes the new bus for Logan Reserve and Park Ridge West and expansions for the Yarrabilba 587 bus. I am so passionate about public transport that I am almost as passionate about outer suburban public transport as our Premier.

While benefitting from reduced congestion we also helped our drivers with a 20 per cent discount on car registration. That is not just for cars but also for all light vehicles and trailers. The Premier spoke of Logan kids paying sport and the assistance this government can give to Logan families to ensure a kid who is facing financial pressures at home can still get the great benefits of community sports like at the Mustangs or the Panthers with the expansion of the FairPlay vouchers. The member for Macalister recognised that Logan families like ours can struggle with household bills. The Premier gets this. That is why he is helping out with a \$1,000 rebate on electricity bills. All over the world and in every state in Australia there is pressure on bills. That is why the Premier is providing more assistance than any other state. Logan residents appreciate the help and the Premier is focused on helping our families with car registration, with bus and train fares, with household bills, with seniors and with kids in sport.

I also want to speak about our economy. We now have more than 200,000 Logan residents working. That is an increase in the last two years of over 12,000 families. That is 12,000 breadwinners in their house who now work but who were not in work previously. That is a great achievement of a strong economy. The member for Broadwater, of course, asked nothing about any of these issues. While there are many questions Queenslanders have about the budget, there was not a single question that actually spoke about the investments of over \$200,000. We saw the shadow opposition minister the member for Toowoomba South ask about smaller amounts. Many Queenslanders will be asking about the many debts racked up by the businesses all over South-East Queensland.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (11.43 am): I am pleased to rise to continue to put the focus on this government's failures because it matters to Queenslanders, who are paying more as a result. It is important that this government is held to account and the state opposition, the LNP, has spoken clearly about the priorities that Queenslanders are speaking to us about in regard to health in particular, housing, crime and cost of living as well as other issues at the front line of service delivery and infrastructure failure that mean so much to everyday Queenslanders.

What are the priorities of this government? There has been a 50 per cent increase in ministerial staffers over the last number of years since this government came to office. That is where their priorities lie. They have seen a huge bump in the number of their own political staffers to help ministers at a time when we have seen not enough police at the front line serving in our community; where there are fake reports from government about the actual number of police operating and able to respond; and where we are seeing record numbers of people suffering due to theft of cars, break-ins into houses and other assaults that are affecting everyday Queenslanders. What has been the government's priority? It has been to hire more ministerial staffers so they can try to spin the story. They can try to spin the story, but it is everyday Queenslanders who are paying the cost of these blowouts in their own abuses of power.

Let's talk about another abuse of power. In this case it is an abuse that has caused a lack of power that has placed an impact upon everyday Queenslanders' household energy bills with the failure of the Callide Power Station. It is about three years on and we have seen the debacle where this government has shuffled and tried to hide the reality of what occurred. We found through estimates and the process of pursuing this issue that about \$10 million has been spent on the Brady report to inquire into what went wrong. It was exposed that about \$38 million, a lot of which has been in legal fees, has gone to trying to protect, cover up and hide the report into this massive failure of this very important generator. Who are the people who are ultimately paying the cost? It is Queenslanders through the increased cost of a lack of certainty in their supply of energy and the impact from this major generator being offline. The government's focus is on cover-up and certainly we have also seen a focus on expenditure to hide the truth. I think Queenslanders can handle the truth because they are paying for it under this inept Labor government.

Let's talk about some of the integrity issues. It has been mentioned—


**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): There will be no more interjections like that, thank you.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Queenslanders can handle the truth and they demand the truth. They should have transparency around the reports, but we have seen this government still defending and hiding reports into the way they have done business. They are still protecting their own with the former deputy premier Jackie Trad and those issues. They failed to act to allow the CCC to table reports regarding one of their Labor mates and this government underwrote the legal action to try to hide those reports. They were willing to underwrite to enable that report to stay hidden.

This is a government that is still protecting their mates, as we have seen with questions asked about the CFMEU and their links with this government. There is absolutely a place for unions to look after workers, to keep them safe and to help them with their entitlements. However, there is no place for criminal behaviour and the way this militant union has behaved; it has ripped off Queenslanders, costing them dearly with respect to blowouts in project costs and a lack of delivery of services that Queenslanders need. This government, which relies on this support, has failed to act. They have failed to take action to deal with this militant union as they are sitting in power because of this militant union and others like them who have been willing to bend the rules in order to get their people into power.

We will not stand for it. Queenslanders want the truth. They want their priorities addressed. That is why the only way to change the outcome is to get rid of this government and show them the door in 2024.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (11.48 am): It is wonderful to follow the member for Maroochydore in this debate. I am really glad the Premier got to speak about our recreation and boat fishing after watching the member for Maroochydore's fishing expedition during the estimates process. What I have heard so far is that members of the opposition bemoan the fact that this government is ignoring the priorities of Queenslanders, but if they had asked questions that actually referred to the priorities of Queenslanders during estimates they would have learned about our record cost-of-living relief. The cost of living is the biggest issue facing Queenslanders, but you would not know it from the questions that were asked by the opposition at estimates.

I know that in my community and in Logan things like the electricity rebate are having a big impact on the cost of living. That was in the estimates documents, but you would not know it from the opposition's questions. The 20 per cent off rego—that is going to be making big savings in my community's pockets over the next 12 months—is a big issue in my local area and my constituents are loving it, but you would not know anything about that from the opposition's scrutiny of the estimates. Instead, those opposite focused on, as the shadow Treasurer focused on, small amounts. I will tell members what is a small amount: \$200,000. That is a small amount, and where is the scrutiny of that?


Let us get back to the estimates process and what was actually in the budget. Let us have a look at things like cost-of-living relief for our first home buyers. In estimates we found out that there is eligible tax relief in the budget—and this was able to be scrutinised at estimates—of \$360 million for first home buyers and increased first home owner grants worth \$209 million. That is money that will be helping Queenslanders. That is what Queenslanders worry about. They worry about the bills that are coming in their mailbox. They are not interested in any of the things that the opposition decided to waste time on in estimates.

Estimates is a scrutiny process. This is an opposition that continually complains that this is a government that hides or has no transparency, but it has the opportunity to ask ministers questions here in question time and at estimates senior public servants are there to ask questions of. However,

what do members opposite do? They waste their time on the minutiae of process, not what actually matters to Queenslanders. Queenslanders want cost-of-living relief. Queenslanders want to know that they can afford their bills. Queenslanders want to know that they can put their kids in sport to have active lives. Queenslanders want to know if they can go to a hospital. Queenslanders want to know about the satellite hospitals that are going to help them see a doctor at a time when a kid has an ear infection. Was there a single question about that during estimates from the opposition? No!

Those opposite are not in touch with what Queenslanders want. They think Queenslanders are spending their time worrying about planes going to regional Queensland so the Premier can visit regional Queensland, but that is not what the people in Beenleigh are worried about. People in Beenleigh want to know what their next electricity bill is going to be. I can tell them: it is going to be zero, because this government has made decisions—whether it is our progressive coalmining royalties or whether it is our management of renewable energy—that bring down the cost of things. It is what is in the bills in Queenslanders' mailboxes and inboxes that are Queenslanders' priorities, not the minutiae we had in the committee.

As I said, there was an opportunity at estimates for the opposition to ask questions of senior public servants, but instead we always had the gotcha attempts. Senior Queensland public servants need to be on notice because it appears that the member for Maroochydore has taken it upon herself to be looking in the windows of senior public servants and their personal relationships to bring that up and drag it before the House. The peeping toms on the other side think that is what is important to Queenslanders. They want to know who our public servants are sleeping with! That is what the opposition is worried about. It is not worried about the cost of living. It is not worried about our infrastructure builds. It is just worried about political gotchas. After four years in this place there has not been a bill suggested or raised by the opposition that will do anything to make a difference to Queenslanders' cost of living and that will do anything to make a difference to Queensland's way of life and improving it for Queenslanders. Only this government does that, and those opposite failed at estimates to do that.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (11.53 am): Mr Deputy Speaker Lister, with your indulgence I want to give a big shout-out to the four Kingaroy State High School students and their teacher, David Thomson, who are here today. They designed and operated a hydrogen powered remote controlled car. They won the H2GP Pro race on the Gold Coast and they are going to California to contest the word championships in September. Congratulations to Lexy Nixon, Chloe Elliot, Jack Newby, Cooper Mollenhauer and Oliver Vogelaar. I look forward to following how you go in California later this year.

It gives me great pleasure to follow that rant from the member for Macalister—someone who was on the committee and should know better—because it was the questions about the cost of living from our side that put pressure on ministers and highlighted the failings of the Palaszczuk-Miles government. This is a government that thinks it can have a new premier and miraculously it is going to be all new. Guess what? The reason the cost of living is through the roof is that the now Premier was the deputy premier, and he was every other failed minister before that. They have all been there for a long time, they are all tired and they are all hiding their corruption, as we heard in the chamber today. We all know that.

Let us talk about the Premier and the cost of living during the estimates process. When asked repeatedly how much the jets were, would he answer? No. The member for Macalister thinks the people of Logan are not concerned about a Premier taking two jets to go around the state and not even spend time in those regional communities while hopping in and out of the plane and making people go to the airport just to see him just so he can get a video to play to the poor people of Logan. I can tell the member that they can see through this Premier. They can see through the money that he is expending and wasting. The Police Commissioner, several estimates committees later, actually announced how much it was.

**Mr Stevens:** Eighty-four and 83.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Yes, \$84,000 and \$83,000; I take that interjection. That is \$167,000 of taxpayers' money. When the member for Macalister talks about the energy rebate, why does she not ask why we need an energy rebate? The Queensland Competition Authority—

**Mr Stevens:** Up 19 per cent! Up 19 per cent under them!



**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection because we have said it so many times: a nearly 20 per cent increase in our electricity because of the incompetence of this government. No wonder it has to give rebates, because our electricity bills have gone through the roof and are three times the national average.


**Mr Tantari** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): The member for Hervey Bay is warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Talk about the cost of living! What about the Premier when he is in the *Betoota Advocate*? He gets in the *Betoota Advocate* and he tries to be really cool when he is asked, 'What about the cost-of-living crisis in Queensland?' Do members know what the Premier said? He said, 'There's not a lot the state government can do about it,' and then he announces 12 fuel stations! I have never seen an announcement by a Premier more ridiculed than that announcement. It is actually so embarrassing that I do not like to talk about it because people say, 'Are you kidding? He is not seriously going to kick out mum-and-dad investors from their little fuel stations.' There is one major refinery in this state and the Premier of this state thinks he is going to control fuel stations across the state with 12 state owned fuel stations. I can announce here today that we are definitely not going to be setting up butchers and bakers and candlestick makers. This is desperate. There is no other word for it but absolutely desperate.

How is the Premier setting up fuel stations going to help the people of Nanango? Come on! What a joke! It is so embarrassing that even the Labor members opposite cannot stand to raise it. In fact, the only member in this House who has raised it is the Premier himself. My favourite day this term has to have been when Cameron Dick, the Treasurer of this state, was standing behind the Premier as the Premier announced it and then he had to step into the interview and you could see he was thinking, 'Please don't ask me about the ridiculous idea of the fuel stations.' Come on! Get a grip with Queensland and understand what the priorities of Queenslanders are. They do want to turn up to their health system. They do want to feel safe in their homes—unlike the good people of Goondiwindi. They do want cost-of-living relief. The only people who will deliver that are the LNP.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Nanango, you referred to former governments and present governments conjoined. I remind all members of the House that the Speaker has made a ruling on references to governments and former governments and they should be referred to by their correct names.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.59 am): I am delighted to rise and speak to the estimates process for the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, which was ably chaired by Mr Linus Power, the member for Logan. Today I am really excited to be speaking about what matters for Queensland and what matters for my community in Mount Ommaney. I will start with the 50-cent fares, which has been an absolute game changer and revolutionary in my community of Mount Ommaney.

I have been out and about, at the train stations and on the doors, talking to people. In Riverhills I met a young lady who is a little bit younger than me. She is a homeowner. Previously, she had been catching the bus all the way into the city because that was the cheapest way for her to get to work, even though it was not the quickest way. With the introduction of 50-cent fares she has changed the way she gets to work. She catches the bus to the Darra train station and then catches the train all the way into the city. Every single day she is saving 10 minutes and she is also saving a lot of money, which will add up to thousands of dollars a year for her family. She is obviously over the moon.

Last weekend I was at the Centenary Christian Kindergarten for their open day. They are absolutely delighted with free kindy. It means they have pretty much a full complement of enrolments. It was the busiest open day I can remember them having. I think in large part that is due to the fact that it is a fabulous kindy and also families now know that they can access free kindy for their little ones. It really is a game changer for Queensland kids because now every single Queensland child can start school with the same level of education, which makes things easier for both our prep teachers and our parents. I am sure members can tell that, as I know you are, Mr Deputy Speaker, I am really passionate about this because shortly my youngest child, Elyse, will be the beneficiary of kindy. I am really excited to see that journey for her.

I often hear parents talk about satellite hospitals. A few months ago at the library I ran into a mum who told me that her daughter had a sore arm. She said it was not something that she wanted to go to the emergency room for because she did not feel it was an emergency. I suggested that she take her daughter to the satellite hospital in Ripley, which had recently opened. She drove to Ripley and had her

daughter checked out. It turned out that her arm was not broken. However, the mother was quite concerned so to be able to get that reassurance for free and on a weekend when a GP was not available gave her huge peace of mind. I often promote satellite hospitals around school holiday time because that is when kids are doing physical activities more so than normal and might need to go to a satellite hospital. Another parent told me that when their child had a sore arm it was broken. They went to their local satellite hospital where that was picked up, which was fantastic.


I referred to kids doing physical activities, which is when they can use the \$200 FairPlay vouchers. All Queensland kids are eligible to apply for those vouchers.

**Mr Stevens:** They can get in the game.

**Ms PUGH:** That is exactly right, member for Mermaid Beach; they can get in the game. It is great to hear your support for this fantastic initiative and 200,000 kids are eligible. It is trophy season in my electorate. Last weekend I was at St Cats. We know that our sport clubs create strong communities and strong family bonds, especially when the families get involved in volunteering. It is really important that we give every single Queensland kid the opportunity to participate. Those \$200 vouchers will cover about 50 per cent of the fee for joining one of my local soccer clubs such as Oxley United or St Cats because they work really hard to keep their fees low.

I have to mention the \$1,000 that will come off every single Queensland household energy bill. I spoke to a fellow from Darra last week. He had already had that money taken off his bill and he was so excited. He really appreciated that he did not have to do anything. He did not have to put in any forms. He just had to keep an eye on his energy bill to make sure that the money had come off.


What is really important and something that I think we all need to acknowledge is how we are paying for this. Our Miles government is making multinationals pay their fair share. Billions of dollars over the forward estimates are going towards this cost-of-living relief and critical infrastructure projects such as the Centenary Bridge upgrade in my electorate. Those opposite need to be clear where they stand on this policy because coal royalties are improving the lives of everyday Queenslanders. I back them every day of the week because, when it comes to choosing between multinationals and my community, it is my community that is going to win for me every day of the week.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.04 pm): From my long-serving presence on this particular committee, I can say that this year the estimates hearings to examine the appropriation bills were greatly improved in terms of the time allocated for questioning. The new arrangements in relation to 70 per cent of the time being given to non-government members, including the crossbench members, enabled proper questioning at the estimates hearings, although some of the answers dealt with obfuscation and the dodging of facts. In terms of the estimates process, old-timers such as Terry Mackenroth and Robbie Schwarten would have cringed at the attempts by some members to basically dodge giving accurate answers to the questions that were asked. The fact that the appropriation bill that deals with the Parliamentary Service was examined on the preceding day was of enormous help to the questioning process and I support that going forward.

However, as mentioned earlier, it was embarrassing that the Premier could not answer the questions about the flights that the DPC organised. He could not or would not answer the questions in relation to the cost of the jets. Those are matters that concern the public. Politicians spending taxpayer money in a willy-nilly fashion is very hurtful to people who are suffering from the cost of living. That is exactly why, under the Westminster system, it is important—indeed it is incumbent—that the opposition see where politicians are wasting taxpayers' money. The fact that they took two jets but the Premier did not know or was not prepared to give the cost was an embarrassment to the government. Later in the estimates hearing Mr Gollschewski said, 'Yes, one was 84 and one was 83.' They spent \$167,000 worth of taxpayers' money at a time when the public is suffering cost-of-living issues and is very concerned about those issues, and that is why the opposition appropriately asked those questions at the estimates hearings.

We also asked about a very expensive so-called trade mission to the states during which \$10,000 was spent on a four-wheel drive. No-one could understand how that sort of expenditure could relate to a four-wheel drive. There were also nights spent in very expensive, high-class accommodation. These are the things that give politicians a bad name. That is why, under the Westminster system, it is important for the opposition to ask questions of a government that seem to want to hide all the facts and basically run away from their absolute commitment to providing cost-of-living relief and being frugal in very difficult times. They spent up big on very expensive hotel rooms and other things, but we were told that it was all worth it because the mission resulted in trade deals worth \$30 million, or whatever it was, which justified that very expensive trip.

Questions were asked about Callide, which the great member for Nanango just raised in her speech. The government was asked why the power station has not been fixed. It is absolutely critical to know why the Callide report has been dodged and they have spent \$10 million hiding it. The fact of the matter is that electricity prices have gone up by 19 per cent under this government, which owns the wholesalers. The government has said, 'Here's a grand to make you feel good about the whole thing.' I had someone in my office today asking if he could cash that in for a television. The bottom line is that this absolute mess in relation to the cost of living and power prices has been caused by the government. If Callide had been operating three years ago then we would have much cheaper electricity prices, without a doubt. At estimates it is the job of the opposition to find out why. We saw obfuscation, ducking and weaving by ministers who were trying to hide the facts and basically keep down the political noise about coal and coal-fired stations, which they did not like but apparently they do now that some serious royalties and also some serious GST are rolling in. The fact of the matter is that they are the cause of a lot of the cost-of-living pressures and the sooner we get them out the better.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.09 pm): I rise to speak on the budget estimates report for the Cost of Living and Economics Committee. I want to thank all of the committee members for their fantastic work. The Queensland budget handed down in June makes acting on the cost of living for Queenslanders our No. 1 priority. When it comes to helping Queensland households, the Miles government is doing what matters by setting out a responsible plan to support Queenslanders and invest in our future.

Our budget provided just over \$11 billion in concessions to lower household bills. As members of this House, we speak to our community every day. We know the pressures they are feeling and these relief measures will go a long way to easing some of the strain. We have provided every Queensland household with a \$1,000 rebate off their electricity bills. More than 1.3 million Queensland householders have now received that rebate. Since we introduced it on 1 July, many Ipswich residents have told me how grateful they are for this cost-of-living relief.

On 5 August, we introduced 50-cent fares for public transport. This will save some commuters in Ipswich well over \$1,000 over the course of the six-month trial, helping them to save extra money for Christmas and summer holidays. There has definitely been a reduction in traffic congestion since we introduced those fares. That was one of our aims as a government. We have achieved that goal because many people are taking up the transport offer. As the member for Mount Ommaney said, it is not just money they are saving; it is time as well. We want to support public transport because it is a really effective way to get around. It saves time, it saves money and it eases congestion. Car registration costs will be reduced by 20 per cent for 12 months, benefiting 5.7 million Queenslanders.

We have increased the number of FairPlay vouchers, which are really hitting the mark with local families. I was at a BMX open day a couple of weeks ago and people there were all very excited about the \$200 FairPlay vouchers. We need to keep talking about the vouchers because there are a lot of families who still have not applied for them. For the great number of families who have applied for them, they are making a huge difference. They are making a difference not only to families' bottom lines but also to our kids. Healthy kids are our state's future, and that is why we have expanded the program and why our 2024-25 budget has allocated an extra \$15 million to the School and Community Food Relief Program. This program helps our most vulnerable kids to access healthy breakfasts and lunches at school so that they can engage in learning and thrive. In my electorate of Ipswich, 12 state schools are being supported through the school breakfast program. It is just another cost-of-living budget measure that will provide real assistance to Ipswich families who are doing it tough.

The member for Mount Ommaney also spoke about our free kindy program. What a huge difference that is making. Free kindy and our Textbook and Resource Allowance are going a long way towards helping the bottom line in family budgets. For older kids and young people, we are providing fee-free TAFE. I was with the member for Bundamba and Minister for Training and Skills Development last week talking to some apprentices about the expansion of the \$1,000 rebate which will help cover the cost of their tools. This rebate is really helping. The work they are doing and the skills they are acquiring at our gorgeous TAFEs that have world-class facilities will go a long way towards addressing workplace skills shortages.

Supporting apprenticeships is a no-brainer. Our free apprenticeships and free traineeships for under-25s mean that more of our young people in Queensland can benefit from fee-free training in high-priority areas, giving them access to secure, well-paid jobs. First year apprentices are benefiting from the \$1,000 cashback I just mentioned. It will help them pay for the tools that they need to work in construction, plumbing, engineering and electrical careers. This investment is vital if we want to increase the number of tradies so we can build more homes faster under our Homes for Queenslanders


plan. We are also making it easier for businesses to employ apprentices and trainees with our 50 per cent payroll tax rebate, which we have extended to 30 June next year. It will help Queensland businesses employ trainees.

Our budget is investing in the state's future, but the LNP and David Crisafulli have made it clear that they oppose our plan of making mining companies pay their fair share, which is how we are able to fund this cost-of-living relief package. David Crisafulli and the LNP want to hand back billions of dollars to mining companies, which means they will have to make cuts. Will they cut our FairPlay vouchers? Will they cut fee-free TAFE? Will they cut the cashback for apprentices? We do not know.

Report adopted.

### **Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee, Report**

Resumed from 20 August (see p. 2555).

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.14 pm): I rise to speak as a member of the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee on the recent estimates hearing. It was a very long day. I would like to thank all members of the committee—the chair, the member for Redlands, and the members for Mundingburra, Lytton, Toowoomba North and Callide. Although we have differing opinions at times, by and large we work fairly well together, as we did during estimates. That is not to say it was perfect, but the member for Redlands did fly the flag very well as the chair.

We have heard about the number of questions that were asked and the huge advantage that the opposition had—I have heard a figure up to 80 per cent. I am not disputing any of that, but asking questions does not equate to getting answers. Even though the opposition asked a lot more questions than the government on a number of subjects, the questions were very light. There was no greater example of that than during the energy portfolio on one particular topic: the Pioneer-Burdekin dam. We asked the minister, the director-general and departmental representatives, 'What is it going to cost?' We heard that the original figure of \$12 billion will change, but not one of them could give a figure as to what that project will cost. That is of real concern to every Queensland taxpayer.

We heard Brendan Worrall, the Auditor-General, state that he was concerned that that project would not be financially viable, that it will become too expensive. We have heard that it will be in excess of \$20 billion. If that is what it is going to cost, we need to know. It did not matter how many times that question was asked because we still got no answer. We asked when the detailed analytical study would be released. All we know is that it will be after the election, which is quite convenient.

When answering questions, the minister referred to previous governments, blamed federal governments and talked about senators. He talked about everybody else but did not answer the questions. There was a question about Project Kruger. The member for Bonney tried to pursue that line of questioning but it created a fair bit of confusion because some witnesses seemed to know what it was but the minister did not. We never really got to the bottom of that one.


One thing that really stood out to me in this estimates process was the lack of Dorothy Dixier questions about hydrogen. Hydrogen was basically not spoken about. In estimates hearings in previous years, hydrogen was front and centre. Suddenly, it has completely dropped off the radar.

It was interesting to hear the Minister for Resources say yesterday that everything is wonderful in the mining industry, that there is growth and that coal is doing well. That is because those approvals were done 10, 15 and 20 years ago. That is why those projects are expanding. That is why there is exploration. The problem will be evident in the years ahead. A lag will follow the uncertainty that has been cast upon the industry. That is coming, and for a minister to not realise that is really disturbing.

I cannot talk about mining without expressing my sympathy for the recent death of a miner at the Byerwen Mine. Dale Last prosecuted safety throughout that section of the hearing and it is something we all hold dear in this House. I am sure I speak for both sides when I express my sympathy to the family of that miner.

In terms of the transport portfolio, there is no doubt the current transport minister went to the previous transport minister and asked him, 'How do I give answers without giving an answer?' because he followed the pattern of the previous transport minister almost to the letter. It was uncanny. The state of our roads and the delays with repairs are concerning.

I cannot finish without thanking the staff of the committee, particularly our research director, Amanda Ward. She is taking a well-earned break. We wish her all the best for her time off.

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (12.19 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the estimates report of the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee. I was pleased to spend four hours on a Tuesday evening with the committee.

In the transport portfolio our record investment of \$37.4 billion in QTRIP is delivering the transport infrastructure for our growing state and the cost-of-living relief that Queenslanders need most. Right across the state we are investing in transformational road, rail, public and active transport projects. We have a rail revolution well underway in South-East Queensland with Cross River Rail, Sunshine Coast direct, Beerburrum to Nambour and Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail all steaming ahead. I was very pleased to talk about those projects at length. The Miles government additionally has billions allocated to the Bruce Highway over the forward estimates. From 2027 we will invest \$250 million per annum on the Bruce—an increase of \$50 million every year.

It is, of course, not just our big transport build that is transforming travel across the state; our nation-leading 50-cent fares initiative is saving Queenslanders money and boosting public transport use around the state right now. In the first week alone Queenslanders saved over \$7 million and, as of yesterday, more than \$14 million is back in the pockets of hardworking Queenslanders. That is more money to put towards the mortgage, rent or groceries or to put into savings. Patronage throughout South-East Queensland during the first week of the trial was up to 98.4 per cent on pre-COVID levels—a clear indication to us that Queenslanders are keen to make the most of this almost free travel. The last weekend of 50-cent fares was the biggest weekend of public transport in South-East Queensland of all time—breaking the record set only the weekend before.

Airtrain passengers are also making the most of half-price fares, with an 18 per cent increase in passenger numbers in the first week, as well as a 69 per cent increase in airport staff tickets. For the very first time airport staff tickets are now available at Central station, with half-price weekly tickets available at Central and the airport stations for the 20,000 workers who commute to the Brisbane airports every day. We are pulling the levers to ensure Queenslanders get better value for money from a dud deal struck by the former dud LNP government.

This government is also cutting rego by 20 per cent. Queenslanders will now see this discount on their rego renewals for the next 12 months. For those who might have just paid their rego, they will see it on their next bill, regardless of whether that is three, six or 12 months from now. It is something that all Queenslanders who drive a light vehicle will benefit from. Across South-East Queensland alone, 20 per cent off rego is set to save drivers a massive \$239 million.

We are listening to Queenslanders in every pocket of our state to deliver essential cost-of-living relief. It is no secret that Gold Coasters love using public transport. Light rail was the first mode to return to pre-COVID patronage levels, and its uptake during 50-cent fares has skyrocketed. Gold Coast commuters are well and truly making the most of our 50-cent fare trial, with light rail trips up 19.6 per cent and train trips to and from the Gold Coast up 28.6 per cent.

Despite the massive savings being made by commuters, the member for Mermaid Beach has labelled our 50-cent fares a strain on the state economy. In a newsletter to the Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce, the member for Mermaid Beach said the Labor government initiative ‘will only add to the strain on the state economy and is contributing to further cost-of-living pressures’.

Who can forget the comments by his Gold Coast neighbour the member for Burleigh who three years ago told the media in a bizarre rant that public transport will be obsolete in 10 years. Back then the Leader of the Opposition ducked and weaved and failed to take responsibility for the ludicrous comments by members of his own party. Why did the Leader of the Opposition support light rail in 2021 but has since told Queenslanders that in government he will order a complete review of stage 4 of light rail and send it back to the drawing board.

Just like his dealings while the sole director of SET Solutions, the Leader of the Opposition is not giving Queenslanders the whole picture. Rather than take responsibility for his actions, the Leader of the Opposition has refused to disclose hush money payments made years after his failed small business, SET Solutions, collapsed. If the Leader of the Opposition cannot be trusted to run a small business he cannot be trusted to run the state.

As we are talking about budget estimates, the Leader of the Opposition needs to break his silence about his own books and the budget estimates in those. Who was the hush money for? Who does the Leader of the Opposition still owe money to?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Members, I cannot hear the minister. He is not taking interjections. I cannot hear if he is being relevant because I cannot actually hear him. Can we have some quiet in the chamber.

**Mr MELLISH:** We have a solid protection racket over there for the Leader of the Opposition who does not want to answer questions, who does not want to hear examination of his own budget history and who has questions to answer.

**Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (12.24 pm): I start by acknowledging the final comments the Minister for Transport made in terms of wanting people to answer questions. Estimates is meant to be an opportunity to answer questions. Unfortunately, there are many questions that get posed but very few answers and very little detail comes back. It would be great if the government of the day could actually step up and be up-front and honest in terms of all questions posed during the estimates process.

I would like to thank the hardworking parliamentary staff and committee secretariat for preparing everything for estimates and for their assistance in compiling the report. I thank all members of the committee—my third estimates hearing.

The first estimates session was on the energy portfolio. For those who might not be able to work it out, Callide Power Station is, of course, in the great electorate of Callide.

**Mr Stevens:** Fair dinkum!

**Mr HEAD:** It definitely is, member for Mermaid Beach. You never would have guessed. When it comes to the Callide Power Station, we have seen a huge failure on the part of the Miles Labor government in terms of what it has done in running that asset into the ground to the point that the C4 generator exploded and then the cooling tower for C3 collapsed due to a lack of maintenance.

The Labor government talks about giving the people of Biloela certainty with the jobs guarantee. In the jobs guarantee we know that there are relocation packages which provide no certainty for the community of Biloela. The community of Biloela and the surrounding areas do not just want relocation packages. They want certainty that there is a future in that community. That is why the LNP has committed to a maintenance guarantee. The maintenance guarantee ensures not just jobs, but jobs at the Callide Power Station for workers in that community. They tell me they want a future. They want to live in Biloela. They want to work at the power station. They want to raise their families in the great community of Biloela in Central Queensland. The LNP has a plan to deliver a maintenance guarantee to ensure that the power station gets back online and runs for many years to come because we are going to need it to drive down electricity prices in Queensland.

The government talks about hydro projects. We know that the Pioneer-Burdekin scheme in North Queensland is an absolute hoax.

**Mr Stevens:** Tooth fairy stuff.

**Mr HEAD:** I take that interjection. It is tooth fairy stuff. There is very little information that we get. We certainly ask many questions. We still do not know what it is going to do to power prices in Queensland if that gets up and running. That is information we do not get from the government when we ask these questions. That is why the LNP has committed to scrapping the Pioneer-Burdekin project if elected.

In regard to the transport session, of course, it would have been great to ask a lot more questions of the minister. In the estimates process we do not get a whole lot of time to ask all the questions we would like to ask on behalf of our electorate. I would have loved to have asked the Minister for Transport about the Mundubbera Durong Road. This road has huge potential to unlock economic opportunities for the people—

**Mrs Frecklington:** Hear, hear! Sign the petition.

**Mr HEAD:** I take that interjection from the member for Nanango. There is a petition to sign to upgrade the Mundubbera Durong Road to get road trains into the North Burnett and unlock economic opportunities through that great region. It is the citrus bowl of Queensland and provides a lot of fresh food and fibre for the Queensland community.

Through the great electorate of Callide there is the Warrego Highway, the Bruce Highway, the Leichhardt Highway, the Dawson Highway and the Burnett Highway. There are many highways across my great electorate that are significantly underfunded and deteriorating under the Miles Labor government because of a lack of investment and road maintenance backlogs. We saw during the rain in the electorate the other day—and that was much welcome rain—that it only takes a little bit of rain and potholes form everywhere. The potholes form because of the lack of maintenance on those roads. A lot of those stretches have been overdue for new seals for a very long time.

This government closed the Gin Gin driver reviver on the Bruce Highway. Along one of the deadliest stretches of one of the deadliest roads in the state, they closed the driver reviver. This just shows that the Miles Labor government has the wrong priorities for Queensland.

In the resources session I was incredibly disappointed to hear that when the government remaps vegetation categories in Queensland and changes the vegetation mapping on individual landholder properties they do not even notify those landholders. Those landholders can get a map to manage vegetation. The government changes it and they do not even get notified. Show Labor the door in 2024.


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Members, we have reached the end of the time for the debate of this report.

Report adopted.

Interruption.

## CROCODILE CONTROL AND CONSERVATION BILL

### Order Discharged; Withdrawal

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (12.30 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—


That General Business Order Referred to Parliamentary Committees No. 4, Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill, be discharged from the *Notice Paper* and withdrawn.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## CROCODILE CONTROL, CONSERVATION AND SAFETY BILL

### Introduction

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (12.31 pm): I present a bill for an act to establish the Queensland Crocodile Authority and for related matters. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Crocodile Control, Conservation and Safety Bill 2024 [[1549](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Crocodile Control, Conservation and Safety Bill 2024, explanatory notes [[1550](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Crocodile Control, Conservation and Safety Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1551](#)].

The Crocodile Control, Conservation and Safety Bill is necessary because North Queenslanders are ropeable about losing more of our recreational waterways to the increasing crocodile population. The constant threat of attacks, recent deaths and the near-death escapes are drastically affecting North Queenslanders' outdoor lifestyle. We never had to worry about the threat of crocodiles in our recreational waterways and beaches until the last two decades.

According to the data from the Queensland Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, there were 1,216 saltwater crocodile sightings reported in 2023 compared to just 176 sightings in 2010—and people were ropeable back then. A study in 2017 found croc related deaths had risen sharply since hunting was outlawed in 1971. The report revealed that there were 10 deaths in 33 years from 1971 to 2004. That has drastically increased to 14 deaths in only nine years between 2005 and 2014.

In the last five months we have seen three fatal croc attacks in our northern waters. In April, a 16-year-old boy was horribly taken by a croc in the Torres Strait, while in August we saw the terrible death of a New South Wales doctor who fell in the waters near Cooktown in Queensland and was taken by a crocodile. In July, a 12-year-old girl was taken from a remote swimming hole in the Northern Territory sparking an enormous outcry. It is gut-wrenching when crocodile deaths occur and I hear statements such as 'They should have known better', 'They were in croc country' or 'They should be croc wise.'

Our waterways are infested with crocs because of the failure of consecutive governments over years to listen and to take action and do something positive about the increase in croc numbers. There is no denying that the crocodile population has exploded and crocodiles are encroaching more and more into populated waterways, creating an unacceptable risk to human life. Waterways which people previously regularly swam in are now infested with crocs. I am saddened that our tourist industry is trying to promote our beautiful beaches and waterways, but when tourists arrive all they see are the croc signs and they are told, 'You may swim there but you may be ripped to pieces.'

Nobody is more croc wise than those who live in North Queensland. It does not matter how croc wise you are when you are threatened by crocs when you are trying to launch a boat, fishing on a river bank, paddling your kayak or enjoying the lakes, rivers or beaches your family had swum in for many years without the fear of crocs. North Queenslanders want sensible crocodile management in restoring the balance between the crocodile population and protecting human life. However, what is the government's solution? They put up more croc signs and close the beaches and swimming holes. This is unacceptable.

As almost 80 per cent of the crocodile population is located in North Queensland, this bill establishes a Queensland Crocodile Authority based in Cairns, not Brisbane, with all staff sourced regionally. The bill establishes an advisory committee to provide recommendations to the authority on a balanced management policy. This will take into account conservation of the crocodile population to ensure they do not become extinct, commercial opportunities and reducing the threat to human life. It is important to ensure Queensland has the best possible advice on managing its crocodile population, while protecting Queenslanders and creating a crocodile industry that will financially benefit the state and its landowners for many years to come.

Under the bill, the Queensland Crocodile Authority will be solely responsible for all aspects of crocodile management in Queensland, including: a complete review of the current management zones under the Queensland Crocodile Management Plan to implement a zero-tolerance zone to remove all crocodiles reported in the areas deemed as populated waterways by killing them or moving them to an approved crocodile farm or sanctuary; development of flexible policies on crocodile management through consultation with different individual Indigenous communities to deliver a specifically designed management program, considering cultural sensitivities; increase current allowable egg-harvesting limits, which would be reviewed annually; oversee egg-harvesting permits with incentives specific to Indigenous communities to set up egg-harvesting enterprises; manage approvals and permits to allow traditional landowners to hunt or remove crocodiles on private land with the landowner's consent; to allow private landowners to contact the Crocodile Authority to have crocodiles immediately removed from their property by an approved person; and conduct controlled annual crocodile removal programs along Queensland's populated east coast to constrain population growth and reduce crocodile numbers in populated areas and waterways.

The bill aims to eliminate from our waterways any crocodile that poses a threat to human life, while continuing to protect crocodiles from becoming extinct as a species. As well as protecting human lives, the Crocodile Control, Conservation and Safety Bill aims to create a significant and sustainable crocodile industry in Queensland. This bill will allow a tangible economic opportunity to Indigenous landowners to benefit from the fast-growing crocodile industry, which is estimated to be worth more than \$100 million a year in the Northern Territory. Indigenous landowners have a connection with and understanding of the land and should be empowered to manage that land as they see fit. The bill will empower Indigenous landowners by placing a value on crocodiles and therefore create an unprecedented economic opportunity for these landowners.

If a crocodile is on their land, the landowner may choose to have it relocated to a farm or crocodile sanctuary, let it remain on their property or choose for it to be killed. They may do this themselves by shooting, harpooning or using traditional methods or accept payment from a quota of 'high-end clients' who wish to hunt the crocodile. It is incredible that the government currently denies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders this wonderful economic opportunity. Recently we saw calls from Indigenous landowners in the Northern Territory to be at the forefront of new developments in crocodile management, including allowing a quota of 'high-end clients' to hunt for crocodiles in the Northern Territory.

I note that in the USA and Canada dangerous animals listed as game include native alligators, various species of bears, bison and mountain lions. Countries in Africa offer safaris to legally hunt the native Nile crocodile. These safaris are offered to licensed hunters for premium prices that range from a few thousand Australian dollars up to \$30,000. Critically, the hunting of these animals is monitored and regulated by legislation and overseen by regulatory bodies. Under the bill that would fall to the Queensland Crocodile Authority. The heavily regulated hunting industry in other countries helps keep the population of particular animals under control. It also provides economic benefits for local economies, including additional funds to undertake on-ground wildlife conservation of endangered flora and fauna. It is pure arrogance for a bureaucrat in Brisbane, based on his or her beliefs, to deny Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the opportunity to manage crocodiles on their land and generate a return for them and their communities.



During the consultation process the view was expressed that the policy objective of keeping humans safe from crocodiles could be achieved by relocating problem crocodiles to other locations. However, a joint Department of Environment, Science and Innovation and CSIRO study recently found that Queensland crocodiles like to stay close to home, with most remaining within 50 kilometres of where they hatched. In fact, most crocodile parents and offspring in Queensland are found within 10 kilometres of each other. While crocodiles are capable of moving anywhere along Queensland's coastline, the study also showed that most of the estimated 30,000-strong population are in Far North Queensland. Consultation with experts also suggested that crocodiles may become more dangerous once they have been relocated; therefore, crocodiles should only be relocated to crocodile farms, sanctuaries or properly managed reserves. Consultation also revealed that because there are so many crocodiles that require removal to keep people safe it is very unlikely there would be a desire by existing crocodile farms to house all of these crocodiles. Based on consultation and recent studies, it is clear that a combination of killing and relocation to farms or sanctuaries is the best way to achieve the policy objectives.

This bill is about prioritising human life in waterways that are heavily used by North Queenslanders. Until crocodiles are actively removed from all populated waterways that are used for recreational and commercial activities, we will be no closer to taking back our waterways and achieving a balance between human life and the crocodile population. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (12.42 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee

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

## PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY) BILL

### Introduction

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—Ind) (12.42 pm): I present a bill for an act to enhance the transparency and public accountability of the decision-making processes for public-private partnerships. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Public-Private Partnership (Transparency and Accountability) Bill 2024 [\[1552\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Public-Private Partnership (Transparency and Accountability) Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[1553\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Public-Private Partnership (Transparency and Accountability) Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1554\]](#).

The Public-Private Partnership (Transparency and Accountability) Bill provides a framework to establish a culture of openness and transparency around the state's commercial deal making with the private sector. Its primary objectives are: to promote public trust in government; aid in the prevention of corruption; achieve true value for money for Queenslanders; and ensure that all public-private arrangements in Queensland are conducted in accordance with the principles of transparency, fairness, stability, proper management, integrity, accountability and long-term sustainability.

Public-private partnerships, or PPPs, allow private consortiums to finance, build, operate and deliver public infrastructure and services that have traditionally been the province of government. It is a model that explicitly relies on the private sector's profit motive to provide public goods. Here in Queensland PPPs have been used to deliver nearly everything in Queensland, including roads, tunnels, railways, energy and water, schools, aged care, hospitals and prisons. Despite all of this, there is still no specific legislative framework in Queensland to regulate the extensive arrangements between the public and private sectors. This bill will therefore fill an important gap in the state's legislation. In doing so, it seeks to increase public knowledge and trust around how public monies are being spent in

Queensland and what contractual commitments the government is taking on that may bind the state and its citizens for decades to come. Overall, the bill will make a real difference by providing the people of Queensland with the tools they need to ensure the state's massive infrastructure program and government services are delivered in as transparent and cost-efficient a manner as possible.

In part, the bill responds to various findings and recommendations made by the Queensland Audit Office over the past decade. On 14 December 2023, the QAO released a report on the state's major projects that stated—

Clear and complete reporting on capital projects is critical to building public trust and ensuring accountability.

In relation to Queensland's PPP arrangements, the Auditor-General recommended that Treasury update its practices to include details in its summaries on service payments and contributions from private sector companies and to annually publish a report of completed projects in conjunction with the capital statement showing the total amount of actual expenditure as at completion date.

In *Let the sunshine in: review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector*, Professor Coaldrake wrote that the government must be prepared to defend its decision to withhold information publicly. It stated—

... agencies should not be quick to agree to confidentiality clauses which are proposed by sophisticated commercial parties to protect their own interests.

As the Auditor-General said in his report on contract management—

... the public has a right to know how much public money government is spending, on what, and with which vendors.

The bill recognises a key principle of democratic government; that is, the public has the right to know how its money is being spent and whether everything is being done in compliance with all of the proper guidelines for the allocation of those funds.

On page 13 of the QAO's major project report for 2023 the Auditor-General provides a comparative overview of the disclosure requirements for PPPs in Queensland, NSW and Victoria. The table shows that Queensland's disclosure requirements are much less transparent than the other two states. Under Queensland's guidelines, the government is not required to provide details of a PPP's project advisors, risk allocations, contract termination rights, contract modification procedures, value-for-money analysis, service payments or any of the parties' contributions, including private financing details. The guidelines also do not specify any timeframe for the tabling or publishing of a PPP's project summary report. As the Auditor-General notes, this can lead to delays, with the information becoming outdated by the time it actually becomes publicly available.

The bill also introduces a requirement for public sector entities to carry out and make publicly available its value-for-money assessment on a proposed PPP project. Under clause 13(2)(c) of the bill, the public sector entity must consider for each step in the project: the priority of the step; alternative ways of achieving the step; and the costs and benefits of alternative approaches. Clause 13(4) of the bill requires that a public service comparator also be carried out as part of the VFM due diligence to ensure that the right model is chosen for delivering public infrastructure and services. The PSC's data, methodology and findings must also be made publicly available on a government website.

The bill encourages the public sector to adopt a balanced approach when determining value-for-money assessments, free of any confirmation bias or third-party influence. All options must be considered. The reason a public service comparator is so important is because governments are able to raise capital at a significantly lower cost than private consortiums.

With interest rates continuing to rise, so has the cost of private finance compared to government borrowings, making PPPs a much more expensive option for delivering the services and infrastructure the state needs. Governments often use VFM assessments and PSC calculations produced by private consultants, who almost always find ways to justify using a PPP model instead of public procurement. This is achieved by using adjustments based on intangible benefits such as 'efficiency gains', 'risk transfer' and 'value-added innovations'.

