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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 18 September 2025

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THURSDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

ABSENCE OF SPEAKER


The Clerk informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Speaker for this day's sitting. In accordance with standing order 12(1), the Deputy Speaker shall take the chair as Acting Speaker.

Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Krause, member for Scenic Rim) read prayers and took the chair.

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I acknowledge the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people of this state and their elders past, present and emerging. I also acknowledge the former members of this parliament who have participated in and nourished the democratic institutions of this state. Finally, I acknowledge the people of this state, whether they have been born here or have chosen to make this state their home and whom we represent to make laws and conduct other business for the peace, welfare and good government of this state.

PRIVILEGE


Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.31 am): Yesterday during question time the member for Woodridge tabled documents in the House that he alleged showed payments of electorate and communication allowances. Having now reviewed the tabled documents, it is clear the amounts cited by the member for Woodridge were not repayments as alleged and that in all three cases, as has been advised by the accountable officer of parliament, (a) there were no instances under which any member was required to repay the allowance amount and (b) in each case the difference between the allowance amount required to be acquitted and the actual expenditure amount acquitted represented a personal contribution by the member. As a result, the member used their own private funds to supplement the allowance amount provided by parliament. These members used their personal funds in their electorates in the same manner the member for Bulimba had done previously, as reported in this article I now table.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Brisbane Times*, dated 30 September 2016, titled 'Member for Bulimba Di Farmer exceeds allowance for office expenses' [\[1266\]](#).

These members should be congratulated for using their own personal funds to supplement their allowances. I believe the member for Woodridge has deliberately misled the House and I will be writing to you as such, Mr Acting Speaker.

Comments by Member for Woodridge, Apology

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.32 am): To any extent that I have inadvertently misled the House, I apologise.

Government members interjected.


Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr DICK: According to the ruling of the Speaker, that is the appropriate step for me to take. To any extent that I have inadvertently or inappropriately misled the House, I apologise.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Woodridge.

ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Sunshine Coast homeschoolers in the electorate of Nicklin and Ingleside State School in the electorate of Currumbin.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Welford, Hon. RJ



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.33 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Honourable Rodney Jon Welford, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland and Minister of the State.
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

Rodney Jon Welford was born in Brisbane on 30 September 1958. He grew up on Brisbane's north side, where he attended Aspley East State Primary School and St Paul's Anglican Grammar School. Mr Welford was a man of the law, working as a solicitor in private practice and later in the Commonwealth DPP and the Supreme Court of Queensland before becoming a barrister of the High Court of Australia.

In the 1980s Mr Welford became involved with the Australian Labor Party, including as campaign director for the ALP in the electorate of Petrie at the federal election in 1987. It was not long before Mr Welford was preselected by the ALP as its candidate for the state seat of Stafford. At the 1989 state election, Mr Welford successfully won the seat of Stafford, helping Wayne Goss and Labor form government in Queensland for the first time in 32 years. Mr Welford served as a member of this House until 2009. He held the seat of Stafford until it was abolished during a redistribution when he moved to the seat of Everton in 1992.

During his time in the parliament, Mr Welford served in many roles. Central among them was serving Queensland as a cabinet minister for nearly 11 years from 1998 to 2009 under premiers Beattie and Bligh. At various times during this period he held the ministerial portfolios of attorney-general, justice, arts, education, training, environment, heritage and natural resources. He was the shadow minister for environment and heritage from 1996 to 1998 during the term of the Borbidge government, before taking on these portfolios as minister when the Beattie government came to office in June 1998.

After leaving the parliament, he continued to make contributions as the chief executive of the Australian Council of Recycling and as an adjunct professor at Griffith University, serving on the board of its Climate Ready Initiative. I also note that Mr Welford had been a member of the Burleigh Surf Life Saving Club since 1972 and was an accomplished swimmer, surfer and lifesaver. He was a life member of both the Royal Life Saving Society Queensland and the Royal Life Saving Society. He made significant contributions to both societies, serving as president of the Queensland branch and representing his state as a member of the state lifesaving sports team.

The Hon. Rodney Jon Welford passed away on 28 June 2025, aged 66 years. As I said at the time of his passing, Mr Welford entered politics at a time of great change. He left his mark as someone who cared deeply for his community, the legal profession and the environment. Earlier this year he made a personal donation of \$5 million to Queensland Gives, a significant Queensland contribution to the causes that shaped his life. As was the case with his public life, he did not seek recognition or glory. He did it because he believed in it.

I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service Mr Welford gave to the Queensland community. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Mr Welford's family and friends. I welcome to the House today his partner, Gayle, who said to me the thing she misses most is his ability to simplify the complex, and her daughter, Elena, as well as his sister and brother-in-law, Karen and Stephen, who remain very proud of his achievements. Vale, Rod Welford.




Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.37 am): It is with sadness that I rise today to honour the life and legacy of Rod Welford, a proud Labor man, a reformer, a father and a friend to so many in this House. When news of his death broke I said that Queensland had lost one of its finest policy minds. That was not just a tribute; it was a statement of fact. People who serve in this place can be classified as those who want to be something and those who want to do something. Rod Welford was definitely here to do something. Rod was a thinker, a builder and a man who dedicated his career to making this state more just, more educated and more sustainable. Even before entering politics his career reflected those values. As a solicitor, prosecutor and lecturer at the University of Queensland, he worked with dedication and integrity.

Rod was elected as the member for Stafford in the great Labor victory that brought an end to 32 years of conservative rule here in Queensland. He later served as the member for Everton. In that time he held some of the most important portfolios—education, the arts, justice and the environment.

As environment minister, Rod introduced Queensland's first vegetation management laws—reforms that balance sustainability with economic development. His environmental action captured his conviction that we owe our children not only opportunity but also stewardship of the Queensland they will inherit. As attorney-general Rod was equally committed to reform, particularly in strengthening laws to protect children from sexual abuse. Rod's final and perhaps most cherished role was as minister for education and the arts. He was passionate about learning and creativity and he believed deeply in the power of education to change lives. He launched the State Schools of Tomorrow program, the single largest investment in modernising school infrastructure in Queensland's history, and he spearheaded the prep to grade 12 education model we now know. That was Rod Welford—always looking forward, always planning for tomorrow.

Beyond his achievements in office Rod was, above all, a devoted father. He raised his daughter, Lisa, often bringing her into this very chamber. What people remember most about Rod was not just his intellect but his love and pride as a dad. That love for his daughter, and later for his partner, Gayle, defined him every bit as much as his public service. I acknowledge Gayle and family members in the gallery today.


He was part of a remarkable generation of Labor leaders who modernised Queensland after the dark days of the Bjelke-Petersen era, yet he never sought the spotlight. He described himself as a 'policy wonk'. He was proud to do the work behind the scenes, shaping ideas and building reforms that would outlast him. Rod Welford's contribution to Queensland will not be forgotten. His life reminds us that politics at its best is about ideas, about justice and about leaving our community better than we found it. Vale, Rod Welford.

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.41 am): I rise today to speak briefly on the condolence motion for the Hon. Rod Welford. Whilst not knowing Rod well, as a former long-term member for Everton and previously Stafford for nearly 20 years, I bumped into him occasionally and of course heard good reports from constituents about his time as our area's state member. His legacy is deeply woven into the fabric of our community. Locals spoke highly of his assistance to Everton community organisations and his presence at local events. He was a champion for our local schools and ahead of his time with regard to caring for the environment. He was instrumental in securing funding for critical infrastructure projects, from improvements to our local roads to supporting sporting clubs and community groups.

One thing I had in common with Rod was his commitment to physical wellbeing. His daily swim at the Everton Park State School pool was legendary, where, I was told, he would swim roughly 2.5 kilometres every morning. Rod's partner, Gayle, told me just before we came into the House that after that he would also go to the Albany Creek swimming pool, not satisfied with doing laps by himself at Everton Park, to train with the Olympians who trained there.

In his role as education minister, his passions in the area of sport and physical activity also came through. This is reflected in the number of programs he introduced. The Smart Moves program mandated 30 minutes a day of physical exercise in primary schools and two hours a week in secondary schools. He initiated the Year of Physical Activity for Queensland state schools, the first 'year of' theme for state schools, which would continue for years to come.

Beyond his local contributions Rod fulfilled many senior ministerial roles, as has been mentioned by previous speakers. In all of these roles he was guided by a strong sense of duty and the desire to build a better future for all Queenslanders. Rod Welford was a politician of conviction. Rod's was a life of service and commitment to his community and his state. On behalf of the people of Everton, I offer my deepest sympathies to Rod's family.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.43 am): Rod Welford was the best member for Everton who ever served in the Queensland parliament—just do not tell Senator Murray Watt. Rod was a real Labor man, steeped in the beliefs that have always shaped the great Australian Labor Party. In his first speech here in this very chamber Rod said—

For it is this fundamental principle of justice—social justice—which distinguishes the Labor Party, the party of reform, from those merchants of reaction and deceit ...

...

It is this concept of social justice which underpins not only our electoral system but our entire understanding of the Government's role in guiding and nurturing a just society.

These are noble words from a noble man. Rod Welford was a reformer. As attorney-general he took to law reform with passion and conviction. More than 20 years ago Rod Welford introduced the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Bill into this House. This groundbreaking Labor reform, which has stood the test of time, gave Queensland courts the power to order the ongoing control, supervision and monitoring of dangerous sex offenders even after their original court imposed sentence had expired.

For Rod, it was always about community safety and protecting the most vulnerable in society. A media report prior to his leaving politics described Rod as one of the state's best attorneys-general, his strike rate with successful appeals was outstanding. Rod Welford was also an outstanding education minister who oversaw the successful implementation of the prep year in all Queensland schools.

Outside of politics his interests were many, including lifesaving, energy and renewables, and environmental causes. He was also a man of great generosity, including an extraordinary bequest made to Queensland Gives, operated by the Queensland Community Foundation. As the Queensland Law Society journal *Proctor* recalled earlier this month—


True to his character as a man of action, he had already found a direct, impactful and enduring way to fulfil his wish of improving lives through long-term support for causes close to his heart.

Earlier this year, Rod made a significant living gift and personal bequest of \$5 million to Queensland Gives, committing to the causes that shaped his life: social change, environmental protection, and education.

His gift was the largest legacy donation ever made by an individual to Queensland Gives in its nearly 30-year history.

It was the things that Rod did away from the public gaze that defined him best. Rod had a big heart and he loved big: he loved his mates in the surf lifesaving fraternity; he loved Queensland's precious and unique environment; he loved his daughter, Lisa, to whom he was devoted; and he loved his beloved partner, Gayle, and his family, including Elena, Karen and Stephen, who join us today.

Rod loved Queensland, and Queensland is better for having Rod Welford as a member of this parliament and a minister in successive Labor governments. Rod Welford did what we all aspire to do: he made a real, substantial and tangible difference to Queensland. Rod made Queensland better, safer and fairer. That is a formidable and fitting legacy for the Rod Welford I knew. We are all the poorer for Rod's passing at such a young age. Through this motion we express our love to Rod's family and recognise his outstanding service to our state.

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (9.47 am): I rise to join with others in honouring the life and legacy of the Hon. Rod Welford. I must begin with a note of candour: I did not know Rod personally. He belonged to an earlier generation of parliamentarians, and by the time I arrived here his service had already concluded. But as I have reflected on his career and the tributes paid since his passing, it is plain that his echo rings strongly still in this parliament, in our society and in my own community.

It rings in this parliament. Rod Welford was elected in 1989 as part of a generation that carried the reforming spirit of the Goss government. Over 20 years he served as attorney-general, as minister for justice, as minister for environment and natural resources, and later as minister for education and the arts. In each and every one of those roles he left a lasting impact. Colleagues recall him as a change agent. Never satisfied with the status quo, he expanded Queensland's national parks, championed water efficiency and created the environmental protection agency. He confronted land clearing head-on—a policy debate that demanded both courage and conviction. As attorney-general he pursued the reform of our laws and institutions with intelligence and rigour. In education he drove innovation, building campuses and opportunities that continue to serve Queensland students today.


Peter Beattie described him as one of the smartest and most thoughtful members of his cabinet. Others remember his humour, his generosity and even his habit of sneaking in a swim before community cabinet meetings while his colleagues were still clinging to their coffees. His echo in this House is one of reform, intellect and contribution.

Mr Welford's legacy also rings across broader Queensland society. Rod did not walk away from service when he left politics in 2009. He led the Australian Council of Recycling, became an adjunct professor and remained active in the great causes that had animated his career: the environment, social justice and education. Perhaps most powerfully, his philanthropy ensured that his values will endure beyond his lifetime. Through a personal bequest of millions of dollars to Queensland Gives, Rod committed support to the causes closest to his heart, as two environmental organisations, two social change initiatives and a scholarship program at Griffith University will continue to benefit. That bequest tells us something important: his service to Queensland was not a chapter of his life; it was the whole story.

Finally, his echo rings in my own community. For more than 50 years Rod Welford was a member of the Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park Surf Life Saving Club. He joined as a teenager, earned his bronze medallion, patrolled the beach, trained others and even chaired the club's constitution committee. He was a swimmer of remarkable stamina, often joining his mates on the long swim from Burleigh to North Burleigh and back. Leaders of the club described him as fair-minded, practical and always generous with his time and counsel. For the Burleigh community, his contribution will not be forgotten.

These three echoes—in parliament, in society, in community—reveal a life devoted to service. Rod Welford was an environmental reformer, a champion of education, a thoughtful attorney-general, a philanthropist and a surf lifesaver. He was also, above all, a devoted father to his daughter, Lisa, and a much loved partner to Gayle. In the end, all public service rests on the private bonds that sustain it, and our deepest sympathy goes to them and to his family and friends as they grieve this loss.

Though I never knew him, I can say with confidence that Queensland is better because of his service. His echo continues to ring in this place. On behalf of the people of Burleigh, I extend my condolences and pay tribute to a life well lived. Vale, Rod Welford.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (9.52 am): Like each speaker so far I suspect, I certainly never expected to be in the chamber for a condolence motion for the very honourable Rod Welford. His positivity, his vitality, his intellect and his pure energy made this motion at this time seem so unlikely. While Rod ultimately had a shorter life than we expected, his was a life packed to the rafters with achievement in a wide array of policy areas which shows the breadth and scope of his talents and his dedication.

I had the privilege of knowing Rod Welford for more than 30 years through Labor circles. We always got on well and swapped notes on the issues and the politics of the day, which was something hardly unique to me given how gregarious and engaging Rod was to just about everybody. It was always a pleasure sharing space with Rod—that cheeky smile, the sharp quip, the ease with which the conversation flowed—and you usually learned something new or walked away with an insight you had not considered after a chat with Rod.

He liked people—he genuinely liked people—and he had faith in people and their capacity to understand and to change. That was one of his starting points. He was always up for a chat, curious, inquisitive and thoughtful. Elected as part of a wave of 24 new Labor seats in the Goss government, he was obviously one of the most talented of a new generation of Labor MPs to come into this House. One of his first roles was on the EARC, the Electoral and Administrative Review Committee, that originated from the Fitzgerald inquiry, working with his good friend and chair of EARC, the Hon. Matt Foley, who I acknowledge is with us in the gallery today. He helped lay the groundwork to abolish the infamous gerrymander, introduced freedom of information and guaranteed freedom of assembly coming from EARC's work.

Before he went on to serve a remarkable ministerial career, there was the task of making it to the front bench in the first place. As a young new Brisbane city councillor, I distinctly recall running into Rod at a conference on the Sunshine Coast soon after some bruising machinations in the state arena where, incredibly, he had not been promoted to the front bench during a tumultuous time in state politics. I distinctly recall he offered up a number of free and animated character assessments of a few people known to both of us, laced with a few turbocharged adjectives, one might say. A necessary part of this role we all do is at times needing to vent to someone you trust, and vent he did, and understandably. However, I knew then that this was a speed bump and it was not going to stop a person of his calibre from getting to where he deserved to be, and his time would come—and did it come.

Joining the front bench as part of a revamped Peter Beattie led opposition, Rod was one of a range of frontbenchers who hounded and terrorised the then Borbidge government regularly for the next 2½ years, returning a Labor government after only a short time in the wilderness. On an extraordinary election night, the conservative vote collapsed, while Labor lost six seats and actually gained six other seats in a highly unusual election.


Rod's first portfolio—appropriate given his profound commitment to the environment—was environment and heritage, as the shadow and then as the minister in 1998, adding natural resources as well. It was Rod who marshalled the historic Vegetation Management Act 1999 to stem the unsustainable freehold clearing and burning of vegetation across the state for the first time that was fuelling emissions and climate change. The act protected ecosystems, riparian zones and biodiversity corridors and reduced salinity and soil erosion to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Rod believed in the sustainable use of resources and had a long view that went well beyond his generation or his lifetime. In that same year, he led the South-East Queensland regional forest agreements to resolve seemingly intractable conflicts around native forest logging—another high bar vaulted.

Rod Welford is revered amongst conservationists, and rightly so. His list of achievements is extensive and have been well covered by people here today, but some of them include: the Cape York buybacks; laying the foundation for a renewable energy sector; a raft of reforms in the areas of anti-discrimination for the LGBTIQ community as attorney-general more than 20 years ago; the establishment of the Legal Services Commission; a new coronial system; greater protection for children in court; and nearly four years as education minister and the arts where he introduced the prep year and a new school curriculum and finished the QPAC complex and GoMA to boot. All of these were challenging portfolios; all were led well, and he made it look easy.

Rod's parliamentary career spanned 20 years, with only 2½ years in opposition—a five-term frontbencher, a four-term cabinet minister, a rare breed in a gruelling profession. It would have been a privilege to serve in the same cabinet as him. As his colleague and friend Matt Foley said of him, 'He was an astute, reforming first law officer of the Crown, a passionate arts minister and a truly sublime, inspiring minister for the environment.'

Rod's optimism and commitment maintained strongly not just during his time in this House but well beyond. I saw Rod not infrequently at energy conferences, where he was still applying his formidable repertoire of experience and skill to accelerate change more than a decade after he had left this House. His bequest to Queensland Gives of \$5 million into a perpetual fund for reform—which was so well covered by the member for Woodridge—shows how rare he was.

Rod Welford flew far higher and further than most. He soared in rarefied air. His legacy benefits and will benefit countless numbers of people in ways they will never know. He was a great soul and a great Queenslander and he left our state in a better place. Vale, Rod Welford. My sincerest condolences and sympathy to his partner, Gayle, to his daughter, Lisa, and to his family.

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education and the Arts) (9.58 am): I rise to speak on the condolence motion for Rod Welford, former member for Stafford and Everton, who served in this House from 1989 until 2009. My first awareness of him was when I first came here in 1990, as a young parent, and my mother-in-law was seconded from the police department to be on the switch here at parliament. Stacey and I came here with our then baby. Back then—and I know this is probably hard to imagine, members—there were no mobile phones, so people had to be—

Mr Nicholls: Really?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, really, and there were no cars either, everyone.

Mr O'Connor: Horse and carriage.

Mr LANGBROEK: Horse and carriage, exactly. Liz Smith said to me, 'There is a new member for Stafford whose wife is calling quite regularly,' and he would be paged because they had a new baby, Lisa. I did not realise who that was until I subsequently came 14 years later, having been elected to this place, and I then realised that that was the person to whom my mother-in-law had been referring.

Rod was active in his community as a member of the Royal Life Saving Society of Australia and was both a state and national medal winner with his surf lifesaving club, as we heard from the member for Burleigh—Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park SLSC on the Gold Coast. He also worked as a professional lifeguard for the Gold Coast City council whilst completing his university studies.

As we have heard from the member for Burleigh, he was renowned for a swim held every Easter from Burleigh Heads to North Burleigh and back. As I discussed with the Clerk, I remember in my early days when I was a more frequent attender at the gym that Rod Welford would often be there and would be quite amazing in the way that he worked out. As the Clerk said to me, he was renowned for eating bananas and fruit and was fastidious about his diet. The partner of my original electorate officer, Josie Stinson, was Gary Young. Members on the Gold Coast will remember the long-term lifeguard Warren Young, and Gary was a fellow traveller with Rod Welford. One of the things that no-one has mentioned so far is that he was also very keen on a rum and coke, or numerous rum and cokes.

During his career, Rod Welford held a wide range of portfolios, including environment, natural resources, attorney-general and, notably, education and the arts. It is a rare distinction to have held both education and the arts together, and I acknowledge that I have also been entrusted with these important portfolios. I am proud to say that it is the first time these important portfolios have been brought together since Anna Bligh over 20 years ago and then, of course, Rod Welford.

As we heard from others, in education Rod's focus was on fairness and preparing young Queenslanders for the future. He often spoke of the four Cs—citizenship, competence, creativity and character—as the foundations of schooling. As education minister, he began the removal of asbestos from Queensland schools, introduced green school initiatives and implemented the national school

infrastructure rollout here in Queensland which gave many schools their first modernised facilities. He was also very proud of initiating Creative Generation, which I would encourage members to go to when you get that invitation. It is an amazing state school on-stage production involving thousands of school students which I think will be a good portent for what we can and will deliver at the 2032 Olympics.

I also remember being at QPAC for one of the launches of a season, and I told Rod, who at that stage told me he was very proud of having initiated Creative Generation, that I caught the train from the Gold Coast using—once again members, we used to have a golden rail badge that the member for Maroochydore is aware of—a golden rail badge that subsequently we were allowed to keep. It enabled you to have free rail transport. I mentioned to Rod Welford that I had caught the train for nothing from the Gold Coast. He said, 'Mate, don't tell the Rail, Tram and Bus Union that you've done that,' also saying that he would not have been allowed to do it.

During his time, Rod also established the Queensland Academies, strengthening partnerships with our universities, providing opportunities for high-achieving students in science, mathematics, creative industries and health sciences. These academies use the International Baccalaureate as a means of assessment. Members, I would hope that you may have noticed this week that in the list of the top 100 public schools in Australia, No. 4 is QASMT—the Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology—at Toowong, established by Rod Welford.


In the arts portfolio, Rod played a role in significant developments, as we have heard from the member for Miller, at the Cultural Centre, including the opening of GoMA, and the new State Library of Queensland, and major refurbishments to the art gallery and museum and accessibility improvements at QPAC.

I remember his last action in the 2009 campaign. I was shadow minister and he opened the flagship South Bank TAFE, and that was literally a couple of days before that election at which he stood down.

He was known as a thoughtful and hardworking minister and preferred lasting reforms to short-term headlines. His approach was always to look for practical solutions that would outlast politics. I do remember him being here, by the end of his term as he headed towards leaving, that he did not take the same interest in question time and ministerial statements that new ministers do. He was pretty relaxed about it. There were a number of times when it would come to his time for a ministerial statement and he was suddenly called and then he would just jump up and do what he had to do, but was not on edge as you would expect ministers to be and as they normally are. He had a very laissez-faire attitude; he was very relaxed.

I remember his final press conference, where it was acknowledged that he could have been the leader or the premier and he mentioned that he had been happy to serve in the way that he had and that he felt very privileged that he had done the job he had been asked to do by other premiers in his role as a minister.


On behalf of the government, I extend my condolences to Rod's family, friends and former colleagues. I note Gayle is here, too. I remember being at a dinner together some years ago, albeit at separate tables, at a restaurant—Chill on Tedder on Tedder Avenue—and Rod was his normal gregarious self. We acknowledge his service and contribution he made to this state. Vale, Rod Welford.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (10.05 am): I rise to contribute to the condolence motion for Rod Welford. I first met Rod quite a while before I entered politics, and this is when I used to have dinner with Peter Lawlor and Ken Hayward, and I got a sneaking suspicion that Bob Gibbs snuck in on those occasions. Most of those dinners were in the Strangers' dining room. Things were quite a bit different back then. I remember him having drinks with us in the Strangers' cafe and being able to continue well after the lights had been turned off.

I recall an occasion where I was invited into parliament to be part of a debate on which is the best side of the river, north side or south side. I think Matt Foley was also part of the debate. Rod was a member of the northside team. He was due to make his contribution to the debate by mobile from the Story Bridge Hotel, but when he was phoned by his team, he was repeatedly not contactable. He did phone in much later, asking his team why they did not phone him so he could help the north side triumph in the debate. The exchange would not pass the parliamentary language filter. For the record, the south side is better than the north side.

On entering politics, I kept in touch with Rod, often reaching out to him for his sage advice and Rod reaching out to me to give me advice to pass on to the Labor leadership team. He was a man that I admired greatly for his intellect, his humanity, his discipline—both with his work and with his commitment to fitness—and his ongoing desire for our society to improve. For Rod, the drinks at the Strangers' cafe was never about the drinks; it was always about the people.


After I became aware of Rod's very sad passing, I went into my text messages to read our exchange over time. I smiled when I saw this message when we kept missing each other or playing phone tag: 'Hi, mate. Sorry. Was at the gym.' To describe Rod as a legend, a mentor and a humanitarian only starts to do him justice, and I miss him greatly. Vale, Rod Welford.

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.08 am): I rise to make a short contribution on the condolence motion for Rod Welford. My first interaction with Rod was when I joined the community engagement division which was initially under Deputy Premier Terry Mackenroth but subsequently under Premier Peter Beattie. It was my job to brief ministers in preparation of the various regional ministerial community forums that were held around the state. Suffice to say that Rod was always one of the most engaged and respectful in those briefings and in terms of the forums themselves. I was going to make a comparison and a contrast with some of his contemporaries at the time, but given the Hon. Matt Foley is sitting in the gallery, I will leave it at the fact that it probably says a lot about Rod Welford and his personality and, as many have said, about his interest in people first and foremost.

Rod and I clearly have different political persuasions, but one thing we share is a love of the environment that transcends simply being the minister. I confessed to his partner, Gayle, when we caught up earlier this morning that I took that passion seriously. As an indicator of my competitive spirit, last time I was the environment minister we had a scoreboard in the ministerial office of the longest serving environment ministers the state had had and at the top was Rod Welford. I was on track to beat him until the premier of the day decided we would go to an early election in January, so I fell a couple of months short. Well, Rod, I got ya, but it took me two terms with a hiatus of 10 years.


Rod and I, beyond the portfolio, also share a lot of environmental interests. He was an honorary member of the board of the International River Foundation, a foundation to which I have just now had the privilege of being appointed as a director. Rod and I interacted often when he served as the CEO of the Australian Council of Recycling and we have a shared passion for driving more recycling in the state of Queensland.

As the Premier and others have mentioned, Rod made an incredible personal bequest to Queensland Gives of \$5 million. I recently caught up with the CEO, Tara Castle, and she was expressing her gratitude for that. Rod specifically earmarked one of my favourite organisations—one of his favourite organisations—the Queensland Trust for Nature, as a recipient of that bequest. I know from talking to Dr Liz O'Brien and her team that we are looking at ways we can put that to good use. Rod is still giving me instructions. Gayle handed me some notes that Rod left for me around what I need to be doing with Queensland Trust for Nature. I look forward to taking that back to the department and seeing if we can deliver on what Rod left. As others have said, he was extraordinarily loved and respected across the environmental sector. He has left an extraordinary legacy in that space. I acknowledge Gayle, her daughter, Elena, Karen and Stephen. Vale, Rod Welford.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (10.11 am): Rod Welford believed that politics should be about ideas and about making a difference, not just about pointscore—and his legacy proves it. I want to share just a few of his career highlights, nominated by some of the dedicated staffers who worked with him in this place: landmark laws like the Vegetation Management Act, a defining achievement which has protected our state's incredible biodiversity corridors, our rivers and, of course, the reef; the Water Act, which modernised how we manage our most precious resource, balancing industry certainty with the ecological health of our great rivers and waterways; and the South-East Queensland Forests Agreement and the Cape York land buybacks which resolved decades of conflict.

When Rod retired, he said that he was truly blessed to have made a real and enduring difference in education, the arts, justice and the environment. The word 'blessed' captures his life's work. He also knew that service comes at a cost. We all know this. Gayle has told me it was Karen who ensured his family was able to thrive whilst Rod served all of ours, but both of their sacrifices are part of his legacy. Thank you to all of his family.

Leaders have remembered Rod as intelligent, energetic and a reformist but also, most importantly, decent. That decency is perhaps his greatest lesson to all of us—to be kinder to one another in here. In the end, what matters is not how often we best our opponents but how often we help people, and Rod helped so many. Rod gave Queensland that kind of service. His passing is a great loss. His legacy, though, is a reminder of why we are all here. Vale, Rod.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (10.14 am): I rise, along with those before me, to recognise the significant contribution of the Hon. Rod Welford. His reputation as a fierce advocate for the environment is well known, and it is this element of his contribution that I want to focus my contribution on this morning. In Rod's maiden speech he spoke of the three aspects of community life that formed the broad planks of his social philosophy. The environment was one of those three pillars. He said, 'There is no justice for us or our children in destroying our environment.' He understood deeply that long-term economic and social wellbeing could only be secured by conserving the natural ecosystems upon which we all depend; that economic prosperity and social wellbeing are not binary but, rather, must be held in tension; and that Queensland's prosperity cannot be built on the unsustainable exploitation of our land, water and forests.

When Rod became shadow environment minister in 1996, he used his time in opposition to work with the ALP's internal policy committees, industry and the conservation movement to develop an ambitious environmental policy agenda that left a legacy that stands today. It was comprehensive and included nature conservation, sustainable industry, energy efficiency, waste management, heritage protection, World Heritage nominations, land-tenure-blind natural resource management, and expanding and improving protected area management.

When Peter Beattie became premier in 1998, Rod became the Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources. I have it on good authority that it was Rod who convinced Peter to combine the environment and natural resource portfolios. When too often these portfolios are held in tension, Rod understood their deep and important synergies. As someone whose family came from the land, and as a person deeply committed to conservation, I believe that Rod had it right. Those who work the land and those who fight to protect it both love the land.

Rod delivered many significant and lasting reforms during his tenure as environment minister. He established the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Environmental Protection Agency; created the policy for Queensland's first solar water heater rebate scheme; set up the first large-scale water efficiency program in Australia; introduced the first state coastal management plan to protect Queensland coastal beaches; negotiated the only regional forest agreement in Australia that received universal support from the timber industry and conservation organisations; and delivered an extra 425,000 hectares of national parks. These were the things that he said before his retirement he was proudest of, but Rod Welford's most enduring environment legacy lies in the landmark Vegetation Management Act 1999. This was the first time Queensland comprehensively regulated the clearing of native vegetation on freehold land. Through this reform, broadscale clearing was curtailed across millions of hectares of native bushland, halting one of the highest rates of land clearing in the developed world. The framework applied across vast areas of Queensland's landscape. Approximately 90 million hectares of land containing remnant and high-value regrowth vegetation were brought under statutory regulation. This represents one of the largest areas of land covered by vegetation laws anywhere in the world.

For the first time, Queensland moved decisively to protect biodiversity corridors, reduce salinity and soil erosion and improve the health of our rivers and the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. The vegetation management framework not only safeguarded ecosystems but also recast Queensland as a national leader in conservation policy, and it allowed the then Howard government to meet Australia's Kyoto Protocol commitments. It was a difficult reform—one that required balancing rural landholder interests with the needs of future generations—but it endures today as one of the defining achievements in land management in our state.


Another significant achievement under his stewardship was the strategic buyback of pastoral leases on Cape York Peninsula. Through this program, hundreds of thousands of hectares of degraded or marginal grazing land were purchased by the state and converted to a mix of conservation tenure and Aboriginal freehold title. This initiative advanced both conservation and reconciliation, significantly expanding Queensland's protected area estate while returning land to traditional owners. It enabled the joint management of country, supported Indigenous ranger programs and protected landscapes of immense cultural and ecological significance, from tropical savannas to wetlands and rainforest margins. He also laid the groundwork for significant and comprehensive scientific work to understand

and articulate the global significance of Cape York Peninsula's natural and cultural values. That work underpinned the successful listing of parts of the peninsula on the World Heritage tentative list last year by then premier Miles.

Rod understood that lasting reform required both courage and compromise. When he left the role in this parliament he did not leave the role of environmental advocate. When I became environment minister, Rod reached out and asked if we could meet. I am sure he did likewise with every environment minister before me. When we met, he did not ask anything of me. He did not tell me how to do my job or wax lyrical about his achievements. He simply offered his support if I should ever need it.

When I saw Rod weeks before his passing, we were at the launch of the inaugural Queensland Environment Day on World Environment Day. He was obviously very unwell, but he did not take the time he had at that event to talk about himself. He used it to line me up as shadow environment minister and he lined up the environment minister, the CEO of Trust for Nature, the CEO of the Goodman Foundation and countless other conservation stakeholders to urgently seek ongoing environmental reform with the time that he had left.

Queensland is greener, more sustainable and more resilient for the reforms advanced under his stewardship. Vale, Rod Welford.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (10.20 am): I rise to address the motion of condolence recognising the extraordinary service rendered to Queensland by the late the Hon. Rod Welford. Rod Welford served as a member of this parliament from 1989 until 2009 and is survived by his daughter, Lisa, and partner, Gayle. I extend my sincere sympathies to them both as well as his family at this time.

Rod Welford was born and raised in Brisbane and first took the seat of Stafford in 1989 at the age of 31. He would go on to hold that seat until 1992 when he would then win the seat of Everton. Rod would go on to become the minister for a number of portfolio areas, but as a teacher and a former school principal his position as the Queensland minister for education from 2005 to 2009 was of most significance to me and to my colleagues in education.

Rod was well educated himself, an important attribute for this position. He was respected immensely by the education profession during his time as minister. This was evidenced by the wide support afforded Rod for the bold and explicit education agenda he led. Rod had high expectations of himself and of others. Our profession was under no illusion as to what was expected of us, for Rod truly believed that a quality education and high-performing teachers could change the trajectory of a child's life.

During that time Minister Rod Welford made significant and exciting legislative reforms which included State Schools of Tomorrow, which involved extensive public consultation aiming to create modern, 21st century learning environments, flexible classrooms with advanced technology. He established the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework, part of the Smart State strategy, which supported teachers and schools in building a culture of high expectations, engaged learning and focused teaching. He oversaw the introduction of prep in all Queensland schools and the first code of school behaviour. Minister Welford established the Queensland College of Teachers and a renewed focus on teacher professionalism. He established the three Queensland academies and Aviation High.

As minister, Rod ensured every teacher was issued with a department laptop to support their teaching and communication with colleagues. He mandated 30 minutes of physical activity each day for primary school students and as minister, he ensured that all teachers embedded literacy and numeracy strategies in their teaching to improve student outcomes and so much more.

As a young principal, I had enormous respect for Minister Welford. His clear vision for education in Queensland, his values, his courage to enact change in a big department, his commitment to improving teaching and consequently student learning resulted in substantial overall school and system achievement. Rod was so proud of our public education system, our teachers and our students. Minister Welford achieved so much in such a short time as Minister for Education. He was a transformative leader.

In his post-political career, Rod became an adjunct professor at Griffith University, where he is much loved. I am sure the students at Griffith University have benefited, and will continue to benefit, from Rod's teachings for many years to come. Rod was a trailblazer in education, committed to making a difference. He was bold, he was intelligent and he was visionary. Rod can rest well knowing he made a significant difference to this world, improving the lives of so many, especially children. The students during his tenure as minister—and many more after—have benefited from the educational reforms that he led. Vale, Rod Welford.