Proponents of PPPs always like to claim that the much higher costs of PPPs, particularly on the financing side, are offset by transferring colossal amounts of risk to the private sector. In reality, however, risk transfer in PPPs is very limited. Risks can never be completely transferred through PPPs because governments will always be ultimately accountable for delivering public services and infrastructure. This responsibility is not changed by expensive and highly complex PPP agreements. If problems arise, it is the public that always has to pick up the bill at the end of the day.

If PPP operators run into problems or do not achieve expected returns, they can just walk away, leaving the public sector to pick up the tab. Since public services need to continue uninterrupted, governments have a hard time refusing additional requests by the private partner or charging penalties for poor performance because the entire PPP may fail. This means the private partner is always in the stronger bargaining position.

The cost of private finance compared to public borrowing has always been the biggest and weakest point of a PPP. In 2011, the *Financial Times* worked out that UK taxpayers were 'paying well over £20 billion in extra borrowing costs—the equivalent of more than 40 new hospitals—for the 700 projects that successive governments had acquired under the private finance model'.

PPPs also limit the government's ability to respond to major economic crises due to their long-term, inflexible contracts and high costs. When there is a need to cut public spending, for example, it is the services that are not managed by a PPP contract that get slashed. This was confirmed by the IMF in a 2018 fiscal affairs note, which states—

While spending on traditional public investments can be scaled back if needed, spending on PPPs cannot. PPPs thus make it harder for governments to absorb fiscal shocks ...

It is important to always remember that these PPP consortiums are accountable to their shareholders, not the people of Queensland. They select projects based on whether they will be commercially profitable, not on whether they serve the public interest. In other words, they may distort public policy. The main way a consortium has to profit from a PPP is to cut corners—also known as 'creating efficiencies'—especially when it comes to staffing levels and the delivery of services. In Lesotho, Africa, a PPP consortium built a new hospital for which the government had to pay an annual concession of \$32.6 million—almost double the annual budget of the old hospital. Within a year, the PPP reduced its services, reduced the number of doctors, cut the number of beds and placed limits on the average length of stay for patients.

To date, the Queensland Audit Office has played a very insignificant role in the governance and oversight of the government's PPP arrangements. At the recent estimate hearings, I asked the Acting Auditor-General whether the QAO had ever performed a performance audit on a public-private partnership in Queensland. To my astonishment, the answer was no. I have since discovered that only three states in Australia have ever had a PPP audited by their state auditor-general. They are New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. One study from 2017 stated that over a 22-year period only 12 per cent of all Australian PPP projects had been audited by a state auditor-general. In Queensland, it is zero per cent. This means that PPP projects and services in Queensland have been subject to no independent oversight whatsoever. That is a statistic that I think would shock all Queenslanders. It certainly shocked me, particularly given the extremely patchy record many of these PPPs have had in recent times when it comes to cost blowouts, poor service delivery, completion delays and huge cost increases across the board when the whole thing is up and running.

The national PPP policy has been endorsed by all Australian state and territory governments and applies to all PPPs that are released to the market. Apart from this, state governments have their own jurisdictional policies and guidelines around the use of PPPs. However, for the most part, the state's Treasury department appears to be the sole agenda setter, rule maker and evaluator of PPPs. Very little is known about the private sector entities engaged in many of our multibillion dollar PPPs in Queensland. Many are private investment trusts that have structured their assets and liabilities inside special purpose vehicles, SPVs, with no obligation to disclose beneficial ownership, financial statements or majority shareholdings.

PPP transactions have numerous commercial-in-confidence provisions that we are told are needed to protect the trade secrets of the entities within the consortium. The counterargument to this is that publicly listed companies are able to disclose their financial dealings to their respective stock exchange whilst still managing to maintain profitability and the security of commercially sensitive information. There is no reason, therefore, that these secretive trust companies should not do the same. Moreover, as most PPP contracts are in areas where there is effectively a monopoly, the argument of competition should only rarely apply.

With the unprecedented number of capital projects in Queensland's pipeline over the next few decades, greater levels of transparency and oversight have never been more urgently needed. The underlying principle of the bill is that information should be made public unless there is a justifiable commercial-in-confidence reason for non-disclosure. This means that as much information in a government PPP contract as possible should be made publicly available, and where this is not done the government must be called on to justify why not. Under clause 21, the Treasurer must publish annually a statement containing financial information about each major project undertaken as a PPP

that year. It must also ensure the stream of future PPP payments in government accounts are included in the annual budget, including which budget these annual costs are being paid from and what the actual cost to government and the taxpayer will be.

For far too long, unregulated global financial markets have been siphoning away funds from productive investments in the real economy. As a result, the paper economy has grown but the real economy has stagnated. Meanwhile, smaller Queensland contractors are being squeezed out of access to government infrastructure contracts while foreign owned superannuation and private equity trusts take public moneys out of the state and out of the country.

Democracy thrives when people can see, understand and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, when decision-makers are accountable for their actions and when leaders lead with integrity. Countless opinion polls show that Queenslanders have lost confidence in their government and elected representatives. Transparency lies at the heart of all good governance. The more we rely on hidden and secretive PPPs, the more our democracy is eroded, along with public trust and the infrastructure and services people actually need—ones based on the public good, not shareholder profits.

It is time to insist on full disclosure, full public consultation, full decision-making and full accountability from the decision-makers in our government. As the Auditor-General said, there should be no secrets when it comes to public money and how it is being spent. I am confident that this bill will deliver a robust legislative framework for the future—one that ensures the affordable and transparent delivery of the critical infrastructure and services that all Queenslanders need. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—Ind) (12.57 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 Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee

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

Sitting suspended from 12.58 pm to 2.00 pm.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### APPROPRIATION BILL

#### Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

#### Appropriation Bill

Resumed from p. 2597.

#### Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee, Report

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): The question is—

That the report of the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee be adopted.

**Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.00 pm): I rise to speak to our committee report on the estimates hearing that we held this year. I find it very interesting that estimates is about an interrogation of the budget, but I always say that we learn more about the LNP when we conduct estimates hearings than from anywhere else. The LNP in this estimates proceedings made a lot of statements, threw a fair bit of shade, constantly peddled derogatory comments and vague figures, made tedious repetition and a lot of, unfortunately, smart alec comments during the—

**Ms Pease:** Just the usual then?


**Mr WHITING:** I will take that interjection. At the end of the day they offered nothing to the people of Queensland. In fact, they left us knowing less and holding less than at the beginning of the day. I am reminded of a quote from Thomas Brackett Read, a former Speaker of the US House of Representatives who said, 'They never open their mouths without subtracting from the sum of human knowledge.' I want to thank the member for Caloundra for that quote. Let's compare the contributions from the LNP during estimates to what the Miles government has actually achieved. There are three things. I think this comparison shows how the LNP actually subtract from the sum of human knowledge, at least in the body politic in this state.

One was the announcement of the Waraba PDA by the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure. As members heard this morning, it involves 3,000 hectares and 30,000 homes to cater for 70,000 people, supporting 17,000 jobs and all the LNP said was, 'Why didn't this happen sooner?' not knowing the amount of work that has gone on over the years behind the scenes with the council and the state to get to this point.

Secondly, we heard about some great housing milestones from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning. For example, we supported the purchase of 500 NRAS homes by community housing providers. There are 558 homes under construction by these community housing providers supported by the Miles government, and 1,300 homes are under contract. We heard that, according to a national survey, we have the most satisfied housing tenants in the whole of Australia. All the LNP wanted to talk about and intimate was that homeless people in Cairns did not deserve such high-quality short-term housing. As always, there is that underlying message from the LNP that many public housing tenants in our great state are undeserving and ungrateful. We saw that during the Campbell Newman era and we saw that again during these estimates.

The third thing I want to point out in terms of comparison is how the Miles government was able to demonstrate the progress of our Olympic venues program. We heard about the progress of the Sunshine Coast Stadium and how the Chandler precinct is progressing, and we also heard about the Moreton Bay Indoor Sports Centre. As always, the only thing the LNP focused on was the cost of major stadiums. They did not want to talk about Victoria Park, but they wanted to talk about the cost of the major stadiums. I point out that these were questions, even though repeated endlessly, which had been answered in previous committee hearings on this matter, and I have heard them answered here in parliament as well.

In summing up, if we look at that quote, if we ask what have the LNP contributed, what I can say is they have added nothing to the sum of political life and of public life here in Queensland. Anything that was uncovered in this estimates was already known. In fact, with their constant interjections, their bad manners, their sneering, they subtract and detract from all that we do here. What we have seen with estimates is that the LNP offer nothing to the people of Queensland. They have nothing. They stand for nothing. I know the member for Kawana will be next on his feet. The challenge to him is to demonstrate how, if he were in government, he would add to the sum of life here in Queensland instead of detract from it. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.05 pm): I take the question and challenge from the honourable member, the chair of the committee: how would the life of a Queenslanders be different under an LNP government? I will tell you: Adult Crime, Adult Time; fixing the housing crisis created by the Labor Party; building the infrastructure—the roads, the rail; fixing the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2032 to stop it being the embarrassment it has become under the Labor Party; getting rid of detention as a last resort; a \$2 billion infrastructure fund for local governments, private developers and churches to supply the government with land so that social and affordable housing can be built on it. We will abolish stamp duty for first home owners buying or building their first home in Queensland. We will raise the stamp duty concession threshold from \$500,000 to \$700,000, saving thousands of Queenslanders from that extra taxation burden.

Do you want me to keep going, member, as to how it will be better under an LNP government than the Labor government? Let's go to crime. People are sick and tired of this Labor government that weakened the youth justice laws in 2015. The member asks how it would be better under an LNP government: Adult Crime, Adult Time; supporting our police, supporting the men and women in blue on the beat, giving them the laws and the resources to do their job. Do you want me to keep going, member, on how it will be better under an LNP government?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Give me more time and I will keep going.

**Mr Whiting** interjected.

**Mr Walker** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Member for Bancroft, you had a go. Member for Mundingburra, cease your interjections. Member for Kawana, direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker. What we saw in the budget estimates process was ministers completely out of their depth. I saw Minister Grace, who is the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure and the Minister for Industrial Relations—but from the performance I saw today by Minister Boyd, she should be the infrastructure minister because the hole she dug for herself is the biggest I have ever seen. Minister Nikki Boyd would fit in very well on an infrastructure site with the hole that she dug for herself today—absolutely.


Let's talk about state development and the Coordinator-General. The Pioneer Valley pumped hydro scheme is not even a coordinated project under the Coordinator-General. This government has spent over \$100 million buying land from private owners and they have no plan about how they will build the Pioneer Valley pumped hydro scheme. Interestingly, no-one can say how much it will cost, not even an estimate. Everyone says, 'We are in discussions.' The Coordinator-General says he has been in discussions with the Department of Energy. Everyone has had discussions, but no-one apparently has discussed how much this thing is going to cost. We know from what stakeholders and industry experts have said that this Pioneer Valley pumped hydro scheme will probably cost \$25 billion to \$30 billion. There is a reason the Labor Party is not disclosing the estimate cost before the election: they know it will be over \$30 billion and they do not want Queenslanders to know about it. We know they know, but they did not disclose it at the estimates hearings.

They talked about the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2032. What an embarrassment it has become under the Labor government. If the LNP are elected on 26 October, give us 100 days to put grown-ups in charge to sort out this mess that the Labor Party have created for over 1,000 days—the chaos and crisis over 1,000 days and no clear plan. They even said, 'Oh, well, the Gabba was our plan A.' Mike Kaiser, the director-general of DPC, said two days before the estimates that there was no analysis on the Gabba \$1 billion, there was no analysis done on the \$2.7 billion and there was no analysis done on the \$3.4 billion, but guess what? Under Premier Miles and the Labor government, their plan B is QSAC.

Cue the crickets. Guess what? There is no analysis on QSAC either—no analysis, no business case. I was interested on the weekend to hear the education minister, Minister Farmer, say that tenders were issued for QSAC. That is interesting because two weeks earlier at estimates they said they had not done any analysis and they have not issued contracts for the project validation report. This has become an absolute embarrassment under the Labor government.

We saw Minister Grace trying to blame the LNP government from 12 years ago for the issues of the CFMEU today. The reality is: the Labor government have weakened the laws in the industrial relations space and they have caused the issues with the CFMEU and the violence that we see on construction sites in Queensland.

In planning, we have had a decline in lot approvals over the last 10 years under the Labor government. They have failed Queenslanders—whether it is in the Olympic and Paralympic Games space, whether it is in the planning space or whether it is in the infrastructure space. Every piece of infrastructure in Queensland has blown out. They cannot explain the blowouts; they cannot explain how much. How did the Bribie Island bridge go from \$200 million to \$700 million? Labor cannot be trusted in Queensland. It is time for a change. Show Labor the door in '24.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.10 pm): The member for Kawana talked about Minister Grace trying to bring up something from 12 years ago. I remind the member that he was the one who tabled the document that showed that his own government could not mend issues within the CFMEU. I thank the member for Kawana. He set himself another trap and fell straight in it. In fact, he is probably digging a very deep hole right now after the calamity that he presented.

I will start where I always start when debating the Appropriation Bill and that is the statement of reservation, my favourite part. I really do enjoy the statement of reservation. I note that at the beginning it states—

Opposition members of the Committee agree with the passing of the 2024/25 Budget.

As I do every time there is a budget debate, I thank Comrade Hart and Comrade McDonald for supporting another great Labor budget—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Bundaberg—

**Mr SMITH:** I will move on.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have been here long enough. You know to call members by their correct title. I would ask you to withdraw that comment and call members by their correct title.

**Mr SMITH:** I withdraw. I will make sure I refer to the member for Lockyer and the member for Burleigh, who are great supporters of this Labor budget. In fact, some would say that they are already on their 'Marx' to back this one in. With some of the recent news, they are set to put some solutions forward for Queensland. I can assure members of that.

The good thing about opposition members is that at least they waited until they saw what was in the budget before they supported it—unlike the Leader of the Opposition, who came out and supported it before anyone had seen it, even members on this side of the House. That is how keen he was. Why did the Leader of the Opposition make the choice to back the budget before he even saw it? It is because he knew that a Labor budget is good for Queensland. That is right. He said, 'Thank goodness I don't have to do it. Thank goodness the LNP don't have to do it. The Deputy Premier and the Premier have it sorted. Thank goodness they are in charge.' I reckon that when the opposition saw the budget they went, 'That was a masterstroke by the Leader of the Opposition, because we back in a Labor budget as well. What a masterstroke it was!' That is why he must be the leader—absolute genius! The next line of this wonderful statement of reservation states—

It is a matter of regret that the Estimates process has, once again, been characterised by obfuscation—

I did not even know the LNP knew that word—

concealment rather than transparency and the triumph of the opaque over the crystal clear.

I taught year 12 English and I can say that that is absolutely year 12 English. In the past I have been critical of the work experience kids of the LNP who write these statements of reservation, but that is whimsical wish-wash. I cannot even say it—that is how whimsical it is!

They say that the data is opaque and not transparent. In our estimates hearing there was a total time for questions of 621 minutes—that is over 10 hours. Some 171 minutes of that went to government members; 450 minutes went to non-government members. There were 170 questions. If the LNP cannot break down the opaque wall after 450 minutes and 170 questions, maybe the process is not opaque; maybe it is just that the questions are dull and dumb and that is why they cannot break through. To the young work experience kid who wrote this I say: don't take on loan when you are doing your creative writing; otherwise you may hear the saying, 'Ere thrice the sun done salutation to the dawn'. If anyone listens to The Smiths, they will know what I just said.


Estimates are critically important because it is important that oppositions can question governments and the leaders of government over their actions—over their dealings in the parliament and over their dealings outside of the parliament relating to their position in the public domain. It is important that there is scrutiny. We can see this throughout the history of Westminster. I found an important reflection when I went back through the history of Westminster. When an opposition member, the former member for Bolsover, was asking questions—it is quite profound—they said in the House, 'This man has done more to divide this nation than anybody else. I still refer to him as "dodgy Dave" as he lines his pockets'. I do not know why that is so profound at this particular estimates hearing—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bundaberg—

**Mr SMITH:** That was a quote from Westminster.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think that is unparliamentary language and I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr SMITH:** I withdraw. I do believe that the former member for Bolsover was kicked out because he did not withdraw, so at least I have learned my lesson from the former member for Bolsover. What another great Labor budget, delivering for the people of this state. The LNP will back it in every day, without even seeing it.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.15 pm): It is great to follow the member for Bundaberg in this debate. I trust you have kept your teacher registration up, because in a couple of months time you will be practising that profession again.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Direct your comments through the chair, member for Everton.

**Mr MANDER:** When I am in town for parliament—I know many people do this—I go for a walk in the morning. One of the most disturbing things I have noticed in recent times is the number of homeless people in this city, on the riverbanks and underneath the bridges. Today in the paper we see reports of homeless people in tents opposite the fire station at Roma Street, just before the William Jolly Bridge. That is happening right under the nose of this government.

During this estimates hearing we found out how bad the situation is—not just in Brisbane but in every town right across this state. Every time you go to a regional city, people will talk about where their local tent city is—down on the riverbank or in the local parks. It is an absolute disgrace. It is symbolic of the utter failure of this government to house our most vulnerable people. Through estimates, we found out that last financial year 145,000 nights of hotel accommodation was used to house homeless people. That is a nearly 30 per cent increase on the year before. Then when we asked what it would be next year, they had absolutely no idea—no planning, no forecasting. Some of these people were in hotels for six months. It is unbelievable that they do not have other transition plans. The minister goes out and says, ‘Anybody who needs a roof over their head, come to us.’ Then they whack them in a hotel and forget about them.

The other thing that is very difficult to accept is the number of people on the social housing waiting list. A week or two before the estimates hearings, we asked the minister to back up the commitment she made to publish the social housing waiting list numbers on a regular basis. We had not had figures since December. Guess what happened. It was not released on the Friday, at that press conference. That night, the minister—after refusing to do it during the day—released it secretly to one source. They have the hide to say that they are transparent. What did we find out? It was 45,473 people—an increase over the last seven years of 53 per cent. We had 5½ thousand added to the list just in the last 12 months. Today I heard the minister talk about the figure suddenly becoming available in the afternoon, after pressure was applied to them by the media and by the LNP. I think that type of behaviour from a government that tries to make out it is transparent is a bit ‘how ya going’.

We have an absolute crisis in this state for which this government has been directly responsible. For the last 10 years the homelessness rate has increased dramatically as has the social housing waiting list. Those opposite come out and make an announcement—maybe a couple a week. They made one last week about 47 homes for older women. When is it going to start? When is it going to finish? There is no mention of it. They say, ‘It is probably going to start next year.’ The Housing Investment Fund has been in place now for three years. However, not one person, not one Queensland, is in a home that was built by the Housing Investment Fund despite promise after promise. This is coming from a side that believes they stick up for those people who are vulnerable. I can tell them that is not the feedback we get. The feedback we get in our offices every day is that people are sick of this government. They are sick of the announcements that are made and not backed up. When are they going to realise that announcements do not house people? People want to see results and outcomes, not false promises, not TikTok videos, not Facebook. They want results, they want houses and this government has failed.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.20 pm): It is fantastic to follow the member for Everton because during his time as housing minister social housing went backwards. He did not actually deliver anything. It went backwards. He did not even make announcements. He just sold them off and social housing went backwards. It is always a pleasure to follow the member for Everton and remind him of his track record.

In the estimates hearing this year, yet again we gave the opposition more time and more opportunities to scrutinise the government. Did they land a blow on the three ministers during that day? No, they did not. What it showed, especially for the member for Everton, was that he was going to be callous towards the social housing tenants in this state. That line of questioning and his tone of questioning showed what he was going to go back to—and we saw it during his time in government.

I was a bit disappointed with the chair’s performance in limiting the government’s time. I know that is a reflection on the chair, but I do not think he will take objection to it. I wanted the opportunity to quiz the OIA a little more and I missed out on that. I wanted to find out why the OIA had referred the former Redlands LNP mayor to the tribunal. I suspect it was for being drunk at work and talking to victims of drink drivers while at work before jumping into her council Lexus—and we do not know how she got her hands on a council Lexus—before she—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Capalaba, can I ask you how this is relevant to the report that we are debating?

**Mr BROWN:** The OIA was included in this session of the estimates, as well as local government.



**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will let you go a little longer on this, member for Capalaba.


**Mr BROWN:** Minister Grace obviously gave us a great performance yet again—always brilliant—especially around the Olympic announcements and what is happening in my corner of the world in Chandler. There were massive announcements for Chandler such as a brand new 10-court indoor centre. It was great to join the minister out there for that announcement. There has been a lack of basketball courts in our area. We need world-class ones and we are now going to have them.

Recently the minister also announced another 14 courts in Moreton. When it comes to basketball courts and indoor centres, we back those. It was great to see that Moreton city council supplied the land for those. That is what we are trying to do in Redlands. The Redlands mayor moved a motion to try to investigate where Redlands could house an indoor basketball centre similar to what we are seeing at Chandler and Moreton, but that was knocked back by the LNP aligned councillors.

The housing minister went through all our initiatives across the whole housing sector. It is a real shame to see what is happening with other levels of government. In my local area the former LNP mayor has taken to court a developer who is trying to build NDIS housing in Redlands. Fourteen units for NDIS recipients have been held up for close to two years. They are nearly complete. There should be people in them now. Those opposite talk about the housing crisis, yet there are active LNP members blocking people with a disability from having a roof over their head.

When it comes to the water minister it was fantastic to see this. As the water minister would know, I have been lobbying for a long time for help with concealed leaks and it is an important cost-of-living measure. Concealed leaks can happen to anyone, rich or poor. People do not check their pipes every day to see whether they have a concealed leak. They only find out when the rates notice comes in. We do not want to see bill shock, because that is when people get into trouble. I am glad the water minister has delivered this cost-of-living initiative because I know it goes a long way in my community.

Let's have a look at the track record of the LNP when it comes to water in the Redlands. The cost of water in Redlands went up 53 per cent in three years under the LNP. That is in stark contrast to what we are doing in regards to water prices. That was 53 per cent in less than three years. What are we doing? We are delivering cost-of-living measures for residents who have a concealed leak, making sure they do not suffer from bill shock and they do not fall further behind. We are backing them all the way.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.25 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on 2024-25 budget estimates report No. 18 of the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee. I am really disappointed with this budget. It does not address the crises that we see in this state, the crises that people are facing: the cost-of-living crisis; the health crisis; the crime crisis; the youth crime crisis, which we see playing out in regional communities like Goondiwindi; and the housing crisis, which I see on a very regular basis—and the member for Everton alluded to what we are dealing with and the people who are coming through our doors. These challenges will not go away on their own. Sadly, after nearly a decade in office and the end of a four-year parliamentary term, this government has not provided reassurance that its policies are meeting the significant challenges in the health, crime, housing and cost-of-living areas. The bandaid solutions and the cost-shifting to other sectors outlined in the budget failed to address the underlying causes behind these challenges.

The budget provided a chance for the government to chart a new direction, however they missed that opportunity. The estimates process revealed just how unprepared the government is to meet the responsibilities of Queenslanders and also the responsibilities that local governments share in Queensland. I was hoping the new Minister for Local Government would bring a new focus and energy to help local governments in the state, but the estimates process showed quickly that nothing had changed. By the end of the local government session it was evident the sector was still not a priority for the Labor government. It was disappointing that the minister was not across the detail and left an impression she was not taking seriously local government matters.

The minister did not know how much the Labor government's mismanagement of fire ants is costing local governments. Queensland local governments have been cost shifted onto again by the state government. Fire ant control is reported to be costing some councils millions of dollars. Councils will need to take care of every park, nature reserve, road corridor and facility they manage to ensure that every space is investigated and any fire ants located are treated to prevent their spread. Queensland local governments are not eligible to claim against the National Fire Ant Eradication Program for additional costs they incur.

Councils have been told that as of 1 July 2024 they would be responsible for undertaking increased surveillance and suppression activities on fire ants. The Labor government is cost-shifting this onto local government and yet the local government minister was unaware of the costs to even her own council and in her own electorate. The minister was not able to give a long-term funding commitment to Works for Queensland, which is the No. 1 ask of Queensland councils, nor was she able to explain why the program's guidelines had been changed to require shovel-ready projects. I do have a theory though that the manipulation of Works for Queensland has a lot to do with ribbon cutting by the state Labor government in the lead-up to the state election.

Most alarmingly, the minister could not explain why the government plunged many Queensland councils into deficit last financial year due to the delayed financial assistance grants payments. Paying the financial assistance grants is the responsibility of the state government. Financial sustainability is the No. 1 pressure facing many councils and this minister seemed lost in her own superdepartment without any focus on the issues that councils face on a day-to-day basis.

I am told that there were councils that questioned if they could run their final end-of-year pay run on 28 June because of the payment delay of the FA grants. The FA grants are a sizeable sum of money and I ask the minister: in relation to the interest that would have been earned on those funds that sat in the state government account, will that interest be shared with Queensland local governments, because, rightly, that is actually their interest and their funds? I would be very interested to know whether that interest will be forthcoming to Queensland local governments. It is only the LNP that will make local government a priority again as opposed to Labor, which has lost focus on local government in a superdepartment. We should show Labor the door in '24.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.30 pm): I rise to join the debate of the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee estimates report. Through some general introductory remarks, I commend the committee for the report and thank the chair, the members of the committee, the committee secretariat, the Clerk, the parliamentary staff and the departmental staff. We have delivered a \$2 billion budget for 2024-25 for state development and infrastructure. I find it quite amusing that member after member gets up and bemoans the budget and are disappointed, yet they endorsed the budget. The Leader of the Opposition endorsed the budget before it even came out, so it is interesting to hear all of the moaning and groaning and whingeing and whining which we expect to hear from those opposite anyway but coming through even louder.

According to those opposite, when it comes to housing, everything is a crisis. It does not matter what it is, it is all a crisis, yet they do not take into account what is happening around Australia and what is happening around the world. With housing there is an issue where federally there have been 13 rate rises in a row. That may have had some impact on housing in this state and around Australia, but, no, their heads are buried in the sand and it is all the Labor government's fault in Queensland. Nothing is happening outside of Queensland, there was no COVID, there is no post COVID; it is all the Labor government. Everyone is feeling the same thing. It is everywhere in the world, yet those opposite bury their heads in the sand and it is only the Queensland government. They are like a broken record and I have never heard such nonsense in all my life.

We have plans in place in this budget to assist with housing. Through Economic Development Queensland there is \$97.1 million in capital grants for social and affordable housing on developments by EDQ and \$16.5 million to investigate the delivery of social and affordable housing through PPPs. Key investments support future focused industry development and the energy transition, with over \$110 million over five years as part of a \$570 million nation-leading Queensland battery strategy. We are in preparation for the 2032 games and we have the nonsense from those opposite that the \$2.7 billion figure for the Gabba was made up. I am sorry, but there was a project validation report that is on the website and available with options with regard to the Gabba. It was a detailed PVR. For those opposite to come in here and suggest that none of that was done is absolutely ridiculous.


If we listen to them, somehow they are going to solve it all in 100 days. I put that down as a Victoria Park solution. They are going to get the big boys in and say, 'We're going to sort it all out. We're going to get the experts in because no-one else has had a look at it,' and they are the only ones who are going to do it. We hear that coming from the Leader of the Opposition. He was given more than 100 days to fix SET Solutions and did absolutely nothing but run it into the ground and left an untold number of creditors without their funds after that, so good luck with that one! He could not do that in 100 days then but somehow is going to solve all of the problems. We have a \$107 billion Big Build. Those

opposite talk about cost increases, but let me tell them that there is not a builder in town, anywhere in Queensland or in Australia, who will tell them that input costs to building have not increased substantially—not one.

**Mr Purdie:** The CFMEU!

**Ms GRACE:** I take that interjection. Let me tell the member: the builders that I talk to say that it has nothing to do with industrial agreements. Rather, it is the input costs that they are facing. Talk to them in my electorate or anywhere. An example is a house in Rocky that was going to cost \$750,000 but ends up costing \$1.5 million, and there is no CFMEU there. It is input costs. Those opposite should not bury their heads in the sand. It is absolute nonsense what they talk about.

When it comes to industrial relations, we are addressing that. It is the Albanese Labor government that is taking the most definitive action in the last 10 years. Nothing was done under the LNP. It sat on its hands. I get tabled documents that are 10 years old which show nothing was done. It will be this government and the Albanese government that will act. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.35 pm): I also rise to contribute to the estimates report, particularly in relation to water, regional development and manufacturing. It was interesting that Minister Grace, who just spoke, said that all she sees is documents from 10 years ago. After having sat here for the last 10 years, all we hear about from the minister and her colleagues is what happened 12 years ago—constantly harping back to an old government over a decade ago.

What do we have here? We have a Premier who is trying to frame himself up as the new Premier. One good thing that this new supposed Premier did—because he was the former deputy premier and all those other ministers for the last decade that led to the failings of the Miles government because he took over from the former Palaszczuk government—was give the Minister for Manufacturing the ability to answer questions on train manufacturing, so it was a very enjoyable estimates where I could ask the manufacturing minister something about train manufacturing, because every other year he fobbed it off to the transport minister, and he talked about Korea quite a lot. We know that the new Minister for Transport and Main Roads certainly would not be able to answer questions in relation to train manufacturing.

Apart from the disclosure of the private information from Downer released in the parliament—and there are still no real answers to that—I was deeply concerned for the workers of Downer in Maryborough where they have discovered asbestos in the boardroom. They have discovered asbestos in the boardroom so that meant that they were unable to meet with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the shadow minister for transport and myself on a prearranged visit to Maryborough last week. I do hope the asbestos has been cleaned up, I do hope that all of the workers at Downer are safe and I do hope that it was not the big hand of the Miles government trying to stop us visiting Downer. We know that this minister is under the pump and that is why he did not want us to go into Downer. We on this side of the House take asbestos very seriously and so I hope that the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Manufacturing and the assistant minister for train manufacturing have not been subjected to that asbestos in the boardroom at Downer—and, goodness me, make sure you get yourselves checked out! Imagine the poor person at Downer who had to make the call to us and say, 'We've found asbestos in the boardroom so you can't come. The minister has said you can't come.' Anyway, we also discovered once again 85—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Order, members! Pause the clock. Minister, we will have no arguing across the chamber please.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** We also discussed the Korean involvement in making the prototypes, with an 85.6 per cent stake in the joint venture. We discussed the workers camp that is being built outside of Maryborough, and it would be good to see some locals able to get those jobs in that vitally important manufacturing.


We talked about the regional forums and how they have been axed and replaced with community cabinets, which comes under the Premier. I note that the manufacturing minister picked up train manufacturing but lost his regional development portfolio, which is a shame because at least he knows where regional Queensland is. However, they have kept the Gold Coast and Sunny coast regional forums. I wonder if that has something to do with keeping the seats of Gaven and Caloundra.

We then moved on to water, but I do not have enough time to cover everything. We talked about a desalination plant. Still the minister is refusing to rule out a desalination plant. In fact, he mentioned the northern Sunshine Coast. I ask the member for Noosa if she knows whether the desalination plant

will be built in her patch. We know full water plans have been delayed. Two years ago it was announced that the Flinders unallocated water project would go out to tender, but on 14 March the minister's department said, 'No, we're going to close off that tender.' That was irrespective of the fact that companies have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars. I will be interested to see what compensation will be made there. We also talked about the Haughton pipeline blowout.

The greatest infrastructure fail under the Labor government is Paradise Dam, and the member for Bundaberg could not ask even one question about that most important issue. It is only the LNP that is supporting the rebuild of the Paradise Dam. The housing minister is here so I note that 10 homes are still vacant in Somerset Dam Village. They could be housing—

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (2.40 pm): As always, we hear very shouty contributions from those opposite, particularly the member for Everton who seems to be a very angry man.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the member's interjection. I too would be pretty angry if the best outcome of the election was going back to the same job I was booted from nearly a decade ago. Why did he get booted from that job? Maybe it was the fact that he was a state housing minister who sent social housing backwards by 428 homes. You want to talk about delivery? I think that is a bit more 'how ya going'! He axed support for renters. We know he clearly does not like them. He demonstrates that every time he comes into this House and talks about renters. They cut 1,600 QBuild jobs—that is, the very people who literally build and maintain public housing. We heard from the member for Everton that he is going to do it all again.

During estimates, we heard that the LNP's plan is for no more public housing. It was the first time we got that on the record: no more public housing from the LNP. The estimates process showed a very clear contrast between the Miles Labor government that is doing what matters by delivering our Homes for Queenslanders plan and an opposition that openly admit that they do not want more homes in their own backyards. This is an opposition whose line of questioning would suggest that they would rather see people sleep rough than have a safe place to stay. It is an opposition that spent its time undermining renters and reforms that will protect renters in this state. It is an opposition that is misleading Queenslanders by saying that 10,000 homes could be magically built at no cost and we discovered that that was a blatant lie.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Minister, I ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

**Ms SCANLON:** I withdraw. The estimates process revealed that at the LNP convention the opposition leader said that they would deliver—

10,000 new community homes working with the faith-based sector, it won't cost a dollar—just a change in regulation.

That is a direct quote. In reality, when we talked to those faith-based organisations we learnt that they do in fact want money for the leasing of the land and they do in fact want money to develop those projects. This is the LNP again either deliberately misleading Queenslanders or doing dodgy and secret deals.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Linton, I ask you to withdraw that comment, please.

**Ms PEASE:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I withdraw and I am the member for 'Lytton'.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** My apologies, member for Lytton.

**Ms SCANLON:** We also caught on the record LNP members saying that they do not want us to build up and they also do not want us to build on defunct golf courses but, at the same time, they say we need more housing supply. The math is not mathing. If you say that you do not want to go up and you do not want to build on land that is available, where are the houses going to go? We know that math is not a strong suit for the member for Everton. We all remember the costings press conference.


The member for Lockyer showed up. He showed that the LNP did not understand that in order to deliver housing there must be solutions in the planning system as well. At least the member for Lockyer actually bothered to hang around, unlike the member for Kawana, who is actually the shadow

minister for planning. He spent barely 10 minutes in the chamber. He asked a handful of questions and, after the theatrics, decided that he had had enough and left. He did not even stay for the one-hour session that was allocated for planning. That shows how strongly the LNP feel about housing and planning.

The opposition leader and the LNP say they want to unleash the community housing sector but, in the same breath, they criticise the community housing providers for buying homes and they criticise them for their timeframes in delivering housing projects. You cannot have it both ways. You cannot say that you support them and then criticise them for everything that they do.

I want to respond to some of the claims made by the member for Everton and those opposite about the Housing Investment Fund. I want to be very clear: the Housing Investment Fund has delivered 617 homes and people are living in those homes right now. We all know that it takes some time to build homes and this is just one of many programs. They are very picky with their words because they are trying to deliberately mislead Queenslanders. There are people living in those homes right now because of the investment that our government has made. I could go on and criticise many other elements of the member for Everton's comments. He suggests that we are spending too much money on emergency accommodation but then talks about people living in tents. I think the LNP need to articulate what on earth their plan is.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.45 pm): It is a privilege for me to rise and speak on this year's estimates process for the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee, formerly known as the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. At the outset, I thank our shadow ministers for their contributions and assistance in the estimates process. In particular, I place on record my thanks to my colleague the member for Burleigh who, along with other opposition members, held the government to account. I pay my respects to the member for Burleigh because this will be his last involvement in the estimates process. There are many members who have spent many years in this parliament but may not have contributed to the same level as the member for Burleigh. As his colleague on this committee, I can say that he has always given very careful consideration to the sometimes very complex bills that we have had before us—and we have had quite a large legislative agenda come to our committee. I thank him very much for that.

One of the incredible things to come out of this estimates process is what I would describe as, 'Whoops, they've have done it again.' A short while ago we discovered, through our committee, the failings of the Gabba rebuild project and the \$1 billion estimate that we now know became \$2.7 billion and in more recent times has become \$3.4 billion. This year in the estimates hearing, when asking about the estimate for the QSAC rebuild, we discovered that there is actually no plan. It is similar to what happened with the Gabba. We will be very interested to see where that ends up.

During the estimates hearing we covered a lot of territory. There were some astounding discoveries relating to contractors employed by the government that would not pass the pub test let alone the fit and proper person test. That included some very interesting and colourful directors of a scaffolding company that has been employed with very little due diligence.


We discovered a great deal about the housing supply or, should I say, the lack of housing supply. I note the minister was just being critical of our shadow minister, the member for Everton, Tim Mander, and his contribution regarding the \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund. I want to echo his remarks and also say to the minister that, while there may be 617 new houses in that \$2 billion fund, those houses were purchased by the fund, which is not increasing the housing stock whatsoever.

I am pleased to associate myself with the comments of the shadow minister for housing and our leader that we will make sure that that \$2 billion investment fund goes towards making new supply. We understand that there is an interconnectivity between rental properties and home ownership. When somebody moves from renting a property to home ownership, quite often they do not ever go back to renting and that means another home is available. That was something that we uncovered and that we will continue to make better for Queenslanders.

One thing that flowed through a number of the different departments was simply the denial that there was a problem. It is similar to what has happened in the crime space. There was actually a denial of a number of the problems and they were saying to us that everything is okay. When local government planning is taking, on average, two years to go through the department, it is no wonder that supply is

being stifled. Once again, I want to associate myself with the Leader of the Opposition's announcement during the budget reply speech that we will see those planning schemes returned in three months. They will become more proactive so that councils can unlock supply as well as take advantage of the other opportunities we have announced.

I recognise the contribution of the member for Nanango. Queenslanders are very worried about water and water security. I note that the Minister for Water is in the House. I know that he would love to see more dams and plans delivered across the state. I do not know why the whole government is not supporting that. An LNP government will make sure Queenslanders have water security.

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (2.50 pm): I am proud to be a minister in the Miles Labor government, which is focused on cost-of-living relief, creating jobs and delivering lasting infrastructure for Queenslanders. I always look forward to estimates. It is a chance to talk about the achievements in my portfolio that are changing lives and businesses and growing regional communities.

At estimates, the LNP are forced to actually ask me some questions. They do not ask me any decent questions during a sitting week in question time. It was disappointing, as per usual, to see the member for Nanango use the estimates process as an opportunity to continue to talk down train manufacturing here in Queensland. I actually told the member to go to Maryborough and see what train manufacturing is. She forgot what train manufacturing is about because those opposite sent the building of trains overseas. I was encouraging her to get in a car, head to Maryborough and even meet with Bruce Saunders, the Assistant Minister for Train Manufacturing, to have a look at the trains being made here in Queensland. Safety comes first for the member for Nanango and, unfortunately, her meeting had to be cancelled because asbestos was found.

The statement of reservation was predictable; I think it was just copied and pasted—the same as every year since I have been the minister. The LNP have been running a desperate campaign about Paradise Dam, talking about things being 'torn down'. The member for Nanango keeps going on and on about it. What did she come up with when she was the minister responsible? She came up with \$25 million to fix Paradise Dam. That was it. We have spent four times that just to make the dam safe.

During estimates I confirmed that \$109.6 million was budgeted for the geotechnical work for the new wall, which is continuing to this day. The member for Bundaberg is so passionate about this subject. He did not have to ask me questions about this in estimates because he knows what is going on. He spends time there. He knows exactly what is happening with that project and that we are going to rebuild the wall. That is exactly what the local member should be doing. As I have said, so far we have invested four times more in that project than the LNP did, and we are investing another \$109 million.

When it comes to the noise that comes from the LNP, especially when they start to talk about costs and overruns, we know exactly what that means: they will cut. They will cut and they will run. We know that. The member for Nanango and the LNP candidate for Bundaberg have not once said that they back our project and the funding that goes with it—not once.


The opposition and the member for Nanango must come clean about their plans for water security for regional Queensland. It is fair enough for them to walk around the countryside, but they actually need to commit to some of the fantastic water infrastructure programs that we have funded in our budgets in the past—to the tune of billions and billions of dollars. Where is their promise to regional Queensland communities on water security?

How do they plan to fund anything when they do not support our progressive coal royalties? You cannot build big water infrastructure when you do not have the money in the bank. What they are saying over there in LNP land is fanciful. They say, 'We're going to build four dams. We will put the member for Nanango in charge of building four dams.' Now is the time for the member for Nanango to tell us about the four dams that the Leader of the Opposition has challenged her to build if she ever becomes Queensland's water minister.

Let's look at some of the beautiful infrastructure that has been delivered by this government. Rookwood Weir has been a fantastic project supporting hundreds of jobs in both local businesses and big businesses in Rockhampton which in turn support those communities. We are raising Burdekin Falls Dam by two metres. There will be more water at Burdekin Falls Dam than the combined total of the three major dams in South-East Queensland.

I am very proud to say that we are supporting the Cairns Water Security project. The Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline will deliver water security to that region. The Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline, which everyone knows is a passion of mine, is about securing water for Gladstone for the future, particularly with hydrogen moving forward. More importantly, the Mount Morgan community has suffered for many years with no water and this Labor government is delivering a pipeline. I made sure the opposition knew that during the estimates process.

We are supporting not only water security here in Queensland but also manufacturing. The member for Nanango often forgets that she has 'manufacturing' in her title. We will support water. We will support manufacturing. We will support the regions.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to talk about the estimates process for the last time in this House, as the member for Lockyer said. I have been involved in 12 estimates processes since Labor came to power in 2015. The estimates process has been a complete and utter farce and almost a waste of time.

The government members crow about the LNP getting the majority of time to ask questions, but each chair of the committees—especially the chair of our committee—held up those questions by quizzing everything the LNP had to say and the ministers wasted time in answering. Instead of being concise and accurate, they waffled on to waste time. That is how most of the time was consumed.

I would like to tackle a couple of things the water minister had to say, given he was last on his feet. This government does not like building dams. It never has.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr HART:** If members would like to listen, in 2017 I went to Rockhampton to announce that the LNP would build Rookwood Weir. The members for Keppel and Rockhampton were nowhere to be seen at the time. They said it was not required. They said, 'We don't need this dam.' Suddenly, the federal government and the state government put up money for it, and now they are taking credit for something they had absolutely no interest in. In fact, the only dam construction it has done—

**Ms LAUGA:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence of the member's comments and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr HART:** I withdraw. The only construction this government has done on dams is to deconstruct the Paradise Dam. It has not done anything to replace the water it has taken away from there. Those opposite hate building dams. The only thing they like to talk about is desal plants, and they are keeping most of that a secret. They would not tell us anything at estimates about where they intend to build these desal plants that they think can save everything.

This government seems to be putting all its eggs in one big basket with the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro scheme. If the government is going to rely on renewable energy, it needs storage to back it up; otherwise, the energy system in this state will collapse. There is no doubt about that. If the government builds two big hydro plants, as it seems intent on doing—without business cases, without knowing how much they are going to cost and without knowing the impact that will have on the price of electricity for Queenslanders—and one of them fails, what happens to electricity if there is no storage available? That is why it is a better idea to build quite a few of them.

**Mr Power:** Where are they?

**Mr HART:** There are thousands of sites in Queensland.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr HART:** If the member for Logan would like to read his own report, he will see that there are 1,200 sites in Queensland alone that would take a hydro scheme. This government does not bother to look at that. They are looking at the easy way out. They are looking at the most socially—


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Burleigh, I ask you to resume your seat. The time for the debate on this report has expired.

Report adopted.

## Community Support and Services Committee, Report

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): The question is—

That the report of the Community Support and Services Committee be adopted.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (3.00 pm): I rise to speak on report No. 49 of the Community Support and Services Committee's budget estimates consideration of the Appropriation Bill 2024. We on this side of the House acknowledge the role that the annual budget estimates hearings play in providing the people of Queensland with a robust process in scrutinising the budget presented in this House.

For the committee the primary area of responsibility was reviewing the portfolio areas of treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships; community and the arts; child safety, seniors and disability services, and multicultural affairs; and tourism and sport. With regard to the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts, the 2024-25 appropriations included the administration of the directly targeted cost-of-living rebate—that is, for all households to automatically receive a \$1,000 electricity rebate from the Miles government. Funding was also allocated to support the Miles government's small business electricity rebate. These appropriations also highlighted further cost-of-living relief to support vulnerable Queensland families and allocations for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry as well as provision of Closing the Gap funding to improve outcomes for First Nations Queenslanders.