Mr McCALLUM (Bundamba—ALP) (10.25 am): I rise to pay tribute to the late Hon. Rod Welford. As we have heard, before entering public service he was a solicitor and a barrister and was very passionately involved in lifesaving for his entire life, receiving many medals at state level and national level and he served in leadership positions with the Royal Life Saving Society of Queensland and, of course, his beloved Burleigh Heads surf lifesaving club. I will also mention his endless laps of the pool on level 7 at Parliament House when it was still there.

Rod was elected in 1989 and served for 20 years in this parliament, an incredible contribution. During that time he was an absolutely fierce local advocate. We have heard a lot about Rod's contributions and achievements during his long and esteemed ministerial career. During his time as environment minister, which included the tree-clearing reforms and many others, the one that I probably remember most acutely as a much younger person was the establishment of Queensland's first Environmental Protection Agency. That was really a landmark moment when it came to environmental protection sustainability in the state of Queensland.

Rod was, in the truest sense of the word, a reformer. He was able to think big, he was visionary and he was able to take that and put it into public policy in a way that delivered lasting reform—reforms that really stood the test of time and stood the test of change of government.

Rod was held in very high regard by those who served in this place with him. Post parliament his time spent committed to the issues that he devoted his life to, including environmental sustainability, saw him become the CEO of the Australian Council of Recycling. At that time it was the late 2000s. He championed, of course, recycling initiatives but also policies around e-waste and broader circular economy policies. Again, he was ahead of his time. His ability to see down the road and to see not only the challenges that were in front of us but also the ones that were coming was truly extraordinary.

With his appointment at Griffith University he continued to focus on sustainability and energy. There has been much mentioned—and rightly so—of his very generous legacy gift to Queensland Gives, but he also left a scholarship at Griffith University. At the very wonderful and well attended memorial that was held in Rod's honour, one of the vice-chancellors from Griffith University was there to pay tribute to another quiet part of Rod's enormous generosity.

Personally for me as a young man working as an adviser around this place, Rod was in the saddle and he loomed large amongst his contemporaries, many of whom have been mentioned. One thing that I reflect on personally was that he always gave an enormous amount of his time to young people coming up through the party—young Labor believers—and he was always extremely supportive and generous. It always really stuck with me that he always had time for young people. Rod had a life that was very well lived. He leaves a wonderful legacy. I want to pay tribute to Gayle, to Lisa, to his loved ones and to his family. Vale, Rod Welford—gone far too early.




Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (10.30 am): It is with extreme sadness that I rise to support the condolence motion for my good friend and colleague Rod Welford, born 30 September 1958—a good year, as it was the year I was born as well—and passing on 28 June 2025, just short of his 67th birthday. Rod was elected on 2 December 1989 for the seat of Stafford and, after not recontesting the seat of Everton, he left politics on 20 March 2009, but it was the legacy he left that will be forever enduring.

Rod was larger than life, and what a life he led—fit and healthy, masking the symptoms of a stage 4 cancer, swimmer extraordinaire, surf lifesaver, intellect. More importantly, he lived Labor values to the core, fighting for the environment, social justice, education and the arts—just a few of his passions. He was fortunate to pursue his passions during his 12 years as a minister and 20 years as a member of parliament, and what an effective minister: establishing the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, introducing tree-clearing laws to protect the Great Barrier Reef and seeing policies that expanded national parklands by over 400,000 hectares. He was a reformist attorney-general, with laws supporting the LGBTQ+ community. He was an arts minister who loved the arts, engaging wholeheartedly with the arts industry. He was passionate about education as the key to a better future, also using his love for the arts to establish Creative Generation—State Schools Onstage in 2005, and CGen continues today. It was always great to see Rod and Lisa at many performances and it was also great to share the role of education minister with my good friend Rod.

For those who do not know, Rod planted the roots of the Whitlam Institute that he formed in Queensland in 1992 as a more formal arrangement of the Whitlam Institute for Social and Economic Research and he obtained the endorsement of Gough Whitlam. Not only that, but Gough launched the institute in the Queensland parliament Premiers Hall. Rod was the convener and my good friend Howard Guille, from the Tertiary Education Union, the secretary. Others involved included Senator

Margaret Reynolds, Ian Lowe from Griffith University, Councillor John Campbell and Geoff Dow, political economist from the UQ, then a much younger councillor Mark Bailey and a much younger industrial officer Grace Grace. Carolyn Ryall was employed as executive officer responsible for publishing the Whitlam Institute's quarterly journal *Wiser* from 1993 to 1998. Rod loved independent thinking and listening and he had an incredible ability to bring big ideas to the fore, using his great intellect to find solutions on, for example, environmental and social issues among political complexities.

Rod is survived by Gayle, his partner of 32 years; his beloved daughter, Lisa; his mother, Gwen; his sister, Karen; and Stephen—and I acknowledge those in the gallery. He was a loving father and devoted to his family. I will miss his laugh and cheeky grin and seeing him around. His last text message to me on 24 June said, 'You're such a good soul.' I say, 'Ditto.' May he rest in peace. Vale, the Hon. Rod Welford.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (10.34 am): I rise to contribute to this condolence motion and pay tribute to the late the Hon. Rod Welford—a man of deep principle, fierce intellect and vision, a friend to many of us here, a great father, a partner, a brother, a son—whose contribution to Queensland will endure for generations to come. Rod Welford, as we have heard, served this state with distinction across many ministerial portfolios including the environment and education, but I want to reflect particularly on his contribution as arts minister, where his vision and passion helped shape Queensland's cultural identity.

Rod believed profoundly that the arts are not an optional extra but central to who we are as Queenslanders. Under his leadership, major programs were launched to strengthen our institutions, expand access and embed creativity in communities large and small. One of his most significant initiatives was the art+place Public Art Fund—a \$12 million investment that delivered sculptures, murals and installations across Queensland. From Mission Beach to Longreach, from skate parks on the Gold Coast to cultural trails in regional towns, Rod ensured that public art was not confined to galleries but was part of the daily life of Queenslanders.

He also supported small to medium arts organisations, creating flexibility and stability to creative groups. In fact, in 2008-09 alone, nearly \$10 million went to organisations such as the Queensland Poetry Festival and Vulcana, allowing them to thrive and take risks. He championed the Regional Arts Development Fund, investing millions into local councils so that communities in Cairns, Townsville and the Burnett region could showcase their own creativity. He backed programs like the Gritty Places Partnership Program, which converted old, disused council buildings into vibrant art spaces, and he ensured First Nations arts flourished, with the Backing Indigenous Arts funding flowing into Far North Queensland for new works, festivals and arts centres that celebrated First Nations cultures.

Rod's contribution extended well beyond the arts portfolio and his other government responsibilities. He carried into every area of public life a conviction that government must work for future generations, not just for today, and that commitment is reflected in one of his most enduring legacies. Rod Welford held a deep, enduring commitment to the public good and was determined to see this continue into the future. His legacy is more than policies and politics; it is the creation of better communities throughout Queensland for every generation to come—a vision he entrusted, as we have already heard, to Queensland Gives to deliver.

While he served as a member of this place for some two decades, reformed environmental and educational outcomes and supported the arts in Queensland, he also believed that sustainability must guide every part of government and community life. True to that vision, earlier this year, in the final weeks and months of his life, he made, as we have heard, a significant personal bequest to Queensland Gives. Queensland Gives is the state's leading perpetual public charitable trust. It works with donors to grow funds that provide ongoing grants to charities across Queensland. By entrusting millions of dollars to this foundation, Rod directed support to the causes that shaped his life—social change, environmental protection and education. This bequest was more than a financial gift; it was a vision for the future. He hoped to inspire others, particularly high-wealth individuals, to follow his example, ensuring that generosity today becomes opportunity tomorrow. Through Queensland Gives, his commitment to the public good will continue to shape our state long after his passing.

Rod Welford leaves behind a legacy of leadership, generosity and enduring vision. He will be remembered in the institutions he strengthened, the artists he championed, the communities he empowered and the future he has invested in. On behalf of the generations of Queenslanders who will benefit from his work and his foresight, we thank him and his family. Vale, Rod Welford.



Mr BERKMAN (Maiwar—Grn) (10.38 am): I rise to offer a few words in support of this motion and I do so this morning on behalf of myself and the countless members of the Queensland Greens who have reached out to me to ask that I offer our sympathies and condolences to his family. Unsurprisingly, Rod was very well known to countless members of the Greens in Queensland and the environmental movement more broadly, given his quite extraordinary and longstanding work in environmental advocacy and reform. I will not single out or repeat any of the countless policy or portfolio achievements that others have referred to this morning, but I will note that, as a student of law and environmental science in the 2000s—long before I was particularly interested in politics—Rod's work was clear in the work that all of us students in those topics did. His legacy in education is manifest physically in my electorate with the extraordinary institution that is the Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology. The achievements that we keep seeing year on year coming out of that place are testament to his foresight and the work that he did in that portfolio.

I did not personally have much to do with Rod, but I had the great pleasure of meeting him a few years back when I attended Creative Generation with my eldest daughter. I was not aware until just yesterday, as it has been repeated today, that that is part of his legacy in education. That crossover of education and arts is a wonderful lasting tribute to him. In that brief encounter Rod was so incredibly warm, so incredibly interested. All of the personal traits and values that others have spoken to were laid bare. It was wonderful to meet him, and I know that my daughter enjoyed meeting him that day. She reflected very fondly on it. I offer to Rod's family, friends and loved ones—everyone who lost this extraordinary man too soon—my deepest sympathies and condolences.



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (10.41 am): I rise to speak to the condolence motion for the Hon. Rod Welford. I pass my personal condolences to his partner Gayle and his beloved daughter Lisa. I had coffee this morning with Justin Harper, a long-time chief of staff to Rod. He is in the gallery today. He shared with me his memories and greatest recollections of the man who he admired so much. He said to me that what he remembered most was that Rod always wanted everything that he did and the government did to be the best that we could possibly do. Proposals would come to him and he would always say, 'Is this the best? Can we do even better than that?' He always did. He would always think of permutations so far ahead of anyone else that you could see that it was going to have long-lasting consequences.

As a former education minister and as the shadow minister for Education, one has only to look at his achievements in just four years of education to see what that drive was and what that quest for the best was, knowing that education is everything in determining whether a child will have a happy and healthy future. The introduction of the prep year; the State Schools of Tomorrow with the renewal of some of our oldest state schools; a renewed vision for public education, knowing that every child, no matter who they are or where they are in Queensland, deserves the same opportunities as the next person; the 'year of' concept, with the Year of Physical Activity being the first of those; working with the federal government on the education revolution; the new school curriculum and setting up the Queensland curriculum, assessment and reporting framework; the asbestos roof replacement program; the code of school behaviour; a renewed focus on teacher professionalism and professional development; and more special education options—anyone who has been a minister or is a minister knows what an extraordinary achievement it is to have not only the vision for those things but also the drive to achieve them and in such a short period of time. These were not achievements based on a political agenda, but very much a values-based agenda. That is what we are hearing about Rod Welford across all the portfolios which he oversaw.

I remember that Rod Welford helped me in the 2009 election campaign. I was coming into that term just as he was leaving. I asked him if he would come out to my electorate and meet with people interested in education. There were teachers, parents, principals and a whole lot of people just wanting to talk about education. He was a man who had a record of extraordinary achievement. I will never forget the way he listened to those people, the way he treated them, the respect that he showed them and his genuine appreciation for the way that they were looking at any one of those proposals which to them was going to make a huge difference, whether large or small. They walked away feeling like they had said and done something incredibly important.

We have talked here today about Creative Generation. This year's Creative Generation happened not long after Rod had passed. There are many people involved in Creative Generation who have been doing it for an awfully long time. Many of them knew that it was Rod Welford who had started that whole process. It is the most joyous occasion, but there were a lot of tears. I recognise that the minister spoke after the event and said some beautiful words about Rod to acknowledge just what it

meant to everybody in that room that he was the beginning of it all. That is the measure of him. We all wish to make an impact when we come into this House. We are all here to do good. There is no doubt whatsoever that this was a man who had an enormous impact. Vale, Rod Welford.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Will members indicate their agreement with the motion of condolence by standing in silence for one minute.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Question time will commence at 11.31 am.

PETITION

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

Hervey Bay Hospital, MRI Machine

Mr Lee, from 6,782 petitioners, requesting the House to prioritise the installation of an MRI machine for the Hervey Bay Hospital [\[1267\]](#) [\[1268\]](#).

Petition received.

TABLED PAPER

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business (Hon. Minnikin)—

[1274](#) Queensland Small Business Commissioner—Annual Report 2024-25

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Victims of Crime



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (10.48 am): Our government is committed to prioritising victims and putting their rights first. We promised we would reduce victim numbers and be transparent about that and that is exactly what we are delivering. Queensland police data for the first six months of 2025 show victim numbers have fallen 5.7 per cent compared with the first six months of last year—a small but significant step in the right direction after a decade of decline under Labor.


We inherited a system that did not put victims first. In 10 months our government has worked hard to prioritise victims and ensure consequences for actions. Adult Crime, Adult Time was law before Christmas and further offences were added earlier this year. Jack's Law is permanent, helping take dangerous weapons off our streets. Consultation is underway on our government's new Victims Advocate Service to provide support and help victims navigate the justice system. Significant reforms to domestic violence legislation have allowed police the power to offer immediate protection to victims and trial GPS devices for high-risk offenders.

To help more victims we have invested \$31.3 million to double the capacity of both Womensline and Mensline and deliver a new regional hub in North Queensland. In October last year, if you rang the Womensline, the critical service called by women in crisis, you had a less than 50 per cent chance of having someone answer your call. Since this government's intervention, the call response rates have increased significantly between April and June 2025. We must continue to increase this rate.

Last night, our government passed significant amendments to the Penalties and Sentences Act. These changes will put victims of crime back at the heart of the justice process. Our reforms will ensure criminal sentencing processes prioritise victims and better meet community expectations. The use of good-character evidence will now be restricted during the sentencing of sexual offences. Victims should not have to hear that their offender is a 'good bloke'. Labor had 10 years to deliver these changes—10 years—but did not. Now, during sentencing, courts will also be required to recognise the harm to victims.

We are leading the nation, delivering the strongest child protection framework in the country. We have launched an historic commission of inquiry into child safety and a review into the blue card system and have fast-tracked the reportable conduct scheme. Our government has also led the charge for a national early childhood educator register. Our strong action proves we are delivering justice for victims. We know that there is much more to be done and I promise Queenslanders that that work will continue.

Hunt, Mr J


 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.50 am): Yesterday in the House I tabled a \$12,000 outstanding invoice from Australia Post, dated 3 August 2025, with respect to the former member for Caloundra, Mr Jason Hunt. The Australia Post invoice related to several outstanding invoices dating back 12 months for expenditure by Mr Hunt just prior to the October election. I table a further Australia Post statement, from only two weeks ago, dated 3 September 2025, showing approximately \$12,000 still outstanding and to be paid by Mr Jason Hunt.

As accountable minister under schedule 3 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009, the Premier made appropriate inquiries with the accountable officer appointed pursuant to section 66 of the Financial Accountability Act. The Premier has been advised the following (1) Mr Hunt was personally notified of his \$12,000 debt to Australia Post in January 2025; (2) Mr Hunt was again personally notified of his \$12,000 debt to Australia Post in August 2025; (3) concerning, despite non-payment of the Australia Post debt for 12 months, I can advise the House that Mr Hunt acquitted these expenses on his parliamentary acquittals as if those bills had been paid when, in fact, they had not been paid; (4) in claiming the Australia Post expense, Mr Hunt uploaded a receipt that did not match the invoice; (5) the acquittal entry nominated a payment date of 24 October 2024; (6) Australia Post was not paid, as claimed by Mr Hunt, on 24 October 2024; and (7) Mr Hunt only paid the Australia Post debt last week, not some time ago.

Mr Acting Speaker, you would appreciate that a member of parliament personally trousering \$12,000 of his constituents' money and then fraudulently claiming the bills were paid by acquitting them as if paid when in fact they had not been paid is of a most serious nature and is something that all members in this House should be concerned about. As the Premier is the accountable minister under the act, the Premier will request the accountable officer undertake whatever action is necessary in order for the public to maintain confidence in the publicly disclosed electoral expenses by members and former members, including Jason Hunt.

Tabled paper: Australia Post statement, dated 3 September 2025, addressed to Office of Jason Hunt MP [\[1270\]](#).

Child Protection

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (10.54 am): The Crisafulli government and former opposition has long held concerns that Queensland's blue card system was failing to ensure the protection of Queensland children. The Crisafulli government is committed to strengthening and streamlining Queensland's blue card system to ensure we have appropriate and robust safeguards in place to help protect our most vulnerable. We have now reached a significant turning point, with landmark reforms coming into effect this weekend delivering stronger safeguards for children and tougher penalties for predators. We are restoring integrity and confidence through a framework that underpins the safety of Queensland children.


For parents, this is about peace of mind. Parents deserve peace of mind that the person with whom they leave their child has been properly checked. That is why more people working in child related roles, whether in entertainment, amusement parks, sports or clubs, education or law, will now be required to hold a blue card. We are also introducing new self-disclosure obligations, a simpler disqualification framework and consistent rules for parent volunteers. These reforms will strengthen compliance powers and make decision-making more responsive to risk. Blue Card Services will now be able to exercise a new discretionary suspension power so they can take immediate action to protect children at risk of harm.

As we have said from day one, the protection of our children is a key priority for the Crisafulli government, and blue cards are only one part of the picture. That is why we launched a landmark review into the blue card system as well as the vital commission of inquiry into the child safety system. In August I attended the Standing Council of Attorneys-General meeting and fought for the Commonwealth to remove the barriers to information sharing from their national redress scheme. I am

proud to say that, because of Queensland's advocacy not just for Queensland but also on behalf of the other states, the Commonwealth has agreed to address this concerning gap. From this week, a new position-of-authority offence is also in place, targeting adults who exploit their power over 16- and 17-year-olds. Those predators will face penalties of up to 14 years imprisonment. Where repeated sexual conduct is proven, offenders could face life behind bars. We are also extending non-contact orders for victims of sexual violence from two to five years, with harsher penalties for breaches.

This does send a clear message: victims will be heard, protected and supported. We make no apologies for prioritising the rights of victims. This government will do whatever it takes to ensure thorough and robust checks and penalties are in place to protect Queensland's children.

Youth Crime

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.57 am): The Crisafulli government is committed to restoring safety where you live, ensuring Queenslanders feel safe in their homes, at work and in their communities. That is why our government is delivering on our promise to fix Labor's youth crime crisis and reduce the number of victims across this state.


Today I am proud to update the House that the Crisafulli government is delivering on another major election commitment to restore safety where you live with our \$80 million Circuit Breaker Sentencing initiative. Over the past 10 years under Labor, there has been a 98 per cent increase in youth offending. The previous Labor government weakened the youth crime laws in this state and created a generation of hardcore repeat offenders who made our communities less safe. Previous Labor governments failed to invest in effective early intervention or rehabilitation programs, leaving youth without the proper support to turn away from a life of crime.

After 10 years of a spiralling youth crime crisis under previous Labor governments, the Crisafulli government's Circuit Breaker Sentencing is yet another initiative we are delivering to rehabilitate youth offenders and keep communities safe. Through Circuit Breaker Sentencing, the courts will have the option to order youth to do the rehabilitation they need whilst also removing them from the communities they are causing harm to, to stop the churn of reoffending and restore safety where Queenslanders live. Delivered across two remote locations in North and South-East Queensland, the Circuit Breaker Sentencing program will have capacity for up to 60 youth offenders for three to six months, offering a genuine alternative to detention—one built on structure, discipline, education and rehabilitation.

For too long, repeat offenders have cycled through a broken system with no real intervention. The Circuit Breaker Sentencing program ends that churn. It puts community safety first. We are calling on non-government organisations to partner with government to deliver this new initiative and transform rehabilitation and detention in Queensland. Market engagement is now open, with submissions closing on 9 October.

Circuit Breaker Sentencing delivers what Labor never could: real consequences, real rehabilitation and real community safety. After 10 years of decline under Labor, the Crisafulli government is delivering real reforms within 10 months. This is the fresh start Queenslanders voted for. We are a government that will never give up on making Queensland safer, and we will never give up on turning young lives around.

Thompson, Mr T


 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (11.00 am): I rise today to update the House on serious matters concerning the suspended mayor of Townsville, Councillor Troy Thompson. For nearly 250 days, the Townsville community was left in limbo while the former government failed to act. They failed to deliver stability, and they failed to uphold the standards expected under the Local Government Act. In contrast, we acted within 2½ weeks of coming to government. We promised the people of Townsville a fresh start, and we delivered it. By suspending the mayor, we ensured the council could get on with the job of serving the people and businesses of Townsville.

On 26 August 2025 the Crime and Corruption Commission, pursuant to section 60(2) of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, provided me with briefings as part of their ongoing investigations into Councillor Thompson. That briefing set out serious allegations. Since receiving that advice I have considered the matters relating to Councillor Thompson in considerable detail, including my responsibilities in relation to the Local Government Act 2009. Accordingly, I will today issue Councillor Thompson with a formal show cause notice. This will provide him with 14 days to respond and sets out

in detail the basis of my concerns. As required under section 120 of the Local Government Act 2009, the notice includes a detailed explanation of the factual basis for forming my reasonable belief that dismissal may be appropriate. Following the 14-day period and upon receipt of Councillor Thompson's response, I will carefully consider the matters raised before making a final decision.

These are serious matters and the actions I have taken reflect this government's firm commitment to transparency, natural justice and the highest standards of integrity in local government. At every step my focus has been on the people of Townsville. They deserve a council that is stable, accountable and able to deliver for its community. I have sought to ensure the public interest of the Townsville community is always at the centre of my decision-making.

Queensland's Time to Shine

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education and the Arts) (11.03 am): In late July I was very pleased to launch Queensland's Time to Shine: a 10-year strategy for arts and culture 2025-2035. Queensland's Time to Shine is a fresh start for arts and culture in Queensland, with the vision for a thriving creative sector supporting a statewide vibrant arts scene. Queensland will be front and centre when we host the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in seven years time, and we need the creative workforce, cultural assets, experiences and infrastructure to deliver a memorable event.


The strategy outlines our commitment to strengthen opportunities so all Queenslanders can access and participate in arts and culture, regardless of who and where they are. This commitment includes preparing our creative workforce for the future by investing in skills and opportunities that build employment opportunities and long-term careers. It provides a clear direction for boosting the state's unique arts and cultural experiences to attract visitors and drive a creative economy aligned with the priorities of the Crisafulli government's 2032 Delivery Plan and *Destination 2045: delivering Queensland's tourism future*.

Queensland's Time to Shine will be delivered across six priority areas: transforming arts and culture for Brisbane 2032 and beyond; creating unique Queensland arts experiences; maximising opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creatives; growing a future creative workforce for a creative economy; increasing arts for all Queenslanders; and sharing our stories and celebrating our storytellers. The strategy's first 12-month action plan is underpinned by an arts portfolio investment of \$75.8 million from the 2025-26 arts budget outcome. This includes \$42 million for key screen incentives, including local productions, and increased funding of \$9.4 million to support regional festivals and events, regional arts services and jobs.

I am pleased to announce that actions of the strategy are underway, including new funding opportunities for Queenslanders. For example, a new regional community arts fund will support community-led organisations, groups and individuals to deliver high-quality, community-based arts and cultural programs in regional Queensland. This is exciting progress for arts and culture in Queensland. I look forward to sharing the outcomes of this strategy as we work together to maximise new opportunities and back Queensland's creatives, stories and cultures. I table a copy of Queensland's Time to Shine.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government: Report titled 'Queensland's Time to Shine: A 10-year strategy for arts and culture 2025-2035' [\[1271\]](#).

Child Safety System

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.06 am): The Crisafulli government made a commitment to the people of Queensland through the Safer Children, Safer Communities plan. What I have uncovered since becoming the child safety minister is nothing short of a diabolical mess. When in opposition we asked questions about children who were self-placing, and as the minister I took steps to conduct the first-ever Queensland audit into children who were self-placing outside of the child safety system.

We had five failed ministers under the former Labor government, and not one of them ever conducted an audit of children who were self-placing to understand why, to understand the risks or to even ascertain if those children were in fact safe. The census found that, of the 772 children who were self-placing: 81 were subject to a youth justice order; 51 were on bail; 144 have been subject to another youth justice involvement or interaction; 325 have a diagnosed disability or a mental health disorder; 269 have a suspected disability or mental health disorder; 371 were missing or absent because they

did not like their placement or preferred living elsewhere; 55 did not feel safe in their placement; and 57 had a conflict with another person within the placement. During the census, 586 children were missing or absent and had a history of frequently being missing or absent, and only 44 per cent of them were engaged with school. The findings were damning, with many sleeping rough. Nearly 50 per cent were known to be staying with the family, parents or siblings they had been removed from due to safety. Those opposite knew that self-placing had been occurring. In fact, five former ministers oversaw that regime. It is not good enough. It is not good enough to not ascertain where our most vulnerable children are.

We have taken action. The Crisafulli government will embed child safety officers at three trial sites alongside youth justice officers and police officers. The pilot will trial in Cairns, Caboolture and Logan, and child safety officers will be working after hours to conduct risk assessments on children in care, analyse child protection information on the ground, assist in returning children to their placement or to another safe placement, and act as a conduit to Child Safety to improve continuity of care and casework. We will do this in an attempt to strengthen information sharing between Child Safety and Queensland police. We are also establishing a rapid information exchange with police to support their work on the ground if they encounter children.

There are complex issues and we are fully aware of that, but the systemic failures within the child safety system are why the government has called a commission of inquiry into the failures of the last decade since Carmody. We will do all we can to protect vulnerable children and to ensure safer children deliver safer communities.

Ambulance Service, Enterprise Bargaining Agreement



Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (11.09 am): After a decade of decline under Labor, the Crisafulli LNP government is delivering a fresh start for Queensland. I am pleased to advise the House that the Crisafulli government has now reached in-principle agreement this week with the United Workers Union for a new certified agreement for our Queensland Ambulance Service frontline staff—our much loved hardworking ambulance staff and paramedics.

The Queensland Ambulance Service's 6,200 operational employees represent the very best of our public health system—from our paramedics, the face of the QAS, responding to emergencies to our patient transport officers, who provide a safe journey for patients through the health system, to our emergency medical dispatchers being the first point of contact through the triple-0 call centre. Across all corners of the state of Queensland, our ambulance staff care for Queenslanders when they need it most with skill, dedication and resilience.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: They do not like it, do they? The unions love us.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, would you direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: Indeed. It sounds like the trainee advocacy officer still has their training wheels on over there, I have to say. The in-principle agreement with the United Workers Union will deliver for Queensland ambulance frontline staff a guaranteed eight per cent increase to wages and allowances over three years, with additional wage increases triggered via a CPI uplift if it becomes apparent that that is necessary.

It also delivers for regional and remote Queensland, with initiatives to attract, retain and recognise paramedics and operational employees across the state. We have introduced things like a new allowance for single-officer responses in remote and regional areas. Might I say that we are also increasing the sick leave payment—something those opposite failed to do over three previous rounds of agreements. We are giving them additional sick leave days that those opposite refused to give our hardworking paramedics. That now brings them into line with New South Wales—the best in the country.

The agreement also recognises and rewards employees working unsociable night shifts and has a focus on helping our operational staff to finish work on time so they can get home to their families sooner. I give a shout-out to Mel Burns, the union delegate from Metro South whom I met with. I want to let Mel know that we will work harder to get her home on time so she can see her son, Ethan, before he goes to bed at night. Well done, Mel.

I want to thank the United Workers Union for their collaborative engagement and for their shared commitment to support our valued frontline workforce, and I thank Fiona Scanlon and all delegates from the union with respect to the Ambulance Service who came to see me to discuss this on a number of occasions. So happy were they with the results that again they agreed to another photograph with me in the office. I table that very happy snap.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and member for Clayfield, Hon. Tim Nicholls [1272]

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! The document has been tabled. Minister for Health, carry on.

Mr NICHOLLS: Today's announcement builds on our recent in-principle agreement with the QNMU and AWU to secure nation-leading wages and conditions for our 57,000 nurses and midwives and our earlier deal with Together Queensland and ASMOFQ for our 15,000 world-class medical officers.

The Crisafulli government has now reached in-principle agreement with over 78,000 of our frontline workers in Queensland. That is, almost 40 per cent of the entire Queensland Public Service workforce has reached agreement. Those workers, subject to the ballot being successful, will receive their payments before Christmas—a well-deserved lead-in to the Christmas break.

Each of these agreements demonstrates our commitment to working in partnership with unions to deliver for Queenslanders. The agreements also demonstrate that the Crisafulli government is not only curing Labor's health crisis but delivering on its commitment to grow the health workforce by 46,000 additional workers by 2032.

Government Digital Fund; Women in Technology



Hon. SJ MINNIKIN (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (11.15 am): After 10 years of Labor decline in the ICT systems that Queenslanders rely on, the Crisafulli government is getting on with the job of delivering the technology to drive high-quality customer service outcomes. In just 11 months, the Crisafulli government is already reshaping how the government serves Queenslanders and Queensland businesses. We are making it easier for everyone to get the help they need by bringing many of the customer service phone supports, online supports and face-to-face supports under one department for the first time ever.

I am pleased to inform the House that work is well underway to deliver the \$1 billion Queensland Government Digital Fund. Over the next four years this fund will get more value and more coordination for our ICT investments by focusing on better connected digital systems and services that work seamlessly together to serve Queenslanders.

I recently attended major events hosted by the Council of ICT Associations, CICTA, Women in Technology and the Australian Information Industry Association and told them that now is the opportunity to bring knowledge and cutting-edge expertise to support our rollout of digital and ICT solutions, service and processes. With competition and the right strategic settings, Queenslanders can expect cutting-edge systems delivered efficiently.


I would like to touch on another area of opportunity made clear to me when I attended the recent Women in Technology annual awards night in Brisbane earlier this month. It was a wonderful evening. It was a gathering of more than 700 women in the technology sector, with members and representatives from across ICT and STEM sectors. Women in Technology plays a vital role in creating pathways, building networks and ensuring women have the opportunities they deserve to lead and shape the future of technology in Queensland and beyond.

This year's event brought together highly skilled ICT practitioners to drive innovation, champion equality and create lasting change for women in tech and STEM. The awards theme 'Stronger Together' was embodied in the QCase project that won the public sector award, which I was proud to present on the night. QCase is a groundbreaking digital platform revolutionising civil justice in Queensland. Developed for the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, QCAT, and Magistrates Court, it replaces traditional paper-based processes with an end-to-end digital solution for minor civil disputes. By enabling 24/7 access to lodge documents, track progress and view case information, QCase has enhanced transparency, improved case processing times and streamlined communication across the court system.

This project is a landmark achievement in public sector innovation. The QCase project is an outstanding example of how digital innovation can indeed transform the way we deliver essential public services. Its success lies not just in its technical execution but also in the inclusive, human centred design that prioritises access to justice for all Queenslanders. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the women who led this project. It was simply an outstanding effort.


Women represent just one in four tech workers in Australia, according to the Tech Council of Australia. It is a statistic that absolutely needs to change to ensure Queensland becomes globally competitive in the technological sector in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. I look forward to working with Women in Technology and others to ensure we are driving meaningful change in innovation and competition. Whether you are a small and family tech business or a company with global reach, we want you to know that Queensland's ICT sector is open for business.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.19 am): I advise that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads will be absent for today's sitting due to illness, I advise that the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations will answer questions for the minister in question time.

ETHICS COMMITTEE


Report

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.19 am): I lay upon the table of the House the following report of the Ethics Committee: Report No. 238 titled *Matter of privilege referred to the Speaker on 29 July 2025 relating to allegations of reflecting on the Chair by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Morayfield*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 238, 58th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 29 July 2025 relating to allegations of reflecting on the Chair by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Morayfield [[1273](#)].

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SMALL BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Report


 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (11.20 am): I lay upon the table of the House a report of the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee titled *Report No. 4 of the 58th Parliament—Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee: Report No. 4, 58th Parliament—Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland [[1274](#)].

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Question time today will conclude at 12.20 pm.

Puberty Health Education Project

 **Mr MILES** (11.20 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. I table text messages from a Queensland Health executive director on 21 May, revealed under RTI, which state—

Courier-Mail is reporting that the puberty education project is being reinstated.

There's a lesson about DG wanting cuts versus what the minister wants ...

Is the director-general implementing the LNP's secret plan for cuts?

Tabled paper: Messages, dated 21 May 2025, regarding the puberty education project [[1275](#)].

Mr NICHOLLS: What a surprise that this question should be asked by the Leader of the Opposition, who is obviously suffering from relevance deprivation syndrome. That RTI, as I understand it, shows exactly what I have been saying for 10 months; that is, every cent of the health budget is being spent in the health portfolio. Not only that, but another 10.2 per cent of 2025-26 is being spent in the health portfolio. Not only that, but the project those opposite came in here and accused us of cutting is not being cut: it is being fully funded.

They thought they had the great drop on a program in schools. The member for Miller, the member for Waterford and the member for Murrumba came in here and thought they had the leak of all time. They thought they had it all. They spread it around. They slunk around the gallery upstairs selling the story, trying to get it out there as they always do.

The sheer fact of the matter is there was no change. The money that was there is being spent, as it is across the board, in the Women and Girls' Health strategy. Not only that, but the \$245 million strategy was underfunded by those over there to the tune of \$117 million. We are funding it in this year's budget so that program can run out. On coming to government we found out that promises had been made but the money had not been made available for it. We looked at it and we thought, 'What was their great passion?' They spruiked the Women and Girls' Health Strategy week in, week out, but they failed to put the money behind it to make it happen. We have put the money behind it. If it were not so sad, sorry and sloppy, which we have come to expect from the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Miller in relation to their accuracy and truthfulness in this place and on social media, it would be laughable. All of the money allocated has been spent and we have funded the strategy those opposite left unfunded when they lost office.

Queensland Health, Programs

Mr MILES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Yesterday the minister said the director-general 'knows that he needs to spend money effectively and efficiently'. Did the minister give the director-general advice on health programs that should be cut?

Mr NICHOLLS: It is like Bruce Lehrmann all over again. Having escaped the lion's den, he has come back in to get his hat and run out again. That is the Leader of the Opposition. He comes back in again and asks me: are we spending money in Queensland Health? Are we funding programs across the board? Not only are we funding them; we are funding more of them. It does not matter whether it is for endometriosis and pelvic floor pain; it does not matter whether it is for step-up step-down facilities; it does not matter whether it is for MRI and CT scanners; it does not matter whether it is the additional transit lounges we are opening; it does not matter whether it is the 70 new beds we have opened at the Gold Coast University Hospital; it does not matter whether it is the 24 new beds at the secure mental health unit at the Gold Coast; it does not matter whether it is the 10 extra beds we have opened up in Rockhampton; it does not matter whether it is the new mental health unit the Crisafulli government has opened up in Cairns—we are spending money. We are building beds.

Mr Bailey: Funded by Labor.

Mr NICHOLLS: We are getting on with the job. We are delivering after a decade of Labor's crisis.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Health, just pause for a moment. Members on my left, none of your interjections are being taken. I would like to hear the minister clearly, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I heard the member for Miller say 'funded by Labor'. I can tell members that it was not funded by Labor. When we went in there we found a letter from the former health minister to the former treasurer and former premier saying, 'There's no money left in the sustaining capital budget. There is no money beyond 2024-25'—because they had already spent it all—and they would be returning to CBRC cap in hand because it had all gone out the door.

What else are we funding that was not funded by Labor? Thirty perinatal mental health beds for women and children. Who had to apologise about that? The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Miller. We know that the member for Miller is loose with his facts because he made unfounded claims in relation to surgery at the Toowoomba Base Hospital.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I obviously take personal offence at that sledge and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health, would you withdraw, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. The member for Miller has difficulty with his facts when he stands up and posts on social media, much to the disgust of the hardworking people at the Toowoomba Hospital and Health Service, about cancellations of surgery when in fact it did not happen. He got a letter from the chief executive saying, 'Please apologise, because you are completely misrepresenting the facts and upsetting our hardworking clinicians, doctors and nurses.' He still has not manned up and apologised in public for doing that—

(Time expired)

Public Moneys

Ms MORTON: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the Deputy Premier outline the Crisafulli LNP government's approach to dealing with fraudulent compensation claims, and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the honourable member for Caloundra for the question. I want to start by thanking the honourable member for Caloundra for bringing the matters of the former member for Caloundra to my attention and the attention of the honourable the Premier. It is clear now, as I have indicated this morning, that the former member for Caloundra has fraudulently acquitted money that he did not pay for 12 months. When we first raised this issue yesterday we saw the unhinged response from the Leader of the Opposition, jumping up to protect his former Labor comrade in the left, saying that he personally paid the invoice. Well, as we have indicated today, the invoice was only paid last week—12 months after it was issued and raised by the media and after the former member for Caloundra was given numerous opportunities to pay the invoice.

What is sickening—and the crime of this—is this fact: the former member for Caloundra acquitted the funding; he said to parliament through his acquittals that he had paid the invoice. He had not. When the former member for Caloundra acquitted it, he attached an invoice which was not associated with the invoice issued by Australia Post to the sum of \$12,000. The former member for Caloundra received the money. He got the \$12,000 from Caloundra residents. The question is: what did he spend the \$12,000 on in the last 12 months? What did he buy for \$12,000? Why did he leave it for 12 months to pay his bill? Why did he fraudulently acquit the \$12,000 that he had paid?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I cannot believe the opposition would be so outraged at my bringing this matter to the attention of the House. The outrage should be that their former member for Caloundra fraudulently acquitted the money of the residents of Caloundra to the sum of \$12,000. The only thing the opposition leader and the Labor Party are outraged about is the fact that the former member for Caloundra, Jason Hunt, got caught. That is their outrage: the fact that he got caught after 12 months. The opposition leader said yesterday that he has personally paid it now. You cannot have personally paid it when you have acquitted it. What he has effectively done now is pay back the people of Caloundra whom he defrauded for 12 months—12 months ago—to the sum of \$12,000. That is what the former member for Caloundra did. He can never run for office again. The former member for Caloundra, Jason Hunt, cannot be trusted again by the people of Caloundra or with their money.

(Time expired)

Puberty Health Education Project

Ms GRACE: My question is to the Minister for Health. I table Queensland Health emails from the deputy director-general which outline that the decision to cut the puberty health program was made at the highest level.

Tabled paper: Emails from Queensland Health regarding the Women and Girls' Health Strategy [\[1276\]](#).

Can the minister guarantee to Queenslanders that the minister was unaware of a decision to scrap a project at the highest level?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for McConnel for the question. The member is obviously still burring up over the fact that we have a deal with the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union, her old union—

Ms GRACE: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at those ridiculous statements and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health, the member has taken personal offence. I would ask you to withdraw, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: Absolutely. The member for McConnel—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, could you withdraw, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: Sorry, yes, of course, I withdraw. I did it while I was standing up. The member for McConnel is obviously personally deeply distressed and is still unable to get over the fact that we have managed to secure a deal with our nurses and midwives—

Ms GRACE: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Nonsense comments, take offence.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Ms GRACE: I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Are you taking personal offence at those comments?

Ms GRACE: Yes. Nonsense, nonsense, nonsense.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, I have heard the point of order. Minister for Health, the member has taken personal offence. Would you withdraw, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. It was with great delight that I was able to stand up today and talk about the deals that we have been able to achieve with our hardworking frontline workers—78,000 of them—within nine months: an in-principle agreement with not one day of lost work, not one day of dispute. That is something those on that side are unable to accept we have been able to do. We have done it by doing things like increasing overtime allowances, increasing shift allowances, increasing rural and remote allowances, making sure they are rewarded for unsociable hours, making sure they get home on time—all things those opposite were unable to deliver notwithstanding the fact that the member for McConnel was the industrial relations minister and supposedly comes with not only a Harvard background but also an ability to deal with unions.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I appreciate your point of order. The minister has been asked about his state of mind about a decision being made at the highest level. It is a fairly broad question, and the minister is telling us about his thoughts on the matter and being relevant. Minister, please continue.

Mr NICHOLLS: In that sense I can understand why those opposite are frustrated, because they have come in here every day this week thinking they have another gotcha question, thinking there is another way that something is not being done as it ought to be done, whereas this government is proceeding calmly and methodically to deal with a decade of decline. In doing so, in the health portfolio we are continuing to fund the programs we said we would continue to fund, including the program that the member for McConnel is referring to, which is known as the Ready, Set, Grow! program. It is a program run across six schools involving the teaching and education of certain subjects and areas to kids. I think three of them are in Cairns and three are in another location, but I can confirm that. That program is fully funded, and that program continues to be funded—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr O'Connor: They don't like it.

Mr NICHOLLS: They do not like it. That program will be funded to its conclusion as originally proposed.

(Time expired)

Public Moneys

Mrs STOKER: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity. Will the Attorney explain why Queensland taxpayers' money should be treated with integrity and accountability, and is the Attorney aware of any examples where these standards were not met during a decade of decline?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I thank the honourable member very much for the question because it is exceedingly important. I would suggest that the No. 1 rule of any member of this House—both current members and former members who are still required to acquit money to the parliament—is that it is taxpayers' money. It is our constituents' money. It is money that should be used for the benefit of our communities. For those people online—probably the five or 10 people listening—

Mr O'Connor: Just your office.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, that is probably just my office. They are hearing about acquittals. What that means is that parliament gives members of parliament a certain amount of money to benefit their local constituency. The former member for Caloundra, Jason Hunt, as it has been furnished in this House, obviously misused—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They are defending him over there, but this is someone who took \$12,000 from the parliament; he put a receipt up on the acquittals and he said, 'I paid this bill.' He not only did that but he had to sign a piece of paper. We have all done it. What could that \$12,000 have

been used for? It could have gone to some local sporting groups. It could have gone to help someone in dire need of more health services for their child. It could have gone to constituents who were pleading for their local member to provide them with a bit of support for their community group.

Mr Crisafulli: He could have posted some mail.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Or he actually could have posted some mail about what the then government was going to do.

Mr Bleijie: He did, but he should have paid the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. He did do that, possibly with all good intentions, but it does raise the question. I thank the current member for Caloundra, Kendall Morton. She is someone who is standing up for her community. She respects taxpayers' money, she respects people's money and she pays her bills.

The question today for the Leader of the Opposition is: what are the bills he is paying on behalf of this bloke? What are the bills that have not been paid by Jason Hunt? After 12 months, what are the bills that the Leader of the Opposition—who does not look so happy right now—is paying? He and the one sitting beside him yesterday were saying, 'He paid it. He paid it.' Well, we now know that is not correct. We know that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had to come in here today and apologise. They all should apologise on behalf of Jason Hunt to the people of Caloundra.

(Time expired)

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana, we will hear questions in silence.

Puberty Health Education Project

Mr DICK: My question is to the Minister for Health. I table a Queensland Health email which states the minister wanted details on the Puberty Health Education Project within the Women and Girls' Health Strategy.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 17 March 2025, from the Manager of the Queensland Women and Girls Health Improvement Team, Queensland Health [1277].

Why did Queensland Health cut the puberty health project after the minister asked about it?

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr Power: What did you ask them?

Mr NICHOLLS: I am happy to take that interjection from the member for Logan, as nonsensical as it was. I thank the member for Woodridge for his question. The member for Woodridge obviously is well known to us as a former health minister—a health minister who had such a good relationship with his department that he had to have a lock installed on his door so they could not get in to see him. That was because, he claims, he had such confidential documents that his own department could not see them. Obviously, his relationship with his then director-general was one of enduring trust and confidence.

Mr Bailey: Record rant.

Mr NICHOLLS: I take that interjection from the member for Miller, who makes yet another useful interjection. The member for Woodridge, who inherited an elective—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! Stop your quarrelling.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! Deputy Premier and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, cease your quarrelling.

Mr NICHOLLS: The member for Woodridge inherited an elective surgery waitlist of 35,000 and left it at 52,000. That is the record of the member for Woodridge as health minister, colleagues. There may be some of you who were not here—in fact, many of you. It is always good to have the facts at your fingertips in relation to the member for Woodridge. The member for Woodridge is well known. He is well known to us who have been in this place for a long time and well known to his former colleague the former member for Bundamba, who had some choice things to say about him as well.

As I was saying earlier, those opposite did not fully fund the Women and Girls' Health Strategy. The member for Waterford allocated \$157.3 million for the women and girls' health initiative without any funding sourced—\$157 million. We guaranteed unequivocally funding for the—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members to my left. Your interjections are not being taken. The minister is answering the question.

Mr NICHOLLS: We guaranteed that the Women and Girls' Health Strategy would continue, and that includes the almost \$3 million allocated to the Ready, Set, Grow! Puberty Health Education Project, which I mentioned in my last answer. The next phase of that program has commenced and all funds to that program will be continued. Anything said otherwise is pure fantasy. There has been no cut.

(Time expired)

Townsville City Council

Mr BAILLIE: My question is of the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers. Our community is desperate to see an end to the distractions and uncertainty regarding our local council. Will the minister commit to coming to Townsville to assure our community that we can restore stability to our local government and confidence to our local community?

Ms LEAHY: I thank the member for Townsville for his question and for being such a strong advocate for his community. I also want to acknowledge the strong advocacy from the members for Mundingburra and Thuringowa. Their tireless efforts on behalf of the people of Townsville cannot go unrecognised and I thank them sincerely.

For more than 200 days, Labor refused to act. They left the people of Townsville stuck in limbo. That uncertainty eroded confidence in the council and, more importantly, it impacted on the people and the businesses that rely on local government every single day. Compare that to the record of the Crisafulli government. Within just 2½ weeks we acted. We suspended the mayor. We gave Townsville a fresh start. In just 10 months—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, your interjections are not being taken. They are disorderly. Cease, please. The minister is answering the question.

Ms LEAHY: In just 10 months we are delivering on that promise, restoring integrity to local government, strengthening community safety and standing shoulder to shoulder with locals after the floods and during their recovery. From tackling Labor's youth crime crisis to supporting families and businesses through the historic flooding, our Townsville MPs have been there every step of the way. I want to thank them for their advocacy and tireless work. I know they have tirelessly doorknocked throughout that community, checking on people after the disasters up in Townsville. They have done an outstanding job for the people of Townsville. They know that, as all Townsville locals do, their city deserves better. They deserve a council that gets on with the job of delivering for its people.

The action I am taking today is another step towards providing the certainty that the people of Townsville deserve. Tomorrow I will be in Townsville and I will be joining our local MPs to meet with residents, businesses, the council, the chamber of commerce and stakeholders to give North Queenslanders the respect and leadership they were denied under Labor. The Crisafulli government stands firmly with the people of Townsville. We will stand there firmly, providing that leadership with our local MPs. We are delivering the fresh start the people of Townsville deserve.

Puberty Health Education Project

Ms FENTIMAN: My question is to the Minister for Health. I table Queensland Health emails that discuss the last day for two women's health project officers and what contacts should be provided due to their departure.

Tabled paper: Messages regarding the Queensland Puberty Health Education Project [[1278](#)].

Can the health minister confirm if these two staff were terminated after the Puberty Health Education Project was scrapped?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health, we can pass the tabled document to you. That is fair and reasonable. Take a moment to have a look at it.

Mr NICHOLLS: As I have indicated previously, the Women and Girls' Health Strategy and the Ready, Set, Grow Puberty Health Education Project is funded and is continuing to be delivered.

Mr Crisafulli: Now.

Mr NICHOLLS: It is being delivered right now. I take that interjection from the Premier. It is being delivered in Cairns and Metro South. It is being delivered in conjunction with our delivery partners and it is fully funded to the full extent of \$3 million. It is being funded despite the fact that those opposite did not leave money in the budget for it to be funded. Now \$157 million has been provided in the 2025-26 budget for the forward years for the delivery of the Women and Girls' Health Strategy.

There would seem to be on that side of the House some sense that there is some great conspiracy in relation to this when there is none. They came in here two months ago asking questions about it, accusing me of cutting it. Now they have RTI documents that show exactly the opposite, that the program is proceeding. Now they are trying to say, in some way, shape or form: it is this government's fault because we are funding it. They are trying to say there is some mischief in the fact that it is funded. It was always funded and it remains funded. Now they are trying to say that officers of the department have some secret plan to defund it, when nothing could be further from the truth.

They are never satisfied. When it is funded, they do not like it; when it is not funded, they do not like it. All we know is that they failed to fund it in the first place. The person most responsible for it is the person who asked that question, who left the \$157 million black hole in the Women and Girls' Health Strategy—a strategy that was failed to be funded, a strategy that we are continuing and that we are enhancing with additional funding.

Let me say what else we are doing. In 2025 we are also delivering—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I think it is important that they listen—\$192 million for staff entitlements, including \$48.7 million for midwife-to-patient ratios, left unfunded by those opposite. We are also funding reproductive leave, left unfunded by those opposite, and we are putting money into the women's wellbeing initiative. It is being funded, it is being paid for and the staff are being looked after.

(Time expired)

Community Safety

Mr FIELD: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. Can the Premier outline how the Crisafulli LNP government is prioritising safety for all Queenslanders, especially our youngest and most vulnerable, after a decade of decline?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I want to start by thanking the honourable member for Capalaba for the question. It is a question about safety. It is safety that called him to this place, and I want to thank him for not only his contribution outside the parliament but, equally, his contribution in it. I value his friendship, I value his counsel and I want to thank him for being called to serve.

The member's question speaks about our most vulnerable: our children. I want to make a few comments about what we are doing in this space. As I look in the gallery today I see a lot of young parents. It is young parents who have driven me in this space. I have been speaking to a lot of them. They tell me about the heartache and what the decision-making process is like at the moment when it is time to drop their kids off to day care. It should not be that way. It should never be that way.

I want to make the point: the overwhelming majority of people who work in the early childhood sector are such good people. In many cases, they have kids of their own. They are people who love children and want to see their development. However, there is a cohort—albeit a small one—that casts doubt for every parent in this state. That is what parents tell me. They do not want to feel that sense of guilt when they drop their kids off in the morning. I say to parents: no system will ever be foolproof, no system will ever be rock solid, but you can bet we will do more than what has been done for a long time.

I look around and see the ministers who are working on those areas. I see the minister who is driving reform in blue cards. This has to happen, because if someone has a card that says they are safe, that card should have some legitimacy. I think about what it means across jurisdictions. How can it be that a monster who offends in New South Wales can walk across a border and do it again? That is wrong. This minister has put it on the national agenda, driven it and driven it hard. I think about the broken child safety system in this state. I think about the revolving door. I get to see the faces of many of them sitting opposite me. This minister is the one who has stepped up to the plate to deliver the commission of inquiry that is needed. There has been a decade of decline.

Ms Grace: Rubbish.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will take the interjection; it is another made-up story from the member for McConnell. It is not rubbish. Children have been harmed in institutions where they should be safe.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Pine Rivers and member for McConnell! Member for McConnell, if you do not want your interjections to be taken, do not make interjections.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Children have been harmed in institutions where they should be safe. We owe it to them to do better. We owe it to parents to do better. After a decade of decline, this government is doing better.

Spinal Injuries Unit

Ms ENOCH: My question is to the Minister for Health. The *Courier-Mail* reported the business case for a new spinal unit 'obtained by this masthead and labelled "cabinet-in-confidence"', was submitted to Labor in April 2024. Can the minister rule out that neither the minister nor his office provided a former government's cabinet document to the media?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I will seek some advice about that question. Minister for Health, you have the call.

Mr NICHOLLS: This has echoes of dodderly old Joe Biden, keeping documents from his time in office in his garage. In his quiet moments, when he is not out there doing a bit of powerlifting, what else is he doing? He is out there rifling through his paperwork, seeing what he can do. As I said at the last parliamentary sitting, we know that turkey time is coming when Christmas comes around. They are getting out the knives and sharpening them up. They are ready to slice into the leader over there. I may have used some unparliamentary words, and I withdraw.

When it comes to the spinal injuries unit, Labor does not have a leg to stand on. It was the LNP in 2022 and 2023 who highlighted the failings of Labor over a decade of decline in relation to the delivery of services at the Princess Alexandra Hospital spinal unit. What stories did we hear when Labor were in power? People standing in dark corners dealing drugs to those who were incapacitated, those who could not work and those who were vulnerable. It was through the hard work of the then shadow minister and then opposition that we brought this matter to light. This led to change that was undertaken too slowly and too late. It is another example of a rushed response by those opposite.

One of my first visits as health minister was to the Princess Alexandra Hospital. As is the case when a minister goes to a place, an itinerary was provided—'we'd like you to look at this ward. We'd like you to see this ward.' When I arrived there I said, 'The first place I would like to see is the spinal injuries ward to see what has happened here and what is going on.' I went through that spinal injuries ward and spoke to the patients and staff who were there about what was going on. They lamented the fact that it had taken so long for their claims to be heard by the former government. I asked questions in relation to what work was underway, and I found out from the department that a business case had been prepared in relation to this. I asked for details of the business case so I could understand what was necessary in order to understand how that would fit into what this government is planning as part of our Hospital Rescue Plan, which is an \$18.5 billion plan.

(Time expired)

Education System, Child Safety

Mr LISTER: My question is to the Minister for Education and the Arts. Will the minister please advise how the Crisafulli LNP government is prioritising the safety of Queensland kids in our schools, and is the minister aware of any approaches that failed to keep Queensland schoolkids safe during a decade of decline?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. As he is a proud father of many young children I know that he and Belinda certainly use early childhood education services and I know what a passionate local MP he is. I am looking forward to going to Warwick East State School for its 175th anniversary shortly.

As I say, I know how important this issue is to him, as it is to the Crisafulli government. We will always put the safety of children first. We are doing everything in our power to strengthen the system, which has been left weakened by the previous government. As the Premier has already mentioned this

morning, this is across many portfolios. I am proud to work with the police minister, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence about anything to do with child safety because it is important that we work together, unlike those opposite who worked in a siloed way.

Our educators play a vital role in keeping our children safe. Their dedication does not go unnoticed. The safety of our children is our utmost priority because every parent has the right to drop their child to childcare educators knowing they are safe and secure and that their child's needs are being met.

I join with the Premier in reassuring Queenslanders. We have over 3,300 early childcare services and the vast majority are doing the right thing. When we have significant publicised issues in our early childhood education services it is important that we reassure Queenslanders and Australians that we are doing as much as we can to ensure children's safety is at the centre of everything we do. That is why at our education ministers meeting recently we endorsed a major reform package—this is Labor and LNP ministers from across the nation—to keep children safe in early childhood services and keep children's rights at the centre of everything we do.

What a contrast, because under the previous government funding was set to end for our regulator in Queensland—a regulator that visits childcare services and education services annually—on 30 June 2025. That would have been 19 staff losing their jobs as well as less oversight of the early childhood sector. We restored funding to the early childhood regulatory authority, investing \$12.7 million over four years—not just with those 19, but bolstering the workforce by an additional 29 full-time early childhood regulatory officers. I have been to see them in the department; it is mapped out where these regulatory officers are across the state with constant communications and constant checking on our childhood education services. We welcome the agreed national actions, as the Premier has mentioned, and a national early childhood educator register.

(Time expired)

Redistribution Commission, Hill Electorate

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Premier. There are only 13 seats in North Queensland and we need every single one to be able to represent the interests of the north in the state parliament. As the minister responsible for the Constitution of Queensland, which sets the number of seats in this House, will the Premier explain how North Queensland will be appropriately represented in this House if the LNP submission to the Queensland Redistribution Commission is accepted and representation in North Queensland is reduced to 12 members by the abolition of the electorate of Hill?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I will just take some advice, Premier. Premier, as the Constitution comes under your portfolio, I give you the call.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I will make a couple of reflections. The first is the honourable member is talking about what obviously is required under the act, and that is the redistribution. There is an independent commission that will be doing that following the same model as has always been done. In terms of political parties—

Mrs Nightingale: Let's define the word 'independent', shall we?

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is the same playbook as yesterday. A former judge, a public servant—and this is not a reflection on the member who asked the question. Just to be clear for *Hansard*, I am not reflecting on the member who has asked the question; I am reflecting on the Labor Party's interjection.

I make a couple of observations for the honourable member. Political parties can put in submissions and obviously they have to reflect where population grows. I make this commitment to people: wherever seats fall, whoever represents them one thing is for certain, and that is that I know this state is bigger than Brisbane. I know that because I have lived it. The member asked about how North Queensland will be represented. It will be represented by someone who grew up on a cane farm. Regardless of what happens there, for as long as I am in this place I can say that I know the values of hard work because it was driven into me by a migrant who chose that part of the state to come to. I know it because I started my time in public life on a council in that part of the world.

The one thing I will say about Queenslanders is I love them all because deep down they are aspirational people. I have spent a lot of time in this role as a member of parliament and less than a year as Premier. I have been to communities as far west as you can go and you do not get much further north than Saibai. I can tell honourable members that they are great people. Queenslanders are great people. I understand the way that redistributions must work and where population falls. I want

Queenslanders to know that I value the voices of people who represent their communities. Some of them sit on the other side and they have to represent their communities. Some of them sit on the crossbench and some of them sit on the government benches. Every person who comes into this place represents the values of their community.

Ms Pease: Which ones?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will not take the interjection of the member for Lytton or else I will have to dispute it with one of the members. Across the board, people come into this place and they represent the values of their community. I say to the honourable member that whatever the Redistribution Commission delivers—and political parties will make their submissions towards that—I make the commitment to them that this is a great state. It is the most decentralised state in the country. It was built on the back of agriculture, tourism, mining and manufacturing, and it has a capital city that is coming of age and becoming a brilliant place that will host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast and the tourism destinations to the west—we live in the best part of the world.

(Time expired)

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Delivery

Mr McDONALD: My question is to the Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the minister outline how the Crisafulli LNP government is delivering legacy outcomes for the next generation of homegrown athletes, and is the minister aware of any approaches that did not deliver during a decade of decline?

Mr MANDER: I thank the member for Lockyer for his question. I thank him also for joining me last night in watching the World Athletics Championships from Tokyo, obviously after parliament had risen. We both came to the same conclusion, that Queensland athletes are 'Gout' of this world. What did we see? We saw Gout Gout, the teenage sensation at 17 years of age, just cruising, taking it easy to make sure he qualified for the semifinal. He is an athlete we are very proud of. Let's not forget our country's fastest woman, Torrie Lewis, who stunned with a personal best in the 200 metres, showcasing her immense talent and also earning her a well-deserved place in the semifinal just days after breaking her own Australian record in the 100 metres. Both of these athletes are supported by the Queensland Academy of Sport, another organisation we are proud of. The remarkable performances of these two young athletes are inspiring all of us as an emerging next generation of athletes comes through. We are looking forward to seeing their future.

Our Queensland athletes are showing up for us on the world stage, and back here in Queensland we are showing up for them as well. The Crisafulli government is determined to ensure that we set the stage for them when the games come to Queensland in 2032. We are getting on with delivering the infrastructure and providing a legacy that Queenslanders expect. It was great to be out with the Deputy Premier yesterday talking about the next stage of the construction of the Victoria Park precinct.

I am asked by the member for Lockyer whether we know of any alternative approaches. We do, because those opposite were not just slow out of the blocks when it came to the games preparation; they completely missed the starter's gun. The best plan the opposition leader could come up with was to build temporary stadiums at QSAC. Mr Acting Speaker, can you just imagine Gout Gout and Torrie Lewis and all of those other upcoming athletes hitting their strides in 2032 left to perform at QSAC? They would have been exhausted just trying to get to QSAC before their race after catching a train and three buses—one of the most embarrassing, ridiculous suggestions that has ever been made.

The Leader of the Opposition and all of the frontbenchers are willing to embarrass Queensland on the world stage, whereas this government will have a games that make Queenslanders proud and will leave a legacy for the games and generations after.

Member for Cook

Mr MELLISH: My question is to the Minister for Health. Queensland Health has confirmed that no permission was sought or granted for a helicopter to land on Cow Bay health facility's helipad on 15 August. Will the minister investigate how a helicopter chartered by the member for Cook landed there without approval and whether this put lives at risk?

Mr NICHOLLS: Well, what a day it has been for Queensland Health! We have heard about the great work we are doing investing in the Women and Girls' Health Strategy, we have heard about the great work we are doing investing in our Hospital Rescue Plan, we have heard about the failures of a

decade of decline under Labor, and now we have a question from a former transport minister asking Queensland Health about the rules under which helicopters fly in Australia. You have to say: we do it all at Queensland Health, but one thing we do not do is regulate airspace and helicopter flying. Police minister, I am happy to take that on as well!

What a silly question to a health minister. No wonder the health system was left in such dire straits if that is the quality of the conversation around the cabinet table just 12 short months ago. There would be ministers saying, 'Oh, hello, health minister. How are the helicopters flying today? I wonder which one's landing where and how they're going. Have you got a bead on what's going on at Brisbane Airport? Oh, health minister, what's the latest delay with Qantas flying and taking off?' And, 'Health minister, how is that Cross River Rail tunnel going, by the way? Oh, I know: we will ask the former transport minister—the one who doctors media releases for \$2.4 billion. Let's go to that one.'

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Obviously, I take personal offence at that—another sledge—from the minister and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Clayfield, I heard you refer to the former transport minister. The member for Miller has taken personal offence. It would aid the House if you withdrew that comment and then you have the call.

Mr NICHOLLS: I was in fact referring to the member for Aspley, but I am happy to withdraw.

Government members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Would you withdraw your comment, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: I am happy to withdraw. If I was referring to the member for Miller, I would have referred to the former, former transport minister.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you for your withdrawal.

Mr NICHOLLS: I am happy to withdraw. I was simply referring to an *Australian* story in relation to—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, there is too much cross-chamber chatter. Minister for Health, you have 25 seconds left on the clock. I would ask you to remain relevant to the question.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. In relation to the member for Aspley's question, that is obviously not within my area of responsibility. The movement of helicopters is a federal government responsibility. What I am responsible for is the opening of the Cow Bay health centre, which is another achievement of the Crisafulli LNP government.

(Time expired)

Gold Coast, Infrastructure

Mr BOOTHMAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on the actions the Crisafulli government is taking to support job-creating landmark developments on the Gold Coast and how this record of delivery compares to previous approaches?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the honourable Chief Government Whip for the wonderful question because, as he knows and all members on the Gold Coast know, the Crisafulli government loves the Gold Coast—and I am saying that as a representative of the Sunshine Coast.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am not taking that interjection. The Crisafulli government loves all of the coasts in Queensland and we love regional Queensland as well. For 10 months we have been delivering for the people of the Gold Coast, as opposed to a decade of decline under the Labor government when it had a senior minister on the Gold Coast and another senior minister who, I am reliably informed, spent a fair amount of time at the Gold Coast. Given that, one would think the Gold Coast would have achieved a lot more with Labor ministers; it did not. So big is our support for the Gold Coast that I recently issued a proposed call-in for the Dreamworld ecotourism development. I am not one for self-indulgence; I am very—

A government member: Very humble.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am very humble; I take the interjection. However, I do want to quote the Dreamworld CEO, Greg Yong. He said—

We've spent over \$2 million in nearly two years trying to get this approval moving under the former government in an attempt to invest and add value right here on the northern Gold Coast and, to be frank, it's been a frustrating process, but you, Deputy Premier, visited here 13 weeks ago, we shared our story and we couldn't be more encouraged by your support. We have made more progress in 13 weeks, Deputy Premier, than we've made in two years.

That is what delivering under the Crisafulli government looks like: Queensland, the state where the Crisafulli government makes your dreams come true, whether it is Dreamworld or the Gold Coast.

As we continue to invest in the Gold Coast, let me make another announcement. I am pleased to announce today that, in collaboration with the Gold Coast City council, I have approved the rezoning of 51 hectares in support of the facilitation of the Gold Coast Screen Industry Precinct in Yatala. This new precinct includes a large studio space and sound stage, attracting domestic and international companies to bring their productions to our state as well as education facilities for industry and short-term accommodation.

The other thing we are doing is listening to the people of the Gold Coast. That is why we are not proceeding with Gold Coast Light Rail stage 4, because we have listened to the residents of the southern Gold Coast. Compare and contrast that leadership to the opposition leader's leadership—weak leadership and slipping and slopping on everything he does in this chamber. Yesterday he was in the chamber talking about Jason Hunt and said that it was paid some time ago. I say to the opposition leader: no, it was not; it was paid last week. Why did he know, when did he find out and why has he been silent about Jason Hunt today? He was very enthusiastic yesterday, but he has gone silent because he is a weak leader and will not last until Christmas.

(Time expired)

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Mr RYAN: My question is to the Minister for Health. Whistleblowers have told Labor that the minister revealed at a recent event that he never wanted to be health minister and the Premier gave him the difficult job because they do not get along. Is the minister—

Government members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! We will hear the question in silence. Member for Morayfield, I might ask if you could repeat the question. Members on all sides of the chamber, we will hear this question in silence.

Mr RYAN: My question is to the Minister for Health. Whistleblowers have told Labor that the minister revealed at a recent event that he never wanted to be health minister and the Premier gave him the difficult job because they do not get along. Is the minister intentionally failing as health minister to get back at the Premier?


Dr ROWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to the member for Morayfield's question, I submit to you that there are a number of imputations and inferences. There is also the matter of authenticating the basis of that question.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: There was some imputation in that question. The time for question time has expired.

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Resumed from 22 May (see p. 1437).

Second Reading

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (12.21 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

It certainly is a health day today. I want to thank the opposition for their collaboration and work in a bipartisan way in making sure that the great work the Crisafulli LNP government is doing is being considered. I acknowledge the work of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee in conducting the inquiry into the bill and the organisations that participated in the committee's inquiry. My

recollection from the committee report is that there were five organisations that made submissions. I have read their submissions and thank them for submitting them. I appreciate the committee's support for the bill and their sole recommendation, which is that the bill be passed. I also note that the committee, in its consideration, determined that public hearings were not necessary in relation to their examination of the bill.

The Crisafulli government is committed to strengthening the performance and clarity of our health legislation. The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025 achieves this in five key areas. It works in relation to: pharmacy business ownership and regulation; the reporting of occupational respiratory diseases; the detection and management of serious public health risks such as those presented by Japanese encephalitis; the clarity of our radiation safety application processes—obviously important; and appointment processes for the leadership of the Queensland Mental Health Commission. These amendments reflect our commitment to improving our regulatory levers and protecting the health and safety of all Queenslanders no matter where they live.

Queenslanders are very lucky to have world-class professional health care provided by our community pharmacies. The role community pharmacies play in promoting and protecting the health of Queenslanders cannot be understated. That is why we have expanded their scope of practice to treat and prescribe medications for acute health conditions, improving access for the community and reducing pressure on our GPs and hospital emergency departments. As part of strengthening the new modern framework for pharmacy business ownership, this bill ensures appropriate systems and processes are in place to achieve the intent of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024. This bill will make sensible changes to the operation of the act ahead of the expected commencement of the licensing scheme in November 2025. It will also support the effective operation of the Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council. These amendments are aimed at promoting transparency of information for the public, protecting the community pharmacy model and ensuring clarity and procedural fairness for licence applicants. Importantly, the amendments also support the transfer of regulatory responsibility for pharmacy business ownership from Queensland Health to the council.

These reforms will ensure that the regulation of pharmacy business ownership in Queensland is effective, clear to the stakeholders and operates in the best interests of the community. I note that the committee received submissions from two key pharmacy peak bodies, the Pharmacy Guild and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, both of which supported these amendments. I thank both organisations for their continued engagement in ensuring the important role of community pharmacies is considered in health policy. You well know, Mr Deputy Speaker, as I have travelled with you in parts of your electorate of Cook, and many of our regional candidates know, the very vital role the community pharmacy plays in providing that first line for those people who cannot otherwise get to a GP. This is about ensuring that that continues to be provided and that process is strengthened.

Secondly, I want to deal with notifiable occupational respiratory diseases. This bill amends the Public Health Act 2005 in relation to the notification of diagnoses of occupational respiratory diseases. By establishing the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry the Commonwealth has now assumed primary responsibility for managing the reporting of information about preventable occupational respiratory diseases in Australia. This includes cancer and asbestosis, as well as silicosis. Members might be unfamiliar with—some might have been here, but not many, I think, at the time—when this parliament acted in relation to black lung disease and the effects it had on people who had been miners and the investigation that was instigated as a result of actions taken by the then opposition in referring the matter for further investigation.

Centralising this information and moving towards nationally consistent reporting requirements will improve our ability to understand and prevent these debilitating and life-threatening illnesses. The bill supports this important initiative by ensuring that all diagnoses of these diseases are notified to the national registry. The bill then decommissions the existing Queensland register. Obviously we do not need to duplicate. There is a national register; we no longer need the Queensland register. Queensland Health will continue to have access to patient information about Queensland diagnoses. De-identified information about diagnoses in other Australian jurisdictions will also be available through the secure national registry portal. As noted by the Lung Foundation Australia in its submission to the committee, it is crucial for Queensland policymakers and medical practitioners to continue having access to Queensland data within the national registry and to be able to access broader trends within the national data. I thank the Lung Foundation for their submission on this important amendment.


The bill also introduces clarifying amendments to ensure our officers across public health units and local councils can effectively respond to the risk of Japanese encephalitis virus, or JEV as it is known. To ensure effective testing for JEV, it is necessary to capture adult mosquitoes when they are

most active. This is done by leaving light traps at relevant locations overnight. Current legislation is ambiguous about whether this can be done and this bill provides the clarity our officers need to leave necessary equipment at locations for reasonable periods of time. In effect, they can operate their mosquito traps for longer to ensure that we are scanning for as many opportunities as possible to identify mosquitoes that might carry JEV.

The bill also makes a minor amendment to correct an inconsistency in the Radiation Safety Act 1999. The intent of the act is that any person may apply for an approval from Queensland Health to dispose of radioactive materials. However, one provision within the act implies that only a licensee may hold an approval to dispose. Occasionally members of the public may come across radioactive materials. For example, a person may discover old aeroplane gauges at a newly purchased rural property or a high school science department might find samples of radioactive rocks and geological items. This bill amends the act to confirm that any person can apply for and hold an approval to dispose of radioactive material. This will ensure that potentially dangerous materials are brought to the attention of the department's experts in the radiation health team and disposed of safely.

Finally, the bill also amends the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 to ensure that an acting commissioner can be appointed when the commissioner may be unavailable or their office becomes vacant. I thank the Mental Health Commissioner for his support in identifying the need for these technical amendments.