Following the opposition's line of questioning at the hearing in addition to the lack of comment in the opposition's statement of reservation regarding the government's cost-of-living rebate, it is most notable and now abundantly clear what a risk to our community an LNP government would be. The cost-of-living energy rebates for every household across Queensland would be gone—not \$1,000 or the additional \$372 for seniors; all gone. The LNP allocation would be zero. The only budget allocation the people of Queensland would see is dump trucks full of our progressive coal royalties being tipped back into multinational billionaire's pockets. Our fair share would be their gain again. As the Leader of the Opposition said recently, 'They can take it to the bank.'

Not a single word was mentioned in the opposition's statement of reservation about the rebates. It was like amnesia had struck on a grand scale or, should I say, on a one grand scale. We know why. They are very clear through their silence that our cost-of-living supports—like the other announcements by the Miles government—will be gone, making life harder right across Queensland.


With regard to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs Queensland, the appropriation included allocations for the care allowance and post-care supports and programs to support and strengthen community cohesion in Queensland through asylum seeker and refugee assistance as well as a program to assist survivors of torture and trauma. Being a father of a son with a disability, close to my heart is the package for the provision of disability reforms put forward as an initial response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the NDIS review. This will lead to many great outcomes, improving the lives of those with disability. Did the opposition mention any of this good work? Did it mention any support for the government's uptake of this? No, there was just a comment in their statement of reservation about a delay from the end of March to mid-2024. Seriously, is that all they can come up with!

With regard to the Department of Tourism and Sport, besides several excellent programs directed towards high-performance strategies for Brisbane 2032, the massively popular FairPlay voucher scheme has an allocation increase from \$150 to \$200 to guarantee vouchers to all Queensland children and young people between the age of five and 17 years to participate in sport and recreation. The knock-on benefits to our children and families are enormous. Again, there was no comment from the opposition regarding this measure. Their silence regarding these measures was extraordinary.

As committee chair, I would like to thank the committee members for their work during this estimates process and their support in my role as chair for the first time. I note the statements of reservation from the member for Maiwar and the opposition members. The member for Maiwar has again reiterated his disquiet regarding the process that is the estimates hearings. I feel his commentary criticising time allocations frankly a little strange given that I am advised the overall allocation of time for non-government questions was around 72 per cent of the allocated time during the hearing. It is a bit rich to say that the system is broken and that somehow the government is avoiding scrutiny given that 72 per cent of the allocated time during the committee hearing was allocated to non-government members. What more could be asked?



I put on record the committee's appreciation of the work done by the committee secretariat, the parliamentary staff, the ministers, their advisers and departmental officers who work very long hours to ensure the estimates process is as smooth as possible for the parliament. I support the Community Support and Services Committee's recommendation.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.05 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak to the committee report. I thank the chair, the member for Hervey Bay, who has just spoken, and the deputy chair, the member for Burnett, for having me as a guest. It was across a wide range of issues, including disability services, that we tried to get some answers about foundational supports, which is something that has come into Queensland. I will table a paper from a series of local organisations—Allinto, Autism Queensland, AEIOU Foundation, Centacare, Endeavour Foundation, Multicap, National Disability Services and Xavier—that are concerned about establishing successful foundational supports from June 2024. I note that in the hearing we were unable to get any reassurance from the minister apart from the fact that the state will be ready to provide these foundational supports. There was no practical explanation as to how that was going to happen. I table that paper.

*Tabled paper:* Document, dated June 2024, titled 'Establishing successful foundational supports in Queensland' [[1555](#)].

I note that in March 2024 the minister criticised the NDIS process and so has the Premier. I will table two articles. In the first the Premier, Mr Miles, said there had been 'flawed communication from Mr Shorten, who had rushed the legislation without fairly consulting leaders'. I table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 28 March 2024, titled 'Premier critical of NDIS process' [[1556](#)].

The other article reports that the new minister is concerned about the secrecy of the bill she said was put together with very little consultation. I table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Australian*, dated 28 March 2024, titled 'Anger over NDIS reform plan limiting "choice and control"' [[1557](#)].

I note that there have been meetings since, but very little reinsurance at the hearing about the future for foundational supports. That is of concern to people in the sector.

I note in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnership section of the hearing the concerns about the Closing the Gap targets. As reported by Shaye Windsor in an article on Thursday, 1 August 2024 titled 'Sorry state as Indigenous gap widens'—

The Queensland government will fail to meet its Closing the Gap targets in the remaining eight-year time frame ...

Yes, there has been action in terms of some of the targets, but generally the Closing the Gap targets fail for some of our most disadvantaged citizens. That is something we are committed to doing something more about, including around issues like suicide being the leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 to 39 in 2022. I table a copy of that article.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, dated 1 August 2024, titled 'Sorry state as Indigenous gap widens' [[1558](#)].

I turn to a couple of issues specific to my electorate. There is real concern on the Gold Coast about the redevelopment of Carters Basin and the expansion of Peters Fish Market. I table an article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* of 15 August by Paul Weston titled 'Save our tuna trawlers plea'.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 15 August 2024, titled 'Save our tuna trawlers plea' [[1559](#)].

The timeline, that I will table, of events related to the redevelopment make it abundantly clear that there has been no effective consultation with the key stakeholders. When Minister Grace Grace suggests to people in the fishing industry that maybe they can unload their tuna fishing boats at Coomera, it shows that there is very little practical understanding by the minister about where this has to be done. Removing a wharf at The Spit with no adequate provision for these fishermen and the fishing fleet means that there is a chance that this government's ineptitude could lead to the loss of a Queensland primary industry to New South Wales. I table a copy of the timeline of events.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Timeline of events relating to the redevelopment of Carter's Basin and the expansion of Peters Fish Market' [[1560](#)].

I suggest to the Electoral Commission in my role as shadow minister for multiculturalism that we need to contact Queenslanders, especially elderly ones. Recently I was at the Hungarian club with Broadbeach seniors, and an elderly Hungarian gentleman who is 87 told me that he believes he only has to vote in federal elections. Hopefully, that is something the Electoral Commission will take on board.


I also want to table an article from *Quadrant Online* that I noted following the Premier's suggestion about petrol stations. It took me back to the era of Bob Hawke, who with the unions decided to open a supermarket, Bourkes stores, in the 1970s. That of course failed, yet we have Premier Miles harking back to that issue with his announcement last week about the state prospectively opening petrol stations.

*Tabled paper:* Article from *Quadrant Online*, dated 17 August 2017, titled 'Cartel capers in the Menzies years' [\[1561\]](#).

I also want to table details of Gambling Community Benefit Fund distributions. I believe that the Gold Coast electorates definitely miss out. Answer to question on notice 713 asked on 11 June 2024 clearly shows that the distribution disadvantages Gold Coast electorates. This is something that should be resolved.

*Tabled paper:* Answer to question on notice No. 2024-713 asked on 11 June 2024 [\[1562\]](#).

Having said all of that, it was a day conducted in fairly good humour, and it is an important part of the process that we have in the parliament.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Community Support and Services Committee budget estimates for the 2024-25 financial year. The committee's primary areas of responsibility are: treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, communities and the arts; child safety, seniors and disability services, and multicultural affairs; and tourism and sport. I want to acknowledge and thank Minister Leeanne Enoch, Minister Charis Mullen and Minister Michael Healy and their respective departments.

On 14 June 2024, the Appropriation Bill 2024 and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility were referred to the Community Support and Services Committee for investigation and report. The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. I am humbled to speak on my seventh estimates process. This year's estimates was fair and transparent and gave those opposite ample time to scrutinise government expenditure.

High cost of living affects every household right across the state. The Miles government knows just how tough Queenslanders are doing it right now and we are doing what matters. The Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts allocated \$2.26 billion to the cost-of-living rebate, with many Queenslanders benefiting from the \$1,000 electricity rebate. The amount of \$20 million was invested into cost-of-living relief, providing additional support for the most vulnerable in our communities through initiatives such as the community focused food programs to help families of school-age children create nutritious and affordable meals.

Extra funds were committed to OzHarvest and SecondBite to continue critical food recovery and distribution services. Meals on Wheels will continue its good work with a \$1.2 million boost over four years. Further investment will go towards community financial resilience support and emergency relief provider funding. Our government is making sure that no-one gets left behind. That is why \$5.4 million over two years will go towards combating the effects of isolation and loneliness for Queensland families.


The Miles Labor government is committed to working in partnership with First Nations people. I want to commend Minister Enoch for driving meaningful change through her department, allocating over \$11 million to prepare for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. The stories shared and the emotions shown during the examination of the Path to Treaty Bill, which I was humbled to be part of, tell us that the path to truth-telling and healing is not going to be an easy one. This investment will help community members to tell their stories, support staff wellbeing, and support research and archival specialists. While the Miles government is on the path to forging a new chapter in our state's history, not much can be said for those opposite after the Leader of the Opposition turned his back on treaty.

When it comes to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services, I commend the minister and her department for the work they do to support families, children and young people; providing services to support the safety, belonging and wellbeing of children and young people not able to be cared for by their families; delivering high-quality services and safeguards, and promoting the inclusion, engagement, rights and social and economic participation of seniors, carers and people with disability; and influencing, facilitating and promoting efforts to build belonging and economic and social inclusion for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Our investment will continue to make a difference to those who need it most through initiatives such as the care allowance and post-care supports; Supporting Families Changing Futures, ICT digital applications and the Unify Program Continuous Improvement Pipeline; the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program and the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma; family reunification pilot service; African youth and community members; and disability reforms.

The Department of Tourism and Sport's main aim is to drive the return and growth of a sustainable and competitive tourism industry, attracting capital investment and maximising the benefit of tourism and major events to boost Queensland's economy. Our government has led the way with the sport and active recreation industry to support Queenslanders to participate through quality infrastructure and local environments, and by supporting pathways to assist Queenslanders to reach their full sporting potential.

I want to make special acknowledgement of Minister Healy for his support for the recovery process from the recent floods we had in Far North Queensland. His department stepped up. Through tourism recovery support we were able to deliver packages to support the tourism industry in Far North Queensland. I commend the report to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.16 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for the arts, I rise to address the Appropriation Bill for 2024-25 and specifically the proposed expenditure of the Labor state government as examined by the Queensland parliament's Community Support and Services Committee.

During the specific examination of expenditure for the arts, questions were again raised in relation to the new theatre being constructed at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. The Labor state government's overall management of the planning and delivery of this new theatre has been extremely problematic.

Under the Labor government, this new theatre had an original total project cost of \$150 million and an original opening date of 2022. This then became \$175 million and an opening date of mid-2024. Now it has been uncovered that the new theatre will not open for audiences until at least 2026, with a new total project cost of \$184 million following a \$9 million cost blowout as reported in this year's state budget. Notwithstanding issues related to the 2022 floods, of which revised opening dates had been committed to and since missed, the fact remains that the Labor state government has repeatedly failed to properly manage this project on time and on budget.

We are at a unique time in Queensland's history as we progress towards the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and we do not have a moment to lose. The world's attention and focus is already turning towards Queensland. Between now and 2032, we must maximise and seize every opportunity that is possible to further enhance and showcase Queensland's tremendous reputation as a destination for excellence in the performing, visual and creative arts sectors.

During this year's estimates, questions were also asked in relation to the \$126,000 ministerial study tour to the United States of America and Canada by the Minister for the Arts as well as by the director-general and other staff. Such extravagance, including thousands of dollars on chauffeur-driven vehicles and luxury accommodation, has drawn considerable concern from Queenslanders who are continuing to struggle through Labor's cost-of-living crisis.


It has also been noted that it was extraordinary that throughout the entire overseas trip not once did the minister issue a press release or even post on social media to let Queenslanders know of the overseas business that the minister was undertaking. During these estimates, questions were raised particularly in relation to the specific selection of the Fairmont Hotel at Edmonton, described as 'Edmonton's most luxurious hotel'. This was despite there being much more reasonably priced accommodation available just 800 metres down the road.

I note that, when the minister was specifically asked who made the determination to stay at the Fairmont Hotel and why, the minister stated the selection of this specific accommodation came on the recommendation of 'in-market representatives'. There was no confirmation as to who specifically made this determination or approved the selection of this hotel.

During this estimates hearing questions were also raised in relation to the budgeted allocation for the repatriation of First Nations remains by the Queensland Museum and the additional hiring of staff. It was confirmed by the CEO of the Queensland Museum that of the 1,394 ancestral remains and other objects to be repatriated approximately 890 items are ancestral remains, with the other items being secret and sacred objects. Of the ancestral remains, 67 have been identified as belonging to the Pacific Islands and nations, including Borneo and Fiji.

When questions as to whether the \$4.6 million allocation in the 2023-24 state budget for a period of five years would be sufficient to complete the full repatriation of all items and remains, the minister indicated that the process may take a lot longer due to the sensitive processes required as part of a diligent repatriation program. I certainly accept the explanation as provided by the minister. First Nations communities in Queensland, Australia and overseas deserve to have their remains repatriated as efficiently, sensitively and transparently as possible.

Finally, I wish to thank all members of the committee, the chair, the deputy chair and the minister for their attendance on the day as well as other departmental, agency and other representatives. I thank all members of the committee and the secretariat for their work in compiling this report. This is an important part of openness and transparency when it comes to democracy in Queensland. The committee on the day did some diligent work, and I also acknowledge the attendance of all of those staff on the day.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Community Support and Services Committee's estimates report. The Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queenslanders, and this is reflected in the budget highlights.

In the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts our budget highlights include \$2.267 billion for our nation-leading cost-of-living rebate, with all eligible households automatically receiving \$1,000 in 2024-25 from the Queensland government on their energy bills. If you are a small business owner, on top of the \$1,000 off your power bill you will also receive our \$325 small business electricity rebate.

We have funded \$20 million in cost-of-living relief for households struggling with food, including: \$1.3 million for community focused food programs, including a new food and nutrition initiative to relieve cost-of-living pressures on families with school-aged children; \$2.9 million over four years to improve warehousing arrangements for Foodbank Queensland; \$3.6 million over two years to enable OzHarvest and SecondBite to continue critical food recovery and distribution services; and \$1.2 million over four years and \$300,000 per annum ongoing to support Queensland Meals on Wheels.

We are improving the resilience of our communities by investing in disaster relief support, with \$2.2 million going into community financial resilience support and \$3.3 million into continued emergency relief provider funding.


We have committed \$11.2 million to fund Closing the Gap initiatives, including: \$6.4 million in 2024-25 to continue wellbeing and community safety programs; \$3.1 million to strengthen the sector, including funding to the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander coalition; and \$1.7 million over two years to continue the Doomadgee Place Based Partnership and related programs.

In the disability sector we have invested more than \$160 million into reforms made in response to the disability royal commission and NDIS review, including: \$5 million to expand individual and systemic disability advocacy; \$10 million to provide a temporary uplift in the Queensland Community Support Scheme; \$6.5 million for the Hospital Assistive Technology Loan Pool pilot and an expansion of supports provided under the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme; and \$24.4 million over five years for a sector-led stakeholder engagement strategy, the improvement of disability data and reporting, strategic leadership and the implementation and monitoring of disability reforms across Queensland.

Costs should never be a barrier to our kids getting involved in sports. That is why we have invested \$33.5 million to increase the value of our FairPlay vouchers from \$150 to \$200. We have also guaranteed 50,000 vouchers under current eligibility requirements and a further 150,000 vouchers for Queensland children and young people aged between five and 17. I was a bit surprised to know that riding for the disabled is included in the FairPlay vouchers. There is \$9.5 million in 2024-25 through the Sport Minor Infrastructure Program to provide targeted funding for the delivery of new, upgraded and end-of-life infrastructure projects supporting sports and active recreation. These have all gone ahead in my area, and I am looking forward to the Woombye Snakes being the next club due for an upgrade. I would like to thank the committee, the department and ministers for their involvement and engagement.

**Mr Stewart** interjected.

**Mr SKELTON:** I take that interjection from the member for Townsville about the Snakes. In particular I would like to thank the secretariat and Ms Lynda Pretty, who always answers my questions. Apparently there is no question so silly she cannot answer for me. Her work is quite remarkable. These are just some of the highlights of how the Miles Labor government is using public money for the public good. Unlike some in this place who would seek to use the public purse for private benefit, we are doing what matters for Queensland and getting things done. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.25 pm): As the chair of the Community Support and Services Committee already noted, my statement of reservation this year is remarkably similar to what it was last year, the year before that, the year before that and the year before that because the system is still just as busted as it has been previously. It is still not serving the purpose it is supposed to and that Queenslanders presume is how the key opportunity for transparency and accountability might work in

this state. I do want to note there were some improvements made to the process this year that, from a crossbench perspective at the very least, have been valuable. I want to give credit where it is due. As crossbench members, having questions on notice across the full range of portfolios and having the opportunity to put at least one question to each minister was a huge step in the right direction from my perspective, and I am sure the rest of the crossbench would agree.


We could take it further. If we are genuinely interested in scrutiny and accountability we would not have these kinds of limits on questions on notice that could be asked: we would be entitled to ask multiple questions to each minister or, at the very least, be entitled to ask one question on notice in respect of each portfolio area. As we see in these hearings, having questions on notice that overlap multiple portfolios within a single hearing means that, first of all, we do not get to ask that question on notice in respect of each portfolio area but also we are squeezed into having very short timeframes for specific portfolios rather than the whole of the minister's portfolio responsibilities.

I also appreciate the intent of providing a mandated minimum proportion of questioning time for non-government members and specifically for crossbench members. It is well intended. I recall when the House was looking at the motion for estimates this year the member for Stafford—I hope his health is improving—was agog at the idea that the crossbench would not jump at the fact we were being guaranteed a proportion of time. In practice, the truth is that at best as an entire crossbench we still get seven minutes out of every hour. If you consider that in circumstances where there is a full-time member from the crossbench on a committee—and this year's experience was no different to others, where there were up to three visiting members—it is a vanishingly small amount of time.

This brings me to the observation of some committee chairs, the chair of the Community Support and Services Committee included. The 72 per cent of time for non-government questions is fine. The member for Thuringowa can claim his crown of more than 80 per cent for non-government members for the Health and Environment Committee, but that does not matter when we are still talking about tiny little windows of time. The proportions mean nothing; it is the total time we have for questions. How the government can pretend we are able to adequately scrutinise a portfolio like youth justice in an hour and a half is beyond me. How we are supposed to scrutinise the extraordinary amount of spending and all of the operational work of the Queensland Police Service in an hour and a half is beyond me. This government is spending money hand over fist on new prisons in this state and we are given one hour to ask questions about Corrective Services. Child safety was similar with an hour and a quarter.

If this were a government that genuinely prioritised transparency and accountability, we would be given more time. If this were a government that genuinely cared about public confidence in the operations of the executive and the parliament for that matter, they would give us more time. Instead, time and time again—year in, year out—we see the prioritisation of their own interests. We see them ducking and weaving, avoiding difficult questions by just not giving us enough time.

The solutions are not complicated: expand the timeframes for these hearings and show your priorities through that, similar to what we are seeing in the House this week. We have these three cognate bills that have been introduced and will be debated in one sitting week. Meanwhile, important bills such as the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will go lagging. Children are being taken out of kinship care arrangements because the government cannot get its act together and pass this legislation, just like the Child Safe Organisations Bill. Prioritise this work.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (3.30 pm): I rise to speak on the Community Support and Services Committee estimates report. I would particularly like to thank the member for Hervey Bay, the new chair of this committee, for his expert chairing of the hearing. I also thank the deputy chair, the member for Burnett, and committee members for their time. I would like to acknowledge parliamentary staff, the director-general of my department and the many departmental staff, along with my own ministerial office staff, who worked incredibly hard to prepare for the hearing. A lot of work goes into preparing for a few hours in one day to go through all of those questions, so I want to acknowledge them.

The Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts reaches every Queenslanders. We are delivering cost-of-living support and inclusivity and we are doing that through essential community services, truth-telling, support for veterans, support for culture and arts, and support for LGBTIQ+ Queenslanders. My department is delivering \$20 million for cost-of-living relief for families, including \$3.3 million for emergency relief providers and \$2.2 million to support financial resilience services. We have allocated \$21.8 million to construction and upgrades of neighbourhood centres.

I am very proud that we recently released Queensland's first LGBTQIA+ Strategy and Action Plan called Pride in our Communities. It is backed by \$1 million in funding to support an LGBTQIA+ Alliance for Queensland as part of this unprecedented strategy and \$200,000 to Brisbane Pride to support regional pride events across Queensland. We have also delivered our first Young Queenslanders Strategy, co-designed with young people to help shape our future.

Another Queensland summer will be with us soon, but I would like to acknowledge that in the last disaster season over 377,000 Queenslanders received over \$80 million in personal hardship assistance. That is more than the last three seasons combined. We increased the maximum funding for structural repairs under the jointly funded Commonwealth and state Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements from \$50,000 to \$80,000 per household. I know that will make a big difference to those who have been impacted.

We have boosted the School and Community Food Relief Program by \$15 million in addition to \$2.7 million to extend the School Breakfast Program. Our School and Community Food Taskforce provides cross-sector expertise on better access to healthy food. As part of the Miles Labor government's \$501.98 million Putting Queensland Kids First initiative, we will invest \$15 million in partnership with community organisations for additional support services. We continue to support Queensland's veterans and their families with more than \$4.9 million and \$1.23 million a year ongoing for the Queensland Veterans' Council.


This month marked the United Nations day of Indigenous peoples, and I am very pleased to inform the House that this year's Miles government budget delivered more than \$23 million to support First Nations Queenslanders through Closing the Gap initiatives. This parliament voted with bipartisan support to pass the Path to Treaty Act in May last year to establish the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, which started its work on 1 July. We have endorsed \$40 million for the First Nations Treaty Institute, \$56 million for the Truth-telling and Hearing Inquiry and \$18 million over four years to help Queenslanders share their stories with the inquiry. That is a very important part of understanding our history.

Our government is committed to the repatriation of ancestral remains and secret/sacred objects through the Queensland Museum. We have seen \$4.6 million over five years to amplify the Queensland Museum's repatriation activity, which has now established an historic agreement with the Museum of Vancouver for the return of First Nations artefacts. As a result of that, there is international interest in similar agreements. We have also invested in the arts with our ongoing commitment for the Creative Together strategy.

There were not a lot of questions about all of those things I just mentioned. The statement of reservation from the LNP is a pretty lazy statement of reservation, I have to say. In fact, on the day, most of my questions were about whether I had been still meeting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who actually work in the department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, which I found very strange. The other major part of my questioning was about the argument about what kind of training is appropriate. I had invited the member for Surfers Paradise to undertake some cultural awareness training. It would appear from estimates that it is needed now more than ever. I hope he takes up that offer going forward.

Other than that, I do want to say that the hearing was conducted in a very respectful way. I look forward to that same respect carrying on with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.35 pm): I like estimates. I think it is a great time. I want to acknowledge the secretariat and members of the committee. I think we do a good job on our committee. Our estimates hearing examined the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2024 for the portfolio areas of the following ministers: the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts; the Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs; and the Minister for Tourism and Sport. We heard of critical funding for: Closing the Gap initiatives; wellbeing and community safety programs; and reconciliation, truth-telling and healing. Closing the Gap targets are a major concern and we should all acknowledge that we need to do better.

Repatriation of ancestral remains was a focus of the estimates process, in particular intensive travel and the associated costs. Questioning relating to cultural agility training inevitably returned responses referencing Path to Treaty. The training being offered by the Department of Resources was

explained. What was of interest were revelations that many departments are working around native title and handing back land and renaming of locations. It was interesting to me, as someone who participated in the Path to Treaty inquiry, that we heard an expanded list of agenda items for the new truth and treaty body: displacement; dispossession; settlement; the management of lands, seas and waters; assimilation and protection; missions and reserves; the separation of children and other family members; control over personal property; control over wages; policing and the criminal justice system—and the list goes on. Alcohol management plans were discussed, and the issue of sly grog was acknowledged as being complex and serious.

Delay in the delivery of the performing arts venue was again a topic for estimates this year. There was great news. After many years of advocating for a new neighbourhood centre in Agnes Water, there was confirmation in the budget papers and twice in estimates that six neighbourhood centres across Queensland, including Agnes Water, will occur.

Clarification and discussion around youth in residential care highlighted the complexities of overutilisation. School attendance of young people in care highlighted a lack of data. Equally, data on children in residential care reported as missing was lacking, with reports that the only data is manual data being kept locally in these institutions or residential homes. We again received information that the department has no data on children in the care of Child Safety participating in extracurricular activities.


I was pleased the issues associated with level 3 supported accommodation providers were raised in estimates. The importance of these providers and the circumstances they find themselves in is of major concern. Our committee was privileged to do a significant amount of work over the last year on this issue and we have to turn our minds to what we do with these vulnerable Queenslanders going forward.

We concluded with the portfolio areas of tourism and sport. The issues of delays for the Wangetti Trail were scrutinised. It was revealed there have been significant underspends and continued delays, and there were references to stalled negotiations with Indigenous land use agreements and commercial operators. The Whitsunday Skyway project was also highlighted as being significantly delayed and tied up in red and green tape. It has been four years since that announcement.

Questions regarding the cancellation of the iconic King of the Mountain event in Pomona on the Sunshine Coast—it has been held for over 40 years—were asked. There were serious concerns raised about the 2017 election commitments of \$25 million for the rejuvenation of Great Keppel Island. Estimates exposed that only \$5 million has been spent to date and that the complexities of dealing with the council up there proved difficult. Let us hope Great Keppel can be what it was and what we all aspire it to be.

With the importance of tourism, it was prudent to expose these issues: underspends in the Binna Burra Lodge rebuild; underspends in the North Stradbroke Island futures program; the \$3 million underspend in the activate ecotourism capital grants; underspends in the Year of Accessible Tourism funding; underspends last financial year of \$65 million in tourism development expenses; zero dollars being spent on Great Barrier Reef marine infrastructure despite a budget of \$3 million; and a reduced budget for the Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund. Another project, the Paluma to Wallaman Falls Trail, is delayed for two years as negotiations with traditional owner groups continue. The Cooloola Great Walk and the Thorsborne Trail on Hinchinbrook are now slowing and not progressing.

In contrast, it was highlighted that other states, including New Zealand, are delivering ecotourism projects in bountiful amounts and the questions to both the minister and director-general, we feel, failed to provide responses that would instil strong confidence in the tourism sector. That said, there were a lot of issues raised also, particularly by the director-general, about delays that are relevant—tradies and materials, wet weather and other things—that contribute to the complexities of building in some of these areas. All in all, good luck in estimates next year to everyone.

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.40 pm): I would like to thank the chair and committee for its examination of the appropriations of the child safety, seniors and disability services, and multicultural affairs portfolios. As minister, I was pleased to highlight the significant work and achievements of our government and department, and I acknowledge the incredible dedication of our public servants, many working in complex and challenging settings. During the hearing I received questions about our child safety system and reforms. The child safety system is certainly stronger and more robust than the system we inherited in 2015. It is galling at times to hear the opposition talking

about a broken child safety system, the very system that they ripped \$200 million from when they were in government, the very system they were willing to cut by an additional \$500 million had they stayed in power, and the very system from which they sacked 402 permanent and temporary child safety workers.


In this year's budget, we are investing \$2.3 billion in child and family services. We have increased Child Safety staff by more than 58 per cent since coming to power, but I acknowledge we are seeing increased demand in the child safety system, demand which mirrors the complexities we are seeing more broadly in all of our communities. This includes growing domestic and family violence, mental ill health, drug and alcohol issues and vulnerable families struggling with cost-of-living pressures.

Since January, I have visited 28 child safety service centres and will be visiting more next week. Whilst I have visited residential care homes, my intention will never be to intrude and poke around into what are essentially children's homes. They deserve their privacy and our respect. However, the visits to our service centres and homes have been valuable, enabling opportunities for continued improvements and practices. In that vein, our road map for residential care in Queensland released in February aims to halve the number of children and young people in residential care in the next five years. It is an ambitious plan, but we have a laser-like commitment to achieving this, with all first-year actions now underway. We will do this by keeping children and young people in family or family-based care where possible. The number of children and young people in kinship care is rising, and foster caring numbers remain steady. We have established a youth advisory network called Shift. Young people who have all lived in residential care will get to share with me directly the ways we can make things better and more responsive for children in care.

We are investing \$1.4 million in Queensland foster and kinship care to focus on recruitment and retention of foster and kinship carers. We are supporting PeakCare with \$3.3 million to lead a residential workforce strategy and developing quality staff. We have reviewed every First Nations child and young person in residential care and are already seeing positive results with more children now placed with kin. As I have said many times, residential care must be seen as a pathway back to family rather than a placement.

As minister for disability services, I can say that we are in a period of significant reform. We have now released the Queensland Disability Reform Framework to ensure we continue to honour and action the disability community's mantra of 'nothing about us without us'. We have backed this framework with an initial commitment of \$160 million in funding. We have released Queensland's response to recommendations from the disability royal commission and will provide a response to the NDIS review which is due at the end of this year. We continue to work with the federal government on the NDIS legislation and are actively engaged on what will be fundamental and important changes to our disability ecosystem through foundational supports. I can assure the House that the Premier and I will continue to fight for a fair deal for Queenslanders with disability under any proposed federal changes.

Funding for our multicultural events and projects has been increased to \$3 million. These grants are incredibly important in celebrating and strengthening our diverse communities. I was also pleased to advise that, based on feedback from our multicultural communities, we will also now accept our grant submissions in different languages to ensure everyone has equal opportunity to apply. We are providing an extra \$4.8 million over two years for the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program on top of the over \$2 million we provide annually. This is not just a nice thing to do; it sends a clear message that Queensland is and will always be a welcome haven to all, not just for those whom Peter Dutton likes. As I said at the very start of my estimates hearing, how we look after the most vulnerable in our community speaks to the Queensland we want to be. I commend the report to the House.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (3.44 pm): I am pleased to stand and contribute to the estimates report of the Community Support and Services Committee. I thank the members of the committee from both sides of the House as well as the secretariat. I am also pleased to be speaking after the minister today in the House. In my four years in this parliament and having sat through estimates four times now as well, I have to say of the three ministers I have faced off against, this minister was the least across the brief of child safety that I have experienced. When the minister was asked of her experience in engaging with the residential care system, a system that is under enormous stress in this state and a system that is actually in crisis, it was uncovered that the minister had only visited a residential care facility in the past month since being appointed minister earlier this year and in fact had signed off on and released a residential review into resi-care and a road map that outlines this government's plans to aim for a 50 per cent reduction in residential care attendance over the course of the next five years.



What we have seen over the previous five years is an increase in numbers into residential care by 85 per cent. I do not know how this government think they are going to tackle that challenge when a review is released that does not even address children under 12. As outlined by former minister, Crawford, the commitment was to reduce the number of children under 12 in residential care.


We have babies and children aged five and six in residential care facilities being put to bed at night by one carer and being woken up the next morning by another carer. The minister and the Labor government need to understand what the role of a 'parent' is. What is the role and obligation of the minister when it comes to our most vulnerable children in this state? I think it is to speak to children, to hear their views, to engage and visit residential care facilities like I have and engage with the sector, with those young people, to understand what 36 placements does to the mental health and wellbeing of a child—our most vulnerable children. I point to Dylan, who has been in residential care in Cairns since the age of two and is now 17. He has had over 36 placements.

When I am out and about, I am approached by young people over their lived experience who have been failed under this current Labor government. Ministers should be ashamed that they have abdicated their responsibilities to these children.

The number of children in residential care is growing. There has been a 105 per cent increase since 2019—1,955 children as of March this year. It is disgraceful. These figures are the highest of any state jurisdiction. It is a demonstration that this Labor government has failed both in child safety and in the way it has administered the residential care system. It was never designed to be how it operates under this government.

The minister also outlined that the department confirmed that about 25 per cent of the whole cohort of children in out-of-home care are experiencing disruptions to schooling through suspensions or being expelled. That is unacceptable.

In reviewing the case loads of our frontline workers, particularly the case loads of those in my community of Mackay and the Whitsundays where vacancies are significantly high, it is unacceptable that child safety officers are dealing with up to 60 cases. That is not a government that is putting their frontline workforce first. That is not a government that is respecting the services that are needed. When we see once again that case loads are being averaged out over funded positions—similar to what they do with the police numbers—it does not represent the true extent of the workload pressures experienced by those frontline workers in these services. This was the third Labor child safety minister to face estimates in the term, and the lack of priority demonstrated by this government to our most vulnerable children will continue to generate poor outcomes. The fact is we now have a crisis in child safety, a crisis which has been linked to the youth justice crisis in this state.

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (3.49 pm): I am pleased to contribute to the debate of the Community Support and Services Committee report on estimates. I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of the committee chair, the member for Hervey Bay, and of all the other committee members: the members for Burnett, Maiwar, Cook, Oodgeroo and Nicklin. They all did a wonderful job.

In the first budget of the new Miles government we are doing what matters for Queenslanders—that is, most importantly, delivering the biggest cost-of-living relief in Queensland's history. In my portfolio responsibilities as the Minister for Tourism and Sport, the estimates hearing discussed the work we are doing to support all Queenslanders to live a healthier and more active lifestyle through participating in sport whether at community, organised or elite levels. A significant focus of this year's budget is to provide support for families to participate in sport or active recreation activities in light of the current cost-of-living pressures. We know from a mental health perspective how vitally important it is to get out and enjoy recreational activities.

The hearing discussions included the \$60 million being provided to expand the FairPlay voucher program, making every Queenslanders from five to 17 years eligible for a voucher. There are up to 300,000 vouchers available—increased from 50,000. The value of each voucher has also increased, from \$150 to \$200, to help reduce the cost of sports memberships, registrations and participation fees for families at registered clubs across the state. An additional \$9.5 million has been allocated under the Minor Infrastructure Program for 50 shovel-ready community sport infrastructure programs.

The Queensland Academy of Sport was thoroughly examined, with the Queensland government committed to ensuring elite Queensland athletes in Olympic and Paralympic sports receive the support they need to shine on the world stage. As we saw in the recent Olympics, we have done extremely well.


A four-year investment of \$72 million in the QAS will continue the delivery of Queensland Academy of Sport's 2032 High Performance Strategy. This will enable the Queensland Academy of Sport to retain more than 100 high-performance practitioners and give over 500 QAS supported athletes access to premium facilities and the latest in sports technology as we get closer to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

**A government member:** An excellent result!

**Mr HEALY:** It is an excellent result. I take the interjection. This is on top of the \$60.65 million allocated to the Queensland Academy of Sport over four financial years, commenced in July 2021, to begin delivery of the 2032 strategy.

In the vitally important tourism portfolio, the hearing discussed Tourism and Events Queensland's base funding, which will continue to be supported with \$125 million in 2024-25. The Queensland government is backing its lead marketing agency as the demand for Queensland continues to grow. Tourism and Events Queensland plays a fundamental role in that process. The multiyear funding guarantee recognises the importance of tourism as an industry that supports our regions and, most importantly, sustains good, strong Queensland jobs. It also provides more security and the ability to forward-plan to deliver high-impact global marketing campaigns to drive outcomes in line with the Towards Tourism 2032 strategy. In contrast, when the LNP were in government they cut 35 staff and \$188 million from Tourism and Events Queensland's budget.

During the hearing, I outlined that we were well and truly underway with the construction of the game-changing ecotourism offering in Far North Queensland that is the Wangetti Trail. I asked the Leader of the Opposition if he would complete the Wangetti Trail, and he refused to commit to the project—very disappointing. People in my part of the world—the Far North—would know about that. Cutting this project would be a tragedy for the Far North Queensland tourism industry, as the Wangetti Trail will attract thousands of new visitors into the region and is set to inject over \$300 million into our local economy. The first section of the trail is nearly completed and will be opened in the coming months. This is just one of 127 ecotourism projects we have provided \$149 million towards since 2015, 87 of which are complete with a total project value of over \$369 million. It is worth noting that more time was given to the opposition and crossbenchers to ask questions during the estimates hearing this year. They had more time than ever and did not use their time well.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (3.54 pm): I start my contribution by thanking the committee members and the secretariat for their work. The Community Support and Services Committee estimates hearing covered numerous portfolio areas of this year's budget: treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, communities and the arts; child safety, seniors, disability services and multicultural affairs; and tourism and sport. Sadly, the estimates process only reinforced my statement in my speech on the budget that the government has failed the people of the Cleveland area of Wellington Point, Ormiston, Birkdale, Cleveland, Thornlands and North Stradbroke Island. This budget does not deliver a fair share for the broader Redlands Coast area—the seats of Oodgeroo, Redlands, Capalaba and parts of Springwood. There is insufficient time to cover each area, but I will touch on a few things in each of the portfolios.

In terms of treaty and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, we see that the wrong priorities of this government have meant that Indigenous Australians are suffering. The minister spent \$126,000 on a nine-day trip to the United States and Canada in October last year for little real benefit to Indigenous peoples, particularly in terms of closing the gap. Those funds could have been used towards closing the gap in practical ways on North Stradbroke Island to benefit the Quandamooka people more directly. Labor has repeatedly failed to deliver the basics for the Quandamooka people in terms of education, housing and job security. In fact, it was this government's legislation on North Stradbroke Island that sacked 30 per cent of the Sibelco workforce who were Quandamooka and other First Nations peoples. That is a disgraceful legacy of this government. Instead the focus, sadly, has largely been on virtue signalling.

In terms of communities and arts, further details about the minister's \$126,000 trip to the United States and Canada and the cost of department travel to Venice, Italy were also revealed. Again this showed a poor use of funds and the wrong priorities.

In terms of child safety, seniors and disability services, ongoing failures in child safety were revealed, particularly in terms of residential care and housing standards. The QFCC commissioner belled the cat when he stated—

We continue to place children and young people in houses we would not choose for our own children.

In terms of residential care, we saw the school attendance issue. Twenty-five per cent of children in out-of-home care experience significant forms of disruption to their schooling, and this is not helping. The numbers are growing, as the shadow minister covered in her contribution. There are 1,955 young people in residential care—up from 1,759 last year, when the residential care review was launched. This is up 11 per cent. When we look at under-12s and under-10s, there are significant increases that are very concerning.

In terms of multicultural affairs, we see failures. One of the aspects that was revealed was the management of the Hamas issue among affected multicultural communities since the 7 October atrocity against Israeli men, women and children. On North Stradbroke Island, for some reason there is a Palestinian flag flying over TMR land on the main road at Dunwich. This is causing great consternation to locals, who are wondering why the government is doing that and focusing on just one part of that issue. It is affecting tourism on North Stradbroke Island as well. There is a lot of adverse comment to me as the local member: 'It is sad that they are being so one-sided.' I have written to the minister about this irregularity and the upset it is causing. Again I call on the minister and the government to do the right thing and remove the single flag or add other flags in order to be balanced and respectful.


In terms of tourism, we saw cost blowouts and delays in many ecotourism projects like the Wangetti Trail. We see with Great Keppel Island there was a 2017 election commitment; Labor promised to rejuvenate the island but little has occurred. We see the North Stradbroke Island futures program and the underspend of \$1.7 million as well as the Howard Smith Wharves and the new pontoons that were meant to be there but are not. There are many other ways in which this budget continues to fail the people of North Stradbroke Island and my electorate.

Report adopted.

### **Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee, Report**

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): The question is—

That the report of the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee be adopted.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (3.59 pm): I want to thank the committee members—the members for Rockhampton, Inala, Hinchinbrook, Southern Downs and Ipswich West for their contributions during the estimates hearing. We saw visitors in the shape of the members for Moggill, Maroochydore, Maiwar, South Brisbane, Currumbin and Buderim. What we saw during the debate was the committee adhering to and exceeding the Premier's commitment to 70 per cent of the questions being from non-government members. In terms of time, we actually saw that 75 per cent of questions came from non-government members and only 25 per cent from government members. In terms of the total number of questions, that was 84 per cent for non-government members and 16 per cent for government members. We certainly saw a lot of time taken up by those members who were not government members doing their best and, at times, their worst.

In terms of education and youth justice, we saw Minister Farmer, the member for Bulimba and Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice, outline the very strong and positive record this government has in this space: a \$20.9 billion budget. It includes things like the Putting Queensland Kids First program; the youth engagement strategy worth \$288 million; and the Go for Gold program, which is an excellent program which the Yeronga State High School in my electorate is benefitting from. There was a successful application for \$350,000 to build infrastructure to share their facilities with local sporting clubs. It is a very smart program that will use public assets better. That is really welcomed by the booming numbers in local sporting groups and junior sporting groups.


We have two new schools opening this year by the Miles Labor government. That is a total of 29 new schools since we were elected and is in stark contrast to the closures and sell-off of schools under the previous Newman government, including the Nyanda high school, which was in my former electorate of Yeerongpilly, that was shut and sold off by the LNP—one of many. There was also Fortitude Valley. We know that if they got another chance they would do exactly the same thing again: same people, same ideology, same lack of lessons learned from the failure of the Newman government.

In terms of wraparound support for kids with disabilities, we saw a lot of support there with staff; the community food relief program, \$15 million; GPs in School program; and the minister announced a \$54½ million teacher workforce package, which was very welcome by the sector. We see 200 more Turn to Teaching internships, an increase of 300 for the regional attraction and retention of state school teachers in priority regional areas. They are in demand and we need to keep them there, so we have bolstered that. We have seen 24 new flexi spaces on top of the 34 already announced by the minister.

We have a \$481 million youth justice budget and we also see \$106 million for the Student Wellbeing Package, the textbook and resource allowance providing \$155 per student through years seven to 10 and \$337—double that and then some—per student for years 11 and 12. There were questions asked by members about the new learning centre at Rockhampton North Special School, a very good facility, and there was more than \$2 billion for students with disability in terms of support. We have delivered 6,100 equivalent full-time teachers, which were committed to at the last election, six months early and we see that 1,100 new teacher aides were delivered as well.

People know with education that it will be delivered under a Labor government. They do not see asset sales, they do not see sell-offs and they do not see class sizes surge because of a lack of funding for teachers such as was seen under an LNP government. They see us investing in education because we need that education to maximise life opportunities. That is something I know personally having been the first kid in my family to go to university. My educators at my state schools at both primary and high school were the key things to me being able to achieve the things I have. We have to keep investing in that education sector.

We saw the Night-Life Economy Commissioner from the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development covered in the \$1.5 billion budget for skills and training, which are critical at the moment in a full employment economy, the \$203 million Queensland Skills Strategy and 70,000 places in free TAFE. We saw a relatively good session. I checked in with opposition members, who were very supportive of the allocation of time. We had the usual shenanigans, but that happens at every estimates in any given year.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.04 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for education, I rise to address the Appropriation Bill for 2024-25 and specifically the proposed expenditure of the state Labor government as examined by the Queensland parliament's Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee. The hearing began on the subject of student and teacher safety and wellbeing and the extent of the problematic handling of the serious asbestos exposure incident at Rochedale State School under this Labor state government. In addition to revelations that important information was incorrectly provided by the office of the Minister for Education to concerned parents, it was also shown that Rochedale State School P&C had to provide \$12,000 in emergency funding to assist parents with contaminated materials which were discarded. Parents also had to launch their own GoFundMe fundraising page in order to provide financial support for teaching resources.

It was also confirmed that 37 students have since left Rochedale State School, with parents advising the Liberal National Party opposition that the overwhelming majority of school departures was attributed to the poor handling of this serious asbestos issue under the Labor state government. Through repeated questioning it was incredibly disappointing to discover that not only had the Minister for Education not met with any of the concerned parents but the minister would not commit to meeting with those parents into the future.

Whilst parents and the school community have expressed their significant outrage, stress and concern regarding the management and communication of this asbestos exposure incident, parents have been left to only feel further outrage and despair after the Liberal National Party revealed that on the same afternoon that parents and teachers met for the important asbestos meeting with various departmental representatives, the Minister for Education and the director-general along with a host of others attended the Pink concert at Suncorp Stadium that evening. At over \$658 per ticket, Queenslanders deserve to know who paid the \$11,853 for this Pink concert for all who attended, given the minister's insistence that her attendance at the Pink concert was important in order to network with stakeholders as the new Minister for Education. The Minister for Education should know that the most important stakeholders are always Queensland students, parents and teachers. It is clear that under this third-term Labor state government the priority of Labor is entertainment over education.