This bill outlines sensible changes to Queensland's statute book. It gives effect to a range of improvements that ensure our pharmacies continue to provide high-quality professional and safe pharmacy services to the community, public health risks are managed and our legislation is clear and unambiguous for its users. It is on that basis that I submit the bill for the consideration of the House.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (12.29 pm): That is probably the shortest speech ever given by this health minister. What an absolute humiliation it is for such a minor bill to come here on its own. While there are a number of technical amendments that need to be dealt with and the opposition does not have a problem with, the nature of this bill is so threadbare and thin that it is a humiliation and an embarrassment that this minister would bring it to the chamber on its own. It is a demonstration and evidence of how bare the legislative cupboard is when this government brings in a bill that clearly should be attached to a substantive bill and filibusters and wastes the valuable time of this chamber. What we are seeing in terms of this bill being brought in here by the health minister and the Premier is a legislative agenda that is thin and unformed. They had a plan to win the election but they did not have a plan to govern Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member, you are yet to address the bill. Come back to relevance, please.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly, My Deputy Speaker. In saying that, I am referring of course to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025, which, in my experience, should not have been brought here in its own right. Given how technical it is—and it is clearly technical—it should have been attached to a substantive bill. I suspect I know the real reason that such a thin and threadbare bill has been brought here by this under-fire minister, who has probably had his worst week since estimates last month. In the last week we have seen record ramping and the minister blaming nurses for the ramping. We have seen him unable to answer questions—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order goes to relevance. The member has not even addressed the subject of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I agree. Member, I will give you one more opportunity; otherwise, I will ask you to explain how this dissertation is relevant to the bill.

Mr BAILEY: In relation to the bill, after a very bad week for the minister, on the surface the bill makes a number of technical amendments—

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

Mr BAILEY: I am speaking to the bill.

Mr NICHOLLS: I take personal offence and the member is still not talking to the bill. I ask him to withdraw.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw. On the surface, the bill makes a wide range of technical amendments to pharmacy ownership, occupational respiratory disease reporting, mental health governance and radiation safety. However, in reality, the bill contains little more than minor technical changes, including changes to legislation that has never caused a single issue to date. It is actually amateur political

theatre. It is a thespian effort, plain and simple, with minor technical changes dressed up as meaningful reform by a government that is addicted to spin and not reform. It is already out of ideas, lurching from scandal and crisis to difficulties and record statistics that are embarrassing. They are incapable of policy substance. I suspect that the reason this bill is here is that there has been widespread media reporting in relation to the bill—

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

Mr BAILEY: I am talking about the bill. You are running interference.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr NICHOLLS: I have two points of order now. The first is on relevance to the contents and the long title of the bill. The second is that I take personal offence at the comment made by the member after you had already called him to order. I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, the minister has taken offence and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the second point, I ask you to keep your dissertation relevant to the bill before the House and stop wandering off.

Mr BAILEY: Throughout the procedure for the debate of this bill, it will be interesting to see if the bill remains exactly as it is or whether a late amendment will be moved by the government, as has been reported in the media. That is in relation to the bill—

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

Mr BAILEY: This is clearly in relation to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, when a point of order is called, you will stop talking. You could see that the point of order was taken. We will deal with this as we should.

Mr NICHOLLS: Again, the point of order goes to relevance. We are debating the bill that is currently before the House and its long title. I ask that you bring the member back to relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Member, how is talking about potential amendments in the future relevant to the bill before the House? Could you explain?

Mr BAILEY: I am happy to explain that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, there will be silence when I am asking questions of a member. Member, can you explain how that is relevant, please?

Mr BAILEY: Referring specifically to this bill, there have been widespread reports that there will be a late amendment to the bill in relation to pill testing. It is clearly in relation to the bill that I am speaking here.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again, it goes to relevance. I would submit, Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. I take your point. Member, I have warned you several times. If you continue to stray into all sorts of hypotheses and other thoughts about what might happen, I will ask someone else to speak. That is your last warning on relevance.

Mr BAILEY: I accept your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker, as I always do. Let me outline what this bill actually does. Part 2 fiddles with the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act and clarifies definitions and requirements for the pharmacy ownership regulation. Part 3 decommissions Queensland's lung disease register, moving reporting to the Commonwealth national registry and creating an historical dust lung disease register. Part 3 also includes provisions for leaving mosquito testing equipment at a place. Part 5 amends the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act to allow the appointment of acting commissioners when terms expire. Part 6 contains a minor drafting fix for waste disposal approval. Those are important matters to a degree but clearly not substantial enough to justify a bill sitting on its own.

I remain suspicious about where the debate and the procedure around this bill will go in the future. I will not stray any further than that, Mr Deputy Speaker; I accept your guidance. However, that is the reality and we will see whether debate around this bill promotes the full fleshing out of what the law will become or whether it prevents discussion around what this bill will eventually become. That is the point that I make.

While Labor supports the bill's intent, we do have concerns. On pharmacy ownership, stakeholders have raised issues about definitions that are not comprehensive enough. Pharmacies want better representation of the services they provide and how material interest is considered. The Labor opposition will always listen to those on the ground and small locally owned independent pharmacies across the state. Our record has been very clear. We have worked very closely with the pharmacy sector in terms of providing models of care to ensure access to our healthcare system. Our record is very strong in collaborating with that sector to maximise people's access to health care, to ensure that people are looked after in the best way possible. In relation to that, we have some concerns.

While the bill tidies up arrangements for appointing acting mental health commissioners, the government still has not come clean on its disastrous and botched appointment process around the new Chief Health Officer who will need to oversee some of these matters.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr BAILEY: Here we go, shutting down debate.

Mr NICHOLLS: Again I go to relevance in relation to this.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member, you are pushing your luck. Please try to stay within the long title of the bill. I have warned you.

Mr BAILEY: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will take your guidance. This is a threadbare and trivial bill which shows, again, that the minister does not have an agenda that is worthy of respect. While we support sensible, technical updates to legislation, we as an opposition will not sit quietly when we see a minor bill being used as a smokescreen for other matters.

I am a strong supporter of this parliament having the opportunity to have a full debate that fleshes out all aspects of a bill. I am grateful for the opportunity to do that as the shadow minister now, and it would be a shame if we saw a last-minute sneaky move by the minister in relation to this bill—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence, and, again, I raise relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, the minister has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr BAILEY: To the point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, it was—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member—

Mr BAILEY: If you allow me to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I do not want an argument.

Mr BAILEY: It was a hypothetical scenario. It was not—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, take your seat, please. Take your seat. I call the member for Southport.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I move—

That the member for Miller be further heard.

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

AYES, 31:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.


NOES, 46:

LNP, 46—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Young.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left and right, cease! Member for Glass House. Member for Springwood, not Waterford.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.46 pm): I rise today to support the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. In rising to speak, I want to acknowledge the role that the committee and the secretariat played in reviewing the legislation.

Mr J Kelly: We didn't have any hearings.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the member for Greenslopes. He is correct: we did not conduct any hearings, but we did have the opportunity to review the legislation. We decided that we would not go to a public hearing, as there were only five submitters—one from each of the parties represented within the amendments to the legislation, and, importantly, each of those submitters supported the objectives of the bill and the proposed amendments required to achieve those objectives.

I note also that, in spite of the protestations from the member for Miller, there was no statement of reservation in respect of this bill. I find it somewhat disingenuous that concerns are being raised today about the nature of the bill and that it has been suggested the bill is somewhat frivolous when no reservations were expressed during the committee process.

Through this bill the Crisafulli government is strengthening the performance and clarity of our health legislation in five key areas: pharmacy business ownership, regulation reporting of occupational respiratory diseases, detection and management of the Japanese encephalitis virus, radiation safety application processes, and the ability of the minister to appoint an acting mental health commissioner. Importantly, the bill clarifies operational requirements relating to the regulation of pharmacy business ownership in Queensland.

Community pharmacists provide world-class primary health care and play a vital role in the health of Queenslanders. That is why the Crisafulli government has expanded their scope of practice to allow them to treat and prescribe medications for acute health conditions. To help more community pharmacists become authorised to treat those conditions, our government has extended training subsidies to support up to 230 more pharmacists with their training.

Speaking of community pharmacists, I would like to give a shout-out to my local pharmacists: Woosub Song and Brad Veric from Ashmore Plaza Chempro, a pharmacy that I regularly visit; and Jason Keily from Greg Keily Chemist in Southport, one of the oldest pharmacies on the Gold Coast. Not only has my family relied on that chemist for the past few decades; my parents and siblings have relied on it since as far back as the 1970s. I note the criticism from the member for Miller, but I would say this: sometimes parliament has to do the knitting and sometimes attention to detail matters.

Let us have a look at Labor's track record through the decade of decline that we have brought to an end with the change of government. The voters of Queensland changed the government. It would be fair to say that the previous government has not always paid attention to the detail. Sometimes there will be legislation that comes to this House that may seem a bit bland or a little dry. Nonetheless, the amendments in this bill, and many other bills before it, as minor or as technical as they may seem, are important. I think it is a shame that the member for Miller has taken this opportunity to criticise simple but important amendments.

I want to thank the health minister because last week I had the pleasure of spending most of the day with him on the Gold Coast as he opened the new H block at the Gold Coast University Hospital—70 new beds delivered for the Gold Coast. More importantly, the minister took the time to meet with representatives from the Gold Coast University Hospital. He met with representatives from a number of institutes at that hospital. He also took the time to meet with representatives from the Gold Coast City council, in particular the team that has been established to grow and develop the health and knowledge precinct on the Gold Coast.

Ms FENTIMAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). This is not relevant to the bill. Given your previous rulings to the member for Miller, I would ask that you make a ruling here.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): I take your point of order. Please take your seat. Member for Southport, please keep your comments to the long title of the bill.

Mr MOLHOEK: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate your guidance. I would argue that this is relevant. The suggestion from the member for Miller was that the minister is not doing his work. I simply raise these matters to highlight—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member appears to be arguing about your direction and I am seeking consistency.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could I have silence in the House, please. Member, I did make a ruling in relation to relevance. That was not an invitation to argue with me. I would ask you to stay within the long title of the bill.


Mr MOLHOEK: I will go back to the detail of the bill, as tedious as that may seem to some members of the House. The bill amends the Public Health Act 2005 in relation to the notification of diagnoses of occupational respiratory diseases. By establishing the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, you walked between the member speaking and the Deputy Speaker. I would ask you to observe the standing orders in that regard.

Mr MOLHOEK: The Commonwealth has assumed primary responsibility for managing the reporting of the information about preventable occupational respiratory diseases in Australia. This includes cancer and asbestosis as well as silicosis.

Furthermore, the bill seeks to make amendments with regard to the Radiation Safety Act. It makes a minor amendment to correct an inconsistency in the Radiation Safety Act 1999. Occasionally, members of the public may come across radioactive materials. For example, a person may discover old aeroplane gauges at a newly purchased rural property or a high school science department might find samples of radioactive rocks and geological items. The bill amends the act to confirm that any person can apply for and hold approval to dispose of this radioactive material. This will ensure that potentially dangerous materials are brought to the attention of the department's experts—the radiation team—and are disposed of safely.

The other technical amendment in this bill is an amendment to the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 to ensure that an acting commissioner can be appointed when the commissioner may be unavailable or their office becomes vacant. I commend the work of the Mental Health Commission. This is an important amendment. We are all very much aware of how the levels of anxiety have increased in society and the challenges that our young people and families are facing as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and new technology around phones. The work of the Mental Health Commission is important. It is important that this amendment go through to ensure the commission is always in good hands and the minister has the power to appoint someone suitable if and when required. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.55 pm): This is an important bill. There are several important provisions in it although, I note from the previous member's speech, they were so important that the committee did not review them other than through the papers. If I get my 10 minutes in today, I will have spent 10 minutes longer talking about this bill in here than I spent talking about it elsewhere.

The Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024 is being amended. There is an amendment to the Notifiable Dust Lung Disease Register. That amendment is very important. I was on the black lung committee. There are some important changes around the detection and monitoring of mosquitoes for the Japanese encephalitis virus.

These are all important changes, but we really have to question why the government has brought this bill in in this way. This is a government that says that it does what it says, and here we have an example of it doing not very much. I table a document that shows what the government does intend to do today.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 16 September 2025, titled 'Queensland government to ban pill testing in move criticised by health advocates' [\[1279\]](#).

One of the things this government likes to talk about is transparency and accountability. That is what I want to talk about today. If they are going to bring in an amendment that will potentially have fatal impacts on people, would they not want that debated in a committee—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member for Greenslopes—

Mr J KELLY: Would they not want that debated—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, please take your seat.

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, on relevance in terms of the member's comment, and I suspect the document that has been tabled may infringe on the relevance matter.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It may well do. Member, you have heard the point of order. There have been a number of complaints today in relation to relevance. I would ask you to keep your dissertation to the long title of the bill.

Mr J KELLY: We have a bill before us that deals with pharmacy business ownership, the Notifiable Dust Lung Disease Register, the detection and monitoring of mosquitoes for the Japanese encephalitis virus, appointing an acting mental health commissioner and amendments to the Radiation Safety Act.

As the minister said yesterday, the government has always had a position on pill testing. They were intending to bring in legislation around pill testing. They would have sent that to a committee of this parliament for full transparency and accountable.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, take your seat.

Mr J KELLY: Instead they have chosen not to do that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member!

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, on relevance. These are not matters before the House. I would also submit that the member for Greenslopes is deliberately defying your direction, in contravention of the authority of the chair.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you are not being relevant and I would ask you to remain relevant. If you stray again, I will warn you.

Mr J KELLY: This is a government that says that it wants to put nurses and doctors back in charge, and we have an example in this bill where it is doing some things around that, but when it comes to pill testing and it gets information or evidence that it does not like—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member—

Mr J KELLY: They simply do not want doctors and nurses in charge.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, when I call you, I will have you cease talking and take your seat. I do not need to take a point of order. Explain to me how pill testing is relevant to this legislation.

Mr J KELLY: As is contained in the document that I have tabled in this House, it is clear the government intends to bring these amendments in. If it were serious about transparency and accountability, we would have the opportunity to debate these things—

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member!

Mr J KELLY: We could have put them through a committee—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I am asking you to explain to me how pill testing is relevant to the long title of the bill before the House.

Mr J KELLY: As I said, I tabled a document which clearly shows the government intends to amend this bill and I am seeking an opportunity to speak to that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, that is simply not an explanation. It is not relevant and I would ask you to remain relevant to the long title of the bill. I have warned you.

Mr J KELLY: Something else this government has said is that it wants to keep Queenslanders safe, and again it has signalled it is bringing in an amendment today which, if passed, will not keep Queenslanders safe.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, take your seat, please. I will get some advice. Member, you have been warned. If you proceed to stray from the bill I will ask you to leave the chamber. You have one minute left.

Mr J KELLY: With respect, Deputy Speaker, I have eight minutes left, but I do intend to speak about these matters that are of deep importance to my community. A government that says it is committed to transparency and accountability took the time to put these matters through the chamber, but simply—


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, could you adjourn the debate, please.

Debate, on motion of Mr J Kelly, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie is the ideological and political champion of the LNP's far-right fringe dwellers. Ever since the Deputy Premier got his hands on the levers of power he has been driving the Crisafulli LNP government to the right. Just recently when the nominal Premier was out of the country the real Premier, the member for Kawana, quickly took the opportunity to declare that pill testing would be outlawed. Make no mistake, it is going to be. It will be a victory for ideology over common sense, expert opinion and community safety.

Where are the government amendments? It has been reported in the media that the government will rush through amendments to pill testing this week, so where are the amendments? Surely the Minister for Health is not going to drop them in under the cover of darkness tonight and not enable anyone to review them or speak to them. If so, that would not be the transparency promised by the Premier; it would be the opposite. The LNP and Premier Crisafulli promised to treat this parliament with respect. If this parliament does not see those amendments and all members are not given appropriate time to consider them, comment on them and debate them, then that will be the opposite of what the Premier promised and it will be another broken promise.

Queenslanders should not forget that it was the Deputy Premier who axed the Queensland Battery Industry Development Strategy—a strategy that would have generated 9,000 jobs and added a billion dollars to the Queensland economy. It is also the same Deputy Premier who terminated the state facilitated development process that would have delivered more affordable housing.

Ms Scanlon: Shame!

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the shadow minister for housing. The Deputy Premier is such a NIMBY he even axed affordable housing projects in his own electorate.


Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The parliamentary term used by the member for Woodridge could be considered unparliamentary.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member, I would ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr DICK: I withdraw. The Deputy Premier is a key player in all of the Crisafulli government's missteps. Notorious Fitzgerald era figure John Sosso was, without any process at all, directly appointed as his director-general. The Deputy Premier was beside himself with glee when Mr Sosso was appointed to the electoral redistribution commission. That aberration had Tony Fitzgerald himself issue a warning that the Crisafulli LNP government risked taking Queenslanders back to the dark days of the notorious Queensland gerrymander. Queenslanders can now have no confidence in any decisions that the electoral redistribution commission makes, and of course we have the Deputy Premier's ideologically driven war on renewable energy generation, transmission and storage in Queensland.

With the Deputy Premier you just have to remember this, Mr Deputy Speaker: it is always about him. It is not about what is good for Queensland. It is always about the member for Kawana, an ideologically obsessed leader of this state.

Caloundra Electorate, Transport Infrastructure

 **Ms MORTON** (Caloundra—LNP) (2.03 pm): I rise today with excitement about what is being delivered in my community and to speak directly about traffic congestion in the area. As has been well documented in my contributions in this House, the No. 1 issue for the people of the Caloundra electorate is traffic congestion. I am honoured and pleased to reconfirm the actions the LNP Crisafulli government is taking to address such a significant need in our community.

The Caloundra Congestion Busting Plan is a comprehensive body of work to deliver five key road projects. Our community has experienced huge population growth without matching infrastructure to address the growth, and after a decade of neglect by the former government the impacts are well-known. The Caloundra Congestion Busting Plan includes the Caloundra Transport Corridor Upgrade, CTCU, an alternative access road into Caloundra from Nicklin Way, and it is ready to go. It is only awaiting the Sunshine Coast's referral to the EPBC to be granted approval. It also includes an overpass at Kawana Way, a huge project that will allow traffic to flow both in and out of Aura and keep Caloundra Road moving.

Traffic congestion is not just about building roads; it is about active transport and public transport. This LNP government is also undertaking an active transport pilot program right in the heart of Caloundra. In conjunction with Caloundra State School and Caloundra High School, \$3 million has been allocated to address the pain points of how our kids get to and from school. I have said it before and I will say it again: as a society, we want our children to get to and from school independently and safely whilst reducing our dependence on cars and roads. This pilot program will be instrumental in finding and addressing those pain points in our active transport networks.

We can also celebrate the Wave direct rail, connecting Beerwah, Caloundra, Aroona, Birtinya and then the metro system all the way to the airport. This public transport network is something the Sunshine Coast has never had before. I believe it is the most exciting and impactful project we will experience and it will be foundational in terms of revolutionising how we get around. I can also announce to the people of Caloundra that the alignment of the Wave project maps has gone live today. The Wave also brings additional benefits to Caloundra, including an active transport pathway down the sports field side of Pelican Waters Boulevard and an intersection opposite North Street. For the first time ever our kids, bike riders and scooters will be able to cross this road safely.

We also have joint funding with council to deliver the C2C Caloundra to Currimundi bikeway, a key project for safe and usable bikeways to make active transport a viable way to get around our area. Stockland has commenced the duplication of Aura Boulevard and continues to keep me updated with progress. This is much needed infrastructure for people travelling through the new Aura suburbs. All residents of Caloundra can have a positive impact on traffic congestion, and I thank the Caloundra Residents Association, Prue Oswin and the Sunshine Coast Bicycle Users Group for their ongoing input into transport modalities and the best outcomes for Caloundra.

Energy Queensland Ltd, Yurika Division; Drugs, Testing



Mr McCALLUM (Bundamba—ALP) (2.06 pm): Since 2017 the Yurika subsidiary of EQL has been central to grasping the opportunities of Queensland's transition to clean energy. I can reveal to the parliament today that under the Crisafulli LNP government the Yurika division of EQL has been dissolved. It has been cut up under this LNP government. There are over 500 workers affected by the Yurika decision. We are talking about frontline energy workers like sparkies, transmission linesmen, technicians and cable joiners—the skilled workers this state needs for its energy future. Their jobs and security now have an enormous question mark over them. I want to read from some correspondence from the office of the CEO that has gone to these workers. It states—

I acknowledge that times of change and uncertainty can be challenging, so please remember that there are a number of avenues available for you to talk to someone: your colleagues, counselling, our employee assistance program and confidential 24/7 support.

These 500 skilled workers are now in a position where they need to seek support about their future. Why? Because the Crisafulli government—I am very glad the energy minister is here in the House—has made a decision to rationalise operations and have the core functions of Yurika taken back into Energy Queensland.

This government cannot stop cutting. Just like the workers in Yurika, we have seen workers at pill testing sites across Queensland in the crosshairs of this government. We know that the Deputy Premier has an ideological opposition to pill testing, just like the government's ideological opposition to renewables. We have seen media reports that say there will be amendments brought into this House which will ban pill testing in Queensland. Where are those amendments? Why is this government hiding its amendments to ban lifesaving medical treatment from the people of Queensland? When a government stoops to these lows, you know they have already lost the argument.

Australian South Sea Islanders



Hon. FS SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism) (2.09 pm): The Crisafulli LNP government is proud to support and acknowledge the 25th anniversary of the recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct ethnic and cultural group here in Queensland. This is a bipartisan acknowledgement because it was a bipartisan agreement when this recognition was made. I acknowledge some of the leaders of the community who are in the gallery today.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Order!

Ms SIMPSON: This anniversary is a valuable—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, I just brought the House to order. You are warned.

Ms SIMPSON: This anniversary is a valuable opportunity to reflect on the achievements and contributions of Australian South Sea Islanders in Queensland who have made our state even stronger. Just this afternoon I was pleased to co-host with the Premier an event to commemorate this 25th anniversary. According to the latest Census, Queensland is home to more than 5,500 people with Australian South Sea Islander ancestry.

I particularly wish to acknowledge the very important work that is done by the community, led most ably by Clacy Fatnowna of QUASSIC, the Queensland United Australian South Sea Islander Council. They are supporting better outcomes for Australian South Sea Islander people, and I want to express my gratitude for that advocacy and acknowledge the great work that has been done.

I also acknowledge the history. It is a difficult history where more than 50,000 South Sea Islanders were blackbirded—forcibly brought to Queensland, or some would say they were deceptively brought here with forced indenture. The tragedy of that difficult history was compounded when in the early 1900s there was a movement to forcibly send back many of the descendants or original South Sea Islanders who had come to Australia in these circumstances. They had to fight to stay. This is a story of resilience, contribution, overcoming and saying they are still here and are strongly and proudly a part of our Queensland and Australian society. Their story is here to be told and we acknowledge the work they continue to do and their resilience.

The beautiful words that Clacy shared today acknowledged those who have risen up and are contributing from the highest offices in their chosen occupation—whether it is in the medical field, the academic field or as first responders. Wherever it may be, they are continuing to serve and help all of humanity while proudly saying they are Australian South Sea Islanders. They wear that badge proudly.

Renewable Energy; Drugs, Testing



Hon. ML FURNER (Ferny Grove—ALP) (2.13 pm): I rise to speak about Queensland's record on renewable energy. Under the previous government Labor made the transition to renewables, and it was the centrepiece of our energy policy through our Energy and Jobs Plan. This is a plan which has already delivered for Queensland. It is a blueprint for leveraging Queensland's natural advantages in the renewable energy revolution. Labor's record has been clear. When we came into office in 2015, less than one per cent of Queensland's energy was produced by large-scale renewables such as wind and solar farms. By the second quarter of 2024, that figure was over 22 per cent. That is a 22-fold increase in nine years, and it does not even include the increase in domestic rooftop solar.

Conversely, the record of those opposite is quite clear. This government has cancelled multiple renewable projects that are already in the pipeline, including wind farms at Moonlight Range and the 1.2-gigawatt Forest Wind project in the state owned pine plantations on the Fraser Coast. The government has suggested there are widespread community concerns—although the local MP has indicated there is very little concern from constituents, with most not even aware of the project.

The government have adopted ideologically-driven legislation which empowers opponents to block renewable projects but silences the voices of support. I note also that the legislation in no way empowers communities to reject coal, oil or gas projects—just renewables. They have cancelled important renewable projects, prioritised gas and extended the life of coal-fired power to make up the shortfall they are creating through axing renewables. Added to this, they are leaving Queensland families behind by ending household and business energy rebates. The government say they are committed to the future and say they are open for business, but the facts are clear. Cancelling \$3 billion worth of renewable energy supply can only lead to energy prices going one way, and that is up.


In the House today we have a debate on an important health bill. We have heard reports in the media that the government will rush through amendments for pill testing. This is a sinister act against those who are most vulnerable in our communities. It is about time they tabled that amendment and were up-front. They should not come in here in the dark hours of the night with a scurrilous amendment that no-one has seen and that we will not have an opportunity to debate. Let us be serious and treat this place as a house of parliament rather than a playpen of the Premier. We need to deliver for those

vulnerable people who need the support that this opposition provided when we were in government. We will continue to fight for these people. Those opposite have forgotten them. The government will certainly not be remembered for their actions in this House.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Before I call the member for Coomera, I would like to recognise the captains from Mabel Park State High School in the gallery today.


Baby Give Back

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (2.16 pm): For the first time in more than 40 years I have been shopping for nappies. I know what many members will be thinking, but you are wrong if you think they were for my great-granddaughter. Many of you would have seen the photos of my great-granddaughter. I am not going to be tabling the photos but feel free to come over and take a closer look.

Those nappies were not for my great-granddaughter. I had no idea about the range of nappies available today. Back in our day, there was one choice: terry towelling and Napisan. Who remembers Napisan from all those years ago? It is still available today on the market. The modern age has brought size options and male and female options as well as traditional types and pull-up types. It is just amazing. I must say that I was confused and I had to phone a friend to get some feedback on what I should be buying. We settled on buying three different sizes in both male and female options, just for the interest of members.

What was the shopping trip all about? It was a very good cause, I can assure you. We donated those nappies, and on 4 September I visited Baby Give Back in the member for Burleigh's electorate. It is a wonderful volunteer organisation that I and my office have supported since 2018 when they first kicked off. Founder and CEO Carly Fradgley and the team at Baby Give Back do an amazing job supporting young mums and vulnerable families right across this state. Volunteers sort and pack essentials with care and dignity. May I say that the boxes look small but you can just imagine how many pieces of small clothing can go in them. There is \$200 worth of clothing in each one of those boxes. Carly said they have a huge number of volunteers, many of whom were previously supported by Baby Give Back and are now giving back by volunteering. They are so well organised and set up, with a great flow through their facilities. It is worth visiting just to see how professional they are. As I mentioned earlier, they are distributing care packages right across Queensland. This is an incredible community effort giving more than clothes; they are giving hope to so many in our community.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (2.19 pm): What a disastrous last week for a flailing and hapless health minister in Minister Nicholls. We have seen record ramping identified by the words of the current Premier when he was opposition leader, when he said, quoting from the *Courier-Mail*—

Record funding is not an outcome. Record ramping and record waitlists are outcomes, just not the right ones.

These are words that are now about his own government. Are they taking responsibility? No, they are not. They are blaming nurses for ramping in Queensland. That is how low this health minister has gone to try to escape responsibility in this state.


He was asked 20 separate times last week at the PA Hospital if he was supportive of the same standards that he applied to me in the past about standing aside, and he would not answer the question. He dodged, he weaved; it was pathetic, absolutely pathetic. He left saying, 'I've got to be on a plane. Seriously, they won't hold a plane for me.' He seems to think he is in the same rarefied atmosphere as the Prime Minister, the Pope or the US President rather than a health minister.

We see a very thin bill here today and it has been widely reported that there will be a late amendment to ban pill testing. He refuses to clarify this situation. Those on the government benches were keen to interject and shut me down today. The reality is that what they are trying to do is go back to the old Newman/Bjelke-Petersen tactic—the dark old days—the tactic of reducing debate, scrutiny, democracy in this place by slipping it in, in the dead of night. I actually think the health minister has been set up by his own leadership because when it comes to those late tactics, how is it that the media got it yesterday? Why is it the worst kept secret since Fine Cotton? Why has it been put out? I think this health minister has been lined up by others in his cabinet. The tactic has been leaked early, and that did not come from the opposition, it came from the government, and the media have reported it. What we will see is a sneaky, sly tactic from a hapless health minister who is struggling. I will table the comments on ambulance ramping.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 14 September 2025, titled 'Qld ambulance ramping reaches worst level, nearly half of patients forced to wait more than 30 minutes' [\[1280\]](#).

People may have heard the chap from Spinal Life speak the other day, advocating for extra spots for spinal care. This is what was said: 'Are you suggesting you can't even get a meeting with the health minister?' 'Yes, I have tried for a number of months. I've worked with governments for 35 years, all different flavours. I've never, most probably, had such a hard situation to meet a minister, and I think quite a number of organisations have the same problem.' This is a health minister in a downward spiral. He is sinking like a stone.

Gregory Electorate


 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (2.22 pm): Last month we saw further evidence of the Crisafulli government's ability and intention to continue delivering for Queensland. When Community Cabinet came to my electorate, the ministry arrived with open ears as well as significant announcements. For over a decade, residents of the Central Highlands have been without the attention and opportunity to truly access ministers and key decision-makers. Labor not only took the regions for granted, they found it too inconvenient to travel as a group to Emerald and listen to the needs of a region that is a huge contributor to our state's economy.

Roads in the region, as I have stated many times already in my short time in this place, have been underfunded for too long. The Crisafulli government's signature Country Roads Connect Program will see an investment of \$100 million in regional road-sealing projects with over \$20 million of this on key roads in and around the Gregory electorate, roads such as the Wyntoon-Springton Road, the Richmond Winton Road and the Diamantina Developmental Road will benefit from completed sealing works, along with a neighbouring road on the Bowen Developmental Road. This will be of benefit not only to locals and agriculture but also to tourism and interstate freight movements. I commend Minister Mickelberg for his ability to see this program initiated and now delivered. It is examples such as this that show the contrast between our minister who understands catalytic investments and the conga line of former ministers from the other side who overlooked and failed the bush when it came to infrastructure upgrades.

Social housing is a massive issue in so many corners of the state. Whilst in Emerald, Minister O'Connor was able to announce that construction will commence on the single biggest housing project in my electorate—a multi-storey social housing project that, when constructed, will provide permanent accommodation for almost half the current waiting list, taking our most vulnerable residents and providing a permanent solution that addresses their needs, and values their ability to remain in the community with dignity and quality of life. Minister O'Connor's approach has been a breath of fresh air and is providing real hope to the most vulnerable residents of the Central Highlands. On their behalf, Minister, I thank you.

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of \$4.5 million in additional funding which was announced yesterday by Minister Perrett to combat locusts. This is on top of the \$1 million which was jointly announced with the Commonwealth and State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, and will deal with locusts in the disaster activated areas, including Winton, Barcaldine and Longreach, especially concentrating on the areas around Muttaborra and Aramac. We have already seen today a re-emergence of the second wave of these locusts. They now attack valuable pasture and threaten significant crops in the Central Highlands and also in the North West Minerals Province. These locusts pose a real, clear and present danger to cropping and grazing in the area, and this is the first time that graziers in the Central West will have access to state support in terms of aerial spraying coordination and control. For that, we thank you, Minister Perrett.

Nitrous Oxide Addiction

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.25 pm): I rise on behalf of families in my electorate who have raised concerns about their young adult children developing nitrous oxide addiction. When used heavily, this drug will cause permanent neurological damage so the person may appear like they have something like Parkinson's disease or multiple sclerosis. Heavy use also causes psychosis. The families who have approached me have watched their children develop these addictions in their teen years and subsequently develop psychosis which requires ongoing hospitalisation and care. It has impacted studies and efforts to enter the workforce.

This substance is used in the hospitality industry for whipping cream. It has been used recreationally for many years and is commonly referred to as 'nang' addiction. Until recently, most users obtained volumes of the gas from tiny canisters diverted from legitimate hospitality purposes. Sadly, we now have numerous businesses that are clearly creating products that are aimed at appealing to and addicting children.

I have permission from the Speaker to show this sample to the House, but I will not table it and it is not a prop. It has been approved for demonstration purposes. I found this less than 50 metres from the entrance of a local primary school. You can see the canisters are decorated to appeal to young people. Inside, the gas is flavoured to appeal to young people. Generally you can purchase these in the same places where you can buy illegal vapes, such as convenience stores and tobacconists. Here is a list of the stores where you can buy it, but don't worry, if you cannot get to these stores, I will table also the 24/7 delivery businesses that exist in Brisbane. There are many of them. Of course, if you forget to go there, they will send you text messages reminding you to come along. In these text messages, there is absolutely no mention of this product being for catering purposes.


Tabled paper: Documents, undated, titled 'Fixed Shops Where NO2 Canisters Can be Purchased' and 'Delivery Service' [1281].

I have written to the health minister requesting that this product is regulated, perhaps using the models already available and rolled out in South Australia and Western Australia. The health minister replied that the current regulations are sufficient. Under current laws, this canister would satisfy packaging and labelling requirements because it includes a warning, but the warnings are tiny, whereas the marketing for kids is large.

What we have here is another example of a range of businesses that clearly do not give a damn about the damage they inflict on young people. In fact, that is their business model. Shame on all of those businesses. Clearly, our current laws are failing. We need to stop packaging and flavouring aimed at children. We need to stop the sale of these products to non-hospitality businesses and we need to stop home delivery services. I appeal to the minister: allow the health committee to hold an inquiry into this issue and provide guidance on legislative options. We can keep kids safe. I know that is what people in my community want. The Crisafulli LNP government said they would keep people safe. Well, here is an opportunity to do that.

Haven't they missed another opportunity to give us a chance to keep people safe when it comes to pill testing? Our committee could have easily looked into pill testing and reviewed pill testing. We know there are amendments coming. This parliament has been told it would be treated with accountability and transparency. It has been treated with disdain—absolute disdain.

Australian South Sea Islanders; Queensland Literary Awards

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (2.28 pm): I would like to take a moment to acknowledge family and friends of the South Sea Islander community who are present in the gallery and attending an event here in parliament today. I acknowledge one of my great-great-grandfathers, a Rotuma man. I acknowledge that, although the event today was spruiked as a bipartisan event, unfortunately—and I do apologise—we were not invited to the event. Not all of the parliament was invited, but I do want to pass on my absolute regard and congratulations to the community, my family and my friends for everything that they do for the community and what they do for Queensland. Thank you.

I want to speak about the Queensland Literary Awards. They have long been a beacon of our state's cultural life, celebrating the voices that shape who we are and how we understand ourselves, yet recent events have cast a troubling shadow over this institution. In May, the State Library of Queensland cancelled the black&write! Writing Fellowships, a writers fellowship designed specifically to support First Nations authors. This decision was made following a personal direction from the LNP's Minister for the Arts, despite the fellowship being awarded by an independent process utilising independent literary award judges. The minister's intervention led to the abrupt cancellation of the awards ceremony just hours before it was due to take place. Following the minister's direction to rescind the annual award, 12 Queensland Literary Awards judges resigned—almost half of the highly respected judges—reportedly in protest.

This is a deeply concerning situation not only for the reputation of the black&write! Writing Fellowships but also for the Queensland Literary Awards and, more broadly, for the arts in Queensland. The issue has been widely reported, with articles in an array of media outlets including the *Courier-Mail* and *Brisbane Times* highlighting the biggest mass resignation of Queensland Literary Awards judges the State Librarian has ever witnessed. The resignations of these highly respected judges directly impacted the 2025 awards timeline. According to ArtsHub, the shortlist—originally scheduled for 5 August—was delayed, and the announcement of winners, initially set for 12 September, was also pushed back.

This is not just about one author or one award; this is about the erosion of integrity and independence in our public institutions. The Coaldrake report made some very clear recommendations, and already we see that the government does not take them seriously at all. The message that the

minister is sending to the arts sector, through the decision to override an independent panel of judges and censor artists based not on the work submitted but on their past comments, actions and relationships, will likely have a profound impact on the reputation of the arts in Queensland. The politicisation of the Literary Awards is emblematic of a government more concerned with controlling narratives than with respecting the conventions of artistic freedom. It is a pattern that erodes public trust and undermines independent institutions.

Coolum Surf Club; Surf Lifesaving



Hon. DG PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (2.31 pm): I rise today to acknowledge the recent completion of the multimillion dollar renovations at the Coolum Surf Club and to mark the opening of the upcoming surf season. Planning for this development began back in 2019, with construction commencing in February this year. I was proud to attend the grand unveiling just last month. This self-funded project, five years in the making, has delivered a significant upgrade to one of the Sunshine Coast's most iconic and award-winning venues. The improvements include a new facade and entryway, an expanded north-eastern balcony, a much needed additional lift for greater accessibility and upgraded storage facilities for lifesaving equipment.

Inside, members and visitors are now enjoying refreshed reception, sports bar, gaming room and function spaces which will help the club continue to grow its membership and community presence. Importantly, the expansion has also provided an additional 60 square metres for the co-located Coolum Beach Surf Life Saving Club, ensuring volunteer surf lifesavers have the space they need to store essential equipment and continue their vital work keeping beachgoers safe. I would like to place on record my thanks and congratulations to the team at the Coolum Surf Club, particularly their general manager, Adam Mann, who was here last night. At full capacity the club employs around 110 locals, and during the construction phase he ensured almost all staff remained employed. This commitment kept people in work and preserved continuity of service for members and visitors.

The Coolum Surf Club has been a cornerstone of our community since 1919. Today it has around 240 active volunteer lifesavers, more than 200 nippers and over 18,300 members. These renovations will allow the club to increase its staff base by a further 20 positions and continue to provide outstanding service to the region.

As summer approaches, Queenslanders will again flock to our iconic beaches, especially the best beach in our state, Coolum Beach. It is timely that we recognise the extraordinary men and women of Surf Life Saving Queensland. Surf lifesaving is one of the largest volunteer movements not only in Queensland but Australia-wide. These dedicated individuals patrol our coastlines, rescue those in distress, administer first aid and provide vital community education about water safety. Our surf lifesavers confront dangerous conditions, unpredictable seas and an increasing number of beachgoers every year, yet they turn up every season. They do this not for reward or recognition but out of service to their community. Their red-and-yellow uniforms are a symbol of safety and reassurance for Queenslanders and visitors alike. I commend the Coolum Surf Club, its staff, volunteers and members on this outstanding redevelopment and wish them and all surf lifesavers a safe and successful season ahead.

Townsville Fire



Ms MARR (Thuringowa—LNP) (2.34 pm): I rise today to speak about the Crisafulli government's recent announcement of the blockbuster basketball tournament that has been secured for North Queensland, bringing all eight women's National Basketball League teams to Townsville for an action-packed weekend. The WNBL Townsville Tip-Off '25 is the league's first-ever standalone preseason tournament, giving basketball fans the opportunity to see eight games over three days at Townsville Stadium—a major win for our city.


As one city leader aptly said about the media announcement, 'There was a cast of thousands here today.' This incredible turnout reflects the unwavering support for the Fire and the significance of this moment for our community and women's sport. I am very proud of Townsville Fire. This is a great announcement that rewards the hard work and dedication of players, staff, volunteers, sponsors and supporters for the past almost 25 years. Without their success, this announcement may not have been in Townsville, so let's reflect and celebrate with the Townsville Fire on their upcoming 25th anniversary.

They were the first to bring a national championship to our region, raising banners that symbolise not just sporting excellence but also the heart and resilience of our community. In 2011, the Fire faced a dire moment, teetering on the edge of collapse, but Townsville rallied. Members, local businesses

and volunteers stepped up, refusing to let them die. From that crisis emerged something extraordinary: the Fire became the only community owned club in the WNBL. It places local kids, local jobs and local pride at the core of a national sporting program. Townsville proud!

Suzy Batkovic, a three-time Olympian and former captain, has been a driving force behind the Townsville Fire's success, leading them to three WNBL championships. She continues her relentless passion for basketball and commitment to ensuring every child in North Queensland can enjoy and thrive in sport. This has made her a local icon. As the Fire's all-time leading scorer, her transformative impact on Townsville's basketball scene is immortalised by the retirement of her jersey, No. 32, and her depiction in the team's logo. The Townsville Fire continue to set the standard in WNBL, working tirelessly to remain visible, viable and unstoppable. Let's honour their 25 years of excellence and the community that keeps their flame burning bright.

Drugs, Testing; Ipswich, Sporting Infrastructure

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.37 pm): At the outset, I want to second the comments from my colleagues on this side of the House in relation to some amendments that have been flagged in relation to pill testing. We read about it in the media. I want to add something to that. All of us in this House are representing communities, and those people expect us to stand up for them—for what they want and what is best for them—in this House. How can we do that if things that are really important—life and death amendments—are put through this House on the sly? It is not acceptable; it is worrying. What does it say about transparency, what does it say about this parliament and what does it say about Queenslanders? We deserve better.

Ipswich deserves a synthetic track. We are the fastest growing local government area in Queensland. Families are moving to our city in record numbers, our schools are bursting with talent and our sporting clubs are nurturing the next generation of Queensland athletes. Despite all of this, we are without a synthetic athletics track. At Limestone Park, our young athletes continue to run on an outdated grass surface. This is simply not good enough for a city of our size and standing. In October last year, under a Labor government, I was proud to secure a \$5 million election commitment to help build a synthetic track at UniSQ's Ipswich campus, but what has the LNP government done? They have ignored Ipswich. They have turned their backs on the thousands of athletes, students and families who would benefit from this facility. Instead, they have announced a million dollars for a business case at UniSQ—but not in Ipswich—in Toowoomba. It just so happens to be the Treasurer's electorate.


Ipswich has the population, we have the demand and we have a range of possibilities for a site. What we do not have is a government that will put Ipswich first. Parents are tired of driving their kids to Brisbane just so they can train on synthetic surfaces and what about those kids whose parents do not have the means to drive them to Brisbane? Clubs are frustrated, athletes are disadvantaged and our region is being left behind.

This is not about politics; it is about fairness. Ipswich is a proud sporting city. We have produced Olympians, national champions and world-class competitors. Imagine what more we could achieve with the right facilities. We even have two of our own in Ipswich representing Australia in the Tokyo World Athletics Championships this week: Gout Gout, who is through to the 200 metres semifinal tonight and Jude Thomas, who competed in the 1,500 metres.

I am calling on this government to stop playing politics with the future of Ipswich sport, stop funnelling funding into electorates that already have facilities and start delivering for the fastest growing city in Queensland. We deserve our fair share. We deserve a synthetic athletics track and I will not stop fighting until we get one.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Members to my left, you are very noisy.

Illegal Smoking Products


 **Mr BAROUNIS** (Maryborough—LNP) (2.40 pm): I rise today to express my strong support for the Queensland LNP government introducing strong legislation regarding illegal tobacconists within our community. My electorate of Maryborough is currently suffering an increase of illegal tobacconists setting up businesses within metres of each other in the CBD, thanks to the former Labor government. Just recently I witnessed the closure of a longstanding legal tobacconist in Maryborough, a legitimate business that simply could no longer compete with four—not one, two or three—illegal operations situated within 50 metres of its storefront. It is unsurprising that customers, particularly those doing it tough, are choosing cheaper alternatives, but let's be clear: these cheaper alternatives are operating outside the law.

To make matters worse, I have now been informed that yet another illegal tobacconist is moving into the very premises vacated by the now closed legal business that was unable to compete with them. That will bring the total to five illegal tobacconists, all within a 150-metre radius, an extraordinary and unacceptable situation, again, thanks to the former Labor government.

The hardworking legal tobacconists will rise again and become profitable businesses once more. With the statewide legislation that has been introduced, the Crisafulli LNP government is sending a strong message: become a legal trading tobacconist or shut up your illegal shop and go. This is not just a local issue; it is a failure of governance. Illegal tobacco operators are dodging tax, undermining local businesses and exploiting state subsidised transport to increase their customer base. That is happening under the government's nose and nothing has been done so far.

There is a lot of talk about teenagers taking up smoking and vaping. Smokers know very well the effects this habit has on their health and their pocket. Making it harder for teenagers to have access to these items would be beneficial to everyone. After 10 years of Labor that is the result my community in Maryborough is facing, but thanks to the Crisafulli LNP government things will change and they will become better.

Multiculturalism

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.43 pm): To not condemn is to condone. This is the message the Crisafulli LNP government has sent to our multicultural communities following anti-immigration rallies. These protests were not only misguided but dangerous. We can have a rational discussion about migration levels in our country, but they are not rational when they specifically target and vilify hardworking migrants in our communities. They are not rational when they are led by Neo-Nazis and far-right groups who are using people's genuine concern as fodder to espouse a return to a White Australia policy. Our Indian and Chinese communities do not deserve to be racially targeted and their fears and concerns should not have been minimised.


I personally spoke to many who on that Sunday chose not to work, who stayed home and forwent income for fear of violence emanating from these protests. Despite the Leader of the Opposition and I writing to both the Premier and the Minister for Multiculturalism regarding what specific measures would be in place to protect the community, we heard nothing. More importantly, this LNP Premier and his ministers refused to condemn the rallies, citing freedom of speech. Of course this comes from the very same LNP that has voted at their recent policy convention to water down hate speech laws because—and get this—the LNP believe that the offence to offend, insult or humiliate someone on the basis of race, colour or ethnic origin 'casts a long shadow' over public debate.

What happens when you embolden people to exercise this so-called freedom of speech? We saw a cowardly and racially motivated bomb threat at the Islamic College of Brisbane which threatened to blow up the school and stab the students. Children are being targeted because of their faith, the lowest of acts. We saw the Arundel mosque on the Gold Coast threatened with a fake bomb, a mosque that has operated peacefully and in harmony with their community for over 30 years. We saw our Jewish community having to increase security measures at their synagogues.

Let's be very clear. These are the consequences when you allow hate to spread. When you see political leaders like the LNP's Jacinta Price say publicly that the Indian community is only being prioritised for migration because of how they vote, you have to wonder what the LNP are saying in private. Then refusing to apologise and being actively supported and encouraged by many in her own party shows what the LNP really think about our multicultural communities.

Once again, I say to our multicultural communities: on this side of the House we stand with you, we recognise you and we respect you. My parents came to this country in the 1950s and 1960s as migrants. They worked hard, peacefully and made a contribution to their adopted nation. They raised their children to be equally proud of their Australian and Greek heritage. It is what we want for every child growing up in our state, but clearly not under the LNP.

Gatton Hawks Rugby League Club

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.46 pm): It is a privilege for me to stand today in this House and tell everybody that this Saturday, 20 September might be the very important part of the Carnival of Flowers, but the highlight for the Rugby League community is the Toowoomba Rugby League championships and the Gatton Hawks are in the grand final; they are hoping to go back to back. I can tell honourable members that last year's win was great, but this year's win is going to be even greater.


In an article earlier in the year, the *Toowoomba Chronicle* asked: who is going to stop the Gatton Hawks juggernaut? I have to agree. There are going to be buses heading up to the game from Gatton thanks very much to the sponsors and the Lockyer Valley council for helping out there. It is going to be a great game as they take on Wattles. Ben Haviland and Luke Self, the co-captains, have done a great job leading the team on the field. For the second year in a row John Flint is hoping to go back to back as the coach and he has absolutely got the boys firing. It is a team effort.

The Gatton Hawks is a real culture for our community. People who live in Gatton know what that is all about. Players who come to play in Gatton actually get embraced by our community and they are forever a Gatton Hawk. It does take a team. Kenny Hughes, the president, leads them very admirably. I have to give a shout-out also to Doug Beahan, who is the vice-president and in charge of pastoral care. Father Doug, as we all know him, does a great job leading the boys in pastoral care. Our secretary, Ann Bichel, and treasurer, Judy Schmidt, of course keep all the things in order behind the scenes.

Our community really rallies behind the Gatton Hawks and I can tell honourable members there will be many cars and buses streaming to the athletic oval, as I know it, or Clive Berghofer Arena in Toowoomba. Last year's player of the series, the best and fairest, young Joel Hughes actually won the John McDonald Medal for the best and fairest. I have a lovely photo at home of him and Mum, who presented him with the award, which is a really great thing. Joel will be a handful again.

Luke Self has been one of the best in the series across Toowoomba and his brother, Jake, is an absolute attacking weapon. They will be great. I know that Dalton Desmond-Walker is an outstanding prop in the Toowoomba competition and he will be putting the shoulder to the wheel when the time gets tough. Brad Zampech is the second highest try scorer. He has some really great flare. If you love Rugby League, get along to the Toowoomba Rugby League grand final. I can tell honourable members that the Hawks will not be left wondering. Go the Gatton Hawks!


Griffith University, Mount Gravatt Campus; Drugs, Testing

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.49 pm): This afternoon I rise to speak on a number of issues of urgent concern—issues that strike at the heart of community life in Toohey and our neighbouring electorates. The first issue is the Mount Gravatt campus and the second issue is in relation to media reports that pill testing will be outlawed by amendments proposed to be moved tonight. The first issue is in relation to the Griffith University Mount Gravatt campus—that is, the uncertainty and the increasingly perilous future of the Griffith University Mount Gravatt campus, home to Yarranlea Primary School, Sunnybank Little Athletics and the much loved aquatic and sporting facilities in that precinct.

In 2024, worried parents from Yarranlea Primary School contacted our office. They were desperate to know what would happen to their children's school once Griffith University handed the campus back to the government. Yarranlea Primary School has a lease until 2034, but leases are only as good as the government willing to uphold them. The former Miles Labor government stood firmly with Yarranlea. We approached the then deputy premier to secure a written guarantee—a guarantee that, if Labor was elected, we would protect Yarranlea's right to stay until 2034, work with the school on long-term tenure and give it a real voice in shaping the site's future. This is what leadership looks like, but what have we seen since? Parents and students and staff have been left twisting in the wind. Sunnybank Little Athletics—a proud and vibrant community organisation—told me that it had finally found a home at the Mount Gravatt campus, only to discover its contract will only be until 31 December. Again, there is no certainty and no leadership.

Going to the second issue in relation to media reports, it is sad that we will not get the opportunity to see these amendments. It would be good if we could see these amendments and they could be distributed in the House. Is the Minister for Health just going to drop them under the cover of darkness tonight and not enable anyone to review them or speak to them? If so, this is not transparency.


Multiculturalism

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.52 pm): As I outlined in my first speech, I am a migrant. During my lifetime I have held four citizenships. My mother is Sicilian, I was born in Africa, I grew up in New Zealand, and when I was 15 my parents saw fit to take our family from New Zealand to a land of greater opportunity and promise—a land that could offer us prosperity right across the ditch: Australia, and not just anywhere in Australia but to the great state of Queensland. In 2004 I became an Australian citizen and in that moment, although I was a migrant, I became wholly Australian and I have never—not once—felt that I was not in my home, a home being a place where you make sacrifice for your family. In this very season our nation and our state are confronted by very ugly conversations and it is tearing at the fabric of what it means to be a Queenslanders and to be an Australian.

In my capacity as the Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs, assisting our very fine Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon. Fiona Simpson, I have sought to drive a bipartisan note around multiculturalism, because I know what it feels like to be a migrant; I know what it feels like to commit yourself to Australia and to want nothing more than to be accepted—and not just accepted by one side of politics but by the whole society.

Just a few weeks ago I had the opportunity to call out extremist rhetoric at a conference on the Gold Coast. Representing the Premier, I stood up and acknowledged the presence of the Leader of the Opposition and I welcomed his attendance there. I said that multiculturalism can never be a partisan issue because when it becomes a partisan issue you divide communities. The contribution in this chamber from the member for Jordan was disgraceful. She is not fit to be the shadow minister for multiculturalism. We are building a better Queensland. Do not listen to her rhetoric; tear it down.

North-West Queensland

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.55 pm): At the moment in the north-west we are at a 'break glass' moment—I do not say that lightly—and I include the Burke shire and Mayor Ernie Camp. Recently with the mayor and the federal MP, my father, we declared an economic crisis requiring an emergency special economic zone. There is not just one thing that needs fixing; there are a number of things at once.


To put some context around this, a copper mine that has been mining in the area for 100 years has closed. This has resulted in 1,200 job cuts. In 2016 in Townsville 787 jobs went, and people in Townsville have just recently said to me, 'We're only just starting to recover from Queensland Nickel'—that is, a population of almost 200,000 losing 787 jobs. Mount Isa, with 18,000 people, has lost 1,200 jobs, and that is from a mine that should not have closed down and has no right to close down.

With regard to the phosphate mine and the fertiliser plant, we import 80 per cent of our fertiliser at the moment. There is one fertiliser plant that requires a gas reserve policy but, in our pig-headedness and with the blindness that we have in our economic ideologies in Australia, no-one can comprehend or fathom having a gas reserve policy, so it is forced to be the vagaries of the global gas reserve. The issue with CopperString cannot be resolved. It does not need words; it needs to be committed to—an absolute commitment that says, 'It'll be built by this state at this cost and this is what the power will cost you.' Until then, we cannot build anything around that with any security. With regard to the performance of utilities such as rail, water, roads—mainly rail and water—and electricity charging, the way that is done is just so inefficient and it is done against the principles of how the whole western regional area was built.

There are now 17,000 jobs on the line—let me repeat that: 17,000 jobs on the line—at the third largest industrial facility in Australia. I am having trouble comprehending why there is not more panic around this. There are a lot of nice, supportive words, but supportive words are not going to keep that open. We have to take some of these global traders around the neck and say, 'We run this country. We will determine the future of copper production in this country, not you from a boardroom in Switzerland,' and that takes some courage. That will take some standing up to the resource bodies or whoever else wants to defend the likes of Glencore.

If we want to pay for the Olympics, we need to fight like our life depends on these industrial facilities. We do not need to hear flowery words like, 'We support this and we don't want to see it close down.' That does not cut it. If this thing is closed down, it will be on this government. That is the reality. It might be a tough gig, but that is where we are at. I am crying out on behalf of people from the north-west. We need some help, because without that help the state is in trouble. It is a problem for not just us; it is a problem for the entire state.

Mount Peter Priority Development Area

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (2.58 pm): Recently the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations, Jarrod Bleijie MP, declared the Mount Peter area in Mulgrave a priority development area, or PDA. PDAs are established under the Economic Development Act 2012 and are managed by Economic Development Queensland. Each area is subject to a specific development scheme which outlines the planning and assessment framework unique to that locality.

These schemes are tailored to accelerate and coordinate growth, streamline approvals and ensure that infrastructure and services are delivered efficiently to meet community needs. As a result, PDAs play a vital role in shaping the future of Queensland's urban and regional landscapes, fostering investment and sustainable development across the state.

I was pleased to hear from the Deputy Premier, the Hon. Jarrod Bleijie MP, about the decision to grant a priority development area across the Mount Peter locality. I have been working closely with the Cairns Regional Council and the Deputy Premier's office to assist with this determination. The Mount Peter southern growth corridor covers a total land area of 3,300 hectares between Edmonton and Gordonvale. The area has a capacity to deliver 18,500 new dwellings, or up to 42,500 new residents. Acknowledging the housing crisis our region is enduring, opening up a large supply of housing blocks will make a huge difference for residents seeking a place they can call home. By declaring Mount Peter a priority development area it will provide fast-track development and infrastructure delivery—roadworks, public transportation and utilities such as water, sewerage, power and connectivity—therefore delivering better housing and community infrastructure faster.

The Crisafulli government is delivering a major step forward for housing supply in Far North Queensland with the declaration of a new priority development area in Mulgrave. The priority development area will unlock 18,500 new homes with 200 to be fast-tracked through an early release area. Once fully developed the priority area will cater for over 42,000 new residents. An interim land use plan is now in effect and enables development applications to proceed immediately for the early development area. Economic Development Queensland will work with Cairns Regional Council, industry and the community to deliver the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time. I would like to thank the Deputy Premier for this important declaration for the seat of Mulgrave. This declaration will ease Labor's housing crisis and give more Queenslanders a place to call home.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.01 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee report on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Dismantling Illegal Trade) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 7 November 2025.

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Reporting Date



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.01 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—That the date for the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee to report on the inquiry into improving Queensland's container refund scheme be further extended from 2 October 2025 to 16 October 2025.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.01 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 14 October 2025.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (3.03 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 15, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner*, tabled on 5 September 2025.

I rise today as chair of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to speak to our oversight responsibilities for the Office of the Information Commissioner and tabled report No. 15 of this 58th Parliament. I extend my thanks to my fellow committee members for their considered contributions

and to our secretariat for their tireless professionalism in supporting the committee's work. The committee further acknowledges the Information Commissioner, Ms Joanne Kummrow, the Acting Privacy Commissioner, Ms Susan Shanley, and the Right to Information Commissioner, Ms Stephanie Winson, together with their dedicated staff, for their assistance in the committee's examination.

The parliament has tasked this committee with oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner. Our functions include monitoring the commissioner's performance, examining annual and other reports, reviewing the handling of information access and privacy matters and reporting to the House on issues for attention. In conducting our oversight the committee examined the commissioner's annual report and we held a public hearing on 19 February 2025.

Under section 130 of the Right to Information Act, one of the key responsibilities of the Information Commissioner is to investigate and review decisions made by agencies and ministers. This includes ensuring that reasonable steps have been taken to identify and locate documents sought by applicants. The committee's examination of the annual report shows that this function continues to be carried out with independence, timeliness and fairness.

During the reporting period the office received 696 applications for external review, which is an increase of 68 on the previous year, and finalised 664 of them. That is representing a very high completion rate of 95 per cent. Importantly, the average time taken to resolve matters was 147 days, which is meeting the target of 150 days. Of those reviews finalised, 90 per cent were resolved informally without the need for a written decision. That exceeds the target of 75 per cent—well exceeds that target—and demonstrates the office's commitment to efficient and practical resolutions.


The Queensland Police Service continues to represent the largest share of review applications, accounting for 26 per cent of the total. Despite the challenges, satisfaction among those who did provide feedback improved significantly, with 75 per cent of applicants reporting satisfaction with the conduct of reviews. That exceeded the 70 per cent target and is up 17 per cent from the previous year.

On the privacy front, the office finalised 110 complaints, with a number successfully mediated to achieve compensation for affected individuals. While complaint numbers have eased slightly compared with the previous year, the underlying demand remains at the high end of the historical experience. The committee also noted the increased workload in consultations and submissions, reflecting both legislative reform and heightened community expectations around privacy and transparency.

A number of emerging issues came into focus during our hearing. The implementation of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023 represents a significant reform. The office has stood up a dedicated project team to guide agencies through this transition, providing training and resources across the state. Feedback from agencies has been very positive.

The committee examined the risks posed by new technologies, particularly artificial intelligence. The Information Commissioner emphasised the need for conducting privacy impact assessments before adopting such tools. The committee also discussed a serious privacy breach concerning the QPRIME police database uncovered under the previous Labor government where sensitive victim details were inadvertently shared. We were assured that the office is investigating this matter under its statutory powers and that transparency to parliament and the public will be maintained.

Finally, the committee considered the broader demand on the office's services. I thank the Information Commissioner, her fellow commissioners and all staff for their professionalism and dedication and I commend the report to the House.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (3.09 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report titled *Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner*. At the outset can I thank the committee, particularly the members for Toohey and Macalister. Unlike the Attorney-General, I am happy to thank all of the committee members because I appreciate that everyone does important work overseeing these really important bodies to make sure those bodies are held to account. Oversight might not make the front page, but it is the linchpin of accountability.

Labor has always believed that Queenslanders deserve access to information about their government. That has been demonstrated by previous Labor governments. This morning we heard about some of the work of the Hon. Rod Welford and the significant work that happened over many generations to make sure that Queenslanders have access to information.

Sunlight is the best disinfectant. I know this personally because for many years my mum worked as a freedom-of-information officer in the Public Service. From dinner table discussions I learned that transparency is not aspirational; it is a right. The staff who administer right to information rarely get the recognition they deserve, but they are the guardians of that right and they do really important work. The


Office of the Information Commissioner—the Information Commissioner, the Right to Information Commissioner, the Privacy Commissioner and their staff—carry the burden of making government accountable. I thank them and their teams for the work that they do.

Page 5 of the committee's report is clear: the OIC is mandated to promote 'a proactive and positive culture of information access'. That is the benchmark. That is what Queenslanders expect. Unfortunately, under the Crisafulli government, what do we see? The complete opposite. For all the talk about letting the sun shine in, this government has slammed the shutters closed. Ministers, including the Minister for Integrity, are sitting on expert advice and cabinet documents, despite the fact that there are a whole range of reports that they purported to be big advocates of, such as the Coaldrake review, but now that they are in government suddenly they are less interested in integrity and transparency. Applications are being delayed or refused. Queenslanders are compelled into external reviews to access information they are legally entitled to.

This is not just my view. Media reports have repeatedly documented the Crisafulli government's failures in relation to information that Queenslanders ought to know. The ABC news reported that the government was refusing to release advice made by an independent expert panel that recommended the Making Queensland Safer Laws. We have had two tranches of law reform and still not seen any of that information. A *Courier-Mail* piece carried the headline 'Lazy or incompetent?: LNP accused of integrity fail over missing documents'. That article pointed out that we have still not seen most of the cabinet documents that those opposite seem to be analysing, which is unfortunate because I think Queenslanders have a right to know.

Even the opposition has had to lodge external review applications with the OIC because, clearly, ministers are refusing to fully cooperate. Let us think about that. Those sworn to enforce transparency are now being forced into legal back-and-forth processes simply so the public can see what was done in their name. That is not a proactive or positive culture of information access; it is a culture of secrecy. It is a culture built to shield and not to inform. This matters. When governments hide information, it is not politicians who suffer most; it is people. It is families trying to understand decisions about their children's education, health or safety. It is journalists who are trying to hold power to account. It is citizens who are denied their right to know.

The Office of the Information Commissioner's work may not always be glamorous but it is vital. It is the dividing line between accountable government and secretive government. Under the Crisafulli government, that line is being strained like never before. On behalf of Labor, I thank the OIC, every right-to-information officer across government and everyone who continues to push for transparency, often under pressure and frequently against the current. Queenslanders deserve better than a government addicted to secrecy. They deserve one that does not just tolerate openness but embraces it, and that is what the opposition will continue to hold this government to account on. I thank the committee members and the OIC for their important work and the report before the House.

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.13 pm): I rise to speak to the committee's oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner for the 2023-24 financial year. As part of the oversight process, the committee examined the Office of the Information Commissioner's 2023-24 annual report and held a public hearing on 19 February 2025. The annual report, which was tabled on 13 September 2024, provides an account of the OIC's revenue and use of public funds, an insight into the challenges and opportunities that have influenced its ability to carry out its statutory functions, and an assessment of its achievement of corporate and occupational plans.


In 2023-24, \$11.397 million was appropriated for the OIC. Total expenditure for the same period was \$9.877 million, which represented a 15.4 per cent increase from the previous year. Of this expenditure, employee expenses accounted for 76 per cent of spending. The additional expenses are the result of an increase in resources and an increase in the engagement of contractors and consultants to assist with the information management requirements.

One of the commissioner's core functions under the Right to Information Act and the Information Privacy Act is to review the decisions of agencies and ministers made under the RTI Act. In its annual report the OIC advised that in 2023-24 the OIC received 696 review applications, of which 664 were finalised, meaning a high finalisation rate of 95 per cent. Finalised applications took an average of 147 days to complete, which met the OIC's target of 150 days on average. Seventy-five per cent of the applicants who returned the OIC's satisfaction survey were satisfied with the conduct of reviews. This number exceeds the target of 70 per cent and represents a 17 per cent increase from the previous year. Furthermore, agencies reported a 93 per cent satisfaction rate with the review service, which exceeded the target of 75 per cent and marked an 86 per cent increase from 2022-23.

During the public hearing held on 19 February, the OIC noted its independence has been enhanced as a result of the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022. Under that act, the committee will be required to review OIC funding proposals and report to the Attorney-General on those proposals. The OIC also made note of reforms made by the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023, which included the introduction of a single set of privacy principles and a mandatory data breach notification scheme for government agencies. The OIC also highlighted Queensland's modern RTI legislation. In 2023-24, government agencies in Queensland received 16,845 RTI requests. This number, whilst lower than other states, represents how parliament considers government information to be a public resource, with formal RTI requests intended as a last resort.

A key topic discussed by the OIC during the hearing was how high-profile data breaches in recent years have made privacy a topic of concern throughout the Australian community. The OIC made specific note on how the government needs to maintain public trust in its ability to protect personal information, as it is critical to the adoption of new government digital services by the public. It is to this end that the OIC engages in mediating privacy complaints from the public against government agencies and encourages agencies to adopt a privacy-by-design approach to new technologies and programs.

Overall, committee members and I commend the OIC on its efforts in 2023-24. I commend this report to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.17 pm): I rise to speak on the findings of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner for the 2023-24 financial year. I acknowledge all committee members from both sides of the aisle and, in particular, the chair and member for Nicklin. This report, informed by our public hearing on 19 February, highlights both the achievements of the office and the challenges that lie ahead. The Information Commissioner reminded the committee that the office is part of the Queensland integrity framework along with the Auditor-General, the Ombudsman, the Integrity Commissioner and the Crime and Corruption Commission. With only 51 full-time-equivalent staff, the office nonetheless safeguards Queenslanders' right to access government information and protect their personal data from misuse. The commissioner reported that during 2023 her inquiry service responded to nearly 6,000 inquiries, which is an increase of 13.6 per cent on the last financial year. The commissioner further stated—

In 2023-24 we had over 286,000 visits to our website. Our online and in-person training options engaged more than 4,000 participants ...

The commissioner also noted that 80 per cent of the 696 external review applications were resolved informally and 110 privacy complaints were finalised.

Major reform shaped the year. In November 2023 the Queensland parliament amended the Right to Information Act and the Information Privacy Act with the passage of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act, which introduced a new single set of privacy principles and a mandatory notification of data breach scheme. A dedicated Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act project team has been developing and designing training sessions and taking those around Queensland, most recently in Beenleigh, Longreach and Winton. The committee also heard about the QPRIME data breach. The commissioner stated—

In December last year, we commenced a review under our regulatory powers under section 135 of the Information Privacy Act ... which is effectively an investigation ...

The commissioner further added—

Section 135 ... provides that I am at liberty to provide a report to the parliament ... and the opportunity to issue a compliance notice ... should that be required.

The commissioner also spoke about artificial intelligence and proffered this advice to government: the government should ensure there are proper privacy and safety mechanisms and it should engage both ethically and with transparency. The Acting Privacy Commissioner reinforced the same, saying—

While it is not mandatory to undertake a privacy impact assessment, our office strongly encourages all agencies to undertake a privacy impact assessment ... and ... to publish those privacy impact assessments to the greatest extent practicable ...

Looking ahead, the commissioner said—

Maintaining our independence is always really critical as an integrity body—


...

There is the issue of sustainable funding—

and—

... grappling with new technologies ... including AI ... using privacy by design and transparency by design ... making sure those systems are secure ...

I would also like to echo the commissioner's words and thank her staff, who are steadfast in their commitment to delivering independent and impartial services to the Queensland community. By supporting the Office of the Information Commissioner, we affirm a fundamental right of our citizens: the right to know how government decisions are made.

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (3.22 pm): I rise today as the member for Thuringowa and a member of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to speak on Report No. 15, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner*. I also would like to acknowledge my fellow members of parliament who are on the committee and the staff who have worked tirelessly to help us throughout this year.

This report, tabled in August 2025, represents a critical piece of parliamentary oversight that highlights the fundamental principles of transparency, accountability and the protection of Queenslanders' rights in an increasingly digital world. The OIC, an independent statutory body, plays a pivotal role in promoting access to government-held information under the Right to Information Act 2009 and safeguarding personal information under the Information Privacy Act 2009.

The report details the OIC's performance across key areas: external reviews of agency decisions, privacy complaint mediation, assistance to agencies and the public; and corporate governance. It highlights its achievements, like handling 696 external review applications, finalising 664 of them with a high informal resolution rate and responding to nearly 6,000 public inquiries. It also notes the challenges such as the increasing demand for services and preparation for major reforms under the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023, including a new mandatory data breach notification scheme.

The real importance of this report extends beyond its operational details, reflecting its profound significance to this parliament. In a democracy like ours, access to information is the backbone of accountability. Queenslanders entrust their government with vast amounts of personal data from health records to financial details and they expect that information to be handled with the utmost integrity. This report ensures parliament remains vigilant in overseeing the OIC, an office that acts as watchdog for these very rights. Without such oversight, we risk eroding public trust, especially in the wake of high-profile data breaches that have shaken communities across Australia.

Consider the context: in 2023-24 the OIC mediated privacy complaints and it received 41 voluntary data breach notifications from agencies. These represent real people whose privacy was compromised. The report's examination of these matters allows parliament to assess whether our laws are working effectively. For instance, it discusses the OIC's proactive work in preparing for IPOLA reforms, which will introduce unified privacy principles and mandatory breach notifications starting 1 July 2025. This is timely, as AI and digital technologies pose new risks to privacy. The OIC's advice on conducting privacy impact assessments before adopting such technologies is a direct call to action for government agencies, and this report amplifies the message to us here in parliament.


Moreover, this report reinforces parliament's role in fostering a culture of openness. Queensland's RTI framework encourages proactive disclosure of information, reducing the need for formal requests, unlike in other states where request volumes are exponentially higher. In 2022-23 Queensland saw just 16,845 RTI requests, or about 3.1 per capita, compared to 7.1 in Victoria. This efficiency stems from our modern legislation, but it requires ongoing scrutiny to prevent complacency.

The report notes the OIC's engagement activities, like Privacy Awareness Week and The Solomon Lecture, which reached thousands and promoted digital inclusion. By tabling this oversight report, parliament signals its commitment to these initiatives, ensuring rural and regional areas, like my electorate of Thuringowa, are not left behind in understanding their information rights.

Importantly, this report highlights financial and operational efficiencies. The OIC operated with a budget of \$11.397 million, delivering a surplus while investing in a new case management system to handle upcoming reforms. This demonstrates value for taxpayers' money.