Important matters of accountability and integrity were also raised with respect to the Queensland Pathways State College. The Liberal National Party received correspondence from an anonymous concerned public servant which detailed serious allegations pertaining to nepotism, political interference, conflicts of interest and maladministration with respect to the Queensland Pathways State College and the associated allocation of additional state government funding. These allegations reached the highest levels of the Labor state government. Accordingly, I provided the whistleblower correspondence to both the Crime and Corruption Commission and the Queensland Audit Office as these matters deserve to be fully assessed and investigated.

At the 2020 state election Labor made a commitment to Queenslanders that they would deliver an additional 7,329 new teachers and teacher aides. This is a broken Labor promise. Since 2020 the Labor state government has only recruited a net increase of 1,054 teachers and teacher aides, according to the latest public sector workforce profile. As revealed during these estimates, 13,426 teachers and teacher aides have in fact left the employment of Education Queensland during that same time based on responses to questions on notice and pre-estimates questions on notice.

Finally, I clearly state that our public state school education system is critically important for all. As the state member for Moggill, I want local parents, residents and families to be able to access our public state schools, whether they be primary or secondary, and have that access and availability locally and on a continual basis both now and into the future. There is no doubt there are significant concerns about existing local state school infrastructure in the western suburbs of Brisbane. The Labor state government has not delivered a new Brisbane inner west primary school and this is still needed. Also at estimates the Labor state government confirmed that they have no plans to deliver a new high school for the electorate of Moggill. It is only the Liberal National Party that is committed to an additional high school in the electorate of Moggill as well as further investment in infrastructure at Kenmore State High School. The delivery of a new high school for the electorate of Moggill is critically needed.

It also has to be noted that if we are truly to achieve the outcome of fully funding all of our Queensland public state schools then the federal Albanese Labor government must step up and provide the required funding to our state jurisdiction of Queensland.

In conclusion, I acknowledge the chair, the deputy chair and all members of the committee for the work they did on the day. The chair was certainly fair and balanced and I know that the deputy chair performed his role admirably as well. I want to acknowledge the secretariat, because the work they provide not only on the day but also in compiling reports is very important. The committee process is very important for our democracy here in Queensland. I again acknowledge all of those who attended on the day as part of the hearing.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (4.09 pm): I rise to speak to the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee's examination of the Appropriation Bill 2024-25 and the budget estimates for our committee areas of responsibility. I congratulate the ministers, their staff and the government employees from the various departments. All were very well prepared and I appreciate the large amount of work that takes place in preparation.

Minister Farmer in her opening statement spoke of the importance of the joint portfolios of education and youth justice. Education can give all Queensland children the best start in life and it is a Labor government that believes that, no matter who you are or where you are in Queensland, you deserve the same access to high-quality education. This is backed with a record \$20.9 billion education budget.


To give our kids the best start, the Miles government has implemented programs like the Putting Queensland Kids First strategy to give children that good start from conception; a youth engagement strategy, recognising that not all children can thrive in mainstream classrooms; a record \$1.3 billion capital works budget; Go for Gold; another two new schools to open in 2025, bringing the total to 29 new schools since 2015, and that is in direct contrast to the LNP when there were no additional schools—there were not even any additional classrooms and it sold schools off; Labor's commitment to hiring 2,000 specialist staff to provide wraparound support for students with disabilities in schools; our \$15 million School and Community Food Relief Program; and our GPs in Schools program.

Not every child who is disengaged from education is in the youth justice system, but every child in the youth justice system is disengaged from education. The minister spoke of the elements of the \$288 million youth engagement program and why it is so critical. She also announced the newest of those elements—24 new FlexiSpaces, adding to the 34 already announced this year, including seven in primary schools and two in primary-secondary school clusters.

Minister McCallum spoke of the \$1.5 billion investment in skills and training, employment and small business. Queensland is the nation's employment powerhouse. In Queensland more than one million people are employed by small businesses, and that is why we have our new Queensland Small Business Strategy—a \$250 million package of programs to support our small businesses. The budget also included funds for the appointment of the new Night-Life Economy Commissioner, who will work closely with local businesses, live-music venues and entertainment precincts to create a vibrant and safe night-life environment.

In the training and skills area it is planned to deliver one million subsidised training places for Queensland. This budget has locked in \$203 million over two years with the Queensland Skills Strategy. We know that free TAFE has been changing lives and our economy, so under the strategy we are providing funding for 70,000 places, thanks to the \$162.6 million over three years. To build more homes for Queenslanders, we have also opened the free construction apprenticeships and are providing \$1,000 worth of free tools to first-year tradies through rebates. All of these programs are at risk under an LNP government.

Finally, I want to thank the committee secretariat and parliamentary staff for their assistance throughout the estimates process. Well done to all. I also want to thank my fellow committee members. It has been a good opportunity for all.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.14 pm): We know that Queensland is in the grips of a youth crime crisis and that those opposite do not know how to fix it, but the estimates of the youth justice portfolio were a new low for the Miles Labor government. In the last Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023, this Miles government set itself a key performance indicator to reduce reoffending by five per cent. It failed that KPI. The data tells us that youth reoffending actually went up by five per cent over this period. So what target did the estimates reveal this government has set itself in the new 2024-2028 Youth Justice Strategy? You guessed it: Labor has scrapped the target to reduce youth reoffending altogether in the new Youth Justice Strategy, pointing instead to the SDS which maintains the status quo.

The estimates also revealed—and this really comes as no surprise—that the government's 72-hour transition plans, as meagre as they are, are also not effective. In fact, the estimates revealed that of the 976 young people who spent time in detention in 2023-24 less than half of them received a 72-hour transition plan—less than half. The government also admitted that it has failed to provide plans, like it promised, to all serious repeat offenders. On average, 28 per cent of serious repeat offenders are being released without a 72-hour transition plan and, of those with a plan, 18 per cent reoffended within three days and 72 per cent reoffended within the month.


It could not be clearer that the state Labor government's 72-hour transition planning for young offenders being released back into our communities is not working. This is a shocking failure by this government. These young people need intervention and support to keep them on the right track when they are released from detention to stop the pipeline of reoffending, because we know that 91 per cent of youths released from detention reoffend within a year. Is that any wonder when half of them are released without the government's signature 72-hour transition plan? I wonder: will this government adopt LNP policy once again and support our \$175 million Staying on Track program to provide 12 months worth of intensive support to every single youth who is in detention and released into our community? Will it support LNP policy once again and do that?

We know that serious repeat offenders have increased over 62 per cent over the last three years—a shocking figure given how many times this Labor government has said it is targeting serious repeat offenders. During estimates I gave the minister an opportunity to accept that things are not currently working and to back the LNP's policies—including Adult Crime, Adult Time—but the minister did not because those opposite are not serious about keeping our communities safe. Only the LNP has a plan to restore consequences for action. Adult Crime, Adult Time will hold young offenders to account and restore consequences for action in our Youth Justice Act. At the other end of the spectrum, our Staying on Track program will ensure the pipeline of reoffending is stopped. It will ensure that every single young offender gets a plan—12 months worth of support and rehabilitation both in detention and post release—to ensure we stop the pipeline of reoffending and turn those young lives around. We will do this because a youth crime sentence should not be breeding better criminals like it is under Labor currently.

Then there is the Cairns youth detention centre. In the budget earlier this year the Cairns community was handed a line item with no funding, saying instead that it was subject to commercial negotiations. At the last estimates the government said it would reveal where the Cairns detention centre is going to be located. At this estimates, do you think it told the Cairns community where the detention centre is going to be? No, it did not. Cairns residents continue to be in the dark on the location of the new youth detention centre.

As a final point, estimates uncovered that Labor ministers are picking winners for significant funding rather than basing funding on departmental advice. This saw the Ted Noffs Foundation and Johnathan Thurston Academy receive two significant procurements each and one to Big Bounce. This is a clear disregard for the Auditor-General's recommendation that the government strengthen its investment and procurement practices to ensure that all investment decisions are based on sound

market analysis, with the rationale for decisions clearly documented in line with evidence. Only the LNP has the right priorities for Queensland's future. Only the LNP will bring forward the Making Queensland Safer Laws to ensure our communities are kept safe from the youth crime crisis started by Labor.

 **Ms NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (4.19 pm): I rise to speak in support of the estimates committee report from the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee. I am proud to be a part of this committee and I thank the committee, the ministers, their teams and all who contributed to the estimates process. What is clear from the contributions during estimates is that the Miles Labor government understands that education is the cornerstone of a bright future, and we are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring every child in Queensland receives the high-quality education they deserve. This commitment is reflected in our record-breaking \$20.9 billion education budget. During estimates, we heard about a range of transformative initiatives such as our Putting Queensland Kids First strategy, which gives children the best start in life. However, I note that in a statement of reservation from the opposition they suggested the estimates process did not reveal any plan. I understand their confusion because the LNP could not spot a plan if they fell over it, let alone come up with one of their own. In fact, the estimates committee hearing outlined many plans and initiatives from the government.


The \$106.7 million Student Wellbeing Package is providing access to mental health supports from GPs and other allied health professionals at no cost to students or their families. If you will indulge me, Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to acknowledge the great work of the staff and students from the Barrett Adolescent Centre School who visited us here just yesterday. Having worked in that school for students who are disengaged due to mental ill health, I know how valuable the wellbeing package is. Tragically though, historically the LNP have been blind when it comes to mental health so perhaps that is why this great initiative skipped their attention.

The estimates hearing outlined so many plans that there are too many to include within the time limit of this speech. However, I will list a few more for the benefit of those opposite. Let us start with investment in school infrastructure including two new schools, new playgrounds and tuckshops, GPs in schools and the \$288 million Youth Engagement Program. We have all heard of the Go for Gold program to provide the infrastructure needed to nurture the sporting champions of tomorrow—champions such as the Glenala State High School netballers from my electorate who, over the weekend, took home three first-place trophies and who, thanks to \$4.34 million in funding, will now see new sports facilities built to be used not just by the students but also by the broader community. But wait, there's more!

In the hearing evidence was provided of cost-of-living assistance available through measures such as the textbook and resource allowance and free and subsidised digital devices for learning. We heard about the \$10.7 million in funding available directly to state schools for the delivery of healthy food and drink to students at school. The free kindy program is saving families approximately \$4,600 per child annually and giving them the best start to their education. It is a program that my constituents are very thankful for. Issues that are important to constituents in my community are directly addressed by initiatives heard about in estimates such as the commitment to hire 2,000 specialist staff to provide wraparound support for students with disabilities.

Hiring public servants rather than sacking them might be a novel idea for the opposition but not for the Miles Labor government. Ours is a government of jobs, such as the nursing and construction jobs we heard about thanks to free TAFE. Again, that plan is foreign to those who sit opposite because they absolutely gutted TAFEs. The Leader of the Opposition has his own troubling track record when it comes to training organisations. The LNP asked many questions about third-party providers of TAFE training. I can tell members who was not one: SET Solutions. Those TAFE courses are not just for the young; we are reskilling people of all ages. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would benefit from a Certificate III in Business Administration to learn that it is unlawful to trade whilst insolvent.

Over the course of estimates it was made very clear that the Miles Labor government has a strong plan and that the Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queensland, unlike those opposite who have no plans at all. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.24 pm): In a number of previous estimates debates I have been critical of the protection racket frequently run by Labor committee chairs to protect incompetent Labor ministers. However, this time, in good faith I cannot say that about my experience under the chair of this committee, the member for Miller. It might surprise many in this place to learn that I thought the member for Miller did a pretty reasonable job and was relatively fair, for my part at the very least.

**Mr Watts:** You've changed!

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I have not changed. However, this time the shortfall was a minister who was out of his depth. I have to be honest that I was not shocked but I was very disappointed. I thought that, given that this was the member for Bundamba's first estimates process, he would have been more prepared and across his brief but, sadly, I was wrong. I am not sure if it was a deliberate tactic for the minister to be uninformed about what is going on in his department or if he is genuinely not across what is happening in the department. Nonetheless, Queenslanders should be very concerned.

What detail I could pull from the Minister for Training and Skills Development is that TAFE is delivering a huge amount of training to up to 146,000 students in the last financial year. That is 20,000 more students than the year before. However, only an extra 146 TAFE teachers and tutors have been employed to handle that demand. Class sizes are ballooning and teachers are working overtime to meet the demand. That is not my view; that is the testimony that was before the committee. The numbers speak for themselves. Members can imagine the strain that that is placing on staff. Despite the rhetoric of those opposite, in this budget there is no additional FTE for TAFE. None. Not one. Not a single extra TAFE teacher is provided for under this government. This Labor government claim to be big supporters of TAFE but they have allocated no additional staff for TAFE, despite the significant increase. They are asking TAFE teachers to do more with less, despite the rhetoric that they so often come in here and spout.

The minister said that this was a record budget when, in fact, the funding allocated to the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training was cut by \$191 million compared to the expenditure for the previous financial year. They have cut \$191 million. This budget is all over the shop. The Queensland Skills Strategy, which once again those opposite love to talk about, is to run from 2024 to 2028. However, funding is allocated only to 30 June 2026. Only 4.2 per cent of the \$370 million they so frequently like to skite about is allocated for any measures post 30 June 2026 and, in fact, for the last year, 2027-28, there is zero. There is not a single dollar in the budget under their Skills Strategy. That is this Labor government's plan: a whole year with not a single dollar allocated to skills and training. As is so often the case in my portfolio areas, this Labor government is all about trying to keep Labor members of parliament in jobs rather than keeping Queenslanders in jobs and getting Queenslanders into new jobs.

I was pretty disappointed on behalf of all Queenslanders to find that the minister was unaware of the number of small businesses that have been affected by crime. Business owners tell me that we must put the rights of victims first and we must restore consequences for actions. They tell me that enough is enough. The crime crisis is costing Queensland small and family businesses. The price is in replacing stock, repairing damaged property and protecting staff. It is a cost that many business owners tell me they cannot afford.

Imagine what those small and family business owners thought when they heard the Labor Minister for Small Business say that they could get a \$5,000 Business Basics grant for a bit of CCTV. It was an insult. It is an insult. Businesses are struggling because of the failures of this Labor government and to suggest that a small number of Queensland's 482,000 small and family businesses can access a \$5,000 grant for CCTV is a slap in the face. The grant process is completely flawed. Through estimates, we found out that \$176 of every \$1,000 allocated is spent on administration—that is, 17.6 per cent of grant money allocated by this government is spent on administration and not on supporting small businesses. That is not good enough.

Who can forget the moment when the member for Rockhampton asked a question from the wrong section and caught the minister nervously on the hop and unprepared for his first-ever Dorothy Dixer? He did get there eventually and delivered another soulless prepared diatribe. That was so emblematic of this tired third-term Labor government.

*(Time expired)*

Debate, on motion of Mr Mickelberg, adjourned.

## MOTIONS

### Mental Health Services



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (4.29 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes that:
  - (a) every Queenslander has the right to high-quality mental health care, regardless of their income level or where they live; and



- (b) in 2022, the federal Labor government halved the number of Medicare subsidised psychology sessions from 20 to 10;
2. calls on the Queensland government to tax big corporations to:
- (a) ensure every Queenslanders can access 20 free psychology sessions each year; by
  - (b) directly employing additional clinical and registered psychologists in the public health system.

Queenslanders have been through a heck of a lot during the first half of this decade. We have been through a pandemic with rolling lockdowns, uncertainty and economic instability. We have had spiralling inflation driven by corporate profits and wars in the Ukraine and Gaza. We have been through natural disasters such as the 2022 floods. We are seeing a genocide in Gaza right now. The cost of rent, mortgages, food and health care is at crippling levels. One in five Australian adults have experienced a mental disorder in the past 12 months. There is increased risk for people with a disability, First Nations adults, people in insecure housing, new parents and people on low incomes. In Queensland, the prevalence of psychological distress is at least 1.5 times higher in the most disadvantaged areas.

In the 2023 mental health report to the nation, 59 per cent of people said that their mental health was being impacted by the rising cost of living and 45 per cent of people said that their mental health was being impacted by the housing crisis. The cost-of-living crisis and the housing crisis are making people sick. To make matters worse, cost-of-living pressures are preventing people from accessing the mental health care they need. Some 21 per cent of people said that cost is a barrier to accessing care such as going to a psychologist. Some 44 per cent of psychologists surveyed by the APS said that cost was a key barrier for patient access.

With people struggling with the rising cost of rent, mortgage payments, groceries and transport, how many people can afford to spare \$100, \$200 or more on a gap payment to see a psychologist? In a wealthy state like Queensland, it is unacceptable that thousands of people are unable to access the health care they need. It is not enough to say that mental health is a federal responsibility. The state government can, and needs to, step in.

Everyone here will have someone in their life who is struggling with their mental health and, in fact, many people here have been open about their own struggles with mental illness. In my late 20s, the combination of insecure and stressful work, a relationship breakdown and my mother having a stroke opened up a dark hole under my life. There were times when I wondered if I would make it through the night. The support of my family and friends and having something meaningful to do with my life, as well as the support of psychologists and psychiatrists, helped me through. After the car crash a few months ago that rattled my body and my brain, I felt a dark hole opening up again and I was able to connect with mental health practitioners who shepherded me through recovery so I could get back on my feet and return to work. I cannot thank them enough.

Everyone should be able to access the mental health care they need, but we know that this is not the case. Our mental health system has been underfunded and thousands of people cannot access or afford the care that they need. In the 2022 Mental Health Select Committee inquiry, the sector was calling for an increase in funding of between \$650 million and \$900 million each year. The government's response was to take the lowest estimate of what it would take to fix our mental health system and slash it by about half, granting additional funding of just \$350 million in the first year and \$520 million in this financial year. The Greens have been proud to support the mental health levy but it is clearly not enough.

At the federal level, in 2022 the federal Labor government cut the 20 subsidised psychology sessions available under the Better Access scheme to just 10 sessions. Many people said that getting access to 20 sessions had been life-changing and now people are missing out on crucial treatment. I have heard from both patients and practitioners that 10 sessions with a psychologist just is not enough. The Greens will make mental health a priority and bring back 20 free psychology sessions for every Queenslanders who needs it, and Queensland can afford this. We are a wealthy state and, by properly increasing mining royalties, we could fund 200 new public health clinics across the state and give Queenslanders access to free GPs, psychologists and allied health workers.

Alongside this, we need to address the drivers of mental ill health in Queensland such as housing insecurity, rising living costs, climate-driven extreme weathers and social isolation, which is why we have been fighting to cap grocery prices, have a rent freeze, have more social housing, have fully funded schools and have initiatives like free school meals and free school sport for kids.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for South Brisbane, I realise that you are wearing a brooch which is, in essence, a reference to a piece of fruit. It is also seen to be a symbol of a particular movement. I would ask you to consider whether you wear that again in the parliament, unless you can show that it is not directly related to a cause. I did not want to interrupt your contribution.



**Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

- '1. notes that:
  - (a) the Miles government is delivering the most significant uplift in mental health funding in Queensland's history;
  - (b) mental health funding has increased to a record \$2.48 billion per year; up from \$1.15 billion when the LNP were in government;
  - (c) this funding uplift is only possible because of the Miles government's mental health levy on big business.
2. condemns the former Newman LNP government for their past actions including their cuts to mental health services, including the closure of the Barrett adolescent mental health centre.
3. acknowledges the risk of any future LNP government cutting mental health services again because they will not support the mental health levy.
4. commends the Miles government for its ongoing support for fully funded mental health services for Queenslanders.'

In moving this amendment, I want to acknowledge all mental health survivors and also acknowledge the member for South Brisbane for her courage in speaking this evening about her own mental health challenges. During my time in this place over the last almost 10 years, a number of members have so courageously spoken about their experience with mental health and mental illness. I want to acknowledge each of them for their courage in doing so because I believe that the stigma relating to mental health and mental illness has reduced over the years. Those members who have courageously spoken in this place about their experiences have absolutely made a difference in our communities.

What we know is that mental health care needs to be tailored to the person requiring care. Labor has listened to the experts and has a plan, and that plan is backed by a sustainable funding source. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, including a series of 10 or 20 sessions with a psychologist. Many of us would know people with mental illness who do not necessarily want to visit a psychologist or see that as their pathway to treatment. This is why the government is investing significantly in a variety of psychological supports.

Mental health support can be provided in a variety of ways and we need to offer options that will meet the person where they are at in their journey. More than 427 wellbeing professionals have been employed across Queensland to provide direct wellbeing services into 759 primary, secondary, combined and special schools. I know that those wellbeing professionals are absolutely making a difference to those students. When I have talked to students about being able to access those services at school, they have been so incredibly pleased to have those wellbeing professionals directly available in their schools.


In terms of early intervention for mental health, we are supporting the Royal Flying Doctor Service to provide mental health services to communities right across Queensland. Our Women and Girls' Health Strategy has received \$18 million to deliver virtual therapeutic mental health and wellbeing services to provide early intervention help to women and girls. We recently invested \$10 million to provide psychosocial supports for those in social housing. We have established 12 new acute response teams across eight hospital and health services to provide timely and assertive treatment and care for children and adolescents.

Let us not forget the devastating impacts of the LNP's closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre when they were in charge of Queensland's mental health services. I have heard the member for Inala talk in this place about what she witnessed firsthand when working at the Barrett Adolescent Centre when the LNP closed that centre and the devastating impact that had on the young patients who were there. Let us not forget too that the Greens went on to take the LNP's preferences, which elected the member for South Brisbane, despite the fact that the LNP were the party in government that actually closed that centre and the devastating impact that had on the lives of the people who were treated at that centre.

The Greens party obviously has not been paying attention any time the Miles government has talked about the mental health of Queenslanders. If they had been paying attention, they would know that we are already taxing big corporations to continue strengthening our mental health system to ensure that every Queenslanders has access to the mental health care they need close to home. If they

had been paying attention, they would know that, as part of the 2022-23 state budget, the Queensland government introduced a mental health levy on big business. They would also know that our mental health levy on big business is putting \$1.948 billion into mental health, alcohol and other drug services. The member for South Brisbane should know that, as this was a recommendation from the Mental Health Select Committee, of which she was a member.

We are doing so much to help support the mental health of Queenslanders. I commend the amendment to the motion to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion. I start by saying that we are here once again giving Labor an opportunity to prove their values, to walk the walk and to do the right thing. We are asking them to support 20 free sessions with a psychologist each year for Queenslanders instead of the current paltry, clearly inadequate, 10 sessions.

Surely this time they cannot argue that this is some pie-in-the-sky, pixie-dust proposal that cannot be achieved—an impossible dream. We have had 20 subsidised sessions under mental health plans before—during COVID—and that was transformative for so many people's lives, but the federal Labor government cut the 20 sessions in half—back to 10—last year. Now we have a growing mental health crisis, particularly among young people, and a cost-of-living crisis that is stopping people from getting the help they desperately need.

Queensland's mental healthcare system is still woefully underfunded. Despite whatever significant uplift the government wants to point to, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has reported that we have the lowest per capita spend on specialist mental health services in the country, and a much higher rate of suicide among people pervades in Queensland.

During the inquiry that we have heard so much about—we are not aloof to these figures; the member for South Brisbane has mentioned them—the recommendation from experts was that we needed an uplift of between \$650 million and \$900 million. Since then, the government has halved that amount and put an extra \$350 million in. Since then, demand for mental health care has only grown while support to access it has been cut. It is clear from experts like the Australian Psychological Association that 10 sessions are just not enough. Evidence indicates that 18 to 20 sessions per year are needed, even, in some cases, for relatively minor mental health conditions.

We cannot have Labor and the LNP continue to act like mental health care is a luxury. Mental health care is health care and it should be free. It is not a 'nice to have'; it is absolutely essential. Mental ill health is the leading cause of disability and death among young people and those same young people struggling with mental ill health are increasingly unable to afford a psychologist because they are flat out covering the costs of daily life. One in five people are delaying seeking mental health support because of its cost. That figure is closer to 40 per cent amongst low-income people. It has risen to that point since Labor cut the number of Medicare funded psychology sessions. If this government refuses to freeze or limit rent increases, refuses to cap grocery prices, continues to fail to build enough public housing and continues to let the big banks run roughshod over mortgage holders and hopeful first home buyers, perhaps the very least they could do is allow people to see a psychologist for free.


Our proposal is one to address the failings of the federal government that cut the number of subsidised sessions under a mental health plan. The Greens are saying that this state government can and should step up and fix it. Proposing 20 free sessions per year with 1,000 additional psychologists employed at public health clinics across the state would make these sessions available to any Queenslanders with a mental healthcare plan. The state government could claim the Medicare rebate for the first 10 sessions and cover the cost of the additional 10 sessions with funds raised by our proposed mining royalty raisers. We are not talking about the short-term sugar hit from the so-called progressive coal royalties increase. We are talking about a genuine, sustained, fair share of returns for Queenslanders.

Crucially, these psychologist positions would be secure, well-paid jobs, making them more attractive to people who have been forced out of private clinical practice and helping to address the workforce shortage in the sector. They would be employed directly by Queensland Health, with salaries on par with the private sector and leave entitlements and professional development opportunities.

The real question is: are we willing to make mental health a priority? This is a question of priorities. Are we willing to stop treating and valuing mental health as subordinate to other kinds of health? Bringing back 20 psychologist sessions under a mental healthcare plan and making them free would save lives. It would improve workforce engagement, reduce burdens on emergency departments

and strengthen community safety and cohesion. It is certainly a better solution than building more youth prisons, given that half of the children who reach the point of offending have a mental health or behavioural disorder.

The Greens' plan is clear: make mental health a priority. Fund 20 free psychologist sessions for every Queenslanders who needs it. It is over to the government now.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.45 pm): I start by acknowledging all those people with lived experience of mental health and alcohol and other drug issues. I also acknowledge all the staff, volunteers and other people who work very hard to support people who experience those issues and the families of people with those issues.

I note the motion moved by the Greens. Obviously, I support the government's amendment to the motion. There is no disagreement around the objectives the Greens are putting forward, but there is a great deal of difference around the manner in which we deliver them due to a lack of understanding on their part around the realities of trying to run an entire mental health system.

It was a great privilege to be the chair of the Mental Health Select Committee. We should ask ourselves why the government chose to do that. We did it because Queenslanders told us it was important. We listened to them and then we did what matters.

Last year I had the great honour of attending the opening of Catherine's House at the Mater Hospital. When we did the inquiry, there were only four mum and bub mental health beds in Queensland, and they were on the Gold Coast. Thanks to the Mater Hospital, we have 12. I would like to thank the generous donors and philanthropists like Kelly Murphy and the Murphy family who supported the establishment of those beds. One of the major funding components of that came from the mental health levy that this government put in place. We are not stopping at 12 beds around the state. There are another 30 on the way. We will have 42, which was about the number we recommended.

I was sad to miss the opening of the Stepping Stone Clubhouse on the north side in the electorate of Aspley. Stepping Stone is a fantastic organisation. I did not go because I am afraid of the north side; I just did not go because I had another event on. They are a great organisation. They were mentioned 20 times in the bilateral partnership agreement between the state and federal governments. That new service and facility has been funded by the mental health levy.

During the inquiry we noted the real and rapid increase in people with eating disorders. Just a few weeks ago on your green, Mr Speaker, we had Eating Disorders Queensland with us. I particularly liked talking to the lived experience practitioners. That organisation received a massive funding increase to offer evidence-based services throughout the state, all funded by the mental health levy.

A quick scan of the statement of reservation to report No. 1 of the Mental Health Select Committee by the member for South Brisbane shows that the Greens did not support the levy. I have lost count of how many times at polling booths over the years I have heard Greens volunteers saying things like, 'Tax billionaires and put the money into mental health.' These are good people who give up their time. I wonder what they thought when the first opportunity to do this came along and their elected representative squibbed it and did not support that.

It is pretty typical of the Greens to protest about something but when there is actually a chance to deliver they walk away. Perhaps they are all about protest and they really do not want the outcomes. It is also pretty typical for them to hone in on specific issues that they think can amplify for a bit of noise in the community and not try to understand the complexity of the issue.

Sadly, governments do have to make tough choices about how to deliver health care. If one asked any health economist, they would say that there are plenty of tools and methods to help with those tough decisions but it is common for governments and health funds to set limits on treatments. If one were to ask a clinician, they would say it is problematic. From a clinical perspective, we want to deliver whatever health care is needed based on the needs of the patient. We do not live in the perfect clinical world that I would like us to live in. From an economic perspective, as soon as you put a number on something you can get one of two things happening: you can get too many services or you can get too few services. It is a difficult and challenging thing to get right, but I trust Mark Butler and federal Labor to make this decision.

As I said, the Greens love to focus on some specific issue and then try to blow it up and make out that they are the only ones with moral authority on the issue. I just want to run through a list of some of the things implemented by this government that are having a positive impact on people's mental health and helping to prevent them from developing mental illness. If you help people to get a job you

help their mental health, so Skilling Queenslanders for Work is a great initiative. Focusing on education, free kindy, free TAFE and keeping people in school is important. If you ease their anxieties over cost of living by putting \$1,000 on their energy bills, introducing 50-cent fares and giving them 20 per cent off their car rego, that makes a difference. If you get people fit and active through FairPlay vouchers and investing in sporting infrastructure, instead of protesting against it, that helps people with their mental health. If you support people in their workplaces, as we have done with the small business initiatives, that helps people.

Sadly, my time will not allow me to reflect on the LNP's appalling track record. Labor has introduced a levy. Labor is rolling out improved services. Only Labor is listening to Queenslanders and doing what matters for Queensland.

Amendment agreed to.

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

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 33:**

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

Pairs: S. King, O'Connor; Sullivan, Last.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

1. notes that:
  - (a) the Miles government is delivering the most significant uplift in mental health funding in Queensland's history;
  - (b) mental health funding has increased to a record \$2.48 billion per year; up from \$1.15 billion when the LNP were in government;
  - (c) this funding uplift is only possible because of the Miles government's mental health levy on big business.
2. condemns the former Newman LNP government for their past actions including their cuts to mental health services, including the closure of the Barrett adolescent mental health centre.
3. acknowledges the risk of any future LNP government cutting mental health services again because they will not support the mental health levy.
4. commends the Miles government for its ongoing support for fully funded mental health services for Queenslanders.

## Crime Statistics



**Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (4.56 pm): I move—

That this House notes:

- (a) In the decade since the Palaszczuk and Miles Labor governments came to power, 53 of 55 crime categories and victim numbers have increased, costing Queenslanders their lives, livelihoods, and hitting their hip pockets through higher insurance premiums and security measures.
- (b) Increases have included:
  - Townsville robberies up 287 per cent and stolen cars up 103 per cent;
  - Bundaberg stolen cars up 282 per cent;
  - Rockhampton stolen cars 226 per cent;
  - Gold Coast stolen cars up 60 per cent;
  - Brisbane stolen cars up 150 per cent;
  - Mackay stolen cars up 149 per cent;
  - Cairns stolen cars up 73 per cent;
  - Sunshine coast stolen cars up 100 per cent;
  - Hervey Bay stolen cars up 260 per cent; and
  - Maryborough stolen cars up 282 per cent.
- (c) These increases follow the watering down of laws by the state government.

And calls on the government to put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders.

There is a famous quote that I am sure everyone here has heard. They might have heard it from their parents or parents like me have said it to our kids: 'Actions speak louder than words'. According to Siri, it is a famous quote. It is attributed to Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain and Shakespeare and there is even some reference to it in the Bible: 'History will judge you more by your actions than your words'.

That is why my ears pricked up on 15 February in this place when the Premier was answering a question without notice from the Leader of the Opposition and he said, 'As I have said over and over again, this is a government that is tough on crime.' I would suggest that the actions of this Premier, this police minister and this government do not bode well with that comment. In fact, they are probably in stark contrast to it because we know that in 2015 the top priority of this government when it came to power was to water down the Youth Justice Act. They reinstated detention as a last resort; they closed the Childrens Court; they scrapped early intervention and rehabilitation boot camps; and they scrapped the LNP's breach-of-bail offence—but they did so proudly and pleasingly at the time. The attorney-general at the time, who is the Attorney-General again now, Minister D'Ath, said that the former LNP government was too tough on crime and quoted academics who all agreed—

Evidence clearly shows that increasing the severity of punishment does not reduce offending nor does it reduce reoffending.

Minister Farmer, who was the youth justice minister at the time, said—

We repealed this offence (breach of bail) in 2016 because the evidence is clear that harsher penalties do not work to reduce youth offending and they do not make our communities safer.

How does that now sit with this government, which comes in here often talking tough on crime?

We saw today, as is listed in the motion, a dire list of statistics that show that since that time crime across Queensland has exploded. There is a crime crisis across Queensland. There has been an increase in 53 of the 55 crime categories in communities right across Queensland. Bundaberg and Maryborough saw the most dramatic increases in unlawful use of motor vehicle, or car theft, offences, with both regions experiencing a 282 per cent rise. In Brisbane, residents reported 2,851 more car thefts in 2023-24 compared to 2015-16—a 120 per cent increase—while the Gold Coast reported an extra 1,077. Break-ins also increased by 45 per cent statewide, mostly in Townsville, where offences doubled, from 2,075 to 4,119—a 99 per cent increase—between mid-2015 and 2024. Townsville and Rockhampton recorded excessive 287 per cent and 216 per cent rises in robbery offences.

The next comment that the Premier made was in relation to police numbers. He said—

We have delivered hundreds more police and there are even more on the way—a massive number. There are 600 recruits undergoing intensive training now, with another 1,800 applicants in the pipeline.


Those on this side of the chamber, communities across Queensland and our police know that this Premier and this government are being misleading when it comes to police numbers and crime figures. We know that it is not a media beat-up. We know that behind every statistic is a victim of crime. Once you have been touched by crime, you are never the same.

What the Premier did not go on to talk about was that, of the 1,800 applicants, we know that less than 50 per cent of applicants are often not suitable or not found suitable to become a recruit and start a career in the police force. It was also in contradiction to what the commissioner told us at estimates just recently when he admitted that the government's 1,450 extra police 'boots on the ground' promise from the last election would not be met.

This government and this minister have a history of misleading our police and communities across Queensland when it comes to crime and police numbers. This minister and this government in 2017 promised 535 extra police and by 2020 they were over 100 short of that commitment. In 2020 they promised 1,450 extra police. We now know from estimates that we currently have 1,147 fewer police than the minister promised.

Leading up to the next election, any promise from this minister and this government that they will increase boots on the ground across Queensland is not worth the paper it is written on. Only the LNP will provide our police with the resources and the Making Queensland Safer Laws they need to keep us safe. We will restore consequences for action and enact Adult Crime, Adult Time.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (5.01 pm): I will begin by acknowledging those people who have been impacted by crime. Crime is very personal. It is traumatic. The effects are often lifelong. I acknowledge that even one instance of crime is one too many

because it has an impact on that individual. Agencies like the Queensland Police Service do everything they can to prevent crime, but if crime happens they do everything they can to apprehend the offenders and ensure justice is done. I move the following amendment—

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

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Members, I feel like we have this discussion every sitting week. I want to hear the amendment, so I would appreciate silence while the minister gives us the amendment.

**Mr RYAN:** I continue—

1. since the new Labor Premier commenced in December 2023, the Miles government has delivered the \$1.28 billion Community Safety Plan for Queensland, including an additional 900 police personnel and a record over \$4 billion budget for the Queensland police and community safety portfolio.
2. the latest statistics from the Queensland Police Service reveal:
  - (a) a decrease of 6.8 per cent in the rate of juvenile offences;

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned. I made my expectation very clear.

**Mr RYAN:** And—

- (b) the rate of unique juvenile offenders has decreased by 32 per cent compared with 2012-13 and is the lowest on record; and

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Ninderry, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr RYAN:** And—

- (c) the number of unlawful use of motor vehicle offences committed by young offenders has decreased by:
  - (i) 15 per cent in Cairns;
  - (ii) 49 per cent in Wide Bay;
  - (iii) 30 per cent in Townsville;
  - (iv) 42 per cent in Central Queensland; and
  - (v) 38 per cent in Ipswich.
3. the LNP community safety record:
  - (a) keeping the 2012-13 and 2013-14 crime statistics reports secret;
  - (b) promising to cut 1,000 police positions; and
  - (c) planning to pick up seats off the back of crime.'

We heard the member for Ninderry speak about how people will be judged by their actions, not by their words. This member will be condemned by his words because he was publicly reported in the *Queensland Police Union Journal* as saying, 'We were hoping to pick up a number of seats off the back of crime.' Politicising the traumatic experiences of victims, using a very personal, traumatic, terrible situation that impacts people to politicise—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.


**Mr RYAN:** It is his words printed in black and white on the internet circulated in the *Queensland Police Union Journal*. He has not denied those words. It provides an insight into the modus operandi not only of that member but also the LNP. Rather than showing empathy, rather than coming in and working constructively—

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr RYAN:** Rather than coming in and working constructively on solutions to prevent crime, to support victims and assist the Queensland Police Service with its work, at every opportunity they choose to politicise it for their own interests. It is not me who said that: the member for Ninderry said, 'We were hoping to pick up a number of seats off the back of crime.' That is how they see crime. That is the lens through which they view victims. That is the lens through which they view offenders. That is the lens through which they view assistance for the Queensland Police Service. It was the member for Ninderry's lack of words at the last state election which unveiled their commitment to police numbers: 1,000 less than this government. It was an effective cut of 1,000 police personnel, which is again an insight into how they view this issue.

This is a government that continues to throw everything at this issue. It is a critical community safety issue. We continue to invest in the front line, in prevention and intervention services and in victim support services as well as strengthening laws. The statistics provided by the Queensland Police Service incorporated in the amendment show there is a positive emerging trend as a result of our stronger laws and our investment in the front line. I commend the amendment to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (5.06 pm): This 10-year-old, tired Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government has failed Queenslanders and it has failed my community of Clayfield. For almost a decade now Labor has systematically watered down the laws, and this has led to a generation of young offenders who believe they are untouchable. At the same time this Labor government has failed when it comes to rehabilitation, and it started with the failed policies that were introduced in 2016 by the now Attorney-General, the then attorney-general.

The Palaszczuk-Miles governments have: legislated detention as a last resort for the shortest and most appropriate period; abolished breach of bail; legislated restrictions on publishing identifying particulars of young people in the youth justice system; reinstated sentence review; abolished the sentencing option of boot camps; made childhood findings of guilt for which no conviction was recorded inadmissible in court when sentencing for adult offences; closed the Children's Magistrates Court when hearing all youth justice matters; changed the law to enable more young people to be granted bail; and legislated that electronic tracking devices cannot be imposed on a child. They did all of that in the first six months of coming into office.

After this legislative featherbedding of young criminals what does Queensland have to show for it? More victims and more crime in 53 of 55 police crime category data points. In my electorate of Clayfield, and despite the best efforts of our hardworking but short-staffed police, the statistics on car theft alone are sobering. I notice the minister did not mention car thefts in Brisbane, which is the biggest area for car theft. In a decade car thefts in the Hendra division have gone from 392 in 2015-16 to 712 in 2023-24. That is almost double the number of car thefts. People in Clayfield are worried and fearful. Not a week goes by that I do not receive emails and calls about cars being stolen and homes being broken into. Only on Monday I received this email message—

I am a retired Australian Army officer having served nearly 22 years including multiple deployments to East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Israel. I retired as a Lieutenant Colonel after completing my final appointment as a Battalion Commander.

Upon my retirement, my wife and I made the decision to buy our forever home in Brisbane and after a prolonged search settled on our 1940 Queenslander. We loved Hendra and absolutely loved the thought of raising our children in southeast Queensland. However, after the events of the past few years we no longer feel that way.

Last Friday night, in what was the eighth occasion in recent years, we were targeted at home by a gang of criminals.

The details are that at around 12.15 on Saturday morning both were awake and the TV and inside and outside lights were on when my constituent saw someone trying to break in via the back glass sliding doors. This was while they were awake. Because of his military experience, he got up and tried to chase the intruders away. The intruders jumped the fence into the neighbour's property to escape. As he gave chase to the front of his house, he was confronted by two car loads of criminals from the same gang. Three men immediately alighted from one of the vehicles and began advancing towards him on foot screaming obscenities like, 'We're gonna kill you, you C,' and then yelling to each other, 'Get the gun,' and 'Grab the effing knives. Let's kill this person.'

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I will take some advice. Member, even when you are quoting from material, I think it is clear that you are alluding to language that is unparliamentary. I would ask you to withdraw.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I withdraw. They said, 'We're going to kill you, you so-and-so.' The drama went on and ended with one of the cars being driven directly over the kerb at my constituent and his neighbour, who only survived by leaping out of the way, before the cars did four laps of the block with



bottles and cans being thrown as they sped past, before driving off. That is a terrifying story. This is a veteran who served his country, fought terrorism and ended up as a lieutenant colonel. Here is the consequence, as bad as that story is. He said—

This isn't how it is supposed to be. My wife and I have worked hard all of our lives. We have served and in the case of my wife, continue to serve our country.


And yet the Miles/Palaszczuk Labor governments have abandoned citizens like us, in favour of protecting the criminals who are tearing our communities apart.

Last Friday was the last straw for my family. I did not fight terror overseas to have my family subjected to terror in our own home.

This state has gone mad and I cannot stay silent any longer.

I have spoken to that constituent. He is selling his house and moving to New South Wales. That is the real cost of this lazy, long-term Miles government's soft-on-crime attitudes. People are calling for it: Adult Crime, Adult Time; restore consequences.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals) (5.12 pm): It is the Miles government that is taking real and considered action when it comes to tackling crime in Townsville and throughout Queensland. It is absolutely a serious issue and one this government will continue to tackle. Police have already said that there has been a significant reduction in crime in Townsville this year. In fact, the latest statistics from the Queensland Police Service show that the number of unlawful use—

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

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

**Mr STEWART:** In fact, the latest statistics from the Queensland Police Service show that the number of unlawful use of motor vehicle offences committed—

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Currumbin.

**Mr STEWART:** In fact, the latest statistics from the Queensland Police Service show that the number of unlawful use of motor vehicle offences committed by young people has decreased by 30 per cent in Townsville. This is a significant drop, and I want to thank the police in Townsville for the fantastic work they do when it comes to catching people who do the wrong thing. Any instance of crime is one too many, and as a government we will continue to back the root causes of crime as well as hold people who do the wrong thing to account.

The government is supporting police and the community with a \$1.28 billion comprehensive community safety plan, and our Community Safety Bill is before parliament right now. Our plan includes an additional 900 police personnel and a record \$4 billion budget for the Queensland police and community safety portfolio. This is a top priority for the Miles Labor government, and we saw that when one of the first things Premier Steven Miles did when he got in the job was announce a dedicated police helicopter in Townsville. We are seeing this make a real difference when it comes to tracking youth offenders who do the wrong thing. The Miles Labor government will always back our police with the resources they need, and I am proud to be part of a government that backs community safety and our Police Service.

We are also continuing to invest in early intervention to ensure young people stay on the right track. This includes things like Project Booyah, Transition 2 Success and the Johnathan Thurston Academy. I am also really proud about the Putting Queensland Kids First plan. This is something I have been pushing for for a long time because I know how important it is to get that best start in life. This plan is backed with a \$501.9 million investment from the Miles government. We want to give kids the best start in life, and this is so important to making sure young people get the best start in life and get on the right track.


Tackling crime from all angles is important. We want to stop crime from happening before it occurs, but if people do the wrong thing they certainly must be held to account. We are giving the courts the tools they need to do that, and I expect them to meet the community's expectations. Contrast this with the LNP who announced a four-word slogan void of any detail. The LNP have had four years to

introduce a community safety bill to parliament, and of course they have not. In fact we know what the LNP really think about this issue thanks to the LNP's shadow police spokesperson, the member for Ninderry, who said in an interview, and I quote for the benefit of the House—

We were hoping to pick up a number of seats off the back of crime. And we should have. I was the Shadow Police Minister, and we didn't. So that is essentially all on me. We didn't pick up any of the seats we wanted to on crime, and I was the guy supposed to be selling our message.

That is their message. We also know the LNP were supposed to have a comprehensive crime plan announced, which we are still waiting for. On 8 January 2021—that is right: 2021—the member for Burdekin said that the community could expect a crime plan in the next six months. It has been 1,321 days since that announcement but all that has been released since then is a slogan—no substance, just a slogan.