In essence, this report is a crucial tool for parliament to uphold the principles of good governance. It draws attention to emerging issues like data breaches and AI risks, and it commends the OIC's efforts in building agency accountabilities. By noting this report, as recommended, we affirm that transparency is essential to maintaining public confidence in our institutions. I commend the OIC team; the Information Commissioner, Joanne Kummrow; the Right to Information Commissioner, Stephanie

Winson; and the Acting Privacy Commissioner, Susan Shanley, for their dedication. I thank my committee colleagues and the Parliamentary Service for their work. I commend the committee report to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.27 pm): I rise to make a few comments on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's oversight report in relation to the Office of the Information Commissioner. Even before participating in the committee's oversight hearings, it was clear to everyone here—at least it should have been—that the Office of the Information Commissioner does incredibly important work, and I will at the outset express my thanks to the commissioner and to all the staff at the commission for that work.

We have learnt some really valuable lessons in Queensland in recent years about the importance of transparency and integrity in government, and no doubt the findings of the Coaldrake review and the recommendations that remain to be implemented will provide some challenges. We are a long way from where we should be.

For the most part, the statistics in the report indicate that the OIC is doing an excellent job. Most of the timelines, key targets and performance indicators that it has been working towards have been met. The report also notes that the OIC has been dealing with some big changes, particularly this year. I note that most of the changes the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act introduced commenced at the beginning of the current financial year. That was a big tranche of work.


Perhaps most importantly though, I want to highlight the point the OIC has made about the gradual increase in demand for its services. While they are meeting their KPIs almost across the board, one notable exception is around external reviews and particularly the number of external review applications that are on hand—that is, to be finalised. They exceeded their target for the number of applications to be completed within 12 months and they noted that 'this number does not meet performance expectations, but reflects the increasing demand on the OIC's modest resources'. That is a vitally important point for us as a parliament to reflect on. Their annual report highlighted the year-on-year increase in demand for various services, including inquiry services.

The external review function of OIC is one that I want to focus on specifically because in my experience, both in this role and before I was elected to this place, basically anything of value that comes out of a right-to-information application will be blocked at the first hurdle. I do not know how many times I have received a notice which says, 'We will release some of the documents,' but it comes with blocks of pages or half pages that are completely redacted so that any of the information that the applicant might be interested in is not released to them. We invariably find ourselves going to the Information Commissioner. By and large, I will advise people to skip over the internal review because if they want to stand any chance of getting information released by most departments it will come through the OIC. External review is vital.

The parliament would also be aware that this committee has some role in what recommendations or requests OIC and other statutory bodies might make around their funding. That is a separate matter that the committee has dealt with. I do not intend to reveal any confidential information that the committee considered or recommendations that might have been made, but I will say that if a body like the OIC tells the parliament that it requires more resources to do the work it is tasked with then we should listen. We need to ensure that these bodies can not just meet but exceed their timelines on every possible occasion.

Their work is vital. It will never be done, I would suggest. We have heard examples put forward by other speakers in this debate of information that is still being kept under lock and key. There are really important examples of that that I will point to as well. There is the advice from the independent expert panel that has, supposedly at least, backed up the government's baseless Adult Crime, Adult Time and other youth justice proposals. How about the study on pill testing? CheQpoint was having their work investigated and there was a report prepared by UQ. That is still being hidden from us. What about the lease conditions on the Queen's Wharf proposal across the road? All of these things are being hidden from Queenslanders and they should not be.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (3.32 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the committee report into the operations of the Office of the Information Commissioner. I thank the committee members and the committee chair for their outstanding work on something that is crucial to our democracy—that is, openness and transparency of information.

The importance of the OIC certainly cannot be understated. Openness and transparency is fundamental in any democracy. It empowers citizens to make informed decisions. It empowers citizens to be informed about what is happening in government. The OIC is also important in terms of how data is handled. It ensures that data is carefully respected and properly guarded. We need to ensure that there are high levels of safeguard to create confidence among the Queensland public.

I am interested in talking about AI, which is found on page 14 of the report, and how quickly technology is evolving. We are talking here about microchip companies designing, manufacturing and selling chips that are AI capable. This is a game changer when it comes to computers harnessing data or computing data and potentially causing security and safety issues around information. This is outlined in the report at 3.7, 'Management of risks associated with AI'. As a government we need to ensure the necessary safeguards are put in place. I note that in other parts of the world legislation has been put in place to make it an offence to use AI to mimic a human being or sell a message. This is something that governments need to get onto. They need to understand the ramifications of AI and they need to understand the importance of being in front of these changes.

The Information Commissioner highlighted serious concerns when it comes to proper privacy and safety mechanisms. Unfortunately, when it comes to information technology and what criminal organisations will be using in the future, our laws always seem to be behind the eight ball. We could say that that future is now. We are constantly playing catch-up.

Whilst it is very important that we safeguard information and ensure openness and transparency in our democracy, we need to have the necessary legislation in place to protect data, to protect the livelihoods of our constituents and to protect against the huge changes that AI will present to our society.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (3.37 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 16, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Queensland Child and Family Commission*, tabled on 5 September 2025.

I rise as the chair of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to speak to report No. 16, *Oversight of the Queensland Child and Family Commission*, tabled in August this year. The Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee has statutory oversight responsibilities for the Queensland Family and Child Commission, QFCC. This includes monitoring the commission's performance, examining its annual reports and holding public hearings with the commissioners.

In preparing this report, the committee examined the QFCC's 2023-24 annual report and the Child Death Review Board's 2023-24 annual report and conducted a public oversight hearing on 13 March 2025. I thank my fellow committee members for their commitment to this work and the secretariat for their excellent support. I thank Principal Commissioner Luke Twyford, Commissioner Natalie Lewis, their dedicated team and the Child Death Review Board for their honesty in evidence and for the determination they continue to show in driving better outcomes for children.

The commission's role is to promote the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people, to oversee the child protection and youth justice systems and to provide independent advice and research to government. It also hosts the Child Death Review Board, which conducts systemic reviews following the deaths of children connected with the child protection system. In 2023-24, the QFCC completed 14 oversight reviews, made 20 formal recommendations to government, contributed 32 submissions to inquiries and reviews, published a range of reports and insight papers, and engaged directly with more than 4,600 Queenslanders through surveys and forums. The commission's work has influenced important reforms, including improvements to the blue card scheme, stronger transparency on the use of watch houses and the development of the Child Safe Organisations Bill.


The Child Death Review Board plays a critical role in learning from tragedies to drive systemic change. In 2023-24 the board reviewed 70 cases. Sadly, suicide remained the leading cause of death for children aged 10 to 17. Domestic and family violence was present in more than half of the cases examined. These findings underline the importance of prevention, early support for families and cross-agency collaboration.

The commission also continues to highlight the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection and youth justice systems. Commissioner Lewis and her team play a vital role in advocating for culturally informed approaches and supporting kinship care reform so that more children can remain safely connected to family and culture.

Overall, the committee found that the QFCC continues to provide rigorous, evidence-based oversight and valuable advice to government. Its reports and recommendations help drive policy reform, increase transparency and build accountability across systems that affect vulnerable children.

The Crisafulli government has acted strongly in response to these concerns. The announcement of an independent commission of inquiry into Queensland's child safety system is a major step forward. This inquiry will allow us to take a deeper look at the structures, practices and policies that underpin child safety in Queensland and ensure they deliver on their purpose. It reflects a clear commitment to reform where it is needed most.

Again I thank the commissioners and staff of the QFCC, the Child Death Review Board, my fellow committee members, and in particular our secretariat for their excellent support. The work of the commission is not easy, but it is vital. By maintaining oversight, listening to the voices of children and families and ensuring transparency, we can continue to strengthen Queensland's child protection system. I commend the report to the House.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.41 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's oversight of the Queensland Family and Children Commission report. The QFCC is a vital part of the child safety portfolio. So much of what they do goes a long way towards building a stronger child protection service for Queensland as well as promoting the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people. As the shadow minister for child safety, I have had the opportunity to meet with Principal Commissioner Luke Twyford and discuss the significant work of the QFCC. I would like to thank the whole team at QFCC for the hard work they do.

During the public hearing the committee heard of the approximately 5,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care and the work of the First Nations and Child Rights Advocacy Team. This team is incredibly important—even more so when you consider that the over-representation of First Nations children within the child safety system was not included in the terms of reference of the commission of inquiry. Despite this oversight, it has been pleasing to see the inquiry's commissioner demonstrate its clear intention to address this over-representation throughout the hearings to date.


In March the committee heard that the QFCC submitted a 2025-26 budget request to the LNP Crisafulli government for continued funding of the First Nations and Child Rights Advocacy Team. QFCC commissioner Natalie Lewis was right in saying that the work her team is doing requires both significant attention and urgent action. There should be no scenario where they are concerned about being funded to continue their critical work, particularly when it comes to young people with First Nations backgrounds. Yet, when I looked into the budget papers one could not find a single line item of dedicated funding for this team to continue this important work.

Almost 50 per cent of children in out-of-home care are First Nations children. First Nations children should be centred in every aspect of their lives, including the policies affecting them—nothing for them, without them. The QFCC is meant to influence systemic change for these children, yet shamefully—but maybe not surprisingly—the Crisafulli LNP government has chosen to limit their ability to do just that through their decision not to continue this targeted funding.

I turn to the Child Death Review Board. I would like to also acknowledge the work of the Child Death Review Board hosted by the QFCC. Their work in reviewing the deaths of children is not easy. It takes an emotional and mental toll. However, this work is important—in fact, some of the most important work we do as government—and their findings help prevent further tragic losses that may have been prevented or avoided. Their annual report noted that 56 per cent of the reviewed cases in 2023-24 involved domestic violence. It notes that suicide is the leading cause of death in children between the ages of 10 and 17. Let me repeat that: it notes that suicide is the leading cause of death in children between the ages of 10 and 17. Facts like this must—must—spur action in every portfolio they relate to, including my own shadow portfolio of child safety and prevention of domestic and family violence.

The review board is also undertaking the review into system responses to child sexual abuse, the blue card review. Every person in this chamber, regardless of their political background, wants to see an effective and robust blue card system—as do all Queenslanders—and we look forward to the

final report due to be published in December. I expect that report to be published with transparency and urgency. Children are our future, and we must ensure that all those involved in policies and programs aimed at benefiting children are functioning at their peak with the adequate funding they require.

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.46 pm): I rise today to speak on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's oversight report on the Queensland Family and Child Commission. As part of the oversight process the committee reviewed the Queensland Family and Child Commission—Annual Report 2023-24, the Child Death Review Board—Annual Report 2023-24 and held a public hearing with QFCC commissioners on 13 March 2025.

The QFCC is responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and improving Queensland's child protection system. The Child Death Review Board, which reviews the deaths of children connected to the child protection system, is hosted by the QFCC for administrative purposes.


The QFCC reported a number of key achievements in its annual report that were of note to the committee. Of note was that the QFCC was featured in 2,385 media reports, which represented an increase of 293 per cent from the previous year. The QFCC also completed 14 oversight reviews regarding statutory child protection systems and other systemic issues. Furthermore, the commission published 10 reports and insight papers on a variety of topics, including young people absenteeism from care placements, and how Queensland is upholding the rights of children.

The QFCC is also responsible for maintaining the Queensland Child Death Register. This register records the deaths of all children and young people in Queensland. Preliminary data from the QFCC indicates there was a decrease in the number of child deaths in 2023-24, with 422 deaths being recorded in contrast to 448 in 2022-23. Of note from the annual report is that over the last three years under Labor, and despite an increase in expenditure on family services, the per child spend in Queensland remains far behind New South Wales and Victoria. In February 2025 the Child Death Review Board tabled its annual report for 2023-24. During this time period, the Child Death Review Board reviewed 70 cases, which was more than it received during the year. Despite this, as of 30 June 2024 there were still 65 cases awaiting a review by the board. Of the cases examined by the CDRB, 56 per cent involved domestic and family violence. In Queensland the leading cause of death for children aged 10 to 17 is suicide, which represents six of the deaths reviewed by the CDRB.

On 13 March the committee held a public hearing with the Queensland Family and Child Commission commissioners. During the hearing, the Principal Commissioner emphasised the value provided by the QFCC's reviews, as well as the importance of the Child Death Register and the work of the CDRB. The QFCC highlighted that significant changes are anticipated following the implementation of the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024. According to the QFCC, the act has expanded the scope of its responsibilities, increased its budget from \$12 million to \$23 million and grown the full-time-equivalent staff from 50 to 80.

When questioned on progress regarding the protection of the mental health of children in Queensland, the Queensland Family and Child Commission advised that it anticipates several government initiatives and new announcements that would make positive differences. Specifically, the commission mentioned the Crisafulli government's 12-month Staying on Track program as having the potential to change the situation of children leaving detention for the better.

In summary, the Queensland Family and Child Commission plays an important role in keeping children safe. Its work in maintaining the Child Death Register and hosting the CDRB is undeniably important. I commend the QFCC for its important work.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.51 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report No. 16 on the oversight of the Queensland Family and Child Commission for the 2023-24 financial year. This report highlights the role the Queensland Family and Child Commission plays in protecting children, supporting families and holding our systems accountable. Established under the Family and Child Commission Act 2014, the Queensland Family and Child Commission's purpose is clear: to promote the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people. It does this by monitoring Queensland's child protection and youth justice systems, undertaking research, advocating for reform and engaging with children, families and communities.

One of the commission's responsibilities is maintenance of the Child Death Register and the operation of the Child Death Review Board. In 2023-24, sadly 422 child deaths were recorded, a slight reduction on the previous year. The board reduced its backlog of cases, reviewing 70 in total, with suicide again confirmed as the leading cause of death among young people aged 10 to 17. The board's


recommendations have consistently pointed to systemic shortcomings: the impacts of parental substance abuse, gaps in youth detention and the need for stronger mental health services for children. These are not statistics; they are tragedies that must guide reform.

A central theme in the hearing was the blue card system. Commissioner Natalie Lewis made it clear: while the blue card is important, there has been an historic over-reliance on it. The reality is that it functions as a record of conviction, not a guarantee of safety. In kinship care, this over-reliance has created unacceptable barriers. Safe and suitable family members have been prevented from caring for children due to administrative decisions rather than genuine risk. Commissioner Lewis advised that legislative changes passed last year could see up to 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children move from residential care to family placements, but this will only occur once a commencement date has been set. Until then, families remain needlessly separated.

When asked by the member for Maiwar about the decline in mental health of juveniles in detention, Principal Commissioner Luke Twyford stated his concern about youth detention and the use of watch houses. Too many children remain detained for extended periods, often in conditions that worsen their mental health. Isolation, lack of sunlight and separation from families compound trauma rather than address it. Commissioner Lewis and Principal Commissioner Twyford were explicit when they said—

... we are still seeing far too many children routinely held in watch houses. Irrespective of everything that goes on around it, the reality is that the science is incredibly clear in terms of the impact on an adolescent brain. They are spending extensive periods in isolation—no stimulation, no sunlight, no contact with families.

Detention must become a place of rehabilitation, not punishment. The current over-reliance on punitive responses—embodied in the so-called Making Queensland Safer Laws—does not reduce offending. Prevention and early intervention must be prioritised. Restorative justice conferencing was identified as a proven approach that delivers accountability for young people and justice for victims. Removing or weakening these options is a step backwards. Commissioner Lewis advised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children make up nearly half of those in out-of-home care and more than half of those in detention.

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (3.56 pm): I rise to address the House on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report No. 16 of the 58th Parliament on the Queensland Family and Child Commission for the 2023-24 financial year. As a member of the committee, I am proud to commend this report to the House. It highlights the QFCC's important work in safeguarding Queensland's children and strengthening our child protection and youth justice systems.

This LNP government has made it very clear that our children, being the most vulnerable, are and will continue to be a priority. Child and family safety is a critical foundation for a thriving society. We must protect the most vulnerable from harm, abuse and neglect while fostering environments where families can flourish, break cycles of trauma and promote long-term wellbeing. This will ensure Queensland's child protection and youth justice systems prioritise safety and accountability.

The purpose of the QFCC is to promote the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people and improve the child protection system. As outlined in the Family and Child Commission Act 2014, their responsibilities include: oversight of the child protection system; promotion and advocacy regarding the responsibilities of families and communities to protect and care for children and young people, including their safety and wellbeing, especially those in the child protection or youth justice system; providing research, assistance, capacity building and leadership for agencies involved in the child protection system; increasing collaboration across different sectors to improve the delivery of services to children, young people and families; reviewing, analysing and evaluating systemic policies and practices relevant to the child protection system; informing and educating the community; and reporting to the minister about matters relating to its functions.

The QFCC hosts the Child Death Review Board for administrative purposes. The CDRB conducts systemic reviews following the death of a child connected to the child protection system and can make recommendations about systemic improvements to practices which respond to the findings of such reviews.


The QFCC has demonstrated its commitment to promoting the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people. In 2023-24, the QFCC completed 14 oversight reviews, made 20 formal recommendations and contributed to 32 state, national and international inquiries. These efforts have driven significant reforms, including changes to the blue card scheme, enhanced reporting on watch houses and the establishment of a peak body for youth justice. The committee acknowledges

the QFCC's expanded role under the Child Safe Organisations Act with its budget nearly doubling to \$23 million and staffing growing to 80 full-time positions, marking a shift toward community-based reform.

However, challenges remain. The committee acknowledges that significant changes are underway with respect to the scope of its function. The committee will examine the implementation and impact of these changes in more detail as it continues its oversight of the QFCC. At this time, I wish to thank all committee members, staff and all those who presented their reports and thank them for their time and effort. I commend the committee report to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Marr, adjourned.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (4.00 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The opposition has just become aware that there are government amendments to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) that are ready for circulation but that members of this House have been denied the opportunity to see and consider. I therefore seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I hear your request for leave, Manager of Opposition Business, but I do have a point of order first before I deal with that.

Dr ROWAN: My point of order is that this is not a matter of privilege suddenly arising, so I ask you to rule in relation to that, but I think—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I will seek some advice, but I have you as well, Manager of Opposition Business. Leader of the House, thank you for your point of order. Manager of Opposition Business, I have sought some advice and have been advised that this is not a matter of privilege suddenly arising. However, I take your motion to seek leave to move a motion without notice. I will put that motion.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 33:

ALP, 32—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

NOES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.


Resolved in the negative.

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2894, on motion of Mr Nicholls—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.07 pm): Well, transparency and accountability are dead in the Queensland parliament. Here is the motion that they were so afraid of seeing in this House—the motion to bring pill-testing amendments into this House. I will also table another document here, another article that says these amendments are coming in.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 18 September 2025, titled 'State government to introduce laws making pill testing illegal' [[1282](#)].

Perhaps the mother of a young man, Josh Tam, who died as a result of—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. It is the same point of order I have made previously to previous Deputy Speakers in relation to relevance to the matter and the bill before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Greenslopes, I ask you to expand on the aspect of the bill before the House at present.

Mr J KELLY: As we know, this bill is about five very important provisions which the committee had the opportunity to consider in great detail, unlike the amendments that the government is intending to bring into this House, according to this article, whereby the mother said, 'Please, for the sake of the lives of our loved ones, step aside and allow the experts to lead the way'—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance, as the previous point of order with respect to relevance, and I ask you to consider that matter in the light of your previous ruling and directions to the member for Greenslopes and the additional matters he is now addressing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I will bring you back to the relevance of the bill before the House.

Mr J KELLY: As the mother said, 'Please, for the sake of the lives of our loved ones, step aside and allow the experts to lead the way in keeping our loved ones safe.' She also said, 'I understand they made a stance, but they also said no new stadiums.'

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

Mr J KELLY: If a mother can work this out, why can't the LNP work this out?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, take your seat, thank you. Member, what is your point of order?

Mr NICHOLLS: My point of order again goes to relevance. This bill does not deal in any way, shape or form with the matters currently being promoted by the member for Greenslopes, and that he continues to promote, despite your prior two directions to the member for Greenslopes to be relevant to the bill. There is no mention of the matter that is being raised and debated by the member for Greenslopes in the bill, in neither the long title, the substance of the bill nor the committee report. I would ask you to bring the member back to the substance of the bill and to refrain from discussing matters that are not the subject matter of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I would like you to bring yourself back to the aspect of the bill before the House. I want you to explain the context of your contribution in terms of relevance to the bill before the House.

Mr J KELLY: As I explained earlier and I will now explain again—this time with a second article, clearly leaked from the government or the Public Service—they intend to bring amendments to this House and I intend—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you are not being relevant to the bill. I am going to warn you.

Mr J KELLY: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. The LNP government love to make big and bold statements. Remember the one about putting doctors and nurses in charge of the health system, except when they give advice they do not like—advice like pill testing is safe, pill testing saves lives—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance, again, with respect to the matters that are before the House and the content of not only the bill but also the committee report. I would submit to you that you have made a number of rulings, you have warned the member for Greenslopes and now his conduct is disorderly. I ask that you consider that matter and your options.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, there is no reference in the bill before the House to pill testing. That, as we know, is a matter that has been ventilated through the media. I would bring you back to the contents of the bill before the House.

Mr J KELLY: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. The last point in this bill goes to radiation safety. Again, the LNP said that they would keep Queenslanders safe. When they refuse to allow us to look at amendments that will have a direct impact on safety, I believe that is relevant to this bill.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, on relevance—

Mr J KELLY: They abuse the processes of this parliament.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, take your seat. I have a point of order.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I again rise to a point of order on relevance. There is a direct refusal to accept the guidance that you are giving in relation to relevance. I would say that is a reflection on the chair in relation to that guidance. You have been extraordinarily patient, and I appreciate your extraordinary patience with respect to the matter, but the member continues to try and circumvent your rulings.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I have a point of order on relevance. This is your last opportunity. I bring you back to the content of the bill before the House, excluding any reference to pill testing.

Mr JKELLY: The bill also talks about the appointment of an acting mental health commissioner. Certainly an acting mental health commissioner, or even a mental health commissioner, would be deeply concerned about mental health issues and addiction issues. Of course, one of the good things you can do in the area of addiction is harm minimisation work. If you had something like a pill-testing regime, the mental health commissioner would clearly have jurisdiction over this.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, take your seat.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, you have provided I think five instances of guidance now, including the last one, which was the last guidance.

Ms Dooley interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Redcliffe, you can resume your seat, thank you. I am taking a point of order.

Mr NICHOLLS: You have given at least five chances now to the member for Greenslopes to be relevant to the bill, including the last one which you said was the member for Greenslopes' last chance to come back to the bill. He has again directly refuted your direction in that regard with respect to relevance. At this stage, you may wish to consider that it is a reflection on the chair and that the member be no longer heard.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I find myself with no choice other than to have you remove yourself from the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Greenslopes withdrew from the chamber at 4.14 pm.



Ms DOOLEY (Redcliffe—LNP) (4.14 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. I rise not only as the member for Redcliffe but also as a member of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee. This bill is another important step by the Crisafulli government to strengthen the clarity and performance of health legislation across Queensland. As outlined in the committee's executive summary, this bill proposes to amend various acts within the health legislative portfolio to: ensure the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act operates as intended; support transition to the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry; enable equipment and materials to be left at places to collect samples of designated pests; and clarify that the minister can appoint an acting mental health commissioner.

The Health, Environment and Innovation Committee carefully examined this bill and recommended unanimously that it be passed. I note that this was the one and only recommendation of the report. The bill complies with the Legislative Standards Act 1992 and the Human Rights Act 2019. It strikes an appropriate balance between individual rights and the need for effective regulation.

One of the key elements of the bill is its amendments to the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024. As the committee report stated, this bill ensures appropriate systems and processes are in place to achieve the intent of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act and to promote transparency, protect the community pharmacy model and ensure clarity and procedural fairness for licence applicants. In my electorate of Redcliffe, community pharmacies are more than just dispensaries; they are trusted hubs of primary health care. I think of Amcal Pharmacy at Kippa-Ring, where my doctor surgery is, of the Woody Point pharmacy and of Watsons Chemists in Newport—just three of many who know their customers by name, support anxious parents with questions about a sick child and play a vital role in the early detection of health issues.

This bill tightens definitions of 'core pharmacy services' to include not only prescribing medicines but also selling medicines under pharmacist supervision, closing loopholes and ensuring these businesses are properly regulated. The committee report was clear: these changes are necessary and appropriate to ensure effective implementation of the licensing framework. This is about reducing red

tape. It is about ensuring that corporate interests cannot exploit ownership structures at the expense of community-based care. The Pharmacy Guild supports these amendments, saying they are critical to ensuring Queensland communities and patients are protected from the increasing corporatisation of health care.

Another significant amendment transitions Queensland's dust lung disease register to the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry. This is vital for ensuring consistent national reporting and preventing duplicative reporting burdens on our medical practitioners. The committee report clearly stated that this will ensure ongoing visibility and tracking of occupational respiratory diseases using the national registry, and it will ensure Queensland Health continues to have access to the data it needs to respond to local and statewide trends. This is especially important for many tradies and construction workers, many of whom live in Redcliffe but are right across Queensland, who may be exposed to silica dust. By improving data collection and sharing, we will be better equipped to prevent tragedies like silicosis, protect the health of our tradies and other workers and respond early to emerging risks.

This bill also makes a practical but critical change to the Public Health Act, allowing authorised officers to leave mosquito traps at locations overnight to better detect and respond to Japanese encephalitis virus, JEV. The committee report identified that JEV is a potentially serious disease, with reported cases across a number of local government areas and at least two deaths in Queensland in 2025. In coastal communities like mine in Redcliffe, mosquito-borne diseases are a constant risk, and I am pleased that this bill gives our public health officers the tools they need to get ahead of JEV before it spreads further.

This bill also makes a small but significant amendment to allow the minister to appoint an acting mental health commissioner when the office becomes vacant at the end of a term. This is a simple safeguard to ensure continuity of leadership and to avoid gaps in oversight for mental health initiatives. Given the many mental health challenges facing those in my electorate of Redcliffe and right across Queensland from our youth to our veterans, we cannot afford to have leadership vacuums in this vital space.

I want to say thank you to everybody in my community who has already signed my community campaign petition for dedicated mental health beds in the new, expanded Redcliffe Hospital when it is built. I am also looking forward to seeing the new co-funded Medicare mental health centre open in Redcliffe in October to provide a welcoming space for people to access mental health information, services and supports from qualified professionals over extended hours. This will be one of four centres opened in Brisbane North.

Finally, this bill clarifies that any person can apply for approval to safely dispose of radioactive material. This may sound rare, but it may help on the occasion a member of the public does come across radioactive materials. This could potentially be at a newly purchased rural property, or a high school science department may find samples of radioactive rocks. This amendment ensures anyone can take the responsible steps they need to dispose of these hazards safely, protecting the public and our environment.

In conclusion, this is a practical, straightforward-looking bill. It strengthens pharmacy regulation, streamlines disease reporting, improves our ability to fight mosquito-borne viruses, protects mental health leadership and clarifies radiation safety processes. For my electorate of Redcliffe, this means safer pharmacies, better protection for our workers, faster detection of public health threats and a better mental health system. I commend the secretariat of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee for their work and I thank the five key stakeholders for their submission and the minister. The report recommended that the bill be passed. I commend the bill to the House.



Dr O'SHEA (South Brisbane—ALP) (4.23 pm): I rise today to address the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. In addressing this bill, I would like to first acknowledge the work of my colleagues on the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, the submitters who provided contributions and the hard work of the secretariat in supporting the committee in its review of this proposed legislation.

This bill proposes to amend four acts: the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the Radiation Safety Act 1999. The objectives of the bill include: clarifying operational requirements relating to the regulation of pharmacy business ownership in Queensland; simplifying approval processes to dispose of radioactive material; supporting the transition of the Queensland Notifiable Dust Lung Disease Register to the

National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry; and enabling sampling to detect Japanese encephalitis virus in mosquitoes. The committee received five submissions and the submissions were generally supportive of the proposed amendments.

The Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, or the PBO Act, was passed in March last year, establishing the Pharmacy Business Ownership Council. The act will commence fully later this year. This bill seeks to clarify some provisions in the act to ensure that it operates as intended. Amendments to the PBO Act include the introduction of an external review process by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal for whole-of-council decisions; expanding the definition of 'core pharmacy business' to include the sale of non-prescription medicines under the supervision of a pharmacist; and ensuring that, with limited exceptions, only practising pharmacists and their close adult relatives can have ownership of, or interests in, pharmacy businesses.

In their written submission, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia advised that they fully supported the amendments proposed in the bill, stating—

These amendments are all critical to ensuring that Queensland communities and patients are protected from the increasing corporatisation of health care.

The guild recommended that the provision of clinical advice by a pharmacist be included in the definition of core pharmacy services. However, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia supported the narrower definition contained in the act. I note that the guild also raised concerns that the tying of the definition of a supermarket to physical premises failed to address pharmacy businesses operating as online businesses.

While discussing pharmacy services, I would like to thank all the pharmacists who help vaccinate our community against the flu. It is timely that this bill should be before the parliament during a surge of flu cases across Queensland. Over 70,000 cases of influenza have been recorded across the state in 2025 with 85 per cent of those people not vaccinated. The most recent figures show over 200 people with flu in hospital and, sadly, at least 163 people have died from flu related illnesses in Queensland this year.

With vaccination providing the best defence against serious illness and hospitalisation, I wish to take this opportunity to remind everyone who may be listening to find the time to get their annual flu vaccination. It is free for all Queensland residents aged six months or older until 30 September. My husband and I received our flu vaccinations earlier this year and I urge anyone in this House who has yet to get vaccinated to attend a pharmacy and remedy that as soon as possible to ensure they keep themselves, their family and their community safe.

It is so important that we in this House listen to the experts. Whether it is the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners or the Australian Medical Association Queensland, when these experts speak and tell us how to save the lives of Queenslanders we should listen. Whether it is through vaccinations or drug-checking services we need to put the lives of Queenslanders first.

At this point I would like to table an article from the *Courier-Mail* titled 'State government to introduce laws making pill testing illegal'—

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 18 September 2025, titled 'State government to introduce laws making pill testing illegal' [\[1283\]](#).

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. It relates to the bill that is before the House at the moment and the content of that. There have been a number of rulings and the member is now straying and being irrelevant.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In response to the point of order by the Leader of the House, the amendments in this bill go specifically to the Public Health Act, which has objects to protect and promote the health of the Queensland public. From what I could hear, that is exactly what the member for South Brisbane was referring to: matters that are in the public domain in relation to public health. Mr Deputy Speaker, I submit to you that she is being relevant in her contribution.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Thank you. Member for South Brisbane, you were going fine until you referred to a media article. I bring you back to relevance to the bill before the House.

Dr O'SHEA: Thank you. As we were talking about pharmacy services, obviously drug-checking services could easily be offered by pharmacists.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order, which goes again to relevance. The bill and the long title of the bill make no mention whatsoever of pharmacy services; they go to the Pharmacy Business Ownership Council and the structure of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Council. It is not permissible and it is not within the bill, in my submission, for the member to try to draw some line between those two issues when they are not covered by the bill itself, which goes to the structure of the ownership council and only amends that aspect of it.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. On the point of order raised by the Minister for Health, it is absurd to suggest that the point of owning and operating a pharmacy would not be to provide those sorts of services. I hear the point of order also about the restrictive nature of this bill, and of course it is clear why the Minister for Health and the LNP government chose to restrict the scope of this bill. They did not want to talk about their failures on ramping and their intervention in the appointment of the Chief Health Officer. They did not want to talk about cutting the hospital building program. This is part of a complete—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have your point of order. Thank you. Is there another point of order?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to the point of order from the Manager of Opposition Business, the content that he is now straying into is irrelevant to the point of order that he was trying to raise and he is straying far from—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have heard you and I am going to rule now. Member for South Brisbane, I note that clause 3 of the bill before the House is to amend what is a pharmacy business. If that is the line in terms of your contribution and the delivery of your speech, I ask you to keep to that line or anything else that has relevance to the bill.

Dr O'SHEA: The bill also proposes amendments to the Radiation Safety Act 1999 to ensure that any person may apply for an approval to dispose of radioactive material. This amendment is necessary to rectify an inconsistency in the act, which assumes that a person seeking to apply for an approval to dispose of radioactive material would already hold a possession licence for radioactive material. The amendment ensures that if a person needs to dispose of radioactive material and does not hold a possession licence—for example, if radioactive material is found on a property that a person has just purchased—they are able to apply for and be granted a disposal approval.

The bill also amends the Public Health Act 2005 by requiring doctors to notify occupational lung diseases to the national registry rather than the Queensland register. The Queensland Notifiable Dust Lung Disease Register was established in 2019 and mandated that specialist physicians notify any lung disease caused or made worse by work exposure to inorganic dust. This included lung cancer, asbestosis and silicosis. The register has been of paramount importance in tracking the incidence of these diseases and facilitating early detection and prevention of occupational lung disease in Queensland. The National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry commenced last year and only requires mandatory notification of silicosis. The amendment to Queensland's Public Health Act provides for mandatory notification to the national registry by Queensland specialists of other lung diseases caused or exacerbated by occupational exposure to inorganic dust to ensure that diagnoses of the diseases currently recorded on the Queensland register will now be recorded in the national registry.

This bill also amends the Public Health Act by allowing authorised persons to leave equipment at a location to obtain samples of mosquitoes for testing for the presence of the virus that causes Japanese encephalitis. Japanese encephalitis is usually a mild disease, but it can result in severe illness. Symptoms can range from high fevers and headaches to seizures, paralysis, coma and even death. The virus is spread to humans through bites from infected mosquitoes passing on the virus from infected birds and pigs. There is a Japanese encephalitis virus vaccine which is available to people at increased risk of exposure to the virus—for example, piggery workers and vets. Japanese encephalitis virus is an increasing and significant risk in Queensland, with an outbreak in 2022 leading to five cases and one death and infection with the virus causing at least two deaths this year already. The amendment to the Public Health Act will support an effective public health response to this risk. Leaving mosquito traps in place for extended periods will ensure that sufficient sample sizes of mosquitoes are able to be collected to assist with Japanese encephalitis virus detection across the state. I support the amendments contained in this bill and support the passage of the bill.



Mr LEE (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.35 pm): I rise to speak to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. This omnibus bill makes changes to four pieces of health related legislation. It is a bill to amend the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Public Health Regulation 2018, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the Radiation Safety Act

1999. I commend the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services for his diligent preparation of this bill. It is great to have a Minister for Health and Ambulance Services who is across the detail in our healthcare system.

This bill does not provide for an exhaustive definition of 'threadbare', but a great example is the member for Miller's speech earlier today. Clearly, the member for Miller is out of his depth. A rambling, repetitive and monotonous speech is no substitute for a well-considered and thoughtful response to this bill. I congratulate my fellow committee members and the secretariat for their input into the preparation of this bill.

The key objectives of the bill are to: clarify operational requirements in relation to the regulation of pharmacy business ownership in Queensland; support the transition of the state-based notifiable lung disease register to the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry; enable equipment and materials to be left at places to collect samples of designated pests, including mosquitoes, for detecting the presence of Japanese encephalitis virus, JEV; clarify that the minister can appoint an acting mental health commissioner to the Queensland Mental Health Commission where a mental health commissioner's term has ended; and, finally, clarify that any person can apply for and hold an approval to dispose of radioactive material.

This bill provides a new legislative framework for the regulation of pharmacy ownership. It provides a contemporary structure for the regulation of the ownership of pharmacy businesses to provide safe and competent care and promote public confidence in the pharmacy profession. According to the Queensland register of pharmacy businesses, there were 1,327 registered pharmacies in Queensland, excluding hospital-based pharmacies. I want to give a big shout-out to the nearly 20 Hervey Bay registered pharmacies.