We know the opposition do not back our Queensland Police Service. Last time they were in government, they wanted to sell the Townsville police academy. I am happy to tell the House that we are investing \$100 million into a new Townsville police academy at the old North Queensland Cowboys home ground. Do you know what those opposite wanted to do? They wanted to turn that site into a harness track. Once again, they refused to back the Queensland Police Service. That is their record in black and white, there for everyone to see. The Miles government will not back down when it comes to community safety. It will always be a top priority for us because people deserve to feel safe in their own homes wherever they are.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.17 pm): People deserve to feel safe in their own homes. Sadly, under this Miles Labor government, women victims of crime have not felt safe in their own homes. Since 2018 through to this year, domestic violence breaches are up across the state: in my home town of Mackay, an 83 per cent increase; in Townsville, a 93 per cent increase; in the police area of the member for Townsville, a 141 per cent increase; and in Cairns, a 269 per cent increase. I do not know about you, Mr Deputy Speaker, but if I was a woman in Cairns and a victim of domestic violence I would not be feeling very safe in my home. That is what I hear each and every day from women across this state who contact my office because of the failings of this Miles Labor government.

We have seen 171,750 domestic and family violence offences in the past year. What the government is doing is not working. Women in this state are at high risk because of the failings of this government. There are plenty of announcements and lots of money but the government is soft on crime. There has been a doubling in the past five years. Strangulation is up 30 per cent. The Red Rose Foundation continually calls on this government to reform legislation, but their calls fall on deaf ears and women continue to be choked and strangled. Their lives are at risk.

There has been a 181 per cent increase in domestic violence breaches across the state since 2015, and this government says that people are safe in their homes. Are you kidding me? Women do not feel safe in their homes under this government. It is the LNP that is telling the stories of victims of crime, and every time we do this government is embarrassed in the media and then decides to take action. It is too little, too late.

Right now because of the failings of this government, not only is every refuge in Queensland full but there is also no housing. Women who are victims of crime at the hands of their partners have nowhere to go because of the failings of this Miles Labor government. There has been a lack of investment in social and community housing and a lack of investment in refuges. If you are a woman in Gladstone trying to flee domestic violence, you have to leave Gladstone because the refuge cannot take any more local women. This is a consistent story across the state.

I want to turn to the crime figures in my home town of Mackay. Since 2015, there has been a 149 per cent increase in stolen vehicles, a 198 per cent increase in assaults, a 29 per cent increase in other thefts and a 175 per cent increase in robberies. What a legacy the member for Mackay has left our local community! I look forward to standing beside our great candidate there, Nigel Dalton, a former police officer awarded and recognised for his work in crime prevention, out on the beat, out working with communities, right across the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday communities. He is out there doorknocking victims of crime—crime which is occurring each and every day.

A good friend of mine just had her house broken into. Her keys were stolen and her vehicle was stolen, so she could not go to work. She is a single mum who now lives in fear because of what has occurred in our home town.

We used to be very proud, actually, of Mackay's crime rate. We used to be very proud of the work that our local community did. But, under the current government and under the failings of the member for Mackay, under the failings of the Miles Labor government, our statistics are up there, startlingly, with the worst, all because of this failing government. Women do not feel safe and victims of crime are not being heard.

**Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (5.22 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amended motion before the House. I note the amended motion refers to the additional police officers that are being delivered and trained under this Miles Labor government. I recall being in the Queensland Police Service under the Newman government when 110 senior police left the service. Combined, thousands of years of policing experience—gone. Coomera police district—closed. That is the LNP's history. The shadow minister started his contribution by saying, 'History will judge you by your actions.' I can tell you the Queensland Police Service judges the LNP by its actions at that time. I was at those send-offs. Those were senior police officers who had so much experience to give. Gone! Just gone!

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order!

**Mrs McMAHON:** All that service, all that history, gone. Coomera district—where did that go? Gone under them!

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Coomera.

**Mrs McMAHON:** That is the history. That is the history that the northern Gold Coast will know, that they had a police headquarters—

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Coomera!

**Mrs McMAHON:** But Newman wanted to get rid of it. That is the history of the member over there.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mrs McMAHON:** No police headquarters in—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat, please, member. Member for Coomera, you are warned under the standing orders. You have continued to interject even though I have been attempting to get your attention.

**Mrs McMAHON:** That is the history of how they handle policing on the Gold Coast. I support our police officers and I know this government supports our police officers as well. We are recruiting vast numbers of police officers, far outstripping what they did under the Newman government. I was there at the academy when we had heaps and heaps of recruits there, but do you know what? They all came back and said, 'We have gone to the stations, but there are no cars. We actually can't go out and patrol because they did not give us enough cars. They did not give us enough tasers to actually do our job.' That is what it is all about: it is all about the numbers and fudging and what they can do to try to present themselves as tough on crime, but they actually do not support the police officers to do the job that they need to do in frontline policing.

It is not just the uniformed police officers—no, no, no—they have a special target in their mind and that is the public servants; in this case, the public servants who support our police officers in the QPS. Hundreds of administrative officers lost their jobs under this lot opposite. Do you know exactly what that means? It means uniformed police officers had to pick up the work of the admin staff. That meant fewer police on the beat because they were more interested in sacking public servants. That is their record on police.

Yes, member for Ninderry, history will judge you by your actions. That is what everyone in my area understands. They know what the LNP stands for. It is about the figures, it is about the slogans, but there is absolutely nothing behind it—nothing behind it. Rolled gold or gold-plated prevention. No-one even knows what that means. They do not even know. They could not point to where that money will be invested.

We on this side are proud of our investments in Project Booyah. I see members over there are happy to get their photos taken with Project Booyah graduates. They are happy to have their photos up on social media—'Here is Project Booyah'—but what they really want to do is look at ways to lock up these kids. 'Adult Crime, Adult Time'—does anyone actually know what that means? They talk about—

**Opposition members** interjected.


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

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Absolutely! It must be another gold-plated slogan. They talk about unshackling the judiciary. You know what they want to do? Shackle the judiciary by mandating sentences. That is exactly what mandating sentences is. It is actually shackling the judiciary. Which one is it, guys? Which one is it?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Through the chair.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Is it shackling the judiciary or mandating sentences? Which one is it? It depends on what day of the week it is for the opposition because they cannot make up their minds on any given day. Whatever will play well for the sound bite. That is all that we have from the opposition—sound bites and slogans. No solution to crime. We know they are not interested in preventing crime because their idea of crime prevention is putting more people in jail. That is all they have—building more jails, putting more people in jail. That will do it! That is all they have.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.27 pm): It gives me great pleasure to follow the member for Macalister's little rant there and support the member for Ninderry's motion before this House. I can tell the member what Adult Crime, Adult Time is. If you commit murder, if you commit manslaughter, if you break into someone's house with intent and if you flog their cars, that is an adult crime; therefore, you are going to serve adult time. It is not that hard to understand. I can tell the member and all those people over there, that people, particularly in Townsville, understand.

What is more distressing about the member for Macalister's speech and her not understanding Adult Crime, Adult Time is the fact that she did not mention victims once. Not once did a victim get mentioned in that speech. What an absolute rot of diatribe when we have victims screaming out in pain. You only have to hear the member for Clayfield's contribution as to what has gone on. I can only imagine how much the insurance premiums have gone up and how expensive it is now for that incredible man and his wife who have served our nation.

I spoke to Goondiwindi local councillor Susie Kelly this afternoon, and she told me that her insurances, particularly car insurance, have gone through the roof. Her house was broken into by a person carrying a knife, and her house insurance has gone up.

The cost of business insurance has gone up. A few months ago the leader and I were at a business in Cairns. That coffee shop owner said how disgusted they were in the member for Cairns for his lack of support when crime is out of control. Do members know what this coffee shop owner did? They stopped notifying their insurance company every time their windows got broken because, 'What's the point? The insurance premiums would just go up.' That is the effect of the cost-of-living crisis and the crime crisis in this nation.

Those opposite have no understanding. They are so out of touch. We just heard from a minister who is from Townsville. He is so out of touch. The figures say it all: in Townsville, robberies are up 287 per cent and stolen cars are up 103 per cent, and they think everything is okay? We have Janelle Poole running for us in Mundingburra. There is a police officer who knows what she is talking about. Of course, we have Marty Hunt running in Nicklin.

What about these figures? Just last week I was in Hervey Bay and Maryborough. David Lee in Hervey Bay was talking about crime, as was John Barounis in Maryborough.

**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Maryborough!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** When you look at these figures—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Maryborough!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I do not find it funny.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Maryborough, you are warned under the standing orders. I was attempting to get your attention and you ignored that.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take his interjection because I do not think it is funny. There has been a 282 per cent in increase in stolen cars in the member's area, and those opposite think it is a laughing matter. These statistics represent victims of crime. We have not heard 'victims' once. We have not heard from victims. That is because it is only this side of the House that has been listening to

victims—listening to the impact of the crime that is going on in not just major centres but all of the regional centres. That is why insurance is going up; that is why rents are going up. People do not want to rent out their homes anymore because the insurance has gone through the roof.

We must get rid of these guys. Queenslanders deserve more. Queenslanders can change the government at the end of this year, which I plead with them to do. We continue to talk about crisis after crisis, but the crime crisis is affecting each and every Queenslander. It is now in every suburb and regional town and people have had enough. That is why we will be bringing in the Making Queensland Safer Laws by the end of the year. Headlining that is Adult Crime, Adult Time. Let's show these jokers the door at the end of the year.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind those members on a warning, particularly the member for Southern Downs, that when you are on a warning you cannot participate in the debate. Even if the name 'Kelly' is mentioned and you are excited about that, you cannot say 'Hear, hear', member for Southern Downs. You cannot participate in the debate, or I will have to remove you.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (5.32 pm): The member for Nanango failed to talk about the victims of the member for Broadwater's little action when he was a company director. There is many a victim that she has not discussed. Speak up for those victims!

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! The level of interjection was extreme.

**Mr WALKER:** I want to make it clear: one crime is one too many. No decent human being likes crime. No-one likes crime. The LNP's approach to crime is not about community safety; it is all about political benefits for the LNP. In an interview, the LNP's shadow police minister, the member for Ninderry, said—

Well, look, we were hoping to pick up a number of seats off the back of crime. And we should have. I was the Shadow Police Minister and we didn't. So that is essentially all on me. We didn't pick up any of the seats we wanted to on crime, and I was the guy supposed to be selling our message.

This is an absolute disgrace. It is not about community; it is all about political gain for the LNP. The LNP is so cynical when it comes to community safety that it cherry-picks statistics to suit the LNP narrative. In contrast, here are some plain facts the member for Nanango might be interested in. The Miles government delivered a record \$4 billion police and community safety budget and a month's extra recruit training has been added to equip police to address domestic violence. The latest police statistics reveal a decrease of 6.8 per cent in the rate of juvenile offences. The rate of unique juvenile offences has decreased by 32 per cent compared with 2012-13—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr WALKER:** Sorry for speaking while you rudely interrupt. The number of unlawful use of motor vehicle offences committed by young offenders has decreased by 15 per cent in Cairns, 49 per cent in Wide Bay, 30 per cent in Townsville, 42 per cent in Central Queensland and 38 per cent in Ipswich. The problem is that they cannot handle the truth.

The LNP in government was not so fond of crime statistics. The LNP kept the 2012-13 and 2013-14 crime statistics reports a secret. They should let the sun shine in over there, because they talk the talk but they do not walk the walk. There is little wonder. There were cars stolen, rapes, murders and armed robberies under their watch. They would have you believe that there was zero crime when they were in government, but they had stolen cars, armed robberies and even domestic violence. The member for Whitsunday should remember that.

The LNP's track record on community safety is dodgy. In government, the LNP cut the number of extra police the government was funding by more than 1,000 police officers. In stark contrast, the Miles government is making record investments in police to deliver approximately 3,000 extra police personnel. We have record numbers of recruits training at the police academy in Townsville and Brisbane.

**Opposition members** interjected.


**Mr WALKER:** They cannot handle it. They will not shut up because they cannot handle the facts.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

**Mr WALKER:** I withdraw. The number of police recruits is at an all-time high for Queensland. The government is implementing a \$1.3 billion Community Safety Plan for Queensland. Fight crime we will. In Townsville the secondary engine immobiliser trial is well and truly underway. The advice from police

is that not one vehicle fitted with these devices has been stolen. Nearly 300 flights have been undertaken by our police helicopter in Townsville, nearly 100 vehicles have been recovered and over 200 persons of interest have been located. The Premier championed the investment in Townsville's police helicopter. That is right: it is this side of the House that implemented the police helicopter.

The member for Ninderry has been exposed as a fake. He has been shamed, humiliated and discredited by his own cynical and self-interested words. We have a community safety plan that supports victims of crime and our police; those opposite have nothing.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (5.38 pm): What a contrast, whether it be on police numbers, crime or the solutions for the future that we hear from this government and an LNP opposition that have been travelling across the state listening to Queenslanders. Do members know what Queenslanders are saying to us? The most common thing that people say to us is, 'We do not feel safe.' For this government and its ministers to come in here and say that there is not a problem, or it is a beat-up about numbers, is denial at the highest level and it has to be called out. It is a disgrace.

I was pleased to be with my colleagues the members for Ninderry and Currumbin on the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee when we went across the state and listened to people who told us they do not feel safe. The government was spruiking made-up metrics of unique offenders with a proven offence. I will contrast those numbers with what is happening in Townsville. In Townsville in 2022-23 there were 1,614 cars stolen. That is 1,614 victims. There were 49 unique offenders with a proven offence. That is an example of the made-up metrics that this government is trying to use to justify their argument that what they are doing is working.


Let's talk about police numbers for a moment and the promise of 1,450 extra police. In estimates this year I was there when we asked questions of the Police Service and they disclosed to us that their projection to October this year—when that commitment was made it was 1,450—was 633. That is more than 800 down on their numbers. Not taking into consideration the growth in population, that is 800 police down right now. It is no wonder that crime is out of control across this state.

I want to pay respect to my colleague the member for Ipswich West, who is out listening to Queenslanders in his electorate and heard those people say, 'We do not feel safe.' I would like to also place on record the appreciation for Georgia Toft, who was working with Darren Zanow in his campaign and is listening to Queenslanders. She is now our candidate in Ipswich West and Darren Zanow will do everything he can to see Georgia Toft elected in Ipswich West. In Ipswich West unlawful use of a motor vehicle has gone up by 54 per cent over the last nine years. That is 54 per cent, but it is actually 740 unlawful use offences. That is 740 stolen cars. That is 740 victims and the people of Ipswich West and Ipswich deserve better. That is why the LNP has been listening to Queenslanders and we have the right plan for Queenslanders. Included in that plan is the Making Queensland Safer Laws. That is the plan that has been announced many times, and our leader outlined that a number of months ago.

We will remove detention as a last resort—not playing around with the Youth Justice Act and other sentencing principles; we will remove it and unshackle the judiciary, which is the appropriate thing to say so that judges and magistrates can make good choices. Underlying that is also adult time for adult crime, as well as seeing gold standard early intervention right across the state. The Auditor-General looked at that and over \$1 billion was spent on early intervention programs, but many of those were not being measured. We will get those measures and replicate them across the state.

Our leader has also announced that we will provide genuine support for those young people going into detention; we will provide up to 12 months support for them, not the 72 hours that the government currently provides of which we know 50 per cent do not actually complete that program. Giving those kids social and emotional support for 12 months and getting them to be taxpayers and not law-breakers will help.

The LNP will see Queensland safer. We are listening to Queenslanders. I am proud to be part of an LNP opposition that will show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.43 pm): I rise to speak against the opposition's motion and to support the amended motion. I want to start by recognising this House's interest in the plight of victims of crime because the issue of community safety is complex and it should be above politics. It is actually an area that really calls for a long-term bipartisan approach. If only there was a mechanism, say through parliament, to achieve a bipartisan agreement on youth justice and a victims strategy for Queenslanders!

Something that former police commissioner Bob Atkinson said during the youth justice and victim select inquiry was how he found it did not help to talk about the statistics; that even though the Queensland overall crime trends are following the global trend of year-on-year decline, it is not helpful to say that when a person or their neighbour has been broken into or they are reading about it, and I could not agree more. What victims need from us as leaders is hope. They want unity, certainty, information and action—action like appointing a victims commissioner to provide strategic advocacy for all victims in Queensland, introducing a financial assistance scheme to get people back on their feet, investing in innovative sentencing models that cater to the very needs of victims and introducing an Australian first free counselling service for victims of property crime. That is the action that our government has taken.

It is really easy to take crime statistics and make them say almost anything, and I find it incredibly disingenuous when they are cherry-picked and used in the way those opposite use data to create a picture that Queensland is inherently unsafe, that young people are to be feared and loathed, and that there is no value in victims coming forward because there is no help. I have watched those opposite perpetrate those lines. It is a damaging line to take. It is lazy. It is the lowest form of exploiting our most vulnerable and it deserves to be called out.

Queensland is pretty transparent in the reporting of our crime data, which is released annually through the RoGS national dataset. I say to the member for Lockyer that nothing is made up. Does he have any idea of the data verification process that agencies have to go through before publishing? While I accept that not everyone loves data, anyone who understands policy analysis recognises the importance of interrogating the data to understand the full story. Even my 11-year-old knows how to ask why. If those opposite ask anyone in the victims of crime sector why the recorded number of victims is going up the response they would get is this. It is because victims feel more confident than ever before to report because there are now a number of alternative reporting measures to remove the barriers to report crimes, because we have expanded the definition of crimes like coercive control to capture a broader pattern of behaviours, and because the stigma associated with being a victim has reduced due to the great work of our victim advocates. I am not suggesting that is the whole story or that that is positive or negative, just that it gives us clues to what is happening behind the data.

The obsession that the LNP has with associating Queensland's children with all crime, labelling them as young terrorists and referring to them as the worst of the worst is not helping. That there is a person sitting opposite who openly confessed that he planned to pick up seats off the back of crime should concern us all. Now the LNP's shadow youth justice minister has stated that sentencing under the LNP's proposed policy could be upwards of life if manslaughter is involved.

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member for Currumbin, you are warned.

**Ms BUSH:** The only thing upward of life is the death penalty. Is that what they are foreshadowing under an LNP government? There is a saying that we all know and use, but there is a second and a lesser known part to the statement which goes, 'It takes a village to raise a child, but the child who isn't embraced will burn the village down to feel its warmth.'

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Ms BUSH:** We are the village.


**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Gregory.

**Ms BUSH:** We are the village. In fact, we are the village chiefs.

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

**Ms BUSH:** It is time that the LNP joined us in investing in policies that actually work, not just slick slogans, glossy brochures and empty promises.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.47 pm): I want honourable members to put themselves in this circumstance. It is the middle of the night. There are two cars prowling the street outside their house. They are stalking their next victim. Eight juvenile offenders jump out of those cars. They are wearing masks, they are carrying machetes and long knives. They sprint to their house. They try to open the car door. When that does not work, they try to kick down their front door. They come up to their camera and they brazenly turn it away. This is what happened in Currumbin Waters over the weekend and these juveniles returned three days later to terrorise this community again. Youth criminals are running riot through our community in Currumbin Waters and right across the state, and

they are getting away with it because under this Labor government there are no consequences for their actions. The latest annual data reveals there were 11,191 child offenders in Queensland in 2022-23. That is an increase of 557 child offenders in 12 months. On top of that, serious repeat offending has increased 62 per cent.

These are the facts. These are the undeniable facts that our Queensland communities are living with. Since Labor came to power in 2015, unlawful use of a motor vehicle is up 101 per cent, assault is up 198 per cent and robbery is up 123 per cent. Why? How did we get here? I spoke with the residents of Currumbin Waters and they said that they did not feel unsafe like this five years ago. They did not feel like they were going to be terrorised in their own homes five years ago, so how did we get to this point where kids carrying machetes and breaking into homes is normalised in our communities? I will tell members: in 2015 now Premier Miles, alongside the former premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, made a decision to introduce legislation to water down our Youth Justice Act. They made detention a sentence of last resort and this has meant that over the last nine years our courts have been unable to remove youths as a sentence of first resort. They have had to go through the linear process of imposing every other sentence available under the Youth Justice Act before they can remove that youth from our community and that has resulted in the revolving door of crime. This has resulted in youth offenders becoming serious repeat offenders and then for youth offenders having to have at least 70 offences before they are removed and put into detention.

Labor has created a generation of repeat young offenders who know the laws are weak and who know that they will get away with terrorising our communities, and these are not just statistics. There are victims behind every single one of these, and that is the number that matters—almost 300,000 victims of crime in this state over the last year. That is the number that matters. The LNP's Making Queensland Safer laws will restore consequences for action. Adult Crime, Adult Time will ensure that juveniles—

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** Member for Thuringowa, I hear you objecting. Your community is riddled with crime. It is screaming out for Adult Crime, Adult Time—screaming out for it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, member.

**Mrs GERBER:** This will mean that the people of Townsville—the residents of Townsville who have seen a 99 per cent increase in unlawful entry—will be able to rest a little easier under an LNP government. Adult Crime, Adult Time will mean that the people in Rockhampton who have seen a 253 per cent increase in assault under Labor will feel a little safer. It will mean that the residents of Toowoomba who have seen a 226 per cent increase in robbery under Labor can feel a little bit safer. Only an LNP Crisafulli-led government will deliver the Making Queensland Safer laws. Only an LNP Crisafulli-led government will deliver the Staying on Track program and our Adult Crime, Adult Time. Queenslanders have to vote for change in October to get these laws.



**Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (5.52 pm): Once again we find ourselves here having a discussion about something for which there are no facts and no figures—

**Mr Nicholls:** It's what you're paid to do, but don't worry: it won't be for too much longer.

**Mr HEALY:** Your margin is not that big either, buddy. When we look at the—

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

**Mr HEALY:** When we look at where we are, it is very important to note that we have one side that thinks locking kids up is going to be the solution. There is no evidence anywhere to support that. When I talk to people in the street when I am doorknocking and when I talk to experts in this space they will tell you that that does not work. I will tell members what does work: investing in things like Midnight Hoops, Johnathon Thurston Academy's programs, designed to enhance life skills for at-risk youths, and Club and Culture at all Police Citizens Youth Clubs with their after-school drop-in activities, structured sport and active recreation. These are fundamental programs that get to the core of the issues.

The Kang Kang Youth Leadership Team in Aurukun has young community leaders planning and implementing PCYC activities for the broader community. It is working and we are seeing the numbers of crimes decrease in these communities because of these programs. In Cairns and Aurukun the PCYC's Blue Edge is an eight-week program to empower youth. This has resulted in eight male youths returning to school who previously were totally disengaged. These are the sorts of things that you do.



In terms of locking people up, you have to be joking. Friday Night Lights is a safe place for youths in and around Cairns and other areas throughout Queensland up until 9 pm where they can interact. They can enjoy the company of those around their same age but, more importantly, there will be police and other people there to enjoy their company.

The Youth Support Service provides individualised case management support for at-risk kids from eight years of age to 21 years of age. The Duke of Edinburgh program is a three-tier system that provides young people with opportunities to volunteer for sport and other activities. It is the interaction that they are needing. It is the attention that they are needing. This is what you do to start driving it down. You start implementing and investing in these things because this is the science and this is what the experts are telling us. Changing Gears and Breaking the Cycle at all PCYCs provide supervision to enable youths to obtain drivers' licences which, in some areas, particularly regional areas, is absolutely key to any development for those young boys and young girls. Deadly and Active in Yarrabah promotes youth engagement through organised sports activities. A consultation process was undertaken in Yarrabah where the community gave feedback. As a result of the feedback, these programs were put into place.

More importantly, when the LNP was last in government it oversaw the cutting of 110 senior police and all up more than 300 police personnel were cut. The QPS strategic review, the Greenfield review, found that there was a reduction of 500 staff members—full-time positions—in 2012 and 2013 which significantly contributed to administrative and support service activities being passed to police. I bet that was popular! The LNP failed to fully fund any new police positions. The then president of the Queensland Police Union, Mr Leavers, said—

I was involved with the police numbers in 2012, and sadly they were not fully funded. That meant that the police budget had to be stripped everywhere.

This is the solution of those opposite, and here is another one: they took police away from frontline roles to work in a complicated and inefficient emergency services bureaucracy which they created. They cut police training, reduced firearm training and forced police to pay for their own body worn cameras. What a wonderful group! They are not investing in kids and they are not investing in police. Their record is very clear for the people of Queensland to see. The LNP's 2012-13 budget slashed funding for new police equipment from \$77.5 million to \$53.8 million—the lowest in three years. These are the facts and they remain undisputed. Those opposite do not have any options and they do not have a plan. Rather, they have some glib lines.

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

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 37:**

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

**KAP, 3—**Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**Ind, 1—**Andrew.

Pairs: S. King, O'Connor; Sullivan, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I remind members that if a further division is now required the bells will ring for the duration of one minute.

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

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 37:**

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

**KAP, 3**—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**Ind, 1**—Andrew.

Pairs: S. King, O'Connor; Sullivan, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes:

1. since the new Labor Premier commenced in December 2023, the Miles government has delivered the \$1.28 billion Community Safety Plan for Queensland, including an additional 900 police personnel and a record over \$4 billion budget for the Queensland police and community safety portfolio.
2. the latest statistics from the Queensland Police Service reveal:
  - (a) a decrease of 6.8 per cent in the rate of juvenile offences;
  - (b) the rate of unique juvenile offenders has decreased by 32 per cent compared with 2012-13 and is the lowest on record; and
  - (c) the number of unlawful use of motor vehicle offences committed by young offenders has decreased by:
    - (i) 15 per cent in Cairns;
    - (ii) 49 per cent in Wide Bay;
    - (iii) 30 per cent in Townsville;
    - (iv) 42 per cent in Central Queensland; and
    - (v) 38 per cent in Ipswich.
3. the LNP community safety record:
  - (a) keeping the 2012-13 and 2013-14 crime statistics reports secret;
  - (b) promising to cut 1,000 police positions; and
  - (c) planning to pick up seats off the back of crime.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL


### APPROPRIATION BILL

#### Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

#### Appropriation Bill

#### Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee, Report

Resumed from p. 2630.


 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (6.04 pm): The Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queensland. I very much appreciated the three hours of examination of the 2024 budget for my portfolio. I place on record my thanks to the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee for its consideration of the Appropriation Bill. I thank the chair, the deputy chair and all members who participated in the hearing. I thank the dedicated parliamentary staff who form the committee secretariat and the public servants of my department who worked so hard to get us ready for estimates.

By making multinational mining companies pay their fair share, we are able to provide an historic \$1.5 billion investment in skills and training programs, employment services and small business grants, support students and small businesses, help lower household bills, fight inflation and ease the cost of living by boosting jobs for everyday Queenslanders. We are delivering 70,000 free TAFE places, one million subsidised training places, \$1,000 worth of free tools for first years, free construction apprenticeships for over 25s, \$250 million in support for small businesses through grants and financial counselling, an \$80 million funding commitment for Skilling Queenslanders for Work and near record low unemployment.

During the estimates hearing there were some disappointing contributions. Despite the excellent record of Skilling Queenslanders for Work in helping vulnerable Queenslanders get on track for employment by gaining a qualification—they earn while they learn; it is a wonderful program—disappointingly, it seemed that opposition members were intent on undermining it. I am sure that we all remember the brutal cuts to this particular program, which was axed completely by the Newman government. A lot of the members of that government are still in the chamber today. When Skilling Queenslanders for Work and the jobs of the 144 staff who supported the program were cut, the member for Surfers Paradise and then minister said ‘we need to end this type of needless duplication’.

In their right priorities pamphlet, there is not one mention of Skilling Queenslanders for Work. The LNP members who signed the statement of reservation tried to undermine the success of Skilling Queenslanders for Work. In reality, over 70 per cent of surveyed participants report a positive outcome 12 months after exiting the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, meaning that they have a job, have taken up more training or both. If the LNP backed this program they would say it, but they will not. That can only mean that they have a plan to cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work again and, by doing so, defund the community organisations that rely on it to provide those very vital services.

In the statement of reservation provided by LNP members of the committee they make reference to the Queensland Small Business Commissioner. That position was cut entirely by the LNP the last time they were in government and it was reinstated and funded properly by Queensland Labor. During his contribution to the committee report debate, the member for Buderim referenced the TAFE workforce. He is a member of the party that, when last in government, sacked 2,100 TAFE workers, closed down campuses, closed down facilities, sold off campuses and had plans to close up to 30 more. In stark contrast, the Miles Labor government will always back our small businesses and Queenslanders who want training.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.09 pm): I often hear members of the Labor government, ministers in particular, talking about vulnerable people. Just now I heard the minister refer to vulnerable people. I can report to the House that in my electorate the definition of a vulnerable person is somebody who is a law-abiding citizen and lives in Goondiwindi, Warwick or Killarney. It is somebody who works hard to put food on the table, who works hard to provide for their families and who works hard to acquire their possessions. It is somebody who works very hard in small business to provide a service or who runs a small business so that they can provide a service, provide for themselves and pay taxes, which ultimately pay for the salaries of people such as politicians and the people we need to work in government to deliver services.


How they became a victim is a story of Labor’s failure in youth justice. In my electorate of Southern Downs, nobody is listening to the stories that the Miles Labor government is telling about youth justice or the statistics on crime. Whom are they kidding? When you walk down the street of Goondiwindi or Warwick, every second person you talk to wants to raise the issue of crime. Either they have been a victim of crime themselves or someone they love, or are close to, has been a victim of crime, and in many cases they have been a victim of crime on multiple occasions. They may have had their home invaded three or four times. They may have had their vehicle stolen two, three, four or five times. They may have had their business invaded. I would say they are the victims, not the people that the Labor Party like to talk about.

In the estimates hearing, the Minister for Small Business was asked, ‘What is the government doing to support businesses that have been victims of crime?’ His response was that there is a \$5,000 grant available for the installation of CCTV. Try telling that to the small business owners in Goondiwindi, such as the owners of the Five Star supermarket who have had their premises ramraided three times. Each time, it has cost a minimum of \$20,000 to complete the repairs—four times the amount of the grant. An offender, no doubt either on bail or having been released with no custodial sentence, has gone back to steal a vehicle again and then used it to ramraid the business premises of a hardworking small business operator. If it costs \$20,000 or \$30,000 to fix, what will their insurance be like? What will the insurance be like for the person in Goondiwindi who has to pay triple to insure their car now because of the rampant crime in the area because of this Labor government?

In terms of small business and youth justice, this government has been a complete failure. Earlier tonight I heard a Labor member of parliament say that we are doubling down on the weakest, most vulnerable people in our society when we say that youth offenders and others need to be locked up. When you have been soft on crime for 10 years, you reach the situation where you have to lock people up so that they cannot commit the crimes night after night, which is what is happening in Goondiwindi.

People are scared. They cannot sleep at night because their home has been invaded so many times. Every twig that snaps outside could herald somebody coming and kicking their door down. There are people who think, 'How am I going to let somebody into my house so they don't damage it? I will leave the car keys where they can find them so they don't assault me.' We are hearing about increasingly violent assaults where offenders are breaking into motel rooms and people's homes and pre-emptively assaulting them savagely so they can steal their car keys.

Anybody who says that locking up offenders is not the answer and that the Labor government has the solutions has not spoken to the people in my electorate who are victims of crime. Thanks to the weakness of the Labor government on youth crime, the only way at the moment to stop the cycle of crime is to lock up offenders. Nobody likes to see that but, if the question is, 'Should offenders be prioritised and allowed to get out over and over again so they can commit the same crimes over and over again or should they be locked up?' then the answer is that they should be locked up. I am waiting for this Labor government to confess that that is what has to happen, but we need to show them the door in '24 to fix it.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.14 pm): I am darned sure that slogans like that are not going to assist youth justice matters here in Queensland. We are delivering what matters to Queensland. I rise to reflect on my greatest passion: public education and justice for young people in Queensland.

The Putting Queensland Kids First plan is the government's \$500 million investment over four years to give our kids the opportunity of a lifetime through an initiative that supports vulnerable families to access quality early childhood programs and health and other support services. We are keeping Queenslanders safe. Our \$1.28 billion community safety plan tackles the root causes of crime, investing in grassroots early interventions which have been researched and are evidence-based. These programs have been proven to reduce the offending and reoffending rates of young people.

We are keeping students engaged in their education through a comprehensive \$288 million package of alternatives to mainstream schooling, including FlexiSpaces and Pathways colleges. The research clearly states that if we keep students engaged in education the chance they will enter a life of crime is much diminished. We are helping Queensland families who are struggling to meet all of the cost-of-living demands in their household budgets through our \$15 million School and Community Food Relief fund and providing a further 140,000 free laptops for students in Queensland's most disadvantaged areas. We know that children living in poverty are most likely to enter a life of crime.

We are continuing to invest in our greatest assets—our education workforce, of which I am proud—with an extra 535 teachers and 323 extra teacher aides in 2024-25. Why was it that, when I was the principal at Glenala State High School, under the Newman government, my student numbers went up yet my teacher numbers went down? Why was that?

We have listened to teachers and principals across the state and non-state education sectors through ministerial round tables, and we acknowledge and are responding to workforce challenges. Our initiatives include a \$55.5 million teacher workforce package, announced by Minister Di Farmer at the estimates committee hearing. That includes: \$25.7 million to expand the Turn to Teaching Internship Program, with an additional 200 places; \$10.5 million to expand the Trade to Teach Internship Program, with an additional 30 places; and \$18.3 million to provide a recognition of service payment of \$1,200 for 2024 and 2025 on top of the \$900 payment already made. The payment is for state school teachers working in high-priority locations in Queensland.

We are piloting Grow Your Own Workforce approaches in three regions that are experiencing the greatest teacher shortages—Far North Queensland, North Queensland and Central Queensland. This is not new. For 30 years, or longer, we have had workforce challenges in these parts of remote Queensland. The Grow Your Own pilots will explore teacher workforce initiatives targeted at the needs and context of each region, and I understand that the first local committees met yesterday.

We are increasing our tailored support for students, with 2,000 extra support staff and professional resources to help students living with a disability to learn easier. We continue to improve, upgrade and expand our school facilities, with the \$1.3 billion capital program including two new schools opening this year. We are focused on the now while also making long-term investments in the lives of young people and their families that will ultimately lead to a safer, more prosperous future for everyone.


All of this and more is in vast contrast to the opposition, which has no fiscal rigour, no positive policies and nothing more than slogans and criticisms. Let's not forget the opposition's record when it was in government. I knew it well. I lived it every day. When it was in government, education programs

and supports to groups such as the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops and non-government school parent organisations were cut; the teacher staffing model changed; student-to-teacher ratios worsened; there were no EBs for teachers or teacher aides; and there were only 11 mental health and wellbeing professionals employed across 1,264 schools.

During that time, eight schools were closed, including one in my electorate—Old Yarranlea State School. Nyanda State High School was also closed, and all 130 students had to go to Glenala State High School over a weekend. The Barrett Adolescent Centre was closed. Those opposite planned to close another three schools—Coorparoo Secondary College, Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School—and 50 others were being looked at.

I congratulate Minister Di Farmer on her leadership and vision for public education and youth justice in Queensland. I am very proud of public servants and what they deliver for the lives of our young people across our state.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.19 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the report of the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee. I have been on this committee for the last two terms, even though the name has changed. Members have come and gone and ministers have come and gone. I acknowledge the member for Miller and the member for Southern Downs for their contributions and the part they played during the committee hearing. This year there was not the usual Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee fiasco where we have the member for McConnell and Kawana going head to head. We missed the entertainment. We hope to see it in the future. The theatrics were always there and I enjoy them, to be fair.

Our committee is responsible for the portfolios of youth justice, education, small business and training in Queensland. During the committee hearing that day we heard quite a lot of detail with regard to teacher safety across Queensland. I had a chance to ask a number of questions. From talking to teachers in Queensland I know that they do not feel safe in the classroom. They feel like they are understaffed and under-resourced when it comes to tools to deal with behavioural issues. When we have teachers who are upset and leaving the profession because they feel they have lost control in the classroom, all in this House should be concerned and should be trying to find ways to not only support our teachers but also fix the behavioural issues. I also had the opportunity to ask questions around the budget for schools and making sure that the state is working with the federal government and holding the federal government to account to ensure our public schools are fully funded.

We have a problem in Queensland—and I addressed this in a question this morning; unfortunately the minister is sick today, but I thank the member to McConnell for answering the question in her place—that 40 per cent of parents are deciding to homeschool their children because of the academics and wokeness in our schools. That should be of concern to everyone.


I will move on to youth justice. Youth justice in this state and in Townsville is an absolute joke. The youth offenders are getting all the justice in Townsville. The offenders are getting away with blue murder. The problem in Townsville is very clear: the victims are forgotten constantly. Over 50 businesses in the area of the Street University in Townsville are complaining about unruly behaviour day and night. These photos, which I will table, are of vandalism to a hairdressing salon near the Street University. We have written to the minister about this. I have tried to make her aware of this. This needs to be sorted out and needs to be fixed. I table the photos.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of photographs depicting vandalism [\[1563\]](#).

We need to approach youth justice in a different way in Queensland. Katter's Australian Party has a multipronged approach to dealing with youth problems in Queensland. We need to make sure we are holding these youth to account. Relocation sentencing is something that we have pushed for for a long time. I asked some pointed questions about the \$24 million that has been allocated to intensive on-country programs. We believe they are going to fall very short of community expectations.

We need to also implement adult time for adult crimes. We need to remove detention as a last resort and ensure that is coupled with minimum mandatory sentencing so that kids sent to a relocation sentencing site are there for at least 12 months. We cannot turn around one of these children in two or three weeks. Cleveland Youth Detention Centre is failing these kids. We need to ensure we stop failing

Queenslanders. We need to ensure that there are policies and laws implemented in this House when it comes to youth justice so we can start turning the tide and correcting the rudder. We need to ensure that victims come first and victims feel safe in their own homes. We need to swing the pendulum back to ensure people feel safe in their own homes. Right now in Townsville people do not feel that way. People in Hinchinbrook do not feel that way. They expect more from this government. If there is a change of government, we will hold that government to account because that is what the KAP does best.

 **Mr ZANOW** (Ipswich West—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise tonight to speak about the estimates process for the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee—the first one I have done. Thank you to my colleagues, the member for Southern Downs for his guidance and also the member for Miller. The estimates process takes a lot of staff time and effort. We must give thanks to them as well.

The committee agree with the passing of the 2024-25 budget, but, obviously, there are clear limitations. I will step through a few of those. At the conclusion of nearly a decade in office and at the end of the first four-year parliamentary term, the government has failed to provide reassurances that its policies are meeting the significant challenges that face this state—the cost-of-living crisis, the housing crisis, the crime crisis and, of course, the health crisis. One need go no further than Ipswich West to see all these crises in action.

We know that education is critical to addressing a lot of these concerns. In the estimates process I was very disappointed to hear that asbestos management in Queensland schools remains of serious concern to teachers, parents and even students—specifically, asbestos in our schools. We have known about asbestos for a long time and it should have been addressed long before now. For instance, Leichhardt State School in my electorate has cracked asbestos sheeting in its classrooms which has been observed. Also at Leichhardt, the library is breaking in half. They have buildings moving. They are in serious need of repair.

We turn our attention then to Rochedale State School. The minister has not met with parents and has not even committed to meeting with parents impacted by the asbestos incident there. Questions have been asked in relation to the reimbursement of costs for the stationery packs and the student items that were discarded due to the asbestos contamination. The fact that only \$150 was offer to replace stationery packs that actually cost \$250 meant that the Rochedale State School P&C had to come up with \$12,000 to assist. That is a disgrace.

On 19 March, when an important meeting was being held between Department of Education representatives and parents about the asbestos incident, the Minister for Education and the director-general were prioritising entertainment over education by attending the Pink concert. They were too busy 'getting the party started'. That is absolutely disgraceful.

Then we moved on to employment and small business. Despite the impact of crime being a major concern for all Queenslanders and small businesses, the minister was unaware of the number of small businesses that have been affected by crime. This is information that is available from the QPS website. There are a number of businesses in Ipswich West that have recently been impacted by serious crime—ram raids, smashed windows, you name it. All of their insurance premiums are going through the roof.

We heard about that earlier from the member for Nanango. A lot of businesses are either not renewing their policies or not claiming on their policies for fear premiums are going to go up even more. The minister even suggested the availability of \$5,000 in business basics grants could be used to upgrade CCTV equipment. However, in our view, that is woefully inadequate.


Let us talk about training and skills development. TAFE delivered training to 144,000 students in 2023-24—about 14 per cent up on the previous year. TAFE teacher and tutor numbers only increased by 146—a rate of increase that is well below the increase in student numbers in percentage terms. Now what are they doing? Overtime. What are we going to do to fix this? There is nothing provided whatsoever. They say, 'We will spend more money on sponsorship—\$7 million.' What about more teachers? I think the only way to fix this is to show Labor the door in 2024.

Report adopted.

Clauses 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.31 pm): I move—


That the bills be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bills read a third time.

### Long Title (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.31 pm): I move—


That the long titles of the bills be agreed to.

Question put—That the long titles of the bills be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Shadow Ministry, Lobbying Contact; Order for Production of Documents

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.31 pm): I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

**AYES, 50:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**KAP, 2**—Dametto, Katter.

**Ind, 1**—Andrew.

**NOES, 33:**

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

Pairs: S. King, O'Connor; Sullivan, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I move—

That—

1. members of parliament who hold or have held shadow minister or shadow assistant minister portfolios during the 57th Parliament are directed to provide to the Clerk of Parliament by 12 pm, Friday, 6 September 2024 a list of any meetings they attended in their shadow portfolio capacity which they are aware of, at which a registered lobbyist was in attendance;
2. the list provided to the Clerk of Parliament by a current or former shadow minister or shadow assistant minister should provide the date, attendees, and subject matter of the meeting;
3. the Legislative Assembly directs the Clerk of the Parliament that upon receipt of the list identified in 1. and 2. the Clerk of the Parliament is to immediately cause the document to be tabled;
4. by 12 pm, Monday, 9 September 2024 the Clerk of the Parliament is to table advice regarding any member of parliament who should have, but failed to fulfil their obligations in 1., including the member of parliament's name; and
5. notes that legislative amendments have been passed by the Legislative Assembly to ensure that any future meetings shadow ministers and shadow assistant ministers have with registered lobbyists will be recorded in the public lobbying register if it is lobbying activity.

In moving this motion today I can advise the government has not taken this decision lightly.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members will have their opportunity to speak to this motion, I am sure.

**Mr de BRENNI:** We believe it is an important step to ensure Queenslanders know exactly who is lobbying the LNP opposition and what they are lobbying them for.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members to my left, the standing orders have not changed since this morning in question time. I will be applying the standing orders as I always do. I will expect the member on their feet to be heard and other members will have their opportunity. Members will be addressed by their correct titles and members will address their comments through the chair. I hope members are aware of the guidance I am trying to give to the House.

**Mr de BRENNI:** Mr Speaker, thank you for your guidance to the House. We have seen the first law officer of the state, the Attorney-General, move prospective amendments to the Integrity Act to ensure that any future meetings registered lobbyists have with members of the shadow ministry are recorded if they fit the definition of lobbying activity. I note these amendments were passed without dissent. They were passed without division. They were passed with the support of the opposition. As such we hope that those opposite will continue their support of our strong integrity measures and support the motion before the House today.

This motion deals with retrospective elements of lobbyist contact with the LNP shadow ministry during this session of parliament. It will mean that any meetings of any current or former shadow ministers or shadow assistant ministers have had with registered lobbyists which were lobbying activity within their portfolio during this 57th Parliament should be disclosed. This in essence flips the onus. It flips the onus from the registered lobbyist disclosing the contact to requiring former and current shadow ministry members to disclose this contact.