This bill will amend the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024 and address significant issues, including a review of council decisions and beneficial holdings under a trust. The Pharmacy Business Ownership Council is responsible for considering applications under the new licensing framework. A council decision can only be externally reviewed after it has first been subject to an internal review. The internal decision must be undertaken by a person who did not make the original decision and who holds a more senior position than the person who made that original decision. An internal review is not possible in circumstances where the council has made a collective decision. This is because there is no more senior decision-maker than the council. Thus, an external review process is available through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This bill furthermore provides for beneficial holdings under a trust. The policy intent is that, subject to limited exceptions such as friendly societies, ownership and interests in pharmacy businesses should be limited to practising pharmacists and their close adult relatives. The relevant change includes that only a registered practising pharmacist and their close adult relatives may hold a material interest in a pharmacy business. A close adult relative means a spouse or a child of the pharmacist who is an adult.

There are two amendments to the Public Health Act 2005. This bill will amend the Public Health Act to provide a new section 43(5) which provides that authorised persons can leave equipment and materials at a place for a reasonable period to obtain the necessary samples to detect Japanese encephalitis virus. Mosquito surveillance is a key component as mosquitoes are the primary vectors for JEV transmission. This involves monitoring mosquito populations, identifying mosquito species and testing them for the presence of the virus. Surveillance systems help detect JEV cases early, allowing for timely public health interventions and preventing potential outbreaks.


Prior to 2022, human infection with JEV had only been reported in the north of Australia, Queensland's Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands, with the last locally acquired case reported in Far North Queensland in 1998. The 2022 JEV outbreak was an unprecedented one because from February to December 2022 there were concurrent detections of JEV in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory. These detections occurred in commercial piggeries, wild pigs, mosquitoes and humans. On 4 March 2022 Australia's Chief Medical Officer declared the JEV outbreak a communicable disease incident of national significance. This occurs when a communicable disease or condition has potential to severely threaten human health and safety.

The Queensland Mental Health Commission Act provides for the establishment of the Queensland Mental Health Commission which is led by the Mental Health Commissioner. The object of this act is for the Queensland Mental Health Commission to drive ongoing reform towards a more integrated, evidence-based, recovery oriented mental health and substance misuse system. The Mental Health Commissioner is appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the minister for a term of up to five years. Section 23 of the act provides for the minister to appoint a person

to act as commissioner where there is a vacancy. However, the definition of 'vacancy' in section 21(1) is narrowly defined and does not encompass circumstances where a position becomes vacant when a commissioner's term has ended. To minimise the potential for disruption of the commission arising from a vacancy, this bill will amend the definition of 'vacancy' by providing a new section 21(1)(aa). The bill also will amend section 23 to establish a maximum term of six months for an acting commissioner's appointment, with the ability of the minister to provide a further six-month extension.

According to a 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics report, 12.8 per cent of the Fraser Coast as a total proportion of the Fraser Coast population has a mental health condition compared to 8.8 per cent Australia-wide. This amendment to the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act is great news for Hervey Bay mental health clients because it will help push reform towards a more integrated, evidence-based, recovery-orientated mental health and substance misuse system.

The Radiation Safety Act provides the legislative framework for managing radiation materials. This act regulates the acquisition, possession, transport, relocation and disposal of radioactive material. This minor clarifying amendment to section 71 of the RSA ensures that any person, not just a licensee, may apply for or hold an approval to dispose of radioactive material. The RSA provides that it is an offence to dispose of radioactive material unless they hold an approval from Queensland Health. This amendment recognises that some people may inadvertently encounter radioactive material during renovations or cleaning up or when acquiring a new property and must be empowered to dispose of it in accordance with the legislation. I commend the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025 to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.45 pm): I rise to make what is hopefully a long contribution to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). I note, as did the previous speaker, that in relation to amendments to the Public Health Act and the Radiation Safety Act there are stakeholders for whom this is important. The Yarrabilba satellite hospital will not be a stakeholder, which was a commitment that we made at the last election to the fastest growing area of Queensland. When this government looked at whether one could get health care where you needed it, it looked at the growing areas of Logan and said they do not need the radiation services that will be dictated under this bill.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. There is nothing in the bill before the House with respect to the matters that are being canvassed by the member for Logan.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): I think the member is relevant with regard to that section of the bill in terms of radiation.

Mr POWER: I have made my point very clearly about the cuts to the Yarrabilba satellite hospital. When I first spoke about this I spoke about when my son broke his arm and we had to go to the Logan Hospital, which we know now has record ramping. We had to go there to seek that treatment. We were lucky. We got fantastic care from the Logan Hospital. I cannot say enough good things about the care that we received and the people who were so diligent.

Mr de Brenni: You wouldn't blame the nurses.

Mr POWER: I would not be blaming nurses. I would not be attacking them.

Mr de Brenni: You're not.

Mr POWER: The radiation services that are delivered there cannot be delivered closer to the fastest growing area of Logan, the fastest growing city in this state. This is an indictment on this government. This bill reveals that indictment. Those on the other side may be interested to know that I went from the radiation section of the explanatory notes to the consistency with fundamental legislative principles section. We know there is a fundamental legislative principle for these issues to be canvassed before they come to the House. It should be properly considered. Unless there are emergency circumstances they are to go to a committee. In this case they have done that.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, take your seat. Who was that who called out 'hypocrite'?

Mr WATTS: It was me.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can withdraw that. That is unparliamentary.

Mr WATTS: I withdraw.

Mr POWER: Those are important principles. Once when I was an undergraduate a friend took me to one of those new wave plays. It was about someone waiting for someone who never came. It seems that in this debate we are waiting for the introduction of a set of amendments that have yet to be put but we know are going to be put. It could be quite simple. The health minister could rise and say, 'The member is misleading the House. The member is not correct. There will be no amendments put this evening. I am not breaching the fundamental legislative principles that go into bringing this bill before this House.' This could be something that the health minister could have said in the 33 times he has stood to raise that there is no relevance. But, of course, the health minister is playing a long and deceptive game in this House.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the statement made by the member for Logan and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr POWER: There we go!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, member for Logan. Withdraw.

Mr POWER: My apologies. I withdraw. There we go! It is fantastic to hear we have the assurance that there is no deception here whatsoever.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Logan is clearly not speaking the truth and ascribing things to me that are untruthful. I take personal exception and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, you have been asked to withdraw your comments.

Mr POWER: I withdraw. We have been assured by the minister that there is no way that amendments are going to be introduced into this place—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again the member for Logan is making it up. He is making up the statements that he is saying there. I take exception to them and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr POWER: I apologise and withdraw. The other speakers were correct and I was incorrect and I wish to apologise. The other speakers have said they are just about to introduce significant amendments into this House. I was incorrect. The health minister has now revealed that he is going to introduce amendments into this House.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, again, the member for Logan is exercising what in the old days was known as a verbal. I take exception and I ask for him to withdraw.

Mr POWER: I withdraw, and I did not wish to verbal in any way. I totally withdraw. It is important that there is consultation on complex health issues. We should examine carefully any complex change that we put before the people of Queensland, especially when it comes to the safety of things as dangerous as radiation or perhaps drugs of unknown quantities.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr POWER: It is one sentence; give us a break!

Mr NICHOLLS:—I rise to a point of order that goes to relevance. There has been no discussion in relation to drug checking in this legislation. Mr Deputy Speaker, as you know, and despite many attempts at sophistry to get around it, again it is not relevant to the debate before the House in relation to this bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, I bring you back to the contents of the bill.

Mr POWER: Was there a request for withdrawal, Mr Deputy Speaker?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was no request for a withdrawal. I bring you back to the contents of the bill.

Mr POWER: I have been assured that I am not speaking to an amendment that is to come and that the factual reports have been wrong. I will sit down because I no longer need to speak as the minister has given me those assurances.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I gave no such assurance to the member. I have said nothing to the member. I take personal offence and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, you have been asked to withdraw that comment.

Mr POWER: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.



Hon. AJ STOKER (Oodgeroo—LNP) (4.51 pm): This bill does a number of important things and I would like to focus on just one. The bill makes an improvement to the regulatory arrangements for community pharmacies. What it really does is crucial to the availability and quality of community pharmacies. When we look at the big picture, at its core this is about patient safety, because strong frameworks for the function of community pharmacies to deliver outstanding clinical outcomes mean the people in my community get from their local pharmacy better quality and safer health care close to home.

This is really important to my family. We are so well supported, both when we are ill and for preventive health care, by Kelly and the team at the Wellington Point Terry White, closely followed by Karen at the Birkdale Terry White pharmacy. I am a big fan of both of those ladies. Each one is a mother, a committed professional and a serious businesswoman. At the Birkdale pharmacy they have invested in a new fit-out to further enhance the range and quality of services they offer to our community. At the Cleveland pharmacy, Courtney and Sean also do an incredible job. They are always very busy given that they offer such great support to the older people in that part of the electorate. Reflecting their commitment to our community, when he is not helping to give great health care Sean spends his time supporting our local surf club at Point Lookout.

I had the pleasure of joining female pharmacists from across the state on International Women's Day. Members might not realise how many women are incredible professionals and businesswomen in this space. It is really inspiring. I wanted to be part of a celebration of the way that they contribute both to their families and to the health of our wider society at that special event. There are huge advantages to having trusted pharmacy healthcare providers readily available. They live and work in the community and own the businesses that they run, so they really are connected to the needs of the people they serve. The high standards and accountability that that delivers mean better health care for us all. Today I am really pleased to support these enhancements to the community pharmacy regulation.

Of course, soon community pharmacists will be offering more services than ever because we have made permanent the trialled expansion of the scope of practice offered by community pharmacists who make an investment in additional training. At present, people in my community might already visit their pharmacy for the treatment of run-of-the-mill conditions like, say, UTIs or small infections. That will expand to include even quite complex procedures such as physical examinations and treatments by prescription for a lot of conditions. The next time your child comes home with a sore ear or you suspect a case of school sores or a range of other conditions, you can affordably and quickly see a pharmacist rather than having to go to a GP, without compromising the range of treatments that are available. That is a real time saver and a real money saver. If people have not given it a go already, I recommend that when they are at their local community pharmacy they ask the pharmacist how they can help the next time they are not feeling it.

To make sure there is a strong pipeline of skills in this field, the Crisafulli LNP government has extended training subsidies to ensure up to 230 additional pharmacists can be trained for the expanded scope of practice. That amounts to an investment of an extra \$1.5 million. Every time a pharmacist does that extra work, it means a person not waiting for a GP or not needing to go to an emergency department or the Redlands Satellite Health Centre. It gets people better care and it also ensures better and faster care for people facing acute emergencies in our hospitals.

This bill also effects a range of practical improvements to the Public Health Act in relation to the notification of diagnoses of occupational respiratory diseases to the national registry, replacing the Queensland registry that has been in place until now. It amends the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act to make it possible to appoint an acting commissioner when the commissioner is unavailable or when the office is vacant so that there is no disruption to services in this really difficult, important and high-demand field. It amends the Radiation Safety Act to provide a process for how to handle radioactive materials when a member of the community comes across them. That can sometimes happen in environments like school science departments or when dealing with old equipment such as aeroplane gauges. This might sound niche, but it is about providing a safe process. It is the kind of business-as-usual improvement you expect from a competent, methodical, on-top-of-it government. I commend the bill to the House.



Ms HOWARD (Ipswich—ALP) (4.55 pm): I rise to speak on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). The Labor opposition supports the bill and its intention to clarify ownership requirements for pharmacies in Queensland, remove duplicate reporting for the notifiable lung disease register, allow sufficient testing of mosquitoes for Japanese encephalitis and clarify requirements for appointing an acting mental health commissioner as well as fix drafting inconsistencies in the Radiation Safety Act.

We do have some concerns with regard to the amendments to the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act, especially regarding certain definitions used in the legislation. In 2024, the former Labor government passed the Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill to provide Queensland with a modern, effective framework for regulating ownership of pharmacy businesses. The bill transferred regulatory authority from Queensland Health to the new independent Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council. This is a regulatory model similar to what was already in place in other Australian jurisdictions. The Labor Party is a proud supporter of community pharmacies and the community pharmacy model. Queensland's 1,250 pharmacies are an integral part of our healthcare system and they play an important role in providing accessible health care to our communities, especially in the regions.

In their submission to the committee, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia cited examples of how corporate control and ownership of pharmacies can be detrimental to communities. In the United States there was a rapid expansion of corporate owned pharmacies during the eighties and nineties which forced half of the 40,000 independent pharmacies to close by the year 2000. Independent pharmacies now make up only about 35 per cent of all pharmacies in the US. Many corporate owned pharmacies in the US are now facing store closures around the country due to commercial underperformance. For example, Walgreens are planning to close 1,200 underperforming pharmacy stores over the next three years. The store-closing trend continues in the United Kingdom and Europe, where in the past decade corporate ownership and deregulation of pharmacies has caused thousands of pharmacies to close their doors due to commercial underperformance and shareholder losses. So much for the communities and customers that relied on those pharmacies.

I recently had the pleasure of congratulating Ipswich pharmacist Bob Slater on his retirement after 50 years as a pharmacist. For 46 of those years he worked in the Ipswich community, where he was well respected and a friendly source of care and kindness for generations of local families. I would say that Bob embodies everything that is good about the community pharmacy model, and that is why Labor will always back our community pharmacies. They put the health and wellbeing of our communities first, not profits.

In 2018, when the Palaszczuk Labor government established the inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and the transfer of pharmacy ownership in Queensland, I was struck by one submission that came from a pharmacist who owned the Priceline franchise at Riverlink Shopping Centre in Ipswich. The pharmacist was supportive of the pharmacist owned regulatory model in Queensland and how it benefited local communities. I want to share a story that the pharmacist told at that time about a regular customer who came into his pharmacy one day with a number of concerning symptoms, including severe abdominal pain. The customer asked for reflux medication, but the pharmacist, who knew the customer quite well, could see that he was not himself. The pharmacist rang a doctor for advice and the doctor advised the customer seek urgent medical attention. The pharmacist called an ambulance there and then. It turned out that the customer was suffering from the onset of a stroke. The pharmacist's early intervention likely saved the customer's life and prevented him from suffering any significant long-term consequences. That is another reason the pharmacist owned model delivers the best health outcomes for Queenslanders.

The Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council now has responsibility for administering and enforcing the pharmacy business ownership restrictions. This bill will amend the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024 to clarify operational requirements relating to the regulation of pharmacy business ownership and to ensure the act operates as intended when the act's licensing framework commences. These changes will go some way towards protecting community pharmacies and enabling them to put the health and wellbeing of local customers ahead of commercial interests.

Stakeholders during the committee process did, however, raise concerns about the definitions in the bill, which they argue are not comprehensive enough. For instance, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia made an important point: the definition of 'core pharmacy services' does not include the provision of clinical advice by a practising pharmacist. We all know that this is something many pharmacists do, so including this in the definition of 'core pharmacy services' would better reflect the services provided by Queensland's pharmacies.

The other amendment in this bill will allow equipment and materials to be left at sites to help collect a sufficient sample size of mosquitoes for analysis and testing for Japanese encephalitis. In March this year Queensland Health detected the first case of Japanese encephalitis in mosquitoes in Brisbane. In vulnerable populations Japanese encephalitis can be potentially fatal, so it is extremely important we do everything we can to be vigilant. Other changes include the minister being able to


appoint an acting mental health commissioner at the end of a commissioner's term and fixing a drafting inconsistency in the Radiation Safety Act to allow people with an approval from Queensland Health to dispose of radioactive waste, whether they have a licence or not.

The Labor opposition supports the changes in this bill, but this bill does not fix Queensland's health system, which David Crisafulli promised to do during the last election campaign. He promised to reduce ambulance ramping to 30 per cent, but it is the worst it has ever been, with ramping now sitting at 47.8 per cent. In Ipswich, almost 68 per cent of ambulance patients at Ipswich Hospital were not in the ED within 30 minutes, and that is a disgrace. People are waiting longer in hospital EDs and they are waiting longer for specialist appointments.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance and the long title of the bill. I would suggest to you that the member for Ipswich is now straying from both.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Ipswich, I have sat in the chamber and heard a succession of deputy speakers deal with the relevance issue. I ask you to remain relevant to the long title of the bill and the specifics of the bill before us, please. The House would appreciate it, thank you.

Ms HOWARD: When we are talking about a health bill it is important to talk about my community, because we have invested a record amount of money into Ipswich health services. I want to make sure we continue to maintain the best possible health services because the people of Ipswich deserve them. While we support the amendments in this bill, we need more than just minor changes to fix Queensland's health system. We depend on it.

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (5.03 pm): The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) is a bill that looks technical on the surface—clarifying pharmacy business rules, aligning Queensland with national public health notification requirements, improving mosquito-borne virus monitoring, streamlining appointments in the mental health space and enabling safe disposal of radioactive waste. What it represents is actually far greater: it is another step forward in the Crisafulli government's commitment to restoring health services after 10 years of decline under Labor.

For 10 months now we have been delivering practical reforms and real investments, and Redlanders are seeing the benefits. This bill sits alongside our Hospital Rescue Plan, our Surgery Connect program, our commitment to reducing ambulance ramping through an expanded transit lounge at the Redland Hospital and our investment in more frontline workers. Together, these reforms are putting patients first.

I want to bring this back to what matters most: people. Just last week my own son had a fall playing school sport. Within less than an hour he had been seen by a doctor, had an X-ray and had a break in his shoulder confirmed. As a parent, that gave me enormous peace of mind. I rely on the incredible medical professionals in the Redlands, as so many families do. I want to take a moment to thank our doctors, nurses, paramedics, allied health staff and administrators. They are doing a tremendous job. Good government means backing them every step of the way. That is what this bill and our broader reforms are about.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am loath to interrupt the member on her feet because I understand her sentiment, and I share her admiration for doctors, nurses and other health professionals, but I put it to you that Deputy Speakers this afternoon have been very explicit in terms of drawing members back to being relevant to this bill. I would ask you to ensure the member is specifically relevant to the bill, consistent with previous rulings.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Redlands, could you give me a quick run-down on how what you are speaking about is relevant to the long title of the bill and the points in the explanatory notes?

Mrs YOUNG: Absolutely. Like most of us, we are speaking about the healthcare system. I can skip ahead and get to the main points, if you like, if that would help the member for Springwood.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That would be appreciated. Thank you.

Mrs YOUNG: As I was saying, there are many reforms underway. In just 10 months we have shifted the conversation from excuses to solutions, and Redlanders can feel the difference. This bill will deliver pharmacy reforms to protect patients by ensuring businesses selling medicines are properly regulated and staffed by pharmacists so that families know they are getting safe and reliable care when they step into a pharmacy.

The new provisions for the monitoring of the Japanese encephalitis virus will give health authorities better tools to detect mosquito-borne risks before they become outbreaks, an especially important safeguard for communities across Queensland. By aligning public health notifications with

national best practice, we will reduce red tape for health providers while maintaining strong protections for Queenslanders. Streamlining the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner's appointment process will ensure continuity of leadership in this critical area. Broadening approval pathways for the safe disposal of radioactive waste will ensure Queensland is meeting national safety standards. Each of these may be modest in isolation, but together they form part of a clear pattern: the strengthening of our health system, making it more responsive, more accountable and more sustainable.

I represent a community that cares deeply about health—families, young people, seniors, those with special needs—and all of them deserve to know that when they need care they will not face endless delays or uncertainty. For too long they were let down, but in just 10 months this government has shown what is possible when the focus is on outcomes. This bill is another step forward. It backs our health workers, strengthens our hospitals, improves patient safety and ensures Redlanders and all Queenslanders have a health system that will work when they most need it. That is what good government does, it is what the Crisafulli government is delivering and we are just getting started.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (5.09 pm): I rise to speak on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. This bill, as we have heard from many speakers, is an important step in strengthening Queensland's health regulatory framework. It contains a suite of targeted but significant reforms that aim to improve public safety, modernise health regulation and ensure our laws operate as intended.

The objectives of the bill are fivefold: to clarify operational requirements for the regulation of pharmacy business ownership in Queensland, ensuring the new framework under the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024 functions effectively once fully commenced; to support the transition of Queensland's Notifiable Dust Lung Disease Register to the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry, aligning our state systems with national arrangements; to enable the placement of equipment for mosquito surveillance, allowing authorised officers to leave traps in place to better detect Japanese encephalitis virus; to clarify the Minister for Health's power to appoint an acting mental health commissioner where the commissioner's term has ended, ensuring continuity of leadership; and to confirm that any person may apply for approval to dispose of radioactive material, removing unnecessary ambiguity in the Radiation Safety Act.

Last year, this parliament passed the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024. That act replaced an outdated framework that had been in place since 2001 and established a contemporary system designed to promote professional, safe and competent pharmacy services while maintaining public confidence in the pharmacy sector. There are 1,200 community pharmacies across Queensland, employing over 7,000 registered pharmacists and countless support staff. These pharmacies are often the first point of contact for health care, particularly in regional and rural areas.

While I am talking about community pharmacies, I would like to table a news article from the *Courier-Mail* titled 'State government to introduce laws making pill testing illegal'.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance and the long title of the bill. We have had a number of members attempt to undertake the same thing. There have been previous rulings by Deputy Speakers. I ask you to consider that matter not only in relation to the contribution by the member for Toohey but also in light of the other rulings.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): I can see the Deputy Clerk would like to speak with me. I will take some advice. Member for Toohey, the document that you wish to table I understand pertains to a matter which a succession of occupants of this chair have ruled as being irrelevant to this debate. The advice I have is that it would be inappropriate for you to table a document in the course of the debate that is not relevant to this particular bill. I ask you to come back to being relevant and continue your contribution.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I seek your clarification in respect of the tabling of the document by the member for Toohey. I understand that you have indicated that it would be out of order. I am seeking to understand on what basis the member for Toohey is unable to table that document. That would assist the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will confirm the advice. I thank the House for its patience. Manager of Opposition Business, there are two points to make. It is not possible to make a matter relevant by tabling a document about that matter when that would be irrelevant to the debate that is going on at the moment. I take that to be relevance to the long title of the bill that we are considering. Secondly, it is not appropriate to table a document which is irrelevant to the matter that is being debated at the moment. I am ruling that that document not be tabled. I am also ruling that the member for Toohey needs to be relevant to the long title of the bill being discussed.

Mr RUSSO: In light of your ruling, I will conclude my remarks in relation to the bill.



Ms JAMES (Barron River—LNP) (5.16 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2), a bill that delivers targeted and timely improvements to our state's health legislation. This bill improves laws around pharmacy ownership, public health data and disease control, mental health leadership and the safe handling of radiation materials.

This bill is about less red tape and more action. It is about building a healthier, stronger Queensland. These amendments reflect our commitment to improving our regulatory levels and protecting the health and safety of Queenslanders. The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025 is a bold step towards rebuilding Queensland's healthcare system after 10 years of mismanagement, increased regulatory red tape and broken promises. This bill delivers regulation, reduces risk and provides a real improvement to our overstretched healthcare system.

Far North Queensland is home to a number of wonderful family owned pharmacies. The Calanna Pharmacy family I have worked with for nearly two decades. My dear friend and mentor Mario Calanna, whom I miss terribly, sadly passed away of myeloma nearly three years ago. Mario would be thrilled with this bill. I would also like to congratulate and thank the Leukaemia Foundation on 50 years. It was wonderful to have the Leukaemia Foundation in parliament yesterday and hear about the amazing work that they do in our communities and for helping people like Mario Calanna and his family during one of the toughest times of their lives.

Georgina and Trent Twomey, who are pharmacists and the owners of the Alive Pharmacy Group in Far North Queensland, are also incredible advocates for health in our region. Georgina was one of the first independent prescribers in Australia which enables qualified community pharmacists to prescribe medicines for common conditions such as nausea, vomiting, reflux and mild skin conditions and provide health and wellbeing services including the hormonal contraceptive, oral health screening, weight management and support to quit smoking. This has allowed pharmacists to prescribe medicines as part of structured chronic disease management programs such as for cardiovascular disease, risk reduction, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Pharmacists like Mario and Matthew Calanna and Georgina and Trent Twomey are not just unfamiliar faces handing out medications; they care about their communities and they operate with integrity. They will step up to do what it takes to relieve the pressure on families who need a script for nausea and vomiting without having to go to a GP to get it or a busy woman who needs a contraceptive script renewed without having to wait two weeks to see her GP to get a script. This bill allows them to continue to support the community in a wider scope, offering \$15 million to support up to 230 more pharmacists to be trained to treat everyday health conditions.

Under this bill community pharmacists will be authorised to treat and prescribe medications for acute health conditions such as ear infections, acne, school sores and eczema. This eliminates the need to go to a doctor first and reduces the pressure on our already stretched GPs. For parents with a child with an ear infection or vomiting, being able to consult with a local pharmacist rather than having to book an appointment with a doctor is a godsend, especially in Far North Queensland, where tropical ear is a frequent occurrence and always seems to hit in the middle of the afternoon on a Saturday or Sunday when there are no GPs open—but your local pharmacy is. As a mother, I recall numerous times when my boys were younger how stressful it was when one of them came down with an ear infection and high fever and then pain would follow. Taking your child to the hospital as there is no other option on a weekend is really stressful and not what emergency wards are for.

Under these new regulations parents can hop in the car and ensure their children receive the medication they need sooner. In regional communities where doctors are not always available this matters. For parents with a sick infant this matters. For those battling chronic disease and illness this matters. For already stretched GPs and ED department staff this matters. These amendments reflect our commitment to protect the community pharmacy model, ensuring clarity and strengthening the healthcare system. This is what delivering for Queenslanders looks like.

This bill also reduces ambiguity surrounding managing mosquito-borne illnesses, which is a real threat in Far North Queensland. More than 220 species of mosquito can be found in Queensland and many of these are carriers of diseases. Malaria, Ross River fever, dengue fever and Japanese encephalitis virus are all found in Far North Queensland. So far in 2025 Queensland has recorded three JEV cases and, tragically, two deaths from the virus, including a man from Bowen. This bill gives health authorities the tools they need to detect the danger early before another life is lost.


This bill allows environmental health teams to leave specialised mosquito traps out in the field, in back yards, paddocks and remote bushland even after they leave the site. That might sound small, but it is a game changer for detecting where the virus is hiding, especially in our most remote and vulnerable communities. In places like Far North Queensland, where medical help can be hours away, early warning is everything. This bill helps authorities move faster to issue alerts, launch mosquito control operations and roll out vaccinations. We are listening to all of Queensland, including regional Queensland. We understand the unique risks and we are acting.

Another amendment to this bill is to the Mental Health Commission Act, which lets the government appoint an acting mental health commissioner when the previous one's term ends even before a new one is confirmed. Without a commissioner in place, even temporarily, communities in the north risk falling through the cracks when it comes to funding, attention and services.

Under this bill I also welcome technical amendments to the Radiation Safety Act. This amendment clarifies that any person, not just licensed radiation professionals, can apply to dispose of radioactive material safely through Queensland Health.

This bill also supports the shift from Queensland's stand-alone dust lung disease register to the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry. Between 2011 and 2020, 1,451 Australians died from lung diseases caused by exposure to dust and 90 per cent of these deaths were men. The most common condition leading to such deaths—responsible for over 80 per cent of deaths—is pneumoconiosis from exposure to asbestos and other mineral fibres. With mining, construction and quarrying active across Far North Queensland, especially in areas like Chillagoe and Mount Garnet, this will ensure early detection and the better national coordination of serious illnesses like silicosis and asbestosis.

These amendments reflect our commitment to improve our regulatory levers and protect the health and safety of Queenslanders. This bill is another example of how we are committed to getting Queensland back on track by improving our processes, reducing wait times and removing red tape so Queenslanders can get on with the job and have access to health care when they need it. This is why I give my full support to this bill.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.24 pm): Before I start, can I say how appreciative I am. When the previous speaker first began the noise level was quite high, and it was really good to see that everyone then was respectful, so thank you.

The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) includes a number of changes to pharmacy regulation and amending legislation. Prescribed medical practitioners are required to notify the Commonwealth of notifiable occupational respiratory diseases. This is part of the transition to the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry. It will also improve the detection and monitoring of mosquitoes for the deadly Japanese encephalitis virus by allowing public health officials—in addition to entering public and private spaces—to look for these and place testing equipment to catch adult mosquitoes with the use of light boxes. The previous speaker mentioned diseases like Ross River fever. Having been in the Northern Territory, where it is a huge issue, this is really appreciated in Queensland.

The bulk of the bill deals with changes to the pharmacy ownership act, which is still in the process of replacing the previous pharmacy control legislation because during that time several problems were identified which required the fixes contained in this bill. There were five submissions, all supportive, with the committee identifying a couple of issues. The first relates to clarifying which businesses are pharmacies and which are not, thus who is regulated. Under the current act a pharmacy delivers core pharmacy services, which is the compounding of medicines for sale or the dispensing of medicines by, or under the supervision of, a practising pharmacist.

Stakeholders said this definition could be too narrow, hence the bill expands the definition to ensure it covers the sale of non-prescription medicines by a pharmacist. The Pharmacy Guild supported these changes, although they argued it should be broader. It includes services such as the provision of clinical advice. However, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia opposed expanding the definition, as clinical advice can be provided in a range of settings—for example, aged-care homes—that are already regulated under other legislation. The department advised that it had considered this issue on a number of occasions; however, it is outside the scope of the bill. Does this mean it will be addressed in a further bill? I hope so.

The bill also contains an amendment to ensure the definition of 'compound' is the one used in a separate piece of legislation, that is, schedule 22 of the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation. This issue was raised as a potential Henry VIII clause because it allows the executive government to

directly amend legislation through executive action—so-called because of Henry VIII's attempt in 1539 to pass a bill allowing him to rule by decree. This is a real issue, as ministers could alter the medicines regulation themselves. However, having consistency of definition across regulations is important. The committee concluded that, on balance, the bill has sufficient regard to the institution of parliament and is justified. No doubt time will tell.

As we have heard, pharmacy regulations play a vital role in our primary healthcare system and determine who may own or hold an interest in a pharmacy. They also prevent pharmacies from being taken over by supermarkets as they have in the US. The Queensland community pharmacy program goes back to 2020. A Queensland Health report titled *Unleashing the potential: an open and equitable health system* drew on lessons learned from the beginning of the pandemic on needed improvements to health care. This led to a pilot program which started in 2023 and finished in June this year. It was made permanent in July. It enables participating pharmacists to undertake prescribing as part of a chronic disease management program for conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure and asthma. An example of this in my own community is the Priceline Pharmacy in Noosa Civic. In May our committee visited one in North Queensland to see the benefits, and there were multiple benefits. These included providing assistance when doctors are booked out and reducing presentations to casualty and emergency.

Community-based health, as we know, is essential. I give a shout-out to our primary healthcare networks and our hospitals which, like Noosa private, serve our community on public contracts. This is vital for access, especially for our vulnerable and disadvantaged residents who lack transport or funds. Let me say that anyone travelling from Noosa to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital in an Uber has to pay a minimum of \$350 for a return trip. Hence, it is imperative that our Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service ensures that public services at Noosa Hospital grow and that the emergency department expansion moves at a much quicker rate than we have seen.

I want to thank my fellow committee members and our secretariat for their work on the inquiry into this bill. I thank all of our healthcare workers, including pharmacists, for the care they provide every day to our communities. It is deeply appreciated.

Before I finish, I want to say that, should any amendments outside the long title of the bill be raised during consideration in detail, I will not be supporting this bill. If amendments do not go through the appropriate process of committee scrutiny, Queenslanders are denied the right to have their say, and that is wrong in all ways. Also, the fact that we cannot even raise in our speeches what all reports say may possibly be introduced is actually a form of gagging and not part of transparency. However, if this is not the case, I support the bill.

Mr PERRETT: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Lytton, are you seeking the call or are you rising on a point of order?

Ms PEASE: I am seeking the call.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe the member for Gympie was first, so I call the member for Gympie.

 **Hon. AJ PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (5.31 pm): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I rise to speak on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I move—

That the honourable member for Lytton be heard.

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

AYES, 29:

ALP, 29—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

NOES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the negative.



Hon. AJ PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (5.36 pm): I rise to speak on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). The objectives of this bill are to deal with: the regulation of pharmacy business ownership; reporting occupational respiratory diseases; the detection and management of serious public health risks such as Japanese encephalitis virus, JEV; issues regarding the appointment of an acting Queensland Mental Health Commissioner; and the clarification of radiation safety application processes.

A licensing scheme for pharmacies under the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act starts in November this year. The act seeks to ensure that ownership and interest in pharmacies is primarily restricted to practising pharmacists and related pharmacist controlled corporations. There are limited exceptions for certain friendly societies and the Mater. Before the licensing scheme starts in November, this bill amends the act to ensure the relevant systems and processes deliver its expected objectives. Our amendments aim to promote transparency, safeguard clarity, deliver procedural fairness for licence applicants and protect the community pharmacy model.

Community pharmacies play a vital role in protecting the health of Queenslanders. We want to make sure that regulation of pharmacy ownership is effective, is clear to stakeholders and operates in the community's best interests. In many communities, residents go to community pharmacists for advice and help because they know they provide world-class primary health care. In the broader Gympie region, there are 15 community pharmacies which are an immediately accessible source of frontline health service and advice, including for some vaccinations and disease screening.

Expanding the scope of practice for these pharmacies helps improve access as well as helps reduce pressure on our GPs and hospital emergency departments. It makes sense to use every lever and service available to improve Queenslanders' access to good health care. That is why the Crisafulli government expanded the scope of practice for community pharmacists to treat and prescribe medication for some acute health conditions. We are talking about conditions such as ear infections, nausea, acne, school sores, eczema and mild psoriasis. It is also why the Crisafulli government made available \$1.5 million in funding to support up to 230 more pharmacists across the state to be trained to treat these everyday health conditions. The funding extended training subsidies to let pharmacists become authorised to treat these conditions. Otherwise, the subsidies would have expired at the end of March this year.

Japanese encephalitis virus, JEV, is a potentially serious disease which is spread to humans by infected mosquitoes. There have already been two human deaths this year from JEV. This bill will authorise equipment and materials to be left at places to collect samples of designated pests, including adult mosquitoes, for detecting the presence of JEV. Currently, those authorised are allowed to take equipment and materials into or onto a place to collect samples for analysis and testing. However, it is ambiguous about whether they are explicitly allowed to leave the equipment and materials onsite. As the committee report pointed out—

Detection of JEV requires capturing a sample of adult mosquitoes which requires light traps to be left at a location overnight or longer to obtain a sufficient sample for testing.

Authorities need to capture adult mosquitoes when they are most active, which often means overnight or longer. This bill removes any ambiguity about whether they can do that.

The minister noted in his introductory speech that JEV also has serious potential consequences for livestock. My department plays a significant role in the detection and management of JEV. The disease can cause reproductive losses in pigs and encephalitis in horses. I want to reiterate that it is not possible for people to catch JEV from pigs or horses; it can only be from infected mosquitoes. That is why my department collaborates with both Queensland Health and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland who manage the human health and safety aspects when JEV is detected.