We have done this because it would be unreasonable to place the burden of going back a few years on registered lobbyists to now disclose their contact. This motion will require those shadow ministry members of the LNP opposition to go and look at their diaries and make a list and check it twice for any meetings they had with registered lobbyists and the reason and provide it to the Clerk of Parliament by the specified date. The Clerk will then table the document and is empowered to table an advice of any members who have not complied with this motion of the House. This is a very simple task, particularly if those opposite have nothing to hide and they want to be transparent. We know they have a hand-picked shadow minister for integrity whose past actions are somewhat questionable.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask that the minister withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the House, the member for Maroochydore has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I withdraw. The Leader of the Opposition talks a lot about integrity. Now is his and his team's chance to step up and produce their lists of meetings with registered lobbyists this term of parliament. Produce the list of people who have been lobbying them and what they have been lobbying them for. I am advised that we have already seen from publicly available sources 70 or so contacts or meetings that registered lobbyists have had with the LNP opposition during the past financial year. I will say again that registered lobbyists have a role to play in our society; that is fine. Queenslanders deserve to know who the LNP opposition is meeting with and by whom they are being influenced. They deserve to know whom they are making policies for and they deserve to know the full facts.

It was the Miles Labor government that enhanced integrity measures to ensure shadow ministers publish their diaries, and it is through this process that we saw the secret underbelly of meetings being held by those opposite. Just like the secret hush money payments made by the member for Broadwater that we found out about recently, the LNP have form for keeping things secret. They have form for doing things behind closed doors without transparency. They come in here time and time again and throw stones regarding integrity and accountability. It is time they stepped up and showed integrity and accountability. All we are asking the Leader of the Opposition and his team to do is have a look in their diaries, look through their records and create a list of the meetings they have had with registered lobbyists. We know they have been doing it over the past year and therefore logic dictates they would have been doing it well before now.


Those opposite might jump up and claim this should be extended to others. They might claim that chairs of committees should be incorporated; however, importantly, they are not decision-makers. They provide recommendations to the government and parliament for the parliament and government to consider and action when appropriate.



**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I will make one more statement to the House. If you wish to speak on the motion you will have an opportunity. Hold your thoughts and comments until that time. I will give the same courtesy to the speaker on their feet.

**Mr de BRENNI:** This is distinct from the roles of shadow ministers and shadow assistant ministers who, logic dictates, would be forming policies and ideas and making decisions which might impact Queenslanders one day. As such, this is a sensible motion. It strikes the right balance, as it flips the onus on the shadow minister or shadow assistant minister and does not unduly burden the registered lobbyist. It also provides those who are required to comply with this motion of the House adequate time to have a look through their records. One would assume that an opposition which talks about integrity as much as they do would have their recordkeeping well in order. All they need to do is open their Outlook diary or their paper-based diary if they have one and check the meetings they have had. It is simple. As such, I commend this motion to the House. I call on all members of this House to support this strong integrity measure for all Queenslanders.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.46 pm): I move the following amendment—

That:

1. members of parliament who hold or have held shadow minister or shadow assistant minister portfolios or chairs of parliamentary portfolio committees during the 57th Parliament are directed to provide to the Clerk of Parliament by 12 pm, Friday, 6 September 2024 a list of any meetings they attended in their shadow portfolio capacity which they are aware of, at which a registered lobbyist was in attendance;
2. the list provided to the Clerk of Parliament by a current or former shadow minister or shadow assistant minister or portfolio committee chairs should provide the date, attendees, and subject matter of the meeting;
3. the Legislative Assembly directs the Clerk of the Parliament that upon receipt of the list identified in 1. and 2. the Clerk of the Parliament is to immediately cause the document to be tabled;
4. by 12 pm, Monday, 9 September 2024 the Clerk of the Parliament is to table advice regarding any member of parliament who should have but failed to fulfil their obligations in 1., including the member of parliament's name; and
5. notes that legislative amendments have been passed by the Legislative Assembly to ensure that any future meetings shadow ministers and shadow assistant ministers have with registered lobbyists will be recorded in the public lobbying register if it is lobbying activity.

I note that the Leader of the House just said that portfolio committee chairs ought not be included because they are not decision-makers. They actually decide which bills pass the parliament based on the majority of Labor members. I have real concerns when you look at some of the parliamentary chairs. The member for Miller is now a parliamentary chair, having gone through all of the integrity scandals he went through as a minister, and it does concern me.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask those comments be withdrawn.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the member for Miller has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. Make no mistake: this is a government that is so desperate they would pull a stunt like this 41 days from the dissolution of parliament. We have seen parliamentary processes wrecked this week. We have seen democracy continually attacked by this Labor government in their dying days. It is a rotting fish and it is rotting from the head. They are throwing all parliamentary processes out the window. They are rushing through legislation without any committee process. They do not care because they are addicted to power. They will do and say anything in their desperate attempt to cling to that power. I say to honourable colleagues what would you expect from Premier Miles, who is looking more uncomfortable in the job after having served as minister for 10 years in this place. He is looking more and more uncomfortable day by day.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. He has checked out. He is tired, out of action, out of plans, no idea. The irony is that the Labor Party were so against retrospectivity as to not release the Jackie Trad report. Yesterday they hated retrospectivity: 'No. It's terrible. It's bad for democracy.' They did not want anyone to see the Jackie Trad report or the Peter Carne report—that is bad retrospectivity—but they want to see the diaries of opposition shadow ministers from 3½ years ago. What they want to do is tie up the opposition for the next 41 days until the dissolution of parliament so they can campaign and we cannot. That is what they are trying to do. Everyone can see through it.

The Leader of the House said in his quiet, calm voice, 'It's a simple task.' It may be simple for 264 ministerial advisers. It may be simple for the Labor Party with all of their staff, but I will get to it in a second as to why it is not as simple as the Leader of the House would claim. Again, the irony is that they were so against retrospectivity yesterday, but all of a sudden they support retrospectivity as far as it relates to the opposition.

I want to refer to a letter dated 19 June 2024 received by the Leader of the Opposition from the Integrity Commissioner of Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition in good faith wrote to the Integrity Commissioner seeking advice when this issue was mentioned in the media. The Integrity Commissioner wrote back and said—

Thank you for your letter of 27 May 2024 seeking my advice about the Government's proposal for retrospective legislation requiring registered lobbyists to identify and register lobbying contacts with Shadow Ministers and Assistant Shadow Ministers ... dating back to November 2020.

She went on—

In my view, the proposal to extend the obligation to record contact between registered lobbyists and Shadow Ministers, is a sound one as it strengthens the regulation of lobbying activity in Queensland. As the Crime and Corruption Commission ... observed—

The Leader of the Opposition said we would do that at the time. There is legislation now being introduced—prospective legislation—and which we have indicated support for. The Integrity Commissioner's letter went on—

It follows that I also consider there is merit in your proposal to extend the contact reporting requirements to Chairs of Parliamentary Committees given the importance of Committee work.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Did they not know about this letter? This is an own goal. Did they not know about the advice from the Integrity Commissioner appointed by the Labor Party? The Integrity Commissioner went on—

... there is merit in your proposal to extend ... to Chairs of Parliamentary Committees given the importance of Committee work. In this regard I also note the Queensland Parliament website which states—

and she went on with that. She then said—

The proposal to make the requirement retrospective is more problematic.

The Integrity Commissioner then went on with two issues, the first being administrative burden to meet the retrospective requirements, which is at odds with what the Leader of the House says. I will take the advice of the Integrity Commissioner over the advice of the Leader of the House any day. She then said—

Even if such searches were conducted it is unlikely this would result in a reliable and complete record of contacts.

She explained why. She said—

In other words, the Premier's stated aim of ensuring "that the public is aware of all engagements between registered lobbyists and the LNP Opposition" probably cannot be achieved.

Why were they so excited at the start of this motion and they have all downed tools now? Why have they all downed tools? Is this an own goal by the Labor Party? Did the Leader of the House not tell the ministers or the backbench that the Integrity Commissioner has given advice contrary to the motion tonight? Were they left out of the loop? Did the Leader of the House seriously leave his members out of the loop with respect to what the Integrity Commissioner has advised this parliament to do? They have said for 10 years that we should accept the advice of the Integrity Commissioner. What has changed? Why not accept the advice of the Integrity Commissioner tonight?

The Integrity Commissioner went on and talked about the challenges to compliance and consequences for noncompliance. She then said to the effect that because it is over 3½ years and if one phone call was missed—not a meeting but a phone call—there would be criminal penalties attached to this. She then said that it is in that case that it is problematic. I conclude with where the Integrity Commissioner said—

In my view, the imposition of a significant administrative burden on registered lobbyists, together with the potential for significant penalties for non-compliance, is inconsistent with the fundamental legislative principle concerning retrospectivity and would need to be justified on strong public interests grounds.

**Mr Crisafulli:** Case closed.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Not yet, Leader of the Opposition. I am getting to the case closed. She then said—

On balance, I do not consider that threshold has been reached.

Gotcha. I table a copy of the Integrity Commissioner's letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 19 June 2024, from the Queensland Integrity Commissioner, Ms Linda Waugh, to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr David Crisafulli MP, regarding the government's proposal for retrospective legislation regarding lobbying contacts [1564].

The Leader of the House and the Premier obviously forgot to tell their backbench and ministerial colleagues about that letter. By proposing this motion, rejecting all of the recommendations and the advice from the Integrity Commissioner, it shows this for what it is. It is a political stunt by a desperate government and a desperate Premier. They are desperate to cling to power and they will do and say anything to get elected. They will do any trickery to get elected. That is what this is about. It is not about good governance.

I say to the Leader of the House: this is the opposition doing the government's work again—handing in the government's homework. Why is it that they did not consult with the Integrity Commissioner when they were saying they were going to move an integrity motion and have reforms to the Integrity Commissioner? If they did consult the Integrity Commissioner, I assume the Integrity Commissioner would have given the same advice to the Leader of the House as she gave the opposition. Why was he not forthcoming with that advice tonight? Tell this parliament if they received that advice and, if so, why didn't they tell the parliament? I call on the Leader of the House or the government to table any advice they received from the Integrity Commissioner. If not, it shows that the opposition did the work of the government. We believe in governance, transparency and accountability. We went to the Integrity Commissioner about this issue and she said 'prospectively yes, retrospectively no'. What a stunt from an out-of-touch—

*(Time expired)*

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

*In division—*

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! The Deputy Premier will cease his interjections. Other members will cease their interjections.

**AYES, 35:**

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

**Grn, 2—**Berkman, MacMahon.

**NOES, 47:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pairs: S King, O'Connor; Sullivan, Watts.

Resolved in the negative.

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

**AYES, 49:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**Grn, 2—**Berkman, MacMahon.

**NOES, 33:**

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


Pairs: S King, O'Connor; Sullivan, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.


**QUEENSLAND FOOD FARMERS' COMMISSIONER BILL****CROSS-BORDER COMMISSIONER BILL****NIGHT-LIFE ECONOMY COMMISSIONER BILL**

Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill resumed from 20 August (see p. 2453), Cross-Border Commissioner Bill resumed from 20 August (see p. 2454) and Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill resumed from 20 August (see p. 2455).

**Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (7.04 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.


 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (7.04 pm): After that debacle, it is quite incredible that we are standing in this House today with 40 minutes to debate the Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill, the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill and the Cross-Border Commissioner Bill. They do not listen to the Integrity Commissioner, so why will they listen to these three commissioners? Seriously! This was something that the LNP called for back in 2017 and it was the member for Clayfield, when he was the leader, who espoused the reason we needed a cross-border commissioner. Then in the 2020 election, we announced it again. It was the member for Currumbin through COVID highlighting these massive issues and the need for a commissioner. The member for Southern Downs and the member for Warrego are the people who understand what it is like to represent people on a border community. This is not just about crime—it is certainly not just about crime. We welcome a commissioner because it is something the LNP has proposed. We are asking why these three bills are given 40 minutes for the entire debate. It is unbelievable.

There are so many issues when crossing a border, whether it is headers, tractors, water issues, electricity, rail or road. There are 12 local government areas that are impacted by those cross-border issues.

I really do want to thank Mayor Lawrence Springborg for his advocacy because he, alongside we on this side of the chamber, has been calling for a cross-border commissioner since well before 2007. This is one thing he said: 'It has been a long journey of advocacy.' Lawrence, I could not have said it better myself. These guys opposite, two minutes to midnight are handing in the homework. Of course we welcome it because it is our policy. He went on to say—

As the mayor of a border community, I know first-hand the challenges our community faces and I'm very grateful to see this Cross-Border Commissioner framework put in place.

Everyone on this side of the chamber should be given an opportunity to speak, but because the government is truncating the bills—40 minutes for three bills—there is not enough time, so I will sit down and allow my colleagues a bit of time to speak on this bill.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (7.07 pm): I really do appreciate the opportunity to speak to what is, I believe, a very important step forward in Queensland legislative history and to represent our farmers right across this great state with the Food Farmers' Commissioner. This is a recommendation that came out of the committee that was formed through the vision of Premier Steven Miles. It was a vision that he put forward early on to make sure this parliament would hold the large retailers to account and give our farmers a fair go and a fair voice through this parliament.

I really do want to thank all those who are a part of the committee—those members of parliament and also the secretariat and the staff who were along on that inquiry. I want to pay a special mention to the member for Lytton and to the member for Mount Ommaney as government representatives. There is absolutely no secret here that it was the government members of this committee who drove forward the recommendations, who drove forward the want to stand up for farmers, and it was absolutely the Labor members of the committee who were standing up for farmers and have been able to deliver a recommendation that will now be legislation for our farmers as of tonight.

I want to thank some of the local farmers in my community. I want to thank Trevor Cross for coming out and saying exactly what happens in the industry to farmers. How great it was when Trevor came along and spoke at the hearing, but he also invited the Premier onto the farm to hear firsthand

what happens. I want to pay special homage to Judy Plath. What a warrior! What an absolute champion Judy is. Her words really transformed the way our committee saw the inquiry as it moved forward. I want to thank Dean Akers, Dale Hollis, Dean Cayley, Keith Martens, Andrew Martens, Craig van Rooyen, Mark Mammino, Geoff Chivers, Russell and Shona Mortimer, Peter McLennan and Brad Penny, and if I have missed any of our local farmers, I do apologise. They have given me the opportunity to engage with the industry and to know more about what they have gone through.

We heard from farmers right across this state about the inequities in the industry because of the major retailers. There is absolutely no doubt that when Coles and Woolworths control 65 per cent of the market, they control the market, and they have strongarmed our farmers for far too long. Our farmers in this state have been silenced by those big retailers, but now they have a voice and they have a voice in this parliament through the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner because of the vision of the Premier of this state, a Labor premier, who said that there was something wrong at the farm gate, who said he was sick and tired of seeing working people getting ripped off, whether they be consumers or farmers.

Our farmers are working people. The Labor Party stands up for working people, every single day of the week. Our farmers and the farmers across my community go out every day and they have their family at the forefront of their minds. They do what they do to feed their family and to feed every family of this nation. That is what they do every single day. They are good, wholesome, working-class people. That is really what they are. They go out there every day and provide for their families, for their children and for their grandchildren to have a better opportunity.

How dare the major retailers in this country try to silence the voices of those salt-of-the-earth people who work hard so that all of us can enjoy fresh produce? How wonderful it is, and how poignant it is, that it is the party of the working people that is putting forward this legislation. Farmers across Queensland will despair to know that the LNP have refused to publicly support a Queensland food farmers' commissioner, despite the QFF being on it.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** Check your statement of reservation, comrade.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Use members' correct titles, please.

**Mr SMITH:** They have refused to publicly support the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner. I encourage those on the LNP side to come forward and to eat some humble pie and recognise that they failed the farmers all the way through our inquiry. I am proud to be one of three backbenchers of the Miles government who have been able to shape legislation to give our Queensland farmers their voice.



**Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (7.12 pm): I rise to speak in this cognate debate focusing on the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill. According to the explanatory notes, the commissioner will improve price transparency, redress the power imbalance between supermarkets and suppliers, and provide a safe environment for complaints. It will be a statutory position, with an interim commissioner appointed for 12 months. The commissioner will assist producers with supplier arrangements with supermarkets and provide a range of consultative, advisory, mediation, transparency and advocacy functions. In an act of political cynicism, this is only urgent legislation because there is an election in 66 days. After a decade of being in power, the government has suddenly discovered that farmers are doing it tough. The government has wasted 10 years.

The Supermarket Pricing Select Committee inquiry recommended this position, yet, in a sign of tightly controlling the discussion, the government scrapped the ability for members to have their say on the committee report. The inquiry itself was deliberately restricted because it was, in essence, a grandstanding exercise to deflect the government's complicity in the cost-of-living crisis. It was about the narrative—the spin—of appearing to be doing something. It was paying lip-service to farmers and primary producers. The government never wanted to include any cost that it is responsible for imposing on producers. There was no attempt to look at reducing costs to the farmers or primary producers.

Ten years of the state government's policies, taxes, levies, charges, actions and failures have increased direct and indirect costs for producers. They are imposed at the expense of prices and profitability for farmers. Farmers face rising costs from the underfunding and mismanagement of biosecurity threats, the anti-dam agenda, rising electricity prices and the state of rural roads. Farmers face escalating costs from increased regulation, native title claims, vegetation laws and being the sacrificial lamb to reach environmental targets. Pressures on commodity supply chains push up costs.

The government's new-found concern about fruit and vegetable prices is welcome. Supermarkets have been taking farmers for a ride. They must absolutely be held to account. Farmers are price takers; they are not price setters. However, farmers have been doing it tough for some time. The agriculture minister has been warned again and again to do something because government policies are squeezing farmers. For years the government has refused to deal with it. Five years ago, the government was warned about fruit and vegetable growers doing it tough. Since 2019 it was warned that farmers were making decisions not to plant crops. Since then, debt levels have risen and are now critical. Across the state I hear the same message: they have nowhere to go; they are being squeezed.


The Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers cautioned against being 'sucked into' the 'easy narrative of farmer versus the supermarket, the underdog versus the duopoly'. It said—

... let's not forget the government ... are responsible for increasing the cost to the grower. The policy pile-on during the last 18 months has dramatically changed the way growers operate.

For 10 years, as a senior cabinet minister or deputy premier, the Premier was there. He participated in all of the decisions. Electricity, water, fuel, transport, registration, labour shortages and fertiliser costs have increased significantly under this government. In October 2022 I warned about labour shortages pushing up fruit and vegetable prices. *Queensland Country Life* warned about this with its heading 'Lack of workforce holds agriculture to ransom'. This government supported federal Labor's broken promise on the agriculture visa scheme. Growcom called the changes a 'poor consolation prize' and AgForce said it was 'rubbing salt into the wounds'. This government piles on the workload for growers. The Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers said—

It's relatively easy to make a new rule, however ... every change causes a chain reaction.

Last October the Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers called off its 100-year celebration, saying it was inappropriate when the industry was currently enduring one of the most trying periods in recent history. It said that the industry was grappling with financial, mental, emotional and physical hardships with substantial investment needed to weather the current challenges and survive. If the Premier and Labor government is genuine about helping farmers he must address this complicity in increasing farmers costs. If the Premier is genuine about reducing fruit and vegetable prices, he must address the state's role in increasing farmers' costs. To do anything else is hypocrisy. Let's hope this attempt by government works.


 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.17 pm): I am delighted to rise in support of the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill in my capacity as a member of the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee when that committee was formed. As a parent of three kids I have definitely seen prices rise in the supermarkets, as has everybody else in Australia, but, as we found out in our supermarket inquiry, farmers were not seeing the benefit of those price rises. Members of our committee heard from growers and growers' advocates about the process of selling to supermarkets. What I found interesting was the more I learned about the process of purchasing food from local suppliers for those major supermarkets, the more confusing it got. Some growers had direct relationships with supermarkets or other minor stockists like our local fruit and veggie shops; some suppliers worked through a third party, a merchant or an agent; and others had a combination of both arrangements. Worryingly, when those growers raised concerns about their treatment—either by the supermarket directly, or indirectly through their merchants or agents—many supermarkets claimed not to have knowledge or oversight of those concerns.

Equally, growers with concerns about their conditions or their farm gate pricing expressed to the committee that they did not know the best way to go about having their concerns addressed. The issue that kept coming up over and over again was a fear of retribution. They were afraid that if they raised their concerns with the big supermarkets there would be some kind of retribution—that they would lose their contract or their order requests would be dropped. They had genuine concerns about raising those issues. You could very clearly see the power imbalance that existed between these Queensland growers and the major supermarkets that they sold to.

We have seen in previous instances in Queensland where having a commissioner for a group with a power imbalance has really helped. It draws to my mind the small business owners who now have their own Small Business Commissioner. I have many examples of when I have referred businesses in my community to the Small Business Commissioner and they have been able to work with them to get a better outcome. Sometimes the benefit of those positions is also being there to provide advice and intervene at a low level before the issue escalates and both parties feel aggrieved.

I think most members of this House would be aware by now that the largest two supermarket chains have roughly 65 per cent of the grocery market in Australia and the largest four have an estimated 82 per cent of the market. The market power inherent in such a concentration, especially with the big two, is really obvious. One of the big issues that market power creates is that price gouging and other predatory practices can be much easier to manifest. The committee, as I said, heard those concerns and they are widespread among fresh produce farmers, some of whom we were lucky enough to hear from when we travelled around the state. Through the creation of a farmers' commissioner we could assist them to overcome such fears because that will assist our farmers to be willing to invest in and grow fresh produce. The resulting increase in supply of fresh, quality produce will, of course, be of benefit to consumers.

The committee was really lucky to hear from the calibre of growers who appeared. Judy Plath, who appeared before the committee, was incredibly informative in talking about the different kinds of beauty standards and the very tight beauty standards that the products were expected to meet. She brought us in some samples and no, we were not able to eat those delicious looking samples. It was a really good demonstration of just how tightly the big supermarkets hold their suppliers in terms of the volumes they ask them to produce, the physical appearance they ask them to produce and the size—there are so many different characteristics. These are the kinds of things that growers may be able to work with the farmers' commissioner on to get better outcomes to ensure that more of their quality produce is getting on the shelves. It was quite heartbreaking for me on this committee to hear examples of quality produce actually being ploughed back into the ground and it never even made it off the farm. I fully endorse this. I am so excited this recommendation is coming to fruition. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (7.22 pm): I rise to speak to the Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill. I note that I am the first speaker to speak to that particular aspect of this cognate debate. I note that the minister to whom the power created in this bill will vest is not speaking to this, and that says everything about this third-term tired Labor government. This is all about the announcements and it is not about the substance of the issue.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I hear those members opposite chirping away and they are not in their correct seats. These guys are all about the photo-op, but they are not about the follow-up. That is why we are debating three bills in 40 minutes today.

The issues surrounding Queensland's night-life economy and late-night small businesses are very genuine and the LNP will not be opposing this bill today. This bill, though, does not feel like a genuine attempt to implement the solutions for the night-time economy. It has been rushed through very shortly before a state election with no consultation—and they are not my words; that is what the explanatory notes say—and no engagement with industry. This is a political fix. This is not a real solution to the problem. Queenslanders are not stupid; they can see right through these sorts of pathetic political stunts. Nonetheless, the issues around the night-time economy are real and they have been real for many years. We need better than this rushed attempt to push through three bills in 40 minutes to try to secure a few votes in two months time.


Queensland businesses need proper support and they need a considered approach to help them remain viable and flourish into the future. Sadly, we have seen many late-night venues shut their doors for good right across the state, including NightQuarter on the Sunshine Coast and more recently The Zoo in Fortitude Valley. They have not felt supported by this third-term Labor government and unfortunately they have been left to face the music on the day the music died. The struggles go beyond music venues; small and family businesses of all kinds are not trading as well as they could when the sun goes down.

In terms of employment, many Queenslanders need jobs in the late-night economy. Maybe they are students or they need to care for children during the day while their partner is at work. It is an important area of our Queensland economy but it is dying. The idea of a night-life commissioner is okay, but it is only okay if it is going to be implemented properly. That is why it astounds me that no consultation has been done in relation to this. The industry deserves better; stakeholders deserve better. It is not just about businesses; communities are impacted by the night-time economy as well. This government, just as they do so often on issues like crime and just about every single issue they are faced with, chooses to ignore the voices of our communities.

Over the last four years since I became a shadow minister I have met with many of those venue owners and advocates: people like QMusic and JC Collins. A couple of weeks ago I was in the Woolshed in the electorate of Cairns with our candidate for Barron River, Bree James. They were celebrating their 25th anniversary and they were telling me times have never been tougher. That is for an iconic venue like the Woolshed in Cairns. They deserve better than what they are getting from this third-term Labor government.

The issue with this bill is that it is just an attempt to fix a political problem rather than to provide a genuine solution to the problem. We need to ensure that we address all of the concerns. One of the issues that has been raised is the provision of late-night public transport. It is going to be pretty difficult to get more people to attend precincts across the state at all hours of the night when they cannot even get home. Living in my part of the world on the Sunshine Coast, if I wanted to come and watch a concert in Brisbane—admittedly it is not something I have done lately—this Saturday night, I would have to get on a train by 8.30 pm in order to get home. That is simply not going to encourage anyone to use public transport because they would not be able to get home to the Sunshine Coast. Even then, that would only get me home to Nambour. I would have to catch a bus, which frequently does not run either. These are the kinds of issues that a night-time economy commissioner could address.

With a consultation process that is non-existent, with an engagement process that is non-existent, with a lack of any substance—the government's commitment to this is writ large when the minister will not even speak to the bill. This is nothing more than a stunt and Queensland businesses deserve better. Queensland communities deserve better. These problems will not be addressed unless there is a genuine commitment to addressing them. We heard about the Queensland Small Business Commissioner. She is not independent and she has no powers to intervene. She can advocate. That is great and Dominique Lamb does a lot of great work in that regard, but the reality is that we need independent commissioners and they need to be empowered with the resources to fix these issues in our communities.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.27 pm): The member for Buderim might need to go back to parliament school because he is not aware of the fact that members cannot speak on it again. Maybe he needs to go back and read the handbook again. I rise to speak about the three cognated bills tonight. I am really excited to talk about the fact that the Miles Labor government recognises the needs of night-life businesses that are distinct from other businesses and industry. That is why we have developed this position. The proposed bill will establish the Night-Life Economy Commissioner to work with night-life businesses to create a vibrant and safe night-life environment and to support and promote key aspects of the night economy. We have a real plan to keep our night-life vibrant—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr McCallum** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member for Buderim and member for Bundamba, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms PEASE:** We have a real plan to keep our night-life vibrant, grow night-time activation in communities, attract more visitors, create more jobs and drive local economic outcomes. Locally, my bars are doing well. They are growing. We have more people coming to the area and the famous Wynnum Fringe, dare I talk about it, is coming up next month. It is bringing great economic benefits to my community.

Today we also announced that Ian Leavers is going to be the Cross-Border Commissioner. His background in law enforcement and close work with border communities means that he is well placed to understand the issues facing border communities and to advocate strongly in resolving their concerns. The commissioner has been met with overwhelming support from local councils along the Queensland borders as there are more than 750,000 people living in these 12 local government areas.

With regard to the supermarket inquiry and the Food Farmers' Commissioner, I was really proud to be part of that inquiry. I am a mother, a grandmother and a great supporter of my local community and I am out and about in the community all of the time. Members can imagine my dismay when I asked the CEO of Woolworths about the rising prices and the unconscionable behaviour of the large supermarkets in terms of the prices that customers were being charged. His response to me was that they would be happy with the shares they are getting from their superannuation fund. I do not know about the people in other members' electorates, but the people in my community are not sitting on and sweating on getting their shares from their super funds. Rather, these people are on a fixed income or they are pensioners who rely on a small amount of money to do their grocery shopping.



One of the things we heard from these big chains, which have 62 per cent of the market share, is the web and the complex arrangements in terms of how they buy food from our food producers. It is such a complex and confounding way that they go about doing their business. The frightening thing is that the people who grow our food, take care of us and deliver the wonderful food that we eat sometimes have to wait 180 days to be paid. That is absolutely disgraceful. I do not know about anyone else, but if I went into Coles or Woolies and walked out with my shopping and said, 'I'll be back in 180 days to pay my bill,' I would be charged with shoplifting. That is the disgraceful way that these growers are being dealt with by the chains they provide produce to. I know that there are agencies, they go through the market and there is a complex system in terms of how they are dealt with, but it is not the right way to treat the people who are developing and growing our food that is so important to us.

I know that my colleagues spoke about the producers who came before the committee, but I was really moved by all of them. They do so much work and are really passionate about what they are producing. It matters to them, so imagine the dismay they feel at having to dump tonnes and tonnes of pumpkins because one of the supermarket chains decides, 'We don't really want that this time.' This food commissioner is going to provide protections and a place for these farmers and producers to go to get some advice about how to lodge a complaint, because currently the only way they can lodge a complaint is through the organisation. I am really pleased that our government stood up and made a commitment to the supermarket inquiry. We were dedicated to the farmers. That is who we were looking after. Quite sadly, those opposite made it very clear that they were not interested in that. They were along for the ride only. I commend these bills to the House.

**Honourable members** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The House will come to order!

**Honourable members** interjected.

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

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Lytton and member for Gympie, you are both warned under the standing orders. I have been trying to get your attention, and, member for Gympie, you are cutting into your own team's time.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.32 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this unprecedented commissioners cognate debate, and it is unprecedented for a few reasons. It is unprecedented because we are only being given 40 minutes to debate three bills that have been cognated together, it is unprecedented because the minister has announced who the Cross-Border Commissioner will be before the bill has even been passed in parliament, and it is unprecedented because there has been no consultation on any of these bills. However, I want it on the record in this House that since March 2020—since the day I was elected—I have fought tooth and nail for Queensland's own cross-border commissioner. As a proud representative of a cross-border community, I have fought for a cross-border commissioner, and never was that more important than during the border closures of 2020.

Even before that, a cross-border commissioner was the LNP's policy in 2017. We took that to the 2017 election, so for nearly a decade the LNP has been advocating for a cross-border commissioner for our border communities. Did the state Labor government listen or act for almost a decade? No, it did not, but now, on the eve of an election, it is announcing that it is implementing a cross-border commissioner. However, the Premier is trying to make out that this is the solution to the youth crime crisis that this Labor government has seen explode under its watch. He is trying to make out that a cross-border commissioner is his solution. The reason these youths are crossing the border and terrorising communities like Goondiwindi and like my border community of Coolangatta is that they know that our laws in Queensland are too weak to hold them. They know that in Queensland they are untouchable. They know that detention is a last resort in Queensland. So, yes, a cross-border commissioner is something the LNP has been calling for for almost a decade; however, it is not the solution to the youth crime crisis. The solution to the youth crime crisis is to change the laws. The solution to the youth crime crisis—


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I have given you some latitude. I appreciate the point you were making. You have now moved into another area where you are pursuing another line that does not relate to the long title of these bills. I would ask you to come back to the substance of the debate.

**Mrs GERBER:** Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. Time and time again my community called for a cross-border commissioner to navigate the issues that border communities face, but time and time again for almost a decade the Labor government failed to do it, and I want to take this House to a specific instance of that. When my community was suffering through border restrictions and closures, I wrote to the Premier, I made a number of speeches in parliament and I asked questions on notice. I specifically said to take politics out of it and appoint a bipartisan cross-border commissioner to develop a workable cross-border solution for our community. What do members think the Premier's answer to that question was? At the time the then premier of Queensland said that Queensland was without the need for that specific additional officer, yet now on the eve of an election we see Premier Miles announcing a cross-border commissioner.

I also note that the government has announced that the President of the Queensland Police Union, Ian Leavers, will take up the position as Queensland's Cross-Border Commissioner. In the past I note that Ian Leavers has given support to our police getting more powers to keep our cross-border communities safe. In fact, when the LNP announced Adult Crime, Adult Time as a policy, Ian Leavers went on 4BC and talked about how our border communities and our Queensland communities need more police to enforce Adult Crime, Adult Time. Mr Leavers was also one of the first to call this government out for the youth crime epidemic that was ripping through this state. Mr Leavers also said that the current youth justice and bail laws were hindering police cracking down on youth offenders and he also publicly supported opening the Childrens Court to victims and the media.

I hope Mr Leavers continues to support more police for our border communities and I hope he continues to support the laws that our police and our communities need to keep our border communities safe as the newly appointed Cross-Border Commissioner—even though this bill has not yet passed through the parliament—because the safety of border communities should be a priority for this government. If this Labor government were prioritising the safety of our border communities then it would have given our community a cross-border commissioner almost a decade ago when the LNP was calling for it, but no. It does it on the eve of an election because it is trying to secure votes and because it is not serious. This Cross-Border Commissioner is not the solution to the youth crime crisis that the Premier claims it is. The solution to that is to change our laws.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (7.38 pm): I rise to associate myself with the remarks of the member for Currumbin and shadow minister for youth justice. This is something that she and I have been working towards for a long time, as have the members for Warrego and Scenic Rim. In fact, I was proud to stand with the leader of the party at the 2017 election and announce a cross-border commissioner, and I was very proud to associate myself with the 2020 election campaign of which the member for Currumbin was speaking where the LNP again committed to a cross-border commissioner, because its members have the border electorates. People like the members for Currumbin and Warrego and me understand what it means for our communities to be burdened with the difficulties of living on a border, where changes in jurisdiction can impede business, the business of local government and the provision of services.

I want to be very clear that the Cross-Border Commissioner will have, as part of his remit, work to improve law enforcement across both sides of the border. I note that this week, in answering two questions without notice from me about youth crime and so forth, the Premier answered specifically in terms of what the Cross-Border Commissioner will do. I make it clear that whilst the commissioner will have a role it will not be the panacea that we need right now. I do not think the Cross-Border Commissioner will have the power to change the law to enable youth offenders to be locked up so that they cannot continue to commit crime.

**Mr Russo:** I hope not because that's our job.


**Mr LISTER:** I take the interjection from my good friend the member for Toohey. He is right: it is our job. It is the job of this parliament. Guess who is in control of this parliament? It is the Labor government. I congratulate Mr Leavers on his appointment. I had the chance to speak with him briefly today. I have every confidence that he will show verve and commitment in his role.

I want to make an observation about the importance of the bipartisanship of the role. I am a member of parliament whose community faced very significant difficulties associated with border closures during COVID. There was a systematic locking out of non-Labor Party members of parliament from any decisions and any consultation around closures of the border. There were many times when the border was closed and it was easily foreseen that that measure would likely be required again, but

we were never consulted. As a result, poor decisions that in no way improved the resistance of our state to COVID needlessly disadvantaged the small businesses, the big businesses, the workers, the farms, the families, the pensioners—everyone who lives in our border electorates.

Therefore, it is my expectation—and I would be very surprised if I was not supported in saying this by my colleagues whose electorates also border New South Wales—that the government should not in any way indicate to the Cross-Border Commissioner that he is their man because his position works for all of us. I look forward to speaking again with the newly appointed commissioner to reinforce that view. Many officers close to the government, including very senior police officers, have said, 'I can't talk to you. I work for the government.' They do not work for the government; they work for the law.

The Cross-Border Commissioner does not work for the government; he works for the people of Queensland. I expect and I am quite certain that the newly appointed Cross-Border Commissioner will afford due courtesy and consultation to democratically elected members who represent cross-border areas. I am sorry that I have to say that but my experience was that there was a systematic and completely overwhelming drive by the government to lock out opposition members of parliament from decisions being made concerning the border. I hope that having a cross-border commissioner will mean that that does not happen in the future.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (7.42 pm): In this very short debate, I want to welcome the appointment of the Cross-Border Commissioner. It has been LNP policy for a number of years. In 2020, the member for Southern Downs and I had the pleasure of announcing this policy. I am disappointed that, in the dying days of this term, the Labor government are so desperate that they are now announcing LNP policy initiatives.

I make the point that the Cross-Border Commissioner is not all about youth crime. There are many other issues that the Cross-Border Commissioner will need to deal with. On the border we deal with things such as disasters and also simple interactions that are affected because systems can be different across different jurisdictions. I mention Mungindi in my electorate. The Mungindi Hospital is in Queensland but it services a lot of patients from New South Wales. In many cases, we find that physiotherapists cannot visit their own patients in the Mungindi Hospital for the simple reason that they are not credentialed in Queensland. There are many things that need to be dealt with by the Cross-Border Commissioner in relation to licensing. People think that many things operate east-west but in fact, when you live in a border community, it is the north-south interaction that is important.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): I am sorry to interrupt, member. Under the provisions of the motion agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having expired, I will now put all remaining questions.

Question put—That the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the Cross-Border Commissioner Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill**

Clauses 1 to 30, as read, agreed to.

#### **Cross-Border Commissioner Bill**

Clauses 1 to 28, as read, agreed to.

#### **Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill**

Clauses 1 to 23, as read, agreed to.

**Third Reading (Cognate Debate)**

Question put—That the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Question put—That the Cross-Border Commissioner Bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Question put—That the Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

**Long Title (Cognate Debate)**

Question put—That the long title of the Queensland Food Farmers' Commissioner Bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the Cross-Border Commissioner Bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


Question put—That the long title of the Night-Life Economy Commissioner Bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 22 May (see p. 1728) and Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 17 April (see p. 1057).

**Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (7.47 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

I will address each bill in turn. I will first address the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Queensland's workers compensation scheme provides nation-leading coverage and benefits to support injured workers and their families at the lowest possible cost to Queensland employers. We have a proud record of nation-leading reforms that improve compensation and support first responders and workers with work related lung disease and psychological injuries. Our scheme is financially viable, sustainable and affordable for Queensland employers. Due to WorkCover's strong financial position, it continues to offer the lowest average premium rate of any state or territory. Queensland employers have also saved over \$560 million from apprentice wages and early premium discounts since 2017. To ensure the scheme evolves and remains sustainable for the future, on 17 April 2024 the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced into the parliament. This bill implements recommendations from the 2023 independent review of the scheme. The review found the scheme is strong and no major scheme reform was recommended.

However, opportunities were identified to address emerging trends and improve the process for injured workers. Accordingly, the bill will enhance the level of support provided to injured workers to help with their recovery and return to work. It will also enhance compliance with the scheme by ensuring

that insurers and employers have a clear understanding of their obligations. The bill also implements the outcomes of the decision impact analysis statement on regulatory proposals to extend workers compensation coverage to gig workers and bailee taxi and limousine drivers.

Outside of workers compensation matters, the bill amends the Industrial Relations Act 2016 for national consistency and the Labour Hire Licensing Act 2017 to ensure it remains contemporary and compatible with human rights. I extend my thanks to the independent reviewers—Ms Glenys Fisher and Professor David Peetz—and to stakeholders who contributed to these reviews and the development of the bill.

I would like to thank members of the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee for their consideration of the bill, in particular the chair of that committee, the member for Miller. I thank the committee for tabling its report on the bill on 7 June 2024. The committee made two recommendations. The first recommendation was that the bill be passed. The second recommendation was that further consultation be undertaken with stakeholders on proposed Industrial Relations Act 2016 amendments to the appeal pathways for full bench decisions of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

The government acknowledges the stakeholder feedback, particularly from the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Council of Unions and its affiliated member unions, in relation to proposed changes to the appeal pathway for QIRC. In response to this feedback and the committee's recommendation, I will move amendments during consideration in detail to remove clauses 13 and 14 from the bill, and I commit to further stakeholder consultation.

The committee also raised certain matters with the Office of Industrial Relations, including: consulting with the Special Commissioner, Equity and Diversity on extended leave for firefighters; assessing options to extend workers compensation coverage for student teachers, nurses and other students on work integrated learning placements; and to consider an education campaign to ensure employers and workers are made aware of their obligations should the bill pass. I can assure the committee that the special commissioner has been advised and that other actions are also well underway.

The Miles government will always back our hardworking and courageous firefighters. It was this government in 2015 which legislated deemed provisions for certain latent onset diseases for current or former firefighters. I am so proud to be back here again, following the evolving medical and scientific evidence, to expand this list from 12 to 22 deemed diseases. Once again, we are leading the nation. Importantly, the bill includes cervical and ovarian cancers in recognition of the increasing number of women choosing firefighting as a calling or as a volunteer. Uterine cancer has recently been recognised in statute by the Victorian and Tasmanian schemes, and South Australia has also flagged its intent to cover uterine cancer. I acknowledge that the United Firefighters Union Queensland have strongly advocated for the inclusion of uterine cancer in addition to the 10 cancers we have already included in this bill. I commend them for their advocacy on behalf of their membership. I propose to move amendments during consideration in detail to include this further cancer in the list of deemed cancers in this bill.

The provisions in the bill related to firefighters mean faster access to workers compensation if a firefighter is diagnosed with certain diseases deemed to be work related, unless evidence exists to the contrary. The bill also provides certainty that firefighters who are undertaking day work rotation are protected by the same presumptive laws. This is a great win for our firefighters and provides them with greater protections.

Research continues to show that early intervention is critical to reducing the risk and severity of psychological injury and to support recovery and successful return to work. Since 2018, this government has introduced significant improvements to support workers suffering from a work related psychological injury. These improvements include: aligning the tests for a psychological injury and physical injury; providing claimants with free access to supports, from making a claim through to when a decision is made; protecting apologies and expressions of regret—this was very important for people suffering from psychological injuries; streamlining access to compensation for first responders with PTSD; and introducing the psychological code of practice and regulations. This bill builds on these reforms.

Physical injuries and mental health are closely linked. A serious injury can impact on a worker's mental health, recovery, rehabilitation and return to work. Recognising this, the bill places a proactive and positive obligation on insurers to take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of a worker sustaining a psychological injury arising from a physical injury following acceptance of a claim until the worker's entitlement to compensation ends. This aims to reduce time away from work and increase the likelihood of a return to work.

We know that the stress of losing income can add a significant burden to workers who have suffered a workplace injury. That is why we have acted to ensure that workers with an accepted claim receive timely compensation payments by way of a basic weekly payment. This means an immediate cash flow for an injured worker to ensure they are not disadvantaged while the calculation of their weekly compensation is pending. This will allow them to focus on their recovery and reduces the risk of a secondary psychological injury.

Recovering from a work related injury or illness can be different for everyone and can take time. The bill empowers workers in their rehabilitation and return-to-work journey and makes sure employers and insurers are doing the right thing to help workers get back on their feet. It does this by: requiring an insurer to have a rehabilitation and return-to-work plan in place within 10 business days of claim acceptance, and to consult with the injured worker, their employer and the worker's treating practitioners on the plan, and keep it updated; empowering workers with a right to request a different workplace rehabilitation provider where they are dissatisfied with the provider selected by their insurer; ensuring insurers properly consider whether employers are able to provide meaningful, suitable duties for workers; ensuring host employers cooperate with a labour hire employer to assist in a labour hire worker's rehabilitation and return to work; and ensuring the quality of providers of rehabilitation services by giving the workers compensation regulator the power to set performance and service delivery standards.

It is never appropriate for an employer or an insurer to be present during medical treatment. The bill empowers workers to choose their own treating medical practitioner and to not have their employer present during medical examinations. This reflects common law medical treatment rights. The bill also acknowledges the existing rights to seek advice and support of a registered industrial organisation or lawyer for both workers and employers.

Workers and employers will also be better informed about their rights and responsibilities in the scheme through information statements provided to a worker by their employer on the start of employment and provided to a worker and employer by the insurer when the worker makes a claim for compensation. The bill also includes a new offence to prevent employers from replacing or circumventing the workers compensation scheme and affecting a worker's rights.

The Miles government recognises that gig workers who become injured at work do not currently have the same workers compensation protections as other workers. This is because many gig workers do not meet the current definition of 'worker' in the act and, despite working in employee-like circumstances, are not covered by workers compensation protections if they are injured at work. This means the costs of a work related injury are unfairly passed on to individual gig workers and their families and, more broadly, to the public health system and the community.

The issue of gig workers currently operating outside of regulation is not confined to workers compensation but extends to the federal industrial relations system. The bill provides flexibility for our government to regulate the status of gig workers under workers compensation laws once the matter has been determined under new Fair Work Commission powers to regulate workers and businesses in the gig economy.

The bill inserts a narrow head of power that enables a regulation to prescribe who is a worker and employer in particular circumstances where an individual is a regulator worker to whom a minimum service order, minimum standards guideline or collective agreement made under the Fair Work Act 2009 applies. This approach allows the Queensland government to be appropriately guided by decisions at the national level on the legal status of gig workers and provide certainty and national consistency for industry. I also want to acknowledge the organisations that wrote to me to provide their views on this important matter. I note the department has committed to ongoing engagement with digital platform operators.

The bill enhances compliance and enforcement in the scheme by: expanding existing code of practice provisions to be able to apply to employers or other persons; replacing existing guidelines and standards with scheme directions; enhancing regulatory tools available to the regulator to include compliance notices to promote and enforce compliance without a prosecution; increasing reporting obligations on insurers for employer related offences to provide greater oversight by the regulator; and increasing maximum penalties for certain offences to reflect the seriousness of the offence and to meet community expectations.

I now turn to amendments to the Industrial Relations Act contained within the bill. The Miles government is bringing entitlements in the Queensland Industrial Relations Act in line with those in the Commonwealth Fair Work Act as follows. The government continues to support parents or those with

responsibility for caring for children by making amendments to the Industrial Relations Act to increase the number of days of unpaid flexible parental leave from 30 to 100 days. We are also introducing a new late-term pregnancy leave entitlement, given parents the flexibility and greater choice in how to manage their pregnancy. The bill makes other minor and technical amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 2016 to align with the Fair Work Act 2009. This includes the addition of superannuation contributions to the Queensland Employment Standards and increasing the small claim threshold for unpaid wages claims from \$50,000 to \$100,000. These are in line with the Fair Work Act.

The bill also make amendments to the Labour Hire Licensing Act 2017. During a recent review it was identified that section 69(4) was incompatible with human rights, and this bill subsequently repeals that subsection. The bill also makes amendments that promote contemporary operational practices in the labour hire space. Those include providing clarifying amendments to inspector powers and allowing the general service of documents issued under the act to occur via electronic transmission, including email.

During consideration in detail of the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill I intend to move amendments which will provide for the establishment of an administration scheme and appoint an administrator to the CFMEUQ C&G division if the federal CFMEU is placed into administration. As the Premier has made clear, there is no room for illegal behaviour or for behaviour which otherwise undermines public confidence in Queensland's registered unions. The amendments I will move do not apply to any other registered union in Queensland. These amendments relate solely to the CFMEUQ C&G division. The scheme proposed is consistent with and is complementary to the federal scheme.

It is important to emphasise that these amendments will only apply if the federally registered CFMEUQ C&G division and its branches are placed under administration under the Commonwealth Registered Organisations Act. The complementary Queensland scheme of administration is necessary because the laws regard the federally registered CFMEU as distinct from the Queensland registered CFMEUQ. These limited amendments to the Industrial Relations Act will ensure a consistent scheme of administration applies to all entities comprising the CFMEU C&G division at both a Queensland and federal level. The amendments will safeguard the effectiveness of the federal administration scheme and restore public confidence in the CFMEU's ability to act lawfully and appropriately and represent their members.

The amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 2016 provide for the minister to establish an administration scheme and appoint an administrator to the CFMEUQ C&G division. The scheme will provide that the administrator will assume the management powers and functions of the CFMEUQ C&G division once appointed, including control of property and funds. This will provide the administrator with an avenue to review all transactions with related entities, including unauthorised transactions.

The scheme will enable the administrator to obtain documents and information from officers, employees and persons who provide services to the CFMEUQ C&G division under contract or arrangement and other persons prescribed by regulation. The amendments also provide for penalties where persons obstruct the administrator.

The amendments complement the federal scheme—moved by an Albanese Labor government—by providing a person removed from office or employment by the administrator may not become an officer or employee of another registered industrial organisation. The amendments will also provide for six-monthly reporting to parliament by the administrator, which will provide transparency for the process and any outcomes from it, and for the administration to apply for a period of at least three years unless requested by the administrator. Importantly, the provisions will sunset after a period of five years.

In exercising its management control of the CFMEUQ C&G division, the administrator will also have power to suspend or remove officers and terminate employees. It is the intention of the Miles government to seek direction from the administrator, once they are appointed, as to the suitability of CFMEUQ C&G division officials and employees currently representing members on Queensland government boards and committees.

Let us not forget that construction is one of the most dangerous industries. Workers in this industry should have representation on government boards and committees to raise issues of work health and safety. The main purpose of the legislation before this House is to ensure public confidence in the CFMEUQ C&G division and to ensure it is acting lawfully and appropriately, and in the interests of its members. This includes representing their members on workplace health and safety both at the workplace and on government boards and committees.

As a proud trade unionist, I do not take this action lightly, but I am incredibly mindful of the importance of public confidence in the ability of registered industrial organisations to act in accordance with the law and to effectively represent their members. These amendments complement and are consistent with the action taken federally. They ensure the administration scheme has the necessary powers in relation to the state registered entity, the CFMEU C&G division. These amendments ensure that the CFMEU C&G division can continue to operate as a registered industrial organisation. This is of vital importance—construction is an incredibly dangerous industry and all workers deserve a strong and effective union.

As with all unions, the CFMEU has many hardworking and dedicated people, both at an organisational level and within its rank and file who are committed to ensuring the best possible representation for workers. Queensland's hardworking construction workers deserve a strong, functioning union to represent them and that is why we are taking this action.

I will now turn my attention to the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This bill implements legislative recommendations from the review of the Queensland Electrical Safety Act 2002, the 2022 review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor's 2024 review to examine the scope and application of the industrial manslaughter provisions in the Work Health and Safety Act and the 2018 review of the model workplace health and safety laws led by Marie Boland. Before turning to the contents of the bill, I would like to extend my thanks to independent reviewer, Mr Dick Williams, whose careful consideration and thorough examination of key safety legislation played a pivotal role in the development of stronger laws for a safer Queensland.

Secondly, I would like to thank the committee chair, the member for Redlands, and members of the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee for their thorough consideration of the bill and subsequent report about the bill which was tabled on 2 August 2024. I would also like to thank the various organisations that made submissions to the committee and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. The committee made one recommendation—that the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be passed. I note that the committee's report also attached a statement of reservation. I will address those concerns later.

In the 22 years since the Electrical Safety Act commenced, the way we interact with electricity has changed considerably. In that time we have commenced our transition to net zero, harnessing renewable energy generation and storage technology, and as a community we have benefited from continuous electrical innovation in our everyday lives. The bill recognises the transformation of the electrical landscape in the last 20 years and responds to these changes by amending the definitions of 'electrical equipment' and 'electrical installation'.

The amendment of the definition of 'electrical installation' recognises the role batteries and energy storage systems play in our workplaces and in our communities now and into the future—a role that was not established and was not contemplated back in 2002. The bill also amends the definition of 'electrical equipment' to include prescribed electrical equipment. Prescribed electrical equipment is a new concept defined by the bill that means extra-low-voltage equipment that is placing or may place persons or property at electrical risk and is prescribed by regulation. Introducing prescribed electrical equipment in the Electrical Safety Act 2002 responds to emerging risks posed by particular extra-low-voltage equipment.

The approach implemented in the bill ensures that government can respond to risks posed by particular extra-low-voltage equipment by bringing it within the electrical equipment regulatory framework. Supply chain duties, licensing requirements and the recall framework are just some of the regulatory levers this framework applies. Prescribing items as prescribed electrical equipment in response to electrical risk ensures Queenslanders do not need to sacrifice their safety to enjoy the innovations of new technology. The bill implements a further suite of review recommendations providing additional clarity to industry and community and efficiencies for the regulator.

I would like now to address some concerns raised about inspector powers relating to the production of documents and answers to questions under the Electrical Safety Act. These changes align powers to the Electrical Safety Act with those in the Work Health and Safety Act. Additionally, these powers reflect the powers across all jurisdictions across Australia who have model workplace health and safety legislation and have implemented recommendations of the 2018 review of the model workplace health and safety laws.



Section 141 of the Electrical Safety Act essentially establishes a compulsory process whereby a person must produce documents or answers to questions upon written notice by an inspector if an inspector has entered the place within 30 days. This process supports the investigation process, which is a critical function of the regulator.

I now turn to the amendments of the Work Health and Safety Act contained within this bill. This bill makes some very important changes to the industrial manslaughter offence to implement three recommendations made by the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor following his independent review. This review was a recommendation of the 2022 review of the Work Health and Safety Act.

This bill expands the scope of industrial manslaughter beyond workers to capture the work related death of any person who is owed health and safety duties. This means employers and their senior officers can be held to account for criminally negligent conduct that leads to the death of a member of the public or a visitor to a workplace. These amendments will align Queensland with other Australian jurisdictions.

The bill introduces alternative verdicts for industrial manslaughter. Without alternative verdicts a defendant may be acquitted even where there is evidence of culpability in a serious offence. This means if a jury cannot find a defendant guilty beyond reasonable doubt they can find them guilty of a category 1 or 2 offence. Alternative verdicts are at the discretion of the trial judge, who can advise the jury at the end of the trial that they may consider an alternative verdict. An alternative verdict cannot be made unless it has been established by the evidence presented at the trial. The bill also implements an alternative verdict for a category 1 offence of a category 2 offence. Finally, the bill clarifies that multiple persons conducting a business or undertaking in a contractual chain can be charged with the industrial manslaughter offence.


In addition to the recommendations from the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor's review, the bill also implements a recommendation from the Boland review of the national model work health and safety laws. The bill further strengthens the offence framework in the Work Health and Safety Act by including negligence in the category 1 offence in addition to reckless conduct. This means the existing standard of criminal negligence applies to both industrial manslaughter and the category 1 offence. Accordingly, where an employer's negligent conduct exposes workers and other persons to a risk of serious harm or death, the courts can impose the significant penalties available under the category 1 offence.

Building on the changes to the Work Health and Safety Act made earlier this year, the bill empowers health and safety representatives and entry permit holders to take photos, videos and measurements and conduct tests at the workplace as part of the resolution of work health and safety issues. This responds to recommendations of the independent 2022 review of the Work Health and Safety Act. It will assist both health and safety representatives and entry permit holders in fulfilling their important roles in identifying and resolving work health and safety issues at the workplace.

I want to be clear that these powers cannot be used indiscriminately, and the bill includes very specific limits on their use and explicitly prohibits live streaming. Safeguards exist in the Work Health and Safety Act and in other regulatory frameworks to protect against unauthorised use and disclosure of information and to maintain the privacy of workers and others.

In closing, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 will further improve the best workers compensation scheme in the country. It contains a balanced suite of reforms which implement legislative recommendations from the 2023 review and the decision impact analysis statement into the coverage of gig workers.

The Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 makes legislative changes arising from a number of independent reviews. In doing so, this bill reflects a fundamental commitment of the Miles government—the pursuit of the continuous improvement of our safety laws. I thank both committees for their work in considering these bills and look forward to the debate regarding these amendments. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (8.16 pm): In addressing the two bills we have before us tonight and the issue of the CFMEU, let me start with the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. As has been explained by the minister, these bills address various issues in both the electrical safety and the workers compensation framework, the industrial relations framework and following on from the amendments recently moved in the federal parliament.

I will deal with the workers compensation bill first. The first amendment I want to talk about is extending WorkCover to include gig workers—Uber drivers, Uber Eats, Menulog. The gig economy in Queensland in the last few years, and nationally and internationally, has evolved into what it has. Yes, parliaments need to address the issues that come from time to time with those new industries.

I note this particular provision in the bill talks about giving flexibility for the government to include them, depending on the fair work legislation and Fair Work Commission decisions. In submissions to the parliamentary committee, obviously the unions were supportive of this. As the minister has explained, the aim of those provisions was to provide the flexibility to include gig workers and gig platforms in the scheme should the Fair Work Commission make a minimum standards order.

It is fair to say, though, that many concerns were raised during the committee process by some stakeholders. I note in the committee report that other submitters to the inquiry, principally the gig platforms, argued that the way the gig workers operate is not as an ordinary worker when it comes to timing and what they do. They work on different platforms and on multiple platforms. They have different rules for each platform. They work when they want to work, if they do. Some say they fit the independent contractor model. This is going above that and saying they are not independent contractors. We will see where the government use this flexibility to ascertain that. The cost to business is estimated to be about \$23 million, if memory serves me correctly, from the businesses in the gig economy that have submitted to this particular inquiry.

The second issue in the workers compensation bill talks about our firefighters, the presumed diseases qualifying periods and day work for firefighters. We support this. In fact, when I was the shadow minister for emergency services I introduced presumptive legislation for firefighters for particular diseases that are presumed to be caused by work, therefore allowing firefighters to avail themselves of workers compensation schemes. They then copied it—which is good—and we again handed in the Labor Party homework, so the Liberal National Party was in fact the first party in Queensland to bring in—

**Mr Skelton:** Success has many fathers.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The member who is interjecting was not even in the House when this was introduced and went through, if memory serves me correctly. It was the Liberal National Party that introduced the first presumptive legislation for firefighters in Queensland. Then the Labor Party, having realised it is great policy for our frontline firefighters, copied it. They could not just vote for our bill: they introduced their own bill and then applied the same question rule. So ours was never voted on in parliament, but they claimed all of the credit for it. But firefighters know that the legislation would not have proceeded had it not been for the Liberal National Party moving that particular legislation.

As I said, we absolutely support the increase in presumed diseases from 10 to 22, which is an increase of 12. On behalf of the Liberal National Party I want to thank all of our frontline firefighters, both in the red and the yellow trucks, our rural fires and rural firefighters, for all of the work they do, particularly as we come into the hot summer with the fire season ahead of us. I do absolutely support the increase in the number of presumed diseases for workers compensation claims and thank them for their work in battling fires on the front line.

The third element of the bill I want to talk about relates to where the employer must not take action to avoid the compensation process. This is essentially where employers are offering lump sums to an employee and saying, 'Don't go through the workers compensation process. Here's a lump sum.' We support that if that is in fact taking place. People are entitled to workers compensation. That is why businesses pay workers compensation. Everyone is entitled to go to work safely, return safely to their families and earn a good day's pay.

The fourth element relates to the worker information statement. This is a new requirement. Every employee who starts is to provide a statement about the workers compensation scheme. I have found that, in the consultation with stakeholders I have had, employer representatives talk about the fact that this does happen because they pay workers compensation on behalf of the employer to WorkCover and that process is taking place. They do raise issues, including potential administrative and cost burdens, penalties that could be applied and he-said, she-said scenarios where they did provide some information.

I want to make particular mention of Ai Group because they raised the concern in the committee process that new employers may not be as familiar or may not have been given information from WorkCover or the workers compensation scheme about their obligations and therefore without any negligence or deliberate attempt they may fail that scheme. The LNP will be supporting the workers compensation bill as it goes through tonight. There are some good amendments in there.

I note that the minister and the committee spoke about the issue of psychological injuries, which I think the government has noted is a risk to the scheme. The review in 2023 stated that in the four years to 2021-22 there had been a 92 per cent increase in mental health claims in the scheme; therefore, the bill talks more about employers and insurers offering education and support. It is not only in the workers compensation scheme—even though there has been a 92 per cent increase over four years—we have seen many industries, including our schools, education systems and institutions where mental health is a big issue in Queensland, and we must address that. That is the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

**Mr Krause:** Talk about the CFMEU.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am getting to the CFMEU in just a moment, member, but I must get to the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill before I get to that. I am going to address those amendments after that. I hear your anticipation of what might be coming. The minister and I are old friends. We are companions on this journey; we just have different ways of achieving the objectives. I note that the minister, incidentally, did not repeat the Premier's comments about me wanting workers killed on construction sites. I am very thankful to the minister for not repeating those terrible comments from—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** He said it. I take the interjection from the member for Logan, who said it is not true what the Premier said. It is on the public record. It was all over the news last night. The Premier said in this House yesterday, 'The member for Kawana might want to see construction workers die.' The Premier did say that, member for Logan.

**Mr Power:** There is no context. You know it is misleading, so don't say that.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. There is no context to saying that a member wants a construction worker to die on a construction site. There is no good context; there is no bad context. There is one context. It was overreach. It was disgraceful. It should not have been said. All I was simply doing, member for Logan, was thanking the industrial relations minister for not repeating those awful comments the Premier made yesterday, which he did make and which are reflected in *Hansard*.

In relation to the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I want to deal with four issues in this bill. Firstly, the category 1 negligence offence in this legislation is changing to include the fault element of negligence. The review that was undertaken recommended gross negligence. The government has gone with the fault element of negligence because the review found that the threshold of reckless, which is contained in that particular provision in category 1 offences, is contributing—as the committee report says—to a low number of successful category 1 prosecutions.

I am concerned that a law exists, and just because the government feels that not enough people are being prosecuted they need to change it to catch more people. Maybe they have not met the threshold of prosecution and they have not met the threshold of committing the offence, hence why they are not being convicted. Just because not enough people are being charged with that offence does not mean the offence is not working or the penalty is not working: it might mean they are not committing the offence. But I note they have included the element of negligence. As the Boland review found, it is basically because of the word 'reckless'. It is hard to meet the threshold of reckless because when you are reckless at one thing it is a continual pattern of behaviour. Businesses have shown they have not had this continual reckless pattern of behaviour, hence the prosecutions have been fewer.

The second element of the bill I want to speak to is industrial manslaughter. This will expand the scope of the offence to capture the death of other persons. At the moment, industrial manslaughter captures workers and there are particular offences. One of the submitters in the committee report—it might have been Master Electricians—talked about the low level of prosecutions for industrial manslaughter. They also spoke about the majority being small to medium enterprises. When the minister and the government introduced this industrial manslaughter legislation, if memory serves me correctly, they talked about these big corporate giants creating safety issues on worksites. It is not the

big corporate giants that have been caught with industrial manslaughter; it is small and family business owners. What they are doing now with this amendment is expanding the scope, so it is not just a worker—it could be a bystander. That particular provision will now apply.

Those members in the House who were serving at the time will know that the LNP did oppose the provision of industrial manslaughter at the time. It was not that we were not supportive of safety in workplaces. What we actually said was that there were existing laws in place that covered these issues and the law of industrial manslaughter was not required. We have been proven correct because of the low level of prosecutions. I think out of five prosecutions, the two successful prosecutions were because there were guilty pleas. It has not been the success the government said it would be in safety when they introduced the industrial manslaughter provisions, and now they are including it again. It does concern me that, just as they expanded the category 1 offence I just spoke about to capture more people, they are expanding this offence of industrial manslaughter to capture more incidents that could capture actual individual business owners, so again I express concern with respect to that particular provision.

The other element I want to talk about is the alternative verdicts to industrial manslaughter. Again, the government has said that the courts are able to look at alternative verdicts if they are not successful with industrial manslaughter, and the alternative verdicts are category 1 and 2 under these laws which they are expanding, with the fault element of negligence included in category 1. If someone is charged with industrial manslaughter, they go to court and the prosecution has to prove they committed the offence of industrial manslaughter. It does seem concerning that if they do not reach the threshold and they are not found guilty or they have not committed industrial manslaughter under the current laws the judge can simply say, 'That said, you're going to be convicted of a category 1 offence,' even though they were not charged with a category 1 offence.

It seems that the government are trying to justify the existence of industrial manslaughter in the legislation because they have not had the successful prosecutions they anticipated. They have not had enough people charged with these offences under the Boland review and it seems they are just trying to change the law and expand the law to catch more people. I do not think that will reflect safer workplaces just because they are capturing more people. I do not think we will have safer workplaces. You achieve safe workplaces by working with businesses, educating businesses and allowing Workplace Health and Safety to go into businesses and say, 'That's not appropriate. There are better ways to do it. Have you thought about instituting this in your business?' Yes, sometimes it comes at a cost, but when you work with business to achieve workplace health and safety—as the LNP did when we were in government—fatalities and injuries on worksites will decrease, just as we saw.

We changed laws. We did not use the Labor government's scare campaign of 'more fatalities and more injuries on worksites'; we actually worked with businesses to achieve safer workplaces. That is what businesses want. That is what they want Workplace Health and Safety to do—not have the government continually going after people and issuing fines. That does not create safer workplaces. The whole basis of the workers compensation scheme, I might add, is creating safer workplaces. It is about making sure people can return to work and educating businesses so injuries do not happen again in particular situations.

The fourth element of this bill I want to talk about is the bigger issue of the power of health and safety reps and entry permit holders to take photos, videos and measurements and conduct tests. This is a big one because entry permit holders are the talk of the town at the moment, particularly the CFMEU, the CFMEUQ and the amendments we will be debating in a short time. This is about the ability for the CFMEU to go onto a construction site in Queensland and video who they want and take photos of who they want. If the government think confrontation is not already at an all-time high because of the CFMEU's bullying, thuggish and intimidatory behaviour, wait until they see the CFMEU officials come onto construction sites, get out their phones in a workplace and start recording their colleagues. We know how the CFMEU operates. It will be workers who have gone on site who are not members of the CFMEU, and the CFMEU will be filming them, abusing them, bullying them and intimidating them—just as we have seen over the years.

**Mr Krause:** Threatening with assault.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. They will be threatening to assault them and it will all be on video. There is another thing they can do now with this video. There is no prohibition for the CFMEU officials, entry permit holders or health and safety reps, and members would recall that a couple of weeks ago the government passed laws to expand powers of health and safety reps and to have unions

be able to come onto construction sites and talk to health and safety reps. It all seems very curious and convenient that CFMEU powers and entry permit powers are all being increased just before an election. I take the nodding interjection from the member for Condamine.

We have seen it before. The government in its dying days moves in and protects its paymasters in the union movement. We will not be supporting that particular provision with respect to taking photos or videos on construction sites. We feel that in the current climate with the CFMEU—despite the fact we are going to talk about the administration in a moment—it will actually create more unsafe workplaces because we know how the CFMEU operate. We have seen it for 10 years and that is what they are going to do. We will not be supporting that provision. The LNP does not believe it will create safer workplaces. We believe it will create a worse situation for workers who just want to go to work, get paid for the day, go home safely to their families and contribute to building things in Queensland. They do not want the abuse and the bullying that we have constantly seen from the CFMEU and its entry permit holders, so we will not be supporting that particular provision in the bill.

Let me get to the amendments that the minister will move and an amendment that I am going to move. I want to thank the minister for offering both departmental staff and her office staff today for a briefing on the particular provisions. It was very kind of the minister. We have seen in the last few days the administration arrangements pass the House of Representatives and the Senate, and I understand New South Wales parliament has also passed similar provisions with respect to the CFMEU and putting it into administration. The briefing that we had is that the amendments that members will see puts the CFMEUQ C&G division into administration. The laws that we are debating tonight that are introduced as an amendment mirror as best they can the Commonwealth laws that were passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate yesterday, but understand that this is the CFMEUQ and it is a separate registered organisation in Queensland so it is slightly different.

However, I want to thank my federal colleague the industrial relations shadow minister, Michaelia Cash, and the federal opposition leader, Peter Dutton, and their team because they secured some big wins for workers over the last 48 hours and they secured some big wins for Australians. One of those big wins is that the administrator who is about to be appointed has written to Michaelia Cash and the opposition guaranteeing that as administrator he will not allow the CFMEU to make political donations to political parties and he will not allow the CFMEU to spend CFMEU money for campaign purposes or electioneering purposes. That would not have been achieved had it not been for our federal colleagues fighting that out on the floor of the Senate, so I want to thank them for that because we have a better bill for it. I have seen the comments Michaelia Cash made with respect to the administrator and the guarantees he has put in writing.

We also saw that it was going to be for a minimum of three years under the federal legislation but an amendment has now made it five years. That was another good amendment achieved by the federal coalition. We are seeing most of those amendments reflected tonight. We will see the administrator being officially appointed in the next couple of weeks. We will see which office bearers in the CFMEUQ and CFMEU in Queensland are told to leave office. I would hope they start with all the office holders in Queensland who have had contraventions against their names. There is a list of them and the contraventions are a mile long. For 10 years this Labor government have continually accepted the financial contributions of the CFMEU into their Labor Party coffers. They have continued to meet them. I take that back—Annastacia Palaszczuk put a ban in place but Premier Miles reintroduced the meetings with the CFMEU. He allowed his members to meet with the CFMEU. In fact, he met with the CFMEU when he became the Premier of Queensland.

My colleagues on this side of the House know—and I would say the government would know this too—that I have been on this issue for 10 years in this parliament. I have been the shadow industrial relations minister for just as long as the minister has been the industrial relations minister. I remember the minister's response every time I moved a motion in this House condemning the CFMEU and the bullying, intimidatory and thuggish behaviour on a construction site. What was that response? 'You're just anti-union.'

**Mr Krause:** 'Nothing to see here.'

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Scenic Rim—'Nothing to see here' and 'It's just a union-bashing motion.' The LNP has been proved right again. Look at the situation we arrive at now on construction sites in Queensland. We have seen the video footage over the last few weeks. We have seen it for 10 years, I might add, but the Labor government are saying, 'This is new to us.' No,

it is not. It has been raised so many times in this parliament over the last 10 years—hundreds of times—and it has been raised thousands of times in the media over the past 10 years. There is video footage out there—

**Mr Power:** What did Dutton do when he was in government?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Logan. These amendments that your government is moving are to the CFMEU—state registered. The Labor government could have done this administration over the last 10 years since this body has been established but they have not. I will tell you what Peter Dutton did. I will tell you what the coalition government did. They set up the ABCC. Guess what the Labor Party did when they came to power? They abolished it. They got rid of the cop on the beat.

Where have we seen that before? I will tell the member for Logan. When in government we set up the Building Construction Compliance Branch, which was equivalent to the ABCC. What happened when the Labor mob got elected in 2015? They abolished it. They abolished the cop on the beat in Queensland. The member for Logan might want to ask what the coalition did federally. What did the LNP do? We stopped the rot on construction sites. We stopped the thuggish behaviour from the CFMEU. We stood up to the CFMEU in Queensland. The Labor Party cannot and they will not, because they owe their jobs to the CFMEU.

We are only seeing this administration put in place now because we are so close to the election and Queenslanders have had enough and they want action against the CFMEU. That is the only reason we are seeing these amendments tonight. We will support the administration amendments. We will support the Labor government again following the LNP's lead and going against the CFMEU. We will support those particular amendments because it should have happened a long time ago.

We have seen time and time again the Labor Party attack the LNP when we have raised the issues of the CFMEU. I raised in estimates the issue that Kurt Pauls had \$30,000 of fines issued against him by federal courts and commissions. What happened? The Labor Party knowing that then appointed him to the workplace health and safety board. Minister Grace at budget estimates said he satisfied all the due diligence inquiries. I said, 'Was it the fact that you could not find any CFMEU officials in Queensland without a rap sheet a mile long or was it just because he is a friend of the Labor Party and you appoint them?' Then we had yesterday the Premier saying that, after a bit of interjection, he is going to sack all the CFMEU officials from all the boards. That came as news to Minister Grace because only two weeks ago she confirmed and said he satisfied all the due diligence requirements of a board appointment. It is the absolute—

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the injection. I do not know, member, if they have or what they have done to them, but the reality is the Labor Party have been a friend of the CFMEU and they refuse to act against the CFMEU.

I want to address the amendment that I will be moving also to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, and that reintroduces 24-hour access to all entry permit holders in Queensland. They will have to give 24 hours notice if they want to enter a construction site in Queensland unless—and I put a provision in there—unless imminent safety issues arise. That way the entry permit holders can still enter if an imminent safety risk arises. We will stop the rot on construction sites. We will stop the CFMEU from doing what they have been doing. We will stop the violence.

Who would have thought that in 2024, we would have allegations that someone stood up to the CFMEU and then masked intruders allegedly associated with the CFMEU rock up to his house? That is the Queensland we have under the Labor government because the Labor Party weakened the industrial relations laws over the last 10 years, and it is as a result of that. Just as they weakened the youth justice laws and we have the youth crime crisis, they weakened the industrial laws and we have the industrial relations crisis on construction sites in Queensland. We believe that these entry permit holders should give 24 hours notice before they go onto a construction site. That will stop the blockading of workers going on safely to their workplace.

As I said, what Premier Miles said about me yesterday, that I want to see construction workers die because of this amendment, is disgraceful. I have not had the apology. He withdrew it but not voluntarily. Because I asked for him to withdraw it and the Speaker told him to withdraw it, that is why he withdrew it; not on his own volition did he withdraw it. I think it was the most despicable and

disgraceful thing and it just shows that the Premier is a juvenile and is not up to the job of leading this state. It shows his true colours. He is an ideological warrior for the Left, further left than Jackie Trad, and his true spirit and true colours came out yesterday. That is what Queenslanders needed to see because he is faking who he is. He is trying to con Queenslanders that he is this suburban dad that spends 10 hours in a gym every day. He is not. He is an ideological left-wing warrior that says some disgraceful things—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Well, I had a member tell me today they saw the Premier coming out of the gym at 2.30 in the afternoon. Who has time during the day at a parliamentary sitting to go to the gym? I don't. We don't. We work. We work hard. If I had time to go to the gym during the day, I would love to, but—

**Mrs MULLEN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance to the debate.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Thank you, member, I think you are quite right. Member for Kawana, I have given you a bit of latitude. I will ask you to come back to the long title of the bill. You have two minutes left.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker. We work hard on this side of the House and we are going to work harder and harder every day for Queenslanders to convince them why they need to change the government in this state.

I want to conclude by talking about another union, the ETU. The ETU, I have seen in a lot of our electorates, are running scare campaigns at the moment on behalf of the Labor Party about the selling of assets. In a short moment I will table a letter that the opposition leader, Mr Crisafulli, had written on 15 August to Mr Peter Ong, the Secretary of the ETU. He says—

I write to you and, through you, to the members of the Electrical Trades Union to outline, with certainty, the LNP Opposition's support for our state owned assets, including Queensland's critical energy assets.

A future LNP government will not sell Queensland assets.

...

It is worth noting the last government to sell assets in Queensland was the Bligh Labor Government in 2011, in which the current Treasurer Cameron Dick was the Industrial Relations Minister (who spoke glowingly of asset sales in parliament) and the current Premier Steven Miles, was a senior advisor to the Treasurer.

We know that the Palaszczuk-Miles Government will mislead in order to distract Queenslanders from their woeful record when it comes to health, housing, crime and the cost of living in Queensland.

If there is anything our office can assist you with in the future, please do not hesitate to reach out.

I call on the ETU to immediately stop the scare campaign.

**Mr Krause** interjected.


**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. Who sold the assets? The ALP, the Labor party did, not the LNP. I table a copy of that letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 15 August 2024, from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr David Crisafulli MP, to the Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union, Mr Peter Ong, regarding the LNP's support of state-owned assets [1565].

I call on the Labor Party to speak the truth at this election. I call on the ETU to speak the truth and stop misleading Queenslanders with this scare campaign at the moment. Queenslanders will not be fooled by this Labor government. They will not be fooled by the ETU. Queenslanders want a change of government. They want fixed the housing crisis, the health crisis, the cost-of-living crisis and all the other issues we have seen under this Labor government that they are refusing to fix. They say they have all the answers now. In 41 days, this parliament will be dissolved. Time is up for the Labor Party. They have had 10 years. They have created the issues, and Queenslanders want to see change, particularly in Pine Rivers, with the disgraceful member for Pine Rivers sitting over there in the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I think you used some unparliamentary language there. I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (8.46 pm): We all know, in terms of asset sales, what happened. This government stopped the \$35 billion Strong Choices program proposed by the member for Kawana, the member for Broadwater and Campbell Newman. We know what happened. It was stopped by this government. Remember Campbell Newman and the member for Kawana saying to every public servant that they would be safe? Do we all remember that? We remember that. We know that these assurances

from those ideologues on the opposition are not worth the paper they are written on. I have to say what a desperate stunt to see the LNP writing to the ETU saying, 'Oh, believe us. Trust us. You can trust us.' It is quite comical when you look at it. We know the record and those opposite—

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member for Gregory.

**Mr BAILEY**—regardless of what they say now—it would be cut, sack and sell if they ever got back into power.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Gregory.

**Mr BAILEY**: We know that is true because there are two words you will never hear the opposition say in this chamber. What do you think they would be?

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Gregory! Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, you are warned under the standing orders. I called you to attention a few times. If it happens again, you know what happens.

**Mr BAILEY**: Two words, Deputy Speaker, you will never hear the opposition say in this place—Strong Choices. I have not heard it since I have been elected. They are so embarrassed. They are so ashamed. They are so humiliated by their failure.

**Mr WEIR**: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. We are debating two cognate bills. I have not heard either of those mentioned yet.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member for Miller, I have given you a bit of latitude, as I gave the previous speaker. I ask that you move on to the long title of the bill, please.

**Mr BAILEY**: Certainly, Deputy Speaker. I was simply responding to the points raised by the notorious amateur thespian the member for Kawana.

I express my support for the bills at hand. The Miles Labor government recognises the challenges faced by workers who are living with a mental health condition while navigating the workers compensation scheme. Claims for psychological injuries are complex. Sadly, due to this complexity, they generally take longer to determine than claims for physical injuries which means there is potential for the worker's condition to worsen. We know from research that early intervention is critical to reducing the risk and severity of a psychological injury and to supporting recovery and a successful return to work. The Queensland government has introduced a number of reforms to the scheme to support this. In 2018 we established the free Workers' Psychological Support Service, which connects workers who have a work related psychological injury with existing community and social support services including emergency accommodation and housing support, family and domestic violence services, grief and loss support, financial counselling and social inclusion programs.

In 2019, new laws required insurers to provide workers who make a psychological injury claim with reasonable treatment and support services while their claim is determined. This includes paying for counselling support and medical treatment. In 2021, we simplified the application process for post-traumatic stress disorder claims made by first responders so that they are no longer required to prove that their condition resulted from a particular traumatic incident at work. The logic behind that is obvious, given what they so often deal with in our community.

This bill builds on earlier work and responds to the increasing number of secondary psychological injury claims within the scheme. These claims arise following a physical injury and cost, on average, around seven times more than claims for physical injuries, and action is required to ensure the ongoing viability of the scheme. The bill addresses this issue by requiring insurers to take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of a worker with a physical injury sustaining a psychological injury. These steps include providing reasonable services to the worker such as medical treatment, with the cost of these services to be borne by the insurer. The insurer's obligation continues until a worker's entitlement to compensation ends.



The bill introduces a new basic workers compensation payment which will ensure workers are not disadvantaged where the calculation of their weekly compensation is delayed due to employers not providing information in a timely manner. This responds to research which indicates that procedural delays can worsen return-to-work outcomes and cause actual or potential financial stress, leading to poor mental health outcomes.

We also recognise the important work undertaken by firefighters, including our rural and volunteer firefighters, who put their lives at risk every day to protect us and the Queensland community. In 2015, the Queensland government made changes to Queensland's workers compensation laws to streamline the workers compensation application process for firefighters diagnosed with certain occupational diseases. Specifically, eligible firefighters who meet minimum employment periods and are diagnosed with one of 12 prescribed diseases are presumed to have suffered their condition in the course of employment, unless evidence exists to the contrary. This streamlined application pathway makes it easier and quicker for an eligible firefighter to access workers compensation at what is undoubtedly one of the most difficult times of their life. The bill expands the list of prescribed diseases for firefighters from 12 to 22. This is a nation-leading reform that will result in Queensland having some of the most expansive presumptive laws for firefighters in the country.

I congratulate the Premier and the minister for this nation-leading reform. It responds to scientific evidence that occupational exposure in the firefighting profession is carcinogenic to humans. Importantly, cervical and ovarian cancer will be added to the list of prescribed diseases in recognition of the increasing number of women choosing firefighting as a calling or as a volunteer.

The bill improves access to the presumptive pathway by clarifying that periods of day work rotation are counted when determining whether a firefighter meets the minimum employment period. This ensures all firefighters who are exposed to the hazards and risks of firefighting have the same ability to access the presumptive pathway as their peers. I am proud that this bill builds upon the government's record of supporting our firefighters and recognises the enormous contribution they play in our community by assisting them to access support quickly when they need it most. I acknowledge the member for Nicklin, a member of this government who has been a firefighter, for his contribution in the profession. It is good to have frontline workers as a part of this government. Many members of this government bring valuable, real-life experience to the consideration of issues.

The Miles government is committed to supporting the rights of injured workers within the Queensland workers compensation scheme. The bill strengthens and promotes workers' rights by explicitly including the right of a worker to choose their own treating medical practitioner and to not have their employer or the insurer present during a medical examination. It is crazy to think an employer should be present during a very personal and clinical examination of an injured worker and it is against general law rights. This right needs to be stated to protect workers.

The bill recognises that both workers and employers may seek advice from a registered industrial organisation or lawyer in relation to workers compensation matters. While these rights exist under the general law, the bill makes it clear that they are recognised in the scheme. The bill also requires that an information statement be provided to a worker by their employer on employment and provided to a worker and employer by the insurer when the worker makes a claim for compensation. Information statements will be prepared by the Workers' Compensation Regulator. These information statements will assist both workers and employers to better understand their rights and obligations in the scheme. This will increase a worker's awareness of their rights. This is particularly important for young workers and those workers who either may not have any knowledge of the scheme or have had no contact with the scheme previously.


The bill empowers workers in the scheme by allowing them to participate in decisions about their rehabilitation. Workers can request a different workplace rehabilitation provider where they are dissatisfied with the initial provider selected by the insurer. An insurer must accommodate the request unless it would not be practical to do so or it would be likely to adversely affect the worker's rehabilitation and early return to suitable duties. These amendments are designed to enhance workers' participation and decision-making in their recovery and return to work.

I will make a few closing comments about the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Kawana. This is another attempt by the LNP to reduce safety on worksites by requiring at least 24 hours where there may be compelling reasons—

**Mr Head:** There is an exemption in it about safety. Have you even read it?

**Mr BAILEY:** I have read it. There may be a compelling reason for that entry to be swift and prompt. Once again, the LNP are saying that they support workers but they are moving to deny those rights.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (8.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate, but I will limit my contribution to the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 as a member of the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee. I will begin with the amendment that proposes to amend the definition of 'electrical equipment'. The bill proposes to introduce a head of power to prescribe extra-low-voltage equipment where it meets the risk threshold in the Electrical Safety Regulation. This was supported by Master Electricians Australia and the National Electrical and Communications Association, which each noted that the amendment will 'positively address our previously raised concerns regarding high-risk, extra-low voltage equipment'.

The NECA submitted that the following equipment should be specifically included as prescribed items in the regulation: battery energy storage systems; conversion equipment associated with ELV and LV supplies; off-power grid supplies to houses; and ES3 telecommunications, data cabling and equipment. The department advised that, while the definition of 'electrical equipment' is to be amended by the bill, it does not seek to prescribe any items as 'prescribed electrical equipment'.

Certain stakeholders raised concerns about clause 5 of the bill and whether the testing of fire related safety equipment was impacted by the proposed amendment. This fire protection work is currently regulated as licensed work under other legislation which is referred to as the Queensland Building and Construction Commission framework. The National Fire Industry Association stated—

... the Bill gives rise to serious concerns that already-regulated Fire Protection work may either be unintentionally captured by these definitions or, as a consequence of the Bill, may be capable of being captured by future regulatory amendment. Such outcomes would be inconsistent with the Government's approach in establishing a specific licensing framework for this work under the QBCC Act.

The ETU stated that they do not support the current licensing requirements for fire protection work. The MEA also proposed that the bill allow for licensed electrical contractors to inspect and test emergency lighting and to install and maintain fire alarm systems, advising that—

Licensed electrical workers are adequately trained to perform such tasks and would not require additional qualifications to be obtained.

To assist with these concerns noted by the ETU, MEA and NFIA, the QBCC provided advice on the interaction between the definition of fire protection work under the QBCC Act, saying—

Anyone carrying out fire protection work must be licensed, with the QBCC Act recognising fire protection licences and other licences or authorisations under the QBCC Act or another Act for fire protection work.

Clause 5 of the bill proposes to provide that extra-low voltage equipment that forms part of a vehicle, including equipment that provides propulsion for a vehicle, can be prescribed electrical equipment. The MTAQ sought confirmation that the bill would not allow the government to regulate work on electric vehicles, contending that service and repair work on electric vehicles must remain the responsibility of automotive technicians. The department gave assurances that the amendments to 'electrical equipment' do not impact or allow the prescription by regulation of automated vehicles such as electric cars, electric trucks and electric buses, which will remain outside the scope of the framework. The committee recommended the department should maintain active consultation with the motor vehicle industry stakeholders about legislation and regulations that may impact the repair and service of electric vehicles. These changes seek to clarify which tasks are not electrical work and, therefore, do not need to be completed by a licensed electrical worker.

The bill seeks to clarify that the connection and disconnection of prescribed electrical equipment with other extra-low voltage equipment where the voltage does not exceed extra-low voltage remains outside of the electrical licensing framework. The ETU submitted—

The current legislation seemingly permits ... work such as building or repairing ducts, conduits or troughs, cable tray work and above and underground cable installations to be performed under inadequate supervision.

The department responded that this matter was outside the scope of the bill. However, work has commenced to establish a working group to consider the definition of 'electrical work' and ancillary terms such as 'supervision'. Clause 7 of the bill proposes to implement changes to the electrical installation definition as the existing definition is no longer fit for purpose in the contemporary technological environment. The bill amends 'electrical installation' to clearly capture new and emerging energy generation and storage systems previously not contemplated when the definition was drafted in

2002. The changes would clarify that an electrical installation includes a group of permanently connected electrical equipment that is powered by a battery or other storage technology. The MEA welcomed the amendments that integrate battery and other storage technology within the act's definition in recognition of the rapid evolution towards electrification.

Clause 20 of the bill proposes amendments to section 141 of the ES Act to establish a compulsory process whereby a person must produce documents or answers to questions upon written notice by an inspector if an inspector has entered the place within 30 days. The Queensland Law Society raised some concerns around this aspect of the bill stating that—

Unfortunately, section 141A abrogates the fundamental legal right to privilege against self-incrimination. This abrogation could significantly impact the individual.

Under fundamental legislative principles in the report, it states—

The current legislation provides that a person must not, without a reasonable excuse, refuse or fail to comply with requests for documents or to answer questions. The proposed new process reverses the onus of proof, and evidential burden, onto the person to whom the request for documents or answers is made to demonstrate the reasonable excuse.


Clause 33 of the bill clarifies that electrical installation work does not include the replacement of similar appliances in particular circumstances. For example, the similar appliance must have the same voltage rating; the current and power ratings of the similar appliance must not be greater than the old appliance; and the similar appliance must perform the same function in the same way as the old appliance.

Parts 4 and 5 of the bill propose amendments to the WHS Act and SRWA Act to include: negligence as a fault element in the category 1 offence in the WHS Act and the SRWA Act and expand the scope of the industrial manslaughter offence to capture negligent conduct leading to the death of individuals—for example, bystanders and other persons. Currently, under the WHS Act, a person commits a category 1 offence if they have a health and safety duty and, without reasonable excuse, expose an individual to whom they owe a duty to a risk of death or serious injury. Clause 42 of the bill includes 'negligence' in the category 1 offence rather than 'gross negligence'. This is consistent with the terminology used in the industrial manslaughter offence in the WHS Act, which means existing standards of criminal negligence would apply to both offences.

There is another aspect of this bill that I want to finish on. Clause 46 of the bill provides that EPHs and HSRs may take photos and videos and take measurements or conduct tests at the workplace when performing their duties. The Queensland Law Society submitted—

If the photos or videos are used inappropriately (for example, publically shared), there could be significant considerations for the individuals involved.

The LGAQ also commented on the lack of prohibition of an EPH posting images and videos on social media or through electronic means. There is nothing in the bill to suggest when the video or image is required to be deleted. This is a concern. One has only to look at the recent activities at the Cross River Rail site which resembled gang warfare rather than a worksite, much like what is happening in the streets of Goondiwindi, unfortunately, at the moment. We have seen that workers have been followed home and attacked at their home. If these images are used for the wrong purpose, that could have a serious impact on other workers at the site. We fully support the taking of these photos and videos in relation to a safety incident; we want workers to return home safe. However, there need to be strict guidelines around the footage that is taken so it is not used inappropriately.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (9.07 pm): I rise to speak in support of this cognate debate and I am going to speak in part to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This bill gives effect to the legislative recommendations made by the 2023 review of the operation of the Queensland workers compensation scheme. The bill continues to build upon the government's strong track record of supporting injured workers and their families while enhancing Queensland's already excellent workers compensation scheme. The Queensland system is recognised as one of the leaders in the nation and this government is committed to maintaining that standard.


In 2015 this government undertook significant steps by introducing deemed disease provisions specifically for firefighters. These provisions were established in acknowledgement of the hazardous conditions that firefighters face on the job. Under these amendments, if a firefighter develops any of the 12 specific cancers after meeting the required period of active service, the cancer is automatically deemed to be work related. This means that firefighters do not need to prove that their cancer was caused by their work; it is presumed to be so under the law.

The bill builds on that foundation by incorporating the latest medical and scientific research, expanding the list of deemed diseases from 12 to 22. This expanded list now includes primary site cancers such as liver, lung, skin, pancreatic, penile and thyroid cancers. Importantly, it also includes cervical and ovarian cancers—a critical recognition of the growing number of women entering the firefighting profession. This inclusion is a significant step forward in acknowledging the contribution of female firefighters, and I put on the record my thanks for their service.

The role of the United Firefighters Union Queensland in advocating for these changes deserves recognition. Thanks to its efforts, Queensland now boasts the most comprehensive list of firefighter deemed diseases of any workers compensation jurisdiction in Australia. This enhancement will ensure that claims are processed more swiftly, reducing the administrative burden on affected workers and providing timely access to payments and care for those who need it most.

The government, under Premier Miles, reaffirms its unwavering support for our brave firefighters. This legislation is testament to the government's commitment to protecting those who protect our communities, ensuring they receive the care and support they deserve when facing the health risks associated with their work.

The bill also proposes amendments to the Labour Hire Licensing Act 2017 to ensure alignment with human rights, to enhance modern operational practices by enabling electronic service of documents and to clarify inspectors' powers related to information gathering and attendance. The Miles government prioritises the safety of every worker by ensuring they can return home safely at the end of each shift. When accidents occur, it is essential that workers and their families receive the care and support they require through Queensland's workers compensation scheme. These amendments further strengthen the scheme, ensuring Queensland continues to lead the nation in providing workers compensation. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (9.11 pm): I rise to contribute to this cognate debate on the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. As I was on the committee that dealt with the electrical safety legislation, I will confine my comments mostly to that bill. I note that, when it comes to safety—I am sure it is in frame—do as I say and not as I do and keep your fingers out of the way when you are doing any manual labour. Nonetheless, thank you to the committee—

**Mr Boothman:** You should learn a bit more often.

**Mr HEAD:** I take that interjection from the Opposition Whip.

**Mr Smith:** Table it!

**Mr HEAD:** I do not know if I can table that one, member for Bundaberg, but apparently when you become a politician you become incapable of doing physical labour. Thanks to the committee for its efforts in assessing this bill and to the secretariat for putting in the hard yards, as it always does.

This legislation enacts some of the recommendations of the Electrical Safety Act review which was completed in December 2021. Unfortunately, this has taken far too long to come before us in the parliament and again shows that we have a government that has sat on its hands when there are recommendations to deal with to improve safety in Queensland. The discussion paper for this bill was released early last year, meaning, again, that it has taken far too long for the government to bring this legislation forward. Anyone who followed some of the committee's hearings would know that it did take some time for some of us on the committee to be fully across the different definitions as to what is low and ultra-low voltage in dealing with this bill and to relate it to common household equipment.

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Mr HEAD:** I take that interjection. It was members on this side of the House who really pried for some detail to fully comprehend it. This exchange itself shows how complex electrical safety is, especially as technology evolves and we have thousands of appliances that now run on varying voltages. It was only during this process that I started to even consider how many different technologies are on offer that all run on different voltages. In response to the question I asked that was taken on notice, the department was able to confirm a little detail as to what low and extra-low voltage is. Schedule 2 of the Electrical Safety Act 2002 defines ultra-low voltage to mean voltage of 50 volts or less AC—alternating current—RMS or 120 volts or less ripple-free DC—also known as direct current. It also defines 'low-voltage' as voltage greater than extra-low voltage but not more than 1,000 volts AC RMS or 1,500 volts ripple-free DC. No, there is no medium voltage but, in fact, high voltage is defined as voltage greater than low-voltage. There is always an endless number of things to learn in this job.

Nonetheless, we do have concerns with some of this legislation. These concerns relate to photos, videos and data being collected on worksites by health and safety reps and entry permit holders. These changes allow health and safety reps and entry permit holders to take videos and photos of suspected contraventions of the act and in other limited cases. While the Queensland Law Society considers there is some utility in allowing these people to take photos and videos, there are significant risks of misuse, whether intended or otherwise, and it does not consider the bill or current provisions of the act to have addressed those. There is nothing in the bill to suggest when the video or image is required to be deleted. For example, if it was taken and given to the employer or investigator then there should be an explicit requirement for it to be deleted. The LNP will always support improvements to workplace health and safety—

**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr HEAD:**—as when a worker goes to work we expect the worker to return home safely at the end of their working day. I hear the interjection from those opposite and was about to comment anyway on the Premier's comments yesterday about which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has already spoken. I was incredibly appalled at such comments. I know that in previous contributions I have said that I am sure every member of this House comes here only with the best intentions of workers in Queensland, and I found it absolutely disgraceful for the Premier of this state to make that comment about the member for Kawana yesterday. I found it thuggish behaviour.

Speaking of thuggery, this change, other than banning live streaming, provides no limitation on how this footage and data can be used. Given the history of the CFMEU's intimidation techniques, allowing filming could see the CFMEU weaponise workplace health and safety in order to increase its union power. In other words, this is giving the green light to bullying and intimidation tactics—the hallmark of the CFMEU. This is at a time when the CFMEU is, of course, in the spotlight for alleged criminal activities and thuggish behaviour. This absolutely needs to be addressed, and the LNP will be opposing the clauses that relate to these provisions.

In relation to widening industrial manslaughter, currently industrial manslaughter is limited to negligent conduct causing the death of workers. Clause 42 of the bill proposes to expand the scope of the industrial manslaughter offence in the WHS Act to capture the negligent deaths of individuals—that is, workers and bystanders or other persons. The bill provides that it will be an offence if the negligent conduct of persons conducting a business or undertaking or a senior officer causes the death of an individual to whom the PCBU or senior officer owes a health and safety duty. The bill's additions of other persons into the industrial manslaughter offence will bring Queensland's industrial manslaughter laws into line with other jurisdictions in Australia and will mean that the negligent work related death of other persons can be treated with the same level of seriousness as the negligent death of workers.


I want to take a minute to note the evidence given by Mr O'Connor, the Deputy Chair of the Consultative Committee for Work-Related Fatalities and Serious Incidents. I thank him for his advocacy in the search for justice following the tragic incident resulting in his sister's death. I am sure that this is still not easy for him and his family to this day and it is certainly brave of any Queenslanders who has had such an experience to come before a committee and do work such as that, so I thank him for his work.

The Queensland Law Society and other bodies raised concerns about and objections to the proposed expansion of the scope of the industrial manslaughter offence. The QLS advised that a person who causes the death of a bystander or a person other than a worker can already be charged with other offences that carry the same potential penalties. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke in depth about this change in the expansion of the law and the ability to charge someone with a secondary offence that comes with these provisions. I want to reiterate the comments of the deputy leader about the limited success of industrial manslaughter provisions and how there is no evidence that this actually improves safety outcomes for workers in Queensland. It was an LNP government that saw safety outcomes improve in this state by real metrics, by working with Queensland businesses and workers and doing what they asked and by enacting evidence-based legislation, processes and regulation.

In relation to the inspection and testing of emergency lighting and fire equipment, there were certainly mixed views amongst stakeholders about who should inspect and test emergency lighting as well as install and maintain fire alarm systems as contractors. Some concerns were raised that additional accreditation or licensing for electricians will be required and the MEA asked that it be legislated that this is not required. However, the National Fire Industry Association believes a

requirement for additional testing should in fact exist. The LNP will always support improvements to workplace health safety because when a worker goes to work we expect that that worker will return home safely at the end of their working day.

In the time left I note my support for the amendments to be moved by the member for Kawana to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill because we know about the thuggish behaviour of the CFMEU and other unions here in Queensland. I want to respond to the earlier comments of the member for Miller, who suggested that we do not care about safety with this amendment. There is a specific exemption in the amendment that, when there is an imminent health or safety risk at a workplace, the 24-hour provision does not apply. I urge the member for Miller to read the amendment in full next time.

 **Ms NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (9.21 pm): Tonight I rise to speak in this cognate debate and in my contribution I will speak in support of the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I am proud to support this bill, which represents a significant step forward in the protection and empowerment of workers across Queensland, particularly those in my electorate of Inala. The amendments proposed in this bill address several critical issues and extend essential rights to workers, reflecting our commitment to fairness and justice in the workplace.

The bill includes key amendments to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act that will extend coverage to workers in the gig economy. This is a vital change that acknowledges the evolving nature of work and ensures that gig workers, who often lack traditional employment benefits, will now have greater security and support. This sits in stark contrast to those opposite who voted against changes to the act—changes, I might add, that provide increased worker protections and ensure that businesses cannot simply insure against penalties for breaches of safety laws. Breaching laws in the operation of a business is something with which the Leader of the Opposition seems to have personal experience. However, for the Miles Labor government it is about holding businesses accountable and fostering safer workplaces.

Furthermore, the bill introduces crucial provisions that enhance workers' rights in relation to their medical treatment and rehabilitation. Workers will have the right to choose their treating doctor and now, crazily enough, without the presence of their employer or insurer during medical appointments. It is absolutely crazy to think that an employer or insurer would be present during medical treatment. That not only interferes with the basic fundamental privacy rights of a person undergoing or receiving any health care; it completely disempowers them in terms of their own health recovery. Therefore, I am really pleased to see this change.

Workers will also have the freedom to select their workplace rehabilitation provider if they are dissatisfied with the one chosen by their insurer. This is particularly important for those who have a psychological injury. We know that it can be very difficult to find a clinician with whom you can build the trusting and safe rapport that is necessary to achieve the goals of psychological treatment. This decision will ensure that workers now have the ability to choose the provider who will meet their needs and who will ensure that they work towards recovery together. Additionally, the bill allows workers to seek advice from registered industrial organisations or legal professionals. These measures are about giving workers more control over their own recovery, which is a fundamental aspect of their wellbeing and dignity. That will ensure that workers can maximise their recovery and return to work.

It is essential to highlight that this bill also addresses the needs of our firefighters by expanding the list of deemed diseases that are presumed to be work related, including various cancers such as primary site uterine cancers and other cancers that particularly affect women and that previously were not included in the list. In doing this we are acknowledging the unique risks faced by our brave firefighters. This is particularly significant as more women enter that demanding, essential and traditionally male-dominated field.


I would like to take a moment to commend Aly Bull, a firefighter from Durack Fire and Rescue Station in my electorate. Aly is a canoeist who recently represented Australia at the Olympics. Well done, Aly. We really appreciate your efforts. Aly's dedication, both in the field as a firefighter and in representing our country on the international stage, is truly commendable. I thank her and I thank all firefighters for their service. Theirs is not an easy job and it is one that we are all so thankful that they do. It is essential that we make sure that they are protected whilst they do their job and as a result of their job.

This bill also improves rehabilitation and return-to-work planning. It mandates that insurers must have a return-to-work plan in place within 10 business days of accepting a claim. It ensures that insurers take all reasonable steps to prevent secondary psychological injuries stemming from physical injuries. As was mentioned by the opposition, secondary psychological injuries are a growing claim area in workplace rehabilitation. We know that the sooner that people can access appropriate care and treatment the better their recovery will be, so this is an important step forward through this legislation. Additionally, the bill provides for an immediate cash flow to injured workers while their weekly compensation is being calculated, further supporting them during their recovery. I know that workers in Inala can least afford to be out of work and out of pocket, particularly for extended periods as has been the case in the past. It will truly be a relief for injured workers in my electorate to know that they can rely on receiving some cash whilst they are waiting.

For over a century, Queensland's workers compensation scheme has been a pillar of support for workers who suffer from workplace accidents. It has protected workers and their families, ensured fairness and promoted workplace safety. This bill builds on that legacy by ensuring that workers receive information at the commencement of employment. It is crazy to think that workers would be expected to seek out that information at the time of an injury, which is a time when they are busy and have to confront dealing with many other issues. It is unreasonable to expect that the onus of responsibility for having this information should be put on a worker during such a time. It would not inconvenience an employer because, at the time of commencement of employment, employers typically give employees a range of documents. Adding information regarding the right to workplace cover will not disadvantage employers and can only serve to advantage the employee-employer relationship and ensure that workers understand their rights should an injury occur. This addition will enhance workers' awareness of their rights, which is especially important for young workers and those from multicultural backgrounds, such as those in my electorate of Inala, who may not be familiar with these protections. It is very difficult to ask your employer for the information if you do not know in fact that it even exists.

The Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 is a testament to our commitment to workers' rights and safety. Again, this is in stark contrast to those opposite, who previously have cut workers compensation and workers' rights. These changes address the contemporary challenges that we face when we have new, emerging industries, as we have seen with the gig economy. It improves protections and ensures that all workers, regardless of their employment status, have the support they deserve.

It is only when workers are taken care of that we can continue to build our economy and provide a workforce that industry and business need to ensure their success and that of our state. This is where Labor shows its strength. Labor is the only party that looks after workers, and Labor is the party that you can count on to ensure that workers' needs are supported and that workers are encouraged and assisted to access the support they need through the mechanisms of legislation such as this. I commend this legislation to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (9.31 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this cognate debate. I have listened to a number of speakers, including the member for Inala, who spoke before me, talking about taking rights away from workers and saying that the Labor Party is the only party which has the best interests of workers at heart. I can tell you one thing the LNP opposition will never do: take away the right of a worker to be represented by the organisation of their choice in the Industrial Relations Commission.

The LNP would never be party to the expansion of nefarious powers such as being able to take photographs in contested industrial environments and not have to erase them. I concur with what the honourable member for Condamine and others before me have said about how sinister that is when we take into account the recent history of militant unions engaging in violence and misconduct against workers who are not members of those unions or who do not toe the line.

It needs to be said that bills like this will have their place and there are advantages—and of course we are supporting them largely, except for some amendments. The Labor government has a gross conflict of interest in any of these matters. This legislation has the effect of enhancing the business of the big unions, and it does so at the expense of maybe smaller unions and certainly at the expense of independent unions that are not aligned with the Australian Labor Party. When I talk about a conflict of interest in bringing this legislation forward, we have to remember that affiliated trade unions, or even those that are not affiliated—

**A government member:** 'Registered industrial organisation' is the term I think you're looking for.


**Mr LISTER:** Registered industrial organisations—yes, the club that excludes the red unions. I am a member of a red union—the Independent Workers' Union of Australia. Many of those registered organisations, if not all, provide the impetus for preselections for Labor Party MPs. They dictate who gets to be a minister and probably in what portfolio, and it has been widely reported that the unions that will benefit from this legislation had a decisive, if not the conclusive, hand in choosing who the premier of this state would be.

These organisations stand to benefit from these changes and many other industrial relations reforms that I have seen during this term. They will enrich those unions that provide benefits to members of the Australian Labor Party. The organisations which will benefit from this legislation use the levers of government and their numbers in the House here to pass legislation that benefits their political and financial benefactors and disadvantages the competitors of their benefactors. In any other context—and this one too, or it should be—that is called corruption. I bring to the attention of the House and the people of Queensland yet again that the Australian Labor Party has a gross conflict of interest in any legislation it brings forward. This is particularly so in the field of industrial relations, where it seeks to enhance the powers, or the profitability, of the big unions which support them financially, politically, directly with donations or in the form of third-party campaigns.

I support the foreshadowed amendments which have been tabled by my honourable friend the member for Kawana, the shadow minister for industrial relations. We all know—everyone knows—that militant unions use the threat of coming on to a workplace with no notice and stopping work in order to coerce an employer into accepting their terms. The amendment provides, in the appropriate instances, for an official to come on immediately, but I think the amendment is crucial—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Pause the clock. Members to my right, there is too much chitchat going on. Despite the member for Southern Downs's steady voice, I am struggling to hear what he is saying. Please keep your volume down.

**Mr LISTER:** I support the foreshadowed amendments. I again record my disgust at the partisan use of the levers of government to advantage the trade union movement, which financially and politically supports all of the members of the Labor Party over there. If there is a member of the Labor Party over there who feels that that does not apply to them, I invite their interjection. I think I would be more likely to get an interjection from Hansard.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.36 pm): We have plumbed the depths of the conspiracy theory world with the member for Southern Downs. I say to my colleagues on this side of the House that he has really exposed something here tonight. He has exposed the rules and the operations of the Australian Labor Party—something that we have been working on in secret for, what, 134 years! We have updated those rules as times have changed, and we have listed those rules in accordance with all of the laws, and some of the laws we have even made to apply to ourselves.

He is really onto something there. Stop the press! What a shame no-one is in the press gallery to pick this one up because, I tell you what, it will be big news tomorrow! The Australian Labor Party has a relationship with the Australian trade union movement and, as per the rules of our organisation, which are registered and freely available to all those who are interested, the Australian trade union movement has a role in our political party. This is big stuff! This is really big stuff here tonight!

**Mr Dametto:** The rules are on the ECQ website.

**Mr KELLY:** Yes, but you would have to be able to google to do that. You would have to get past the conspiracy theories that you normally google to be able to do that. Wait, it gets better. We straightened out the member's understanding of a registered industrial organisation. We have been operating in this country for only 120 years, probably since the Harvester decision was handed down. Back then, they were registered industrial organisations as opposed to registered organisations of employees and registered organisations of employers. That is the way we have been operating. Once upon a time, we even had agricultural boards—some may be familiar with those—and that was the corporatist way we chose to run this country for about 70 years.

Let's get onto the entry of union officials into workplaces—again, stumbling onto another great secret that apparently we have only just found out about because we have read the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. There is this little piece of legislation called the Workplace Health and Safety Act which has been operational for quite a few years. Jack Munday—the guy from the BLF who used to ride the cranes—had a little bit to do with it. This



legislation is to stop workers being killed at work and stop workers being injured at work. It is a well-documented, well-understood, good piece of legislation that allows a certified union official from a registered industrial organisation to enter a workplace without notice if there is a significant and serious risk to workers. Guess what? They can even shut a workplace down if workers are at imminent risk or in danger. The member has stumbled onto something big here. I have only been doing that for 25 years or more as a union official. It is certainly good that we have picked up on that in this bill.

I speak in jest, but this is a very serious piece of legislation. It extends the workers compensation scheme because sadly not every worker who goes to work goes home without being injured or being killed. We need those important compensation schemes in place. This bill does a range of important things to extend those compensatory mechanisms.

I want to talk about a couple of things with regard to that. The first is the extension of the firefighter provisions—the presumptive legislation. This is important legislation. It is groundbreaking and it is being introduced around the world. It will spread to other industries because we know that there are certain occupations where no matter how much we do to try to protect workers it can be presumed that their injuries and their illnesses are related to their workplace. So as to not delay compensation by having to go through tribunals or have the nature of one's injuries questioned we have decided to do the decent thing, the human thing, and speed up that process and presume that people have acquired those injuries from their work. On the odd occasion it may not relate to someone's work and we will get it wrong, but the greater good and greater benefit will prevail. All workers will get a good outcome from this. It is good to see those provisions being extended to firefighters. I say to my colleagues and friends in the United Firefighters Union, 'Thank you for advocating so strongly in relation to this.'

I wanted to touch on the changes in relation to gig workers. This is an area of employment—and I would call it employment, although the people who employ these workers try to find a million ways to dance around them being called employers. I hope they have their own registered industrial organisation of employees to represent them one day. This is an area that has been rapidly growing and has been subject to a great deal of risk as well as exploitation.

I want to use the example of my nephew Tadhg Kelly. He is a food delivery person in another state. He was knocked off his bike and injured. He broke his arm and had quite a serious injury. Thankfully for him—and I will not say who—he was working for a major company that was not operating as a gig industry. It was not a platform company, but it was a food delivery company. His experience was quite positive. He was well looked after by the workers compensation scheme and the company. He managed to get back to work, his injuries healed and his treatment was paid for.

Compare that to the experience of people in the gig industry who do not have the benefit of that sort of situation. Some of these platforms have in-house programs, but we know that they are woefully inadequate. There was the example given in the report of the sad situation of the young man who was killed at work and his family was denied his death cover and his funeral benefits which were required to get him back to his country of birth. It was done on the basis of some pretty disgusting and pretty low writing of the agreement. We need to make sure that these workers are treated the way that every other worker is treated.

The trade union movement and the Australian Labor Party have been conspiring to continue to fight for gig workers and all workers to ensure that they are safe at work and if they do get injured at work they are properly compensated. I think it is important. This bill does a range of other things that I would have liked the time to have gone through in detail. Gig workers are important workers who do not get enough attention. If gig workers get injured at work and they are subjected to schemes that do not do what other schemes do, they face difficult times.


If we look at the genesis and history of the labour movement it is not unusual to meet people who are not much older than me who have had family members terribly injured at work or killed at work who have received zero compensation. I think it is important that all workers have the opportunity for compensation. Our No. 1 priority is that there is no injury or death at work. In the terrible situations where that occurs, we must ensure there is proper compensation. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Kelly, adjourned.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): It being 9.45 pm, I notify members that it is time for the automatic adjournment of the House in accordance with sessional order 2.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Burdekin Electorate, Bruce Highway Funding

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (9.46 pm): In recent days, a lot has been said and written about the condition of the Bruce Highway. When I drive that highway and I see all those white crosses, I often wonder how many of those lives would have been saved if that highway had been constructed and maintained to an appropriate standard. A recent study by Adjunct Professor Colin Dwyer and Dr Tracy Cheffins ranks the section of the Bruce Highway between Bowen and Home Hill as the most unsafe section of the entire length of the highway. For those of us who drive this road every day—and I know my colleague the member for Chatsworth has recently driven it—don't we know it!

Let's compare regional roads in my electorate to those around the nation. Professor Dwyer found that between Rockhampton and Ayr the fatal and serious injury rate is five times that of roads in regional New South Wales or Victoria. It was Labor at the federal level that slashed Bruce Highway funding by 30 per cent, and it is this Labor government that has watched on while the Bruce Highway and other key roads have literally fallen apart over the last decade.

Who could forget that during his 2022-23 budget speech the Treasurer committed to a funding boost for regional Queensland due to the new royalties regime. His forecast of an additional \$1.2 billion would be, he said, going into regional Queensland. In fact, this government actually siphoned more than \$18 billion out of regional Queensland that year. When it comes to roads, what do we have to show for it? Absolutely nothing.


**An opposition member:** Potholes.

**Mr LAST:** Potholes—I take that interjection. Almost \$50 million per day hit this Labor state government's coffers while people in the Bowen Basin drove on nothing more than goat tracks and travellers on the Bruce Highway between Bowen and Home Hill faced 23 narrow bridges in the space of 100 kilometres.

People in regional Queensland value being treated fairly and with respect. We do not ask for more than our share. According to Professor Dwyer, we contribute more than twice our fair share to the economy based on population. Despite contributing more and asking for nothing more than our fair share, this Labor government has pledged the same amount of funding for an 800-metre bridge in the south-east as it committed in additional funding for the Bruce Highway over three years.

The Bruce Highway is the artery of the north and it is about time we received the necessary funding and commitment to reflect the importance of that highway to North Queenslanders. The money provided to date would not fix the potholes, let alone fund the upgrades required, and I for one will spend every single day between now and 26 October reminding North Queenslanders how this government has let them down. That highway is the backbone of North Queensland and it deserves its fair share of funding. This state government and the federal government need to step up and acknowledge that they have neglected it and it is about time they rectified it.

### Mansfield Electorate, Events


 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (9.49 pm): I am proud to share that the 2024 Mount Gravatt Show was a huge success. I spent my show weekend enjoying the best of my community, visiting show stalls run by locals, fantastic art exhibits and of course the farm animals. My Saturday was so enjoyable that I knew I needed to show it off to our Premier, Steven Miles, who joined me on the Sunday. I am so grateful for his support of this fantastic show, and our Mansfield electorate enjoyed meeting our Premier. Thank you, Premier, for visiting the heart of the Mansfield electorate. I would also like to extend that appreciation to the Mount Gravatt Showgrounds Trust and the Show Society for their tremendous work in the lead-up to the weekend. Our community are immensely grateful for their efforts in bringing us together. I certainly look forward, as the member for Mansfield, to the 109th show in 2025.

The Mount Gravatt Show Society are always looking for ways to make the Mount Gravatt Showgrounds even better. Greg Goebel, Leon Zagorskis and Professor Gerry Fitzgerald from the Mount Gravatt Showgrounds Trust thought it would be very insightful to seek some advice from some of the most valued members of our community—and of course that is our students. The Mansfield Youth Advisory Council were honoured to discuss proposed development ideas with the showgrounds trust during our last Youth Advisory Council meeting. In their discussions, they highlighted the importance of environmental sustainability and appropriate First Nations acknowledgement. I was so proud of these students for sharing these well-thought-out and inclusive ideas to ensure the development of this community monument is celebrated.

This month I was lucky enough to attend the India Day Fair at Roma Street Parkland celebrating Indian Independence Day. It was incredible to celebrate the vibrant culture, performances, delicious food and the rich heritage of India. The Mansfield electorate is incredibly diverse, which I am so proud to lead. The India Day Fair was an opportunity for me and my colleagues to reflect on our respective communities and the unique diversity that they each bring.

Finally, I acknowledge the winner of the Mansfield Greats Queensland Day awards as my southsider of the year, Biju Mathew, trustee of the St George Indian Orthodox Church. As a friend of Biju, I have seen how hard he and the church work to celebrate our community's diversity. With regular community events, the St George Indian Orthodox Church is an essential hub for celebrating diversity in our community. For this reason, I would like to commend to the House Biju and the church for their outstanding work.

### **Weather Events, Insurance Claims; Cost of Living**

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (9.51 pm): The Christmas Day storms which impacted Tamborine Mountain, Cedar Grove, Cedar Vale, parts of Logan City and also parts of Scenic Rim were devastating for so many households.


**An opposition member:** And Wongawallan.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Wongawallan as well. I should say that the Gold Coast as well really copped a lot of damage from that storm. I understand that some \$1.3 billion worth of insurance claims were made arising from that, with 100,000 claims. We are now eight months on from that storm and there are \$523 million of those claims outstanding. I have engaged with the Insurance Council of Australia over the last several months in relation to a number of people's claims. I urge all insurers, and the Insurance Council as the peak body, to do whatever they can to hasten those claims along and to get people's houses into the reconstruction phase as quickly as possible. We know there are labour shortages and contractor shortages as well, but time is getting on and it is really urgent that we get on with those rebuilds as soon as possible.

When it comes to insurance, an issue that is raised with me around Tamborine Mountain and other parts of the electorate is the increase in break-ins we are seeing and the increase in vehicle thefts. We have seen the crime stats from last year where Queensland had 18,000 vehicle thefts compared to only 11,000 in New South Wales, despite their much larger population. There is no doubt that people are feeling the pinch on their insurance bills as a result of the crime crisis that this Labor government has overseen over the last few years, especially starting with the watering down of the Youth Justice Act back in 2015 and 2016. That is a big cause of the cost-of-living crisis not only for households but also for small businesses in my electorate and across the entire state.

There are plenty of reasons to show Labor the door in October 2024. We have the crime crisis, the cost-of-living crisis, the housing crisis and also the health crisis. No-one should forget the GP tax that this government was going to put on general practitioners' practices, and a lot of very concerned GPs from the Scenic Rim electorate approached me. We should not forget that the Treasurer, Cameron Dick, has just put that on the backburner. If Labor is re-elected, the GP tax will be resurrected. That is a tax on bulk-billing; it is a tax on doctor services which are vital to Tamborine Mountain and the parts of Logan City that I represent and the parts of Scenic Rim that I represent. Bulk-billing will be at threat if the Labor government is re-elected here in Queensland because the GP tax is just another tax on primary health care. The Treasurer has refused to rule it out if the Labor government is re-elected. He can do that. He can walk in here tomorrow and rule out the GP tax being brought back. I want to see that on behalf of all the GPs in my electorate.

### **Nudgee Electorate, Cost-of-Living Relief**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (9.54 pm): Like communities across Queensland, my electorate of Nudgee is feeling the national cost-of-living pressures. I rise this evening to speak about the genuine difference the Miles Labor government's historic cost-of-living relief package is making to the people of my community. Whether it is knocking on local doors, holding weekend mobile offices or calling constituents, I have found that cost of living remains the No. 1 issue raised with me by locals in 2024.

Morgan in Northgate raised that affording a home is the biggest challenge he faces in his 30s. Morgan told me that stamp duty costs were a significant hurdle in buying a home. It is for people like Morgan that our government has raised the stamp duty threshold from \$500,000 to \$700,000—minimising the financial hurdle that stamp duty can present by up to \$17,000.


Darryl from Wavell Heights spoke with me in April. He is worried about the rising costs of household bills. It was my pleasure to knock on Darryl's door again in May to tell him in person that he likely will not pay an electricity bill for more than a year thanks to our government's \$1,000 energy rebate.

Minerva and Sigourney in Northgate and Stephen in Nundah raised how difficult the rising costs of petrol were to making ends meet. It is for everyday Queenslanders and Nudgee electorate locals like these that the Miles Labor government is committed to doing everything we can to lower petrol prices and bring competition back to the market. Capping fuel price increases to five cents, limiting price rises to once a day and ensuring fuel stations give a day's notice on price changes are a few of the measures we are committed to implementing if we are returned to government in October.

Chep and Cheng in Boondall, Ross in Northgate and Heidi in Wavell Heights all raised with me the real and positive impact that our energy rebate and rego reductions will make to them. Rebecca from Nudgee was thankful for our expansion of FairPlay vouchers to \$200 and making every Queensland family eligible for the initiative. Charmaine from Virginia is a healthcare worker who is enjoying our 50-cent fares and the savings that it has already brought and will bring. Commuters in my electorate doing the weekday commute into the city are saving more than \$100 a month thanks to this measure, and it was my pleasure to speak to locals at Northgate station recently about how this initiative is making a real difference to them and their household budgets.

I am proud to be a member of the Miles Labor government that is doing what matters for Queenslanders, and most importantly doing what matters for the people of the Nudgee electorate—reducing the cost of living and supporting local families.

### **Mermaid Beach Electorate, Riding on Footpaths**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (9.57 pm): A modern-day problem on the footpaths throughout my electorate is the arrival and acceptance of motorised scooters, skateboards and electric bikes which facilitate fast and convenient travel for the younger generation yet pose a serious threat to regular walkers and older generation users of footpaths—which are called 'foot' paths for a very good reason. Many near-miss situations and even life-threatening collisions are symptomatic of people using excess speed on these transport vehicles with a devil-may-care attitude to get to their destination as fast as possible. A supposed 12 kilometres per hour speed limit is rarely adhered to and, as nobody is there to police that speed limit and there are no identifying licence plates or other means of detecting offenders, the current unlawful, dangerous and defiant behaviour by these riders is way out of control.


It is time to put the safety of walkers on footpaths back to the top priority of legislators and regulators, and only serious and punitive outcomes for abusers of the safety of walkers on footpaths will bring about a satisfactory desired outcome. The existence of 'convenience' bikes by major companies exploiting public footpaths and parks to satisfy a generational thirst for easy modal transport has added to the speed demon threat that walkers face and has also led to a bike-dumping mentality that surely counts as public littering.

We have plenty of people, including myself, who share footpaths with pushbikers who meander along at low speed and provide no threat to walkers whatsoever. It is the motorised conveyances that create the problem, and, human behaviour being what it is in many self-centred human beings, there is no regard for the safety of others as they hurtle along on carriageways that were not designed for them at speeds that defy logic and good principles, and where they threaten vulnerable young mums and dads pushing their babies in prams, oblivious to these kamikaze riders coming from behind.

If we are not prepared to ban motorised transport on footpaths or confiscate this mode of motorised transport from major offenders to address this growing problem in our communities, what is the answer? Countries around the world have already chosen to ban e-bikes for the safety of their walkers and to eradicate the visual pollution of dumped bikes all over our public areas. This issue needs to be addressed now as there is a growing usage of these speed chariots on our footpaths and an elderly person's death is completely on the agenda if nothing is done.

It is impossible for police to be patrolling these numerous footpaths full-time for the troublemakers. However, if strong punitive measures become an official deterrent then word will travel very quickly in the user world and pedestrian safety could return to normal.

### Yarrabilba Parkrun; Logan Electorate, Health Services

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (10.00 pm): I did not want to interrupt that speech; I wanted it to go on and on.

One of the things I find exciting in my electorate—and I know the member for Algeester shares my enthusiasm for this—is parkrun. Yarrabilba parkrun is one of the most fantastic parkruns. I was there recently with Councillor Nathan St Ledger to celebrate Viv's 500th parkrun. That is 10 years of inspiring others to get healthy. Yarrabilba is a great place to get healthy with so many trails surrounding the town. I congratulate the Darlington parkrunners on building this great institution and promoting good health in Logan.

I, like the parkrunners, am trying to do my bit to make Logan healthier. A while ago Logan MPs announced the most recent stage of development at the Logan Hospital, which is being built now. It includes four new floors, 318 new beds and treatment spaces, new surgery and operating rooms, a new maternity ward, five new birthing suites as well as upgrades and a new clinical services building. This is in addition to the previously built 1,500 new parking spaces, the two 28-bed medical wards and the mental health lounge at the emergency department. That is a huge investment.


Logan Hospital can be a daunting place to visit. For the most part, it is dealing with people who are seriously ill. Some would prefer regular services in a smaller venue closer to their homes. That is why we built satellite hospitals—connected to the bigger hospitals and delivering connected services in places such as Eight Mile Plains. Ever since we introduced the concept of services closer to home, I have been pushing for a satellite hospital for southern Logan's growth areas. That is why on the morning that so many parkrunners were celebrating Viv's 500th run I was gathering signatures on a petition for a health service in Yarrabilba.

I am pushing for a satellite hospital. I lobbied for it before. Now we have seen the results, including at Eight Mile Plains, I am pushing for one for southern Logan. I did not give up last time and this time I am getting the community involved by asking them to sign the petition I have been running for weeks. The Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital treats minor illnesses and injuries that are not life threatening, but it also has a range of specialist services, including kidney dialysis, cancer day therapy and mental, allied health and outpatient services.

I have a friend Bev whose husband unfortunately died of cancer. They had to go into the PA to get chemo treatment. The PA was a fair hike. I would love to see patients—people like Bev and her husband—get the treatment they deserve closer to home.

I am pleased that recent reports show that this is on the short list for consideration. I will support any new health service for Logan, but I am getting the community behind the call for a satellite hospital for Logan and more health services for Logan. On Friday I am down at McKinnon Markets and I will be joining the community to call for even better health services for Logan.

### Youth Crime

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (10.03 pm): I rise to speak once again about the scourge of crime throughout the state, and particularly in the electorate I represent. I am sure on some basis the government, through some lens that I do not particularly understand, believes that they are making inroads or somehow addressing the problem.

As politicians, I think where we really earn our money is ground truthing the advice we get from bureaucrats, public servants and so-called specialists. When we are told that there has been a reduction in crime and that these policies are working we need to ground truth that with what we see on the ground and what our constituents are bringing to our offices.

We need to ask: how many people did I have complaining about this five years ago? Five years ago did I have people sleeping in their caravan in Hughenden facing people stealing their car and tearing off down the road while they were still in the caravan? No, I did not. Years ago did I have people terrorising schools in the streets of Mount Isa for 10 hours? No, I did not. We have a live incident in Charters Towers where an allegedly stolen police vehicle is being chased by a SERT team and five other police cars from Cairns. Did we have that five years ago? No, we did not. Five years ago did we have over the Mount Isa Rodeo weekend five cars stolen and being driven around for hours? No, we did not. We did not have any of this.

The government can pull categories out and say, 'We are making inroads', but this is such a big problem. It needs a significant change in policy. By tinkering at the edges they cannot say that they have made some inroads, especially considering that so much goes unreported now because of the apathy around the effectiveness of police and government helping.

We have tried to work with government throughout this and other terms. Our policies have remained constant on castle law, sending people to the bush—bush sentencing—adult time for adult crimes, mandatory minimum sentencing and the removal of detention as a last resort. We have stayed strong and consistent on those policies. We have tried to work with government by offering effective solutions that result in consequences for these perpetrators. I think one of the most compassionate approaches we can take to many of these youth is to give them a consequence. We can build in vocational training, but give them a consequence for their actions. They do not have that. The longer they remain in that space, the longer we are keeping them away from a meaningful and purposeful life.

It is very frustrating to see this growing problem. The communities from where it is stemming have issues with blue cards and the lack of title deeds to help strengthen those communities. These issues remain unaddressed. The problem will continue to become worse until the government adopt some of the KAP's policies.

### **Algester Electorate, Neighbourhood Watch**



**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (10.06 pm): The Algester electorate is home to some incredible not-for-profit organisations, from sporting groups like Calamvale Leopards, Brisbane Super Kings Cricket Club and Souths Acacia Ridge Junior Rugby League, and the many community service groups like Algester Parkinson Lions Club, Volunteer Connect and Archerfield Rotary through to the very active youth focused groups like Browns Plains Scouts and Algester Girl Guides, to name just a few. All these groups are supported by amazing local community volunteers who generously give so much of their time to help others and bring our community together.

Another great example of this community spirit is seen in the many active neighbourhood watch groups currently operating across the Algester electorate. From Hillcrest Neighbourhood Watch, Lakewood Neighbourhood Watch, Queensland's longest serving neighbourhood watch in Forestdale Neighbourhood Watch, Heathwood Neighbourhood Watch and the soon to be established Pallara Neighbourhood Watch.

As we all know neighbourhood watch groups do much more than peek through the curtains on the lookout for signs of suspicious activity. Importantly they build a sense of community connection by fostering relationships between neighbours and creating a space to celebrate and be proud of our community. I have had the great privilege of being involved in a number of local neighbourhood watch groups and understand the incredible value they add to the community.


There have been community fun days and Christmas lolly drops organised by Hillcrest Neighbourhood Watch in past years as well as Halloween and movies in the park by Heathwood Neighbourhood Watch. One need look no further than Forestdale Neighbourhood Watch for the incredible number of community events organised outside regular monthly meetings to raise awareness of community safety strategies and to bring about a fully connected neighbourhood such as the annual car show, Bark in the Park, various fundraising events in collaboration with local businesses and the very popular Food Truck Jam, which is happening this Sunday at Lincoln Green Park in Forestdale.

These community events make a huge difference in so many ways. That is why for a number of years I have been working with the residents of the growing community of Pallara to establish their own neighbourhood watch group. I am pleased to report that recently we have been able to make important progress. I would like to extend my thanks to Pallara residents—in particular, Abhishek Sidana and Sid Wijethunga, who have both been integral in the process of forming a brand new neighbourhood watch group for Pallara, along with our local Queensland Police Service representatives who have dedicated a great deal of time and energy to this good cause.

I would also like to thank members of the Forestdale Neighbourhood Watch executive who have provided valuable insight and support to Pallara residents, sharing what it takes to form an effective neighbourhood watch. The key to a successful neighbourhood watch group is of course community participation along with a strong relationship with the Queensland Police Service which is why I encourage all residents of Pallara to reach out to Abhishek and Sid to help formalise the local Pallara Neighbourhood Watch.

To all neighbourhood watch groups in my electorate of Algester, thank you for your commitment and love of our community. For those who are interested in joining the Pallara Neighbourhood Watch, I encourage you to engage with your neighbours, attend meetings and stay informed.

### Gibbs, Mrs DER, OAM

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (10.09 pm): It is my honour to share the amazing story of Doris Ethel Rosemary Gibbs OAM, born on 15 March 1929 in Victoria. In 1956, with late husband of 60 years plus, the Hon. Ivan Gibbs, who served in this place from 1974 to 1989, Doris moved to Queensland with two children, Chris and Paul. Once settled in Queensland, the family grew with the birth of Andrew, Matthew and Megan.

As well as raising five children in the early years, Doris was seemingly involved in all things good for her community. From the Labrador kindergarten, primary school and Girl Guides, Doris went on to serve as District Commissioner of Girl Guides. Other leadership roles included 20 years to 1989 as president of the St James Guild and chair of the St James Building Committee. The list goes on, with roles at Holy Rood Anglican Church, St Peter's Anglican Church, Labrador Senior Citizens and St Hilda's School, and included the Gold Coast Mayoress' Welfare Committee as a member and chair.

In Doris's life work, the word 'welfare' keeps coming up, as do leadership terms such as 'chair' and 'president'. Unsurprisingly, Doris received awards including Rotary's Paul Harris Fellow award and Lions' Melvin Jones Fellowship award.

In 2013, in her mid-eighties, Doris was a founding member and president of the Probus Club of Coomera Valley. Of course, Doris's world also included the National Party for more than 50 years and the LNP. Indeed, in 2008 Doris was a founding member of the LNP's aptly named ABC Ladies, with ABC standing for Albert, Broadwater and Coomera electorates.

Doris Ethel Rosemary Gibbs OAM passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, on 20 July 2024, aged 95. The service and celebration of Doris's life was held at St Matthews Anglican Church, Upper Coomera, the church named in honour of Doris and Ivan's son Matthew, who sadly passed away at just 17 years of age in 1978.


Perhaps Doris's greatest legacy is her family, including four children, nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. It pleases me to say that my wife, Pauline, and I enjoyed the friendship of Doris and Ivan in their later years, and I can confirm that this lady was most definitely a doer. I can also say she had a wonderful sense of humour and was prone to mischief and practical jokes at times.

Colleagues, I think you will agree, hers was an amazing life, and I can think of no better way to end other than to recite the Ralph Waldo Emerson poem *A Philosophy to Live By* in her honour—

To laugh often and much;  
to win the respect of intelligent people  
and the affection of children;  
to earn the appreciation of honest critics  
and endure the betrayal of false friends;  
to appreciate beauty;  
to find the best in others;  
to leave the world a bit better  
whether by a healthy child, a garden patch,  
or a redeemed social condition;  
to know even one life has breathed easier  
because you lived.  
This is to have succeeded.

By every measure, it is without doubt that Doris succeeded. Vale, Doris Ethel Rosemary Gibbs OAM.

### Inala Electorate

 **Ms NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (10.13 pm): I stand here tonight with immense pride to represent the electorate of Inala. As many here know, Inala is a blend of many cultures that define my beloved electorate. August is not just a month on the calendar for us. It is a celebration of the rich multicultural fabric that makes Inala a unique and dynamic community.

Our electorate is a living testament to the power of diversity. From the bustling streets to the vibrant cultural festivals, every corner of Inala reflects the harmonious blend of traditions, languages and histories that our people bring.

As we celebrate Multicultural Queensland Month, I would like to pay tribute to the countless contributions of our diverse communities. Throughout August, we have witnessed an array of events that highlight the beauty of our multicultural heritage. In fact, in just the last two weeks alone I have attended more than 15 such events. In Inala every month is multicultural month and I love it. From the lively Diwali festival to the spirited Lunar New Year celebrations, from dragon boats to lion dances, each event has been a testament to the rich traditions and cultural practices that our residents cherish and share.

The local markets in Inala are alive with flavours from around the world and the performances by artists from diverse backgrounds have brought our streets and halls to life with music, dance and storytelling. These events are not just opportunities to enjoy and appreciate different cultures. They are a reminder of what makes Inala so special. They serve as a platform for learning and understanding, breaking down barriers and fostering a sense of unity.

Each celebration offers a chance to connect with our neighbours to share in their traditions and to build lasting friendships rooted in mutual respect and appreciation. Our multicultural celebrations also reflect the strength and resilience of our community. They remind us that, despite our differences, we are bound together by common values and shared aspirations. It is through these gatherings that we renew our commitment to building a more inclusive and harmonious society where every individual regardless of their background feels valued and empowered.

As we continue to honour and celebrate the diverse cultures within Inala, let us also remember that our efforts extend beyond this month. Multiculturalism is a year-round endeavour—one that requires ongoing dialogue, understanding and support. In this new role as the member for Inala I will continue to champion policies and initiatives that promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity in all aspects of our lives.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to all the multicultural communities that have welcomed me so warmly. Thank you to the great volunteers of our multicultural community for all the wonderful work that you do to make Inala so great.

The House adjourned at 10.16 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, 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, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Zanow