Biosecurity Queensland continues to encourage all pig keepers and horse owners to take preventative action by monitoring susceptible animals and report suspected cases. The Farm Biosecurity website also provides information on best-practice mosquito control for piggeries and horse owners. My department also works with the Queensland pork industry to enhance early detection surveillance, biosecurity practices and response readiness. While my department has its role, this bill clarifies that officers across public health units and local councils can effectively respond to and manage the risk of JEV.

Another objective of this bill is to clarify issues to allow the minister to appoint an acting commissioner when a mental health commissioner's term has ended. Noting the appointment is for six months with a possible six-month extension, this allows for continuity of leadership within the commission. The commission's work is central to providing the best healthcare services that we can

provide for Queenslanders. As the commission notes on its website, it works in partnership with others, including people who have lived experience, their families, carers and supporters, as well as decision-makers, funders, advocates, frontline workers and service providers in both government and non-government sectors.

My department also works with the Queensland Mental Health Commission to align and highlight the need for better coordination between mental health services. It is working with the commission as well as Queensland Health and Health and Wellbeing Queensland to map all state government mental health support strategies that are deliverable to rural, remote or agricultural communities. We are also working with the Mental Health Commission and other organisations, such as the National Centre for Farmer Health, on integrating their research-backed tools and investigating establishing a trial for Queensland with these organisations.

The Crisafulli government promised Queenslanders it would restore health services where they need them most. This bill safeguards and promotes health and community services for Queensland and makes sure the legislation works as anticipated. I support this bill.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.44 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. The amendments contained in it affect the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the Radiation Safety Act 1999. Whilst the changes are largely technical, they nonetheless touch on important areas of health regulation, workforce safety and public health preparedness. I plan to make a short contribution tonight.

One part of the bill clarifies the requirement around the regulation of pharmacy business ownership. This is intended to ensure the act functions as designed. However, issues were raised during the committee process by key stakeholders. Pharmacists expressed concerns that the definitions used in the legislation are not comprehensive enough, particularly regarding the concept of 'material interest' and how ownership structures are considered. Pharmacies also emphasised the need for definitions that reflect the services they actually provide. We share these concerns, and we will continue to support small and locally owned pharmacies which play a central role in delivering community health care across Queensland and in my bayside electorate. I am a very proud supporter of our local community pharmacies who provide an incredible standard of care to bayside residents, and I take a moment to say thank you for your kindness and your professionalism. It is very much appreciated.

I note the concerns raised by pharmacists regarding definitions in the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act and we urge that these be considered in future amendments. Legislation must support local pharmacies and maintain robust systems of health data and oversight.

The bill further amends the Public Health Act to permit equipment and materials to be left at collection sites for mosquito sampling so that sufficient sample sizes can be obtained for the detection of the Japanese encephalitis virus. This measure enables public health officials to conduct effective monitoring of mosquito populations and respond to emerging risks.

This is particularly important to my electorate with the recent identification of the Japanese encephalitis virus. I did write to the Premier and cc-ed in the health minister on 28 March this year to inquire about the possibility of free vaccinations for the residents of Hemmant and workers in the precinct, which is in the Port of Brisbane area, when we first heard of the tracking. I table a copy of that letter for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 March 2025, from the member for Lytton, Ms Joan Pease MP, to the Premier and Minister for Veterans, Hon. David Crisafulli, regarding availability of vaccination from mosquito-borne virus found in Hemmant [\[1284\]](#).

Also for the benefit of the House, I am yet to hear back from either the Premier or the health minister. What does that say? I guess the residents in a long-term Labor-held seat do not matter because to date we have not received a response. Just saying!

Given the nature of the debate, the number of contributions and the ongoing matters of relevance raised, it is my view that there has been sufficient debate on the second reading of the bill and it is time to move on. I therefore move: that the question be put.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): I am not convinced that there has been sufficient debate. I think there are still plenty of people on the speaking list, and I am not prepared to put that. Member for Lytton, have you ceased your contribution?

Ms PEASE: I have moved a motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not prepared to put that motion. It is at the Speaker's or Deputy Speaker's discretion as to whether that happens.

Ms PEASE: Okay. I will continue.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, actually—

Ms PEASE: You asked me if I have finished my contribution and I have not.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice and I will take it in silence, thank you.

Ms McMillan: What a rabble! What an absolute rabble!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Who said that?

Ms McMILLAN: That was me. It is an absolute rabble.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield! You will withdraw that remark.

Ms McMILLAN: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn you under the standing orders. I said I would take advice in silence and that was an unnecessary provocation and disrespect to the chair. Member for Lytton, you have the call.

Ms PEASE: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. I look forward to hearing promptly from the Minister for Health or perhaps the Premier in respect of concerns about my residents raised in my correspondence of 28 March.

Leadership requires courage. Queensland has a proud record of bold reforms. I recall when we first began the journey of reducing tobacco use. We were the world leaders and we still are today. With those bold reforms we were world leaders, basing decisions on evidence-based research. Let's not forget John Howard's landmark gun reforms. These measures were not easy but they were the right thing to do to save lives. Like the member for Redlands and the member for Barron River, I want to talk about protecting the people of my community and the people of Queensland. The comments of both the member of Barron River and the member for Redlands resonated with me and, no doubt, with all in the chamber. That is why broader reforms to protect loved ones must be bold. Being bold on pill testing is no different.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Ms PEASE: It is not about supporting drug dealers; it is about protecting young Queenslanders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Mansfield.

Ms PEASE: It is about evidence-based—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield! I am sorry—member for Lytton. Forgive me. I got the member's seat incorrect, but when I rise and when I tell the member on their feet to cease their contribution, they will do so. Leader of the House, what is your point of order?

Dr ROWAN: My point of order is on relevance. There have been a number of rulings by yourself and other Deputy Speakers in relation to remaining relevant to the long title of the bill. I would submit to you that the member for Lytton is not doing that. Given the ongoing nature of this, under standing order 247 I move—

That the honourable member for Lytton be no longer heard.

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

AYES, 48:

LNP, 48—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 29:

ALP, 29—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the affirmative.



Mr WATTS (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.56 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the debate of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. I would like to thank the minister for bringing this very important bill to the House. As we know, it is an omnibus bill, but one of the key areas is something I am very passionate about—that is, pharmacy business ownership. In Toowoomba we have a number of great pharmacists. My local pharmacist is Sam, who is at Moreton & Coote Pharmacy in East Toowoomba. Over the years I have used the one out at Highfields which is also great. What I really appreciate about the local pharmacy, and what I think is important in this bill in empowering local pharmacists, is having somebody whom you know who has the ability to get to know the different medications that you take and can offer advice at different times. I got my flu shot with Sam this year. If his wife had got the camera right we would have had a photograph to put online but, unfortunately, I could not get a second shot and we missed the opportunity. We will try again next year. I have had a flu shot every year for a number of years and it seems to be serving me pretty well, so I am happy to do it.

Family pharmacies, small pharmacies and pharmacies that service the people of Queensland become particularly important as you move out of the capital city, start to head west and go into smaller towns where medical services and GPs are harder to find and more difficult to get into. If you need to seek a small amount of medical advice for minor ailments, what medication you should take or what you should do if your particular medication happens to not be available, the pharmacist is well qualified. They have done the majority of a medical degree before they can become a pharmacist and, in terms of knowing what the interactions are, they do an excellent job.

I support local pharmacists. Sam and his family are Coptic Christians who came to Toowoomba. They are Arabic speaking. In our community we have a very large Yazidi population, which also has many parts to it. Although they speak Kurdish Kurmanji they are also Arabic speaking, and for them to go and see a local pharmacist who has the language skills across a couple of generations to communicate with them what is happening with their medication and what they are doing has been particularly helpful. For that traumatised cohort in Toowoomba—they are now numbering in their many thousands—to have a local pharmacist who has met all of the regulatory requirements and has been serving the community of East Toowoomba very well for a long period of time and who also has those language skills to help those people as they are settling into our community has been invaluable. I know that many of the Yazidi like going to see Sam because of the language. If Sam had one complaint it would be that as their English skills get better they come and see him less as they pick a pharmacist closer to their house. He is one who does not want them to learn the English language too quickly because it is much better for business for him! I digress.

It is important that we have these pharmacists in our communities in the western parts of Queensland and that they have various prescriptions on hand. If you go to the same pharmacist on a regular basis, they can make sure they have stock. They can offer cheaper options when they are available rather than always the branded products, for those people who are feeling the pressure in terms of the cost of living. I very much support that part of the bill. I give a shout-out to Moreton & Coote Pharmacy, who have been looking after me for a long time. As you can see, I am fit and healthy so he does a pretty good job.


It is important to ensure that any loopholes are closed to make sure that trust is there. I think it is really important that when someone goes and gets that kind of advice about their prescriptions, what they are going to consume or things that might change the chemical balance in their body, they get it from someone who has that level of education, has that expertise and has served appropriately in developing those skills. It is really important for that well-licensed model to continue. I think the minister needs to be commended for that, and long may it last.

In relation to occupational respiratory disease, we all know about the reports that came along on black lung and how that leads to silicosis and dust lung disease. I think it is good for us to be now transitioning a state register into the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry. This is something that crept up on us and was investigated heavily. Reports were released and we put a program in place. To make that now work across all borders can only be a good thing. We want good data. We want early intervention. We want the ability to ensure that both Queenslanders and people as they move interstate are not suffering from this disease. Whether it be someone who was cutting stone—and I have Wagner in my electorate. I do not mean the concrete Wagners but the stonemasons, who are cousins of the Wagners. They have a lot of stonemasonry and have done a lot of stonework there for a long time. They have great occupational workplace health and safety standards in place. Making sure anybody who finds themselves exposed has access to a national register is a really good outcome, so it is something that is easy for me to support in this place.

When it comes to Japanese encephalitis, the mosquito itself and the diseases it can carry is one of the biggest killers on planet earth. In Queensland we range from the tropics in the north and we have various different climatic opportunities for mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases to spread. Japanese encephalitis is one that needs particularly close monitoring because at the point it gets into the human population it can have very devastating effects. Anything we can do that allows that monitoring and capacity of government officials and others to collect the information and data they need—I am no scientist when it comes to these subjects, so whatever they need, I am happy to empower them to do it. If there is an outbreak I want to make sure it is reported and we have processes in place to identify it, control it and then prevent it from spreading. I think that is a really good outcome.

Mental health has become such a big issue in recent years. Making sure we do not have any gaps in the governance of mental health is critically important. To have the ability to appoint an acting commissioner if there is a vacancy is really important. We want to ensure that in this critical health area we have the right people working in that space, no matter the set of circumstances that arise. We have some great services in mental health in Toowoomba working in this space, but ensuring there is no gap in the governance is very important.

With the limited time I have remaining I will talk briefly about the Radiation Safety Act. In my patch there is a lot of old machinery and a lot of different things on farms. Those things may not always have been taken care of or by the book if people arrive at something that has unknown contents. Having this amendment and disposal capacity at someone's fingertips should they need it when they recognise a danger is important. I appreciate those amendments for an area like ours where over the years lots of old equipment and old things have been left lying around. When they were built, they may not have been built to today's standards and they may contain unknown materials. If there is any fear of radiation, being able to treat that appropriately and dispose of those items safely is a really good amendment.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (6.06 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. It is certainly a comprehensive omnibus bill that addresses many critical aspects of our health legislation. This bill amends several key acts including the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act, the Public Health Act, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act and the Radiation Safety Act. It also includes amendments to the Public Health Regulation.

The introduction of this bill reflects the Crisafulli government's commitment to strengthen the performance and clarity of our health legislation in four key areas: pharmacy business ownership regulation, reporting of occupational respiratory disease detection, management of serious public health risk and clarity of radiation safety application processes. These are all obviously very important areas. The Health, Environment and Innovation Committee has certainly done a fantastic job. They have also recommended that this bill be passed.

First, let's talk about our local pharmacies and how this will affect them. Before I mention that, I want to give a big shout-out to my local pharmacies for the massive amount of work they do for our area when it comes to health care and providing easy access to advice for local residents and also for participating in our local community. As an example, I want to say thank you to Chempro at Oxenford for donating a heap of sunscreen to one of my local schools. I thank them for that very kind donation.

This bill makes some amendments to the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act. It talks about the primary interests of the pharmacies and how they are controlled by corporations. However, in the implementation of the act several issues were identified that required changes. The amendments in the bill clarify issues in respect of seeking to extend the review of a decision by the Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council. Additionally, the bill ensures that stakeholders or corporate pharmacy owners can only hold their share of trusts for practising pharmacists or their close relatives, thereby reinforcing the integrity of pharmacy ownership. To promote the transparency and procedures of fairness for licensed applicants, the bill also streamlines the processes associated with pharmacy business licensing. It will support the effective operation of Queensland pharmacy business ownership and facilitate the transfer of regulatory responsibility for pharmacy ownership from Queensland Health to the council.

Another very important topic that is dear to my heart is respiratory diseases. There are many stone businesses in the Oxenford area—stonecutters—and I always remember talking to a couple of the workers about their harrowing experiences. This bill will make some crucial changes to the Public Health Act 2005 regarding the notification of occupational respiratory diseases. The establishment of a National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry allows a centralised approach to managing reporting of preventable occupational respiratory diseases such as cancer and asbestosis. Transferring the notification of the diagnosis of these diseases from the existing Queensland register to a national


register will enable a nationally consistent reporting process and requirements. This will enhance the ability to understand and prevent these debilitating diseases, ensuring Queenslanders receive the best health outcomes possible.

Japanese encephalitis virus is another important area that this bill covers. This is a serious public health risk. The amendments clarify that authorised officers can leave the necessary equipment and materials for monitoring designated pests such as mosquitoes, the primary carriers, which is crucial in detecting and managing the risk of JEV. The current legislation has been ambiguous regarding the ability to leave equipment for reasonable periods. This bill provides the necessary clarification to ensure that public health units and local councils can effectively respond to risks posed by this terrible virus.

The bill also deals with the Radiation Safety Act 1999 and makes technical amendments to that act. The bill clarifies that any person, not just a licensee, can apply to Queensland Health for approval to dispose of radioactive material. This amendment will ensure that potentially hazardous materials are safely managed and disposed of, reflecting the original intent of the act.

Finally, the bill also amends the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013, ensuring that a commissioner can be appointed in situations where the Mental Health Commissioner's position becomes vacant or when the commissioner is unavailable. This amendment is critically important when it comes to maintaining effective leadership and continuation of the commission. Mental health issues are becoming more and more prevalent in our society. Therefore, we need to have robust processes in place to ensure we are providing the best care for individuals who are suffering through some very dark times in their lives. This bill is a vital step forward in upgrading our legislation to meet the demands of what is required in 2025.

The Crisafulli government is getting on with the job of putting health care first and foremost for the residents of Queensland. I urge all members to support these amendments because they will have a positive impact when it comes to the health outcomes of Queenslanders.

 **Mr BAROUNIS** (Maryborough—LNP) (6.15 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. This bill amends the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the Radiation Safety Act 1999. The bill also makes amendments to the Public Health Regulation 2018. The Health, Environment and Innovation Committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. There was no statement of reservation.

The Crisafulli government is strengthening the performance and clarity of our health legislation in five key areas including pharmacy business ownership regulation, reporting of occupational respiratory diseases, the detection and management of serious public health risks such as those presented by the Japanese encephalitis virus and, finally, the appointment processes for the leadership of Queensland's Mental Health Commission. These amendments reflect our commitment to improving our regulatory levers and protecting the health and safety of Queenslanders.

Our community pharmacists provide world-class primary health care. For Australians and Queenslanders, pharmacies play a vital role in our communities in providing the medication that so many of our community members rely on. The Maryborough electorate has an aging population and it is pleasing to see more pharmacies opening up in our smaller communities, providing services to the most vulnerable among our society. Constituents who have worked and paid their taxes now want to know that they have a good pharmacist nearby whom they can rely on for advice and support. This is why the Crisafulli government expanded their scope of practice to treat and prescribe medications for acute health conditions such as ear infections, acne, school sores, eczema and mild psoriasis and nausea. I know that with this new legislation members of my community will be able to get seen quicker and treated faster by their local pharmacists.

Obviously, pharmacists are not medical practitioners. We know that, but with extra training subsidies now being extended by the Crisafulli government our pharmacists have access to suitable training to better support our communities. This has meant that about \$1.5 million was available to support up to 230 more pharmacists to be trained to treat these everyday health conditions. This has expanded a pharmacist's scope of practice which in turn improves access to the community and reduces pressure on our GPs and hospital emergency departments. In the past couple of months a small community pharmacy has opened in the suburb of Granville within my electorate. Before that, there had never been a pharmacy in this location. The suburb of Granville and beyond has welcomed this pharmacy, coincidentally called the Friendlies Pharmacy. I have heard that the staff are great and the service to our community is outstanding.


This bill ensures appropriate systems and processes are in place to achieve the intent of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024. The bill also makes necessary changes to the operation of the act ahead of the expected commencement of the licensing scheme in November 2025. This will also support the effective operation of the Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council. These amendments are aimed at promoting transparency, protecting the community pharmacy model and ensuring clarity and procedural fairness for licence applicants. More importantly, the amendments also support the transfer of regulatory responsibility for pharmacy business ownership from Queensland Health to the council. This bill ensures that the regulation of pharmacy business ownership in Queensland is effective, clear to stakeholders and operators and in the best interests of the community.

This bill amends the Public Health Act 2025 in relation to the notification of the diagnosis of occupational respiratory disease. By establishing the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry, the Commonwealth has assumed primary responsibility by managing the reporting of information about preventable diseases in Australia. Centralising this information and moving towards consistent national reporting system requirements will improve our ability to understand and prevent these debilitating and life-threatening illnesses. This bill supports this important initiative by ensuring that all diagnoses of these diseases are notified to the national registry. The bill decommissions the existing Queensland registry. Queensland Health will continue to have access to patient information about Queensland diagnoses. Information about diagnoses in other Australian jurisdictions will also be available through the secure national registry portal. In its submission to the committee, the Lung Foundation Australia noted the importance of Queensland policymakers and medical practitioners maintaining access to Queensland data within the national registry and being able to access broader trends within the national data.

This bill also clarifies across public health units how local councils can effectively respond to the risk of Japanese encephalitis virus or JEV. To ensure effective testing for JEV it is necessary to capture adult mosquitoes when they are most active. This is done by leaving light traps at relevant locations overnight. Current legislation is ambiguous about when this can be done, which is why this bill provides the clarity needed for our officers to leave necessary equipment at locations for reasonable periods of time.

This bill also makes a minor amendment to correct an inconsistency in the Radiation Safety Act 1999. Occasionally members of the public may come across radioactive materials. For example, a person may discover old aeroplane gauges at a newly purchased rural property or a high school science department might find samples of radioactive rocks and geological items. This bill amends the act to confirm that any person can apply for and hold an approval to dispose of any radioactive material. This will ensure that potentially dangerous materials are brought to the attention of the department's experts in the radiation health team and disposed of safely. The amendment reflects the original intent of the act.

The bill also amends the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 to ensure that an acting commissioner can be appointed when the commissioner may be unavailable or their office becomes vacant. Being able to see a pharmacist about smaller, simpler medical issues is a life changer. As a local member, as a resident and on behalf of my electorate, I would like to thank the Minister for Health and his team, the committee, and, of course, the Crisafulli LNP government for listening to Queenslanders. I commend the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025 to the House.

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise to speak to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. From the outset I would like to thank the committee for its work in listening to stakeholders and community around the legislative amendments within this bill. The report's recommendation was without any statement of reservation and it was recommended that the bill be passed. I would also like to extend my thanks to the Minister for Health, who has been working with diligence and dedication to detail—because details matter. The bill before us amends four separate acts, including the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act, the Public Health Act, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act and the Radiation Safety Act.

Part of the bill includes amendments around pharmacy ownership and occupation. The intent of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act is to ensure ownership of and interests in pharmacy businesses are primarily restricted to practising pharmacists and pharmacist-controlled corporations. Pharmacists play a vital role in overseeing the operation of pharmacies to maintain high standards of medication safety and patient care. Their expertise ensures accurate dispensing of prescriptions, effective patient communication and proper inventory control, all whilst complying with regulatory and ethical guidelines. As trusted healthcare professionals our pharmacists contribute significantly to the overall wellbeing of our communities.


The bill also expands the scope of practice of pharmacies to diagnose and to treat. We used to do this years ago. Coming from a small country town it was paramount to us, without being able to get into a doctor easily, to go into our local pharmacy and have them diagnose what was going on. It is great that this has been expanded to alleviate some of the pressure on our current GPs as well as the overflows at our emergency departments in the hospitals. Pharmacies are absolutely regionally significant and I would like to give a shout-out to a few of my local pharmacists: Henrieke from TerryWhite Chemmart Day and Night is there for us in the evenings when all things go wrong; Carina from Priceline Pharmacy at Parkhurst; and also Marie from Ramsay Pharmacy. We have over 28 registered pharmacies in my region.

The notification of occupational respiratory diseases is now transferable to a national registry because of this bill. The creation of the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry places the Commonwealth at the forefront of collecting and managing the data on preventable work related respiratory conditions across Australia, illnesses such as silicosis, asbestosis and certain cancers. Consolidating the data and implementing uniform national reporting standards will enhance efforts to identify, monitor and reduce the incidence of these serious and often fatal diseases. Legislation has been introduced to support this initiative by mandating that all relevant diagnoses be reported to the national registry, effectively replacing the Queensland registry. Queensland Health will retain access to patient records for cases that are diagnosed within the state, making sure that data from regions will be accessible via the secure portal of the national registry.

Another part of the bill that we are debating tonight ensures that we can leave out traps at locations overnight to make sure that we are detecting the Japanese encephalitis virus. This is important to the regions because we have had a case of JEV at one of the piggeries at Banana.

The member for Miller suggested this bill is not important enough or relevant enough to be presented on its own. Indeed, he called it a trivial bill. I would say to the member that I am certain that the people of Queensland would value the expansion of the scope of practice of pharmacists to bring significant relief to the pressures on our GPs and our hospital emergency departments. I would suggest that these pressures were created by 10 years of lack of planning, lack of funding and lack of management by the previous Labor government.


Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

 **Mrs KIRKLAND:** Before the dinner break I was halfway through my address on this very important piece of legislation. I was saying that the member for Miller had suggested that this bill is not important enough or relevant enough to be passed on its own today. Indeed, he called it a trivial bill. I say to the member that I am certain the people of Queensland would value the expansion of the scope of practice of pharmacists to bring significant relief to the pressures on our GPs and our hospital emergency departments—pressures that were created by 10 years of lack of planning, lack of funding and lack of managing by the previous Labor governments.

I would also say to the member that the people of Central Queensland would absolutely love to see mosquito trapping made more efficient and more effective through the bill's extension of the provisions for the placement of equipment. This will mean that traps can be left out to monitor night activity, to ensure sufficient sampling sizes of the mosquito colonies.

Our communities deserve to be safer. I would also suggest to the member that the work of the Queensland Mental Health Commission is exceptionally important and the ability for the minister to appoint a commissioner when needed is equally as important. Additionally, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia fully supports the bill, stating that its amendments are critical.

I would say to the member for Miller that this is far from a trivial bill. In fact, I would say that it is an incredibly important piece of legislation that we are debating tonight. Whilst I have highlighted only a small portion of the important amendments, I fully endorse and commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.32 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. For me, one of the most important elements of the bill relates to Japanese encephalitis because we had a detection in my community a short while ago. Our area is very well known for growing potatoes and other heavy crops as well as other things. We also have a large pork industry, and Japanese encephalitis poses a very big risk to that industry. I very much welcome the discussions that my community have had with the Department of Primary Industries and the interventions that they have put in place.

I was very concerned about this because I did not know a great deal about Japanese encephalitis. Some say I am an experienced man and some say I am a middle-aged man. Certainly I have been around for a little while; however, I had had no exposure to Japanese encephalitis. When I did, I was very pleased that the minister and his team acted so quickly. Officers from the DPI came out and spoke with us. They reassured us that contagion cannot spread between pigs and humans. The transfer comes from mosquitoes or mosquito larvae. Mosquito larvae can live anywhere. Mosquitoes can live in a coke can on the side of the road. It is a very challenging disease. I am very thankful that our government is again keeping Queenslanders safe, this time in relation to the biosecurity threat involving Japanese encephalitis. I do not think I had heard about Japanese encephalitis until it was detected in our community. I must pay tribute to the farmers and growers who look after the animals. They were very responsible. At the first sign of a problem, they reported it. They did absolutely the right thing. They got right on top of it and now the department have helped us out. I will come back to Japanese encephalitis in a minute.

I take this opportunity to praise our local pharmacies. In the Laidley community, where I was for many years, the pharmacists are wonderful people. Chris and Tina Wong sold their pharmacy business to Matt and his wife, who had moved to the Lockyer with their young family. Matt is an absolute champion of our community. In Gatton we have David and Eloise, and Chris Owen at the WholeLife Pharmacy, which is a new store where you can actually buy anything. It is truly at the heart of the community.

The issue of Japanese encephalitis needs a full discussion in this place. I am disappointed that members opposite have not seen the work that has gone into this bill, because this is not a trivial matter. It is a very serious matter, certainly in our community and, I am sure, for the greater Brisbane community, which many members opposite represent. I am sure they all enjoy bacon of a morning or some pork sausages.

Mr Dillon: Australian bacon.

Mr McDONALD: Yes, Australian bacon. In Australia, the Japanese encephalitis virus poses a great threat to the industry. I am sure that many people in South-East Queensland will not have heard about Japanese encephalitis. It is important for members opposite to understand what is going on and what the government is doing about it. As a good government, we are responding to it. This bill focuses on the ability to trap mosquitoes so that we can detect Japanese encephalitis across our communities.

Mr Baillie interjected.

Mr McDONALD: I will not take the interjection from the member for Townsville, but I will highlight that many in the community were fearful that humans could contract Japanese encephalitis from pig products. That is not the case. We live in the greatest state in the greatest country on earth. We want to make sure that the DPI and biosecurity officers have the necessary powers to respond to the threats that our communities face. This is one of the battles that we are certainly fighting.

I am pleased that the DPI will continue to brief us. The minister has assured me that we will continue the conversation and that our community will continue to be informed. There has been an education program about Japanese encephalitis. That is a very important part of this. Many in the community are very fearful about the disease because the current legislation is ambiguous about the testing that can be done. This bill provides the clarity needed so that officers can leave the necessary equipment at locations for a reasonable period.

Everyone in this House knows I am a former police officer, and one of the genuine issues police officers deal with is property rights for people. We do not want officers going around willy-nilly thinking they can put traps out. The reason I mentioned being a police officer before is one of the challenges police officers face is working out ways to operationalise any new threats. Whilst the Japanese encephalitis virus is not a policing issue, it is a new issue for our biosecurity officers. It is very important to have some clarity around those things. When there is a threat to being able to perform tests, we want to make sure the testing is as effective as possible.

Mrs Poole interjected.

Mr McDONALD: It is a calm and methodical response—I take the interjection from the member for Mundingburra because that is a very astute observation. We are doing it in a calm and methodical way, and testing mosquitoes is the best way to see the spread of the Japanese encephalitis virus.


I very much welcome the efforts of the four very fine officers who came out and spoke to me and my whole team. The four of us talked to the officers so now when the ladies in the electorate office receive a call about Japanese encephalitis, or anything like that, they already know about it and they

can reassure people that it is not transmissible from animals to people. We will be able to have that calm approach in our community. Some say 'calm the farm', which is a good comment because we have lots of farms growing lots of potatoes, pumpkins and brassicas, but we also grow pigs and a lot of cattle goes through there as well. We have taken that calm approach, and our team has been trained so when we get a call we can respond.

Also, the DPI officers are coming out and dealing with our farmers, not just the farms that have been infected, which is a very high concern. We have dozens of pig farms across the Lockyer and into the Somerset community, which I also represent, and those farmers are obviously very fearful. I recognise the Acting Speaker, who is usually the Deputy Speaker, is from the Scenic Rim, and there are also a number of piggeries in his electorate. Of course, I always say that the only reason farmers have a farm in the Scenic Rim is because they could not get one in Lockyer!

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member, are you being relevant to the bill?

Mr McDONALD: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. It is something that we share in common. Those farms are close to those that have been affected, and of course they are very fearful. I thank the DPI office and my staff for working with the community to make sure we are best informed and are approaching this in a calm and methodical way and getting the best testing done.

 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (7.42 pm): I had a quite lengthy presentation prepared for this debate, but given the hour and the number of government speakers still to speak on this critical piece of legislation I will limit my contribution to a couple of key areas. The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) is an omnibus bill that will amend the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the Radiation Safety Act 1999. There will also be amendments to the Public Health Regulation 2018.

At the outset I need to place on record the thanks of the people of Gregory to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services for methodically going through very important legislation not only to modernise it to reflect contemporary and new government approaches but also to ensure the safety of Queenslanders. Along with the Minister for Health, though, it would be remiss of me not to thank the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, led very ably by the chair, the member for Southport, and assisted by my good colleagues the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Redcliffe. This legislation is important. They reviewed the submissions that were received to ensure the legislation that came before this House tonight was fit for purpose and understood by members on this side, and the explanation they placed in that report was well done and is critically important.

I would like to focus a little bit of my remaining time on the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act. I have many pharmacists in my patch, like Elizabeth Beattie from the pharmacy in Longreach, Jess Burrey from the Direct Chemist Outlet in Emerald and my local chemist, Brodie, from Alpha. The ability for them to treat relatively acute symptoms such as ear infections, school sores, eczema, mild psoriasis and nausea alleviates pressure on our emergency departments, and in some of our small communities we do not even have an emergency department. The ability for a pharmacist to diagnose and provide treatment options definitely improves the lot of people in regional Queensland, certainly right throughout my electorate of Gregory.

We need to ensure these changes are enshrined in the act. We confirmed the funding would have run out because—surprise, surprise!—Labor did not correctly budget for every program that we inherited, but we ensured the funding for traineeships in this space continued past 31 March this year. That all fits with ensuring pharmacists and their trainees are adequately provided with the skill set to care for people in our communities either to alleviate the pressure on our emergency rooms or to provide a treatment option where a doctor may not currently be in residence. I thank the minister for inclusion and I give a big shout-out to my pharmacies and those people who will be able to deliver better health care in our communities as a result of this legislation.


The member for Lockyer discussed the reforms around Japanese encephalitis. Can I say that not only will the pork industry substantially benefit from this bill but also there will be health implications for humans. Whilst this disease cannot spread from host animal to host animal, it affects a number of animals. Equines, which are a critical component of the workforce in Western Queensland, can suffer substantially and die, as happens in a lot of instances, from Japanese encephalitis. There are horses in the racing industry, pleasure horses in backyards, those for pony club students and horses in the grazing industry which are used for mustering and animal husbandry.

We are ensuring the laws of this state allow for the correct taking and analysing of samples, and we are protecting the data so it can be put to the best available use. This shows a government that is getting on with delivering a fresh start for Queenslanders. It is delivering legislation that is fit for purpose. It is delivering legislation that will ensure not only the safety of humans in this state but also the protection of our animals and our industries as well.

The changes to notifiable occupational respiratory diseases probably has not captured a lot of attention, but the work of the Commonwealth in this space to establish a national register will ensure there is better and harmonised reporting across jurisdictional areas. Therefore, the provisions within this omnibus bill will mean that we can sign up to the national register and remove the requirement for a Queensland-based registry. Those respiratory diseases cause significant distress, but the earlier they can be detected and tracked back will mean people right across Australia will hopefully have good, sound and positive treatment outcomes.

In order that all government MPs have the opportunity to speak to this omnibus bill, my final contribution relates to the provisions around the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner. Once again, as a good government we are ensuring an acting commissioner can be appointed. This is tidying up some important things. Mental health is such an evolving treatment space, and now the commission will have certainty and stability around its leadership. Whilst it might seem like a dry piece of legislation, having certainty around the appointment of the commissioner is excellent for the work of the commission.

Once again, I would like to thank the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services for continuing his diligent approach to ensuring legislation in this state is fit for purpose and reflects the fresh start that Queenslanders voted for. I totally support this bill on behalf of the residents of Gregory.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.49 pm): Mr Acting Speaker, may I say from the outset that you have done a wonderful job of standing in for Mr Speaker during his absence. We thank you for your efforts to deliver a parliamentary week where all members have had a fair and reasonable opportunity to put forward their views.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I will take that comment on indulgence, member for Mermaid Beach. Now move on to the bill, if you could.

Mr STEVENS: I thought it was relevant to the bill. In case I wander off the subject, I thought I might butter up the referee! I rise to speak on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025. From the outset, I congratulate the health minister on bringing this bill to the House. Unlike the member for Miller, I will not call this a trivial bill. There is no legislation that comes into this House that is trivial. It does not matter whether it is a small piece of legislation or an omnibus bill, but I know—because I have been here a little while—that what we do is very important to Queensland and to Queenslanders. This bill will have a major impact on Queensland pharmacy businesses and it will protect people.

I will add that the brand new, 10-month-minted health minister has been the best health minister since Lawrie Springborg. He has done a wonderful job in bringing this important piece of legislation to the House. Here comes the best health minister now. I am pleased he is here for my contribution to the debate on this bill.

Pharmacy businesses are a very important part of our community. I know that the Pharmacy Guild was very worried about certain pharmacy groups looking to go to a public float. This bill ensures that local approved pharmacists are operating in our communities and that prescription delivery is done by experienced and proper people rather than publicly listed companies that are looking for the best results for their shareholders, which can impact services. I have seen that with the body corporate act. We do not want a repeat of that type of public company ownership with our pharmacies. This bill certainly enshrines our pharmacists as the operators of their local pharmacies.

It is very important that there is an opportunity for these people to provide extra services in the community. Obviously, some of them will be of a more minor nature than your doctor would provide. It is very important that this service is available to the community. When I try to see my doctor it takes sometimes a week or two weeks to get an appointment. They are flat out. For minor issues, I would like the opportunity to see the pharmacist. I am his local MP and there is no priority given to local members of parliament. The bottom line is that a pharmacist can provide a reasonable alternative for me to get treatment of a minor nature. The advice I can get from a pharmacist is also very much appreciated. I appreciate the fact that through this legislation they are given the opportunity to provide those services. This is a very important piece of legislation, in my view. They are providing world-class primary health care.

The health minister is doing everything he can to address the enormous amount of pressure on the health system. Our emergency departments in our hospitals are full and have queues. People with minor ailments like the flu and those types of things could be better dealt with by pharmacists if they did not want to pay. There are not many doctors who are bulk-billing these days, mainly because they feel the financial structures do not support a lot of bulk-billing. As a result of this bill, pharmacists will be able to provide an alternative to huge waiting lists and queues for treatment.

Mrs Kirkland: Save consumers money.

Mr STEVENS: Exactly. I take the interjection from the member for Rockhampton. It will save consumers money. They can now go to their pharmacist for cheaper, quicker and experienced delivery of services. I have a daughter-in-law who qualified as a pharmacist before she trained as a doctor. We could say that her experience as a pharmacist contributed in a major way to her being a GP, which she does very successfully across the border.

There is another issue that I would like to talk about, and that is encephalitis.

A government member interjected.

Mr STEVENS: The doctor pronounces it differently, but my Latin tells me it is encephalitis. I am going back a long way and the doctor is always right with his Latin. There are two types of mosquitoes—one called *Aedes vigilax* and the other called *Aedes quinquefasciatus*. That is from my council days. I was on Albert shire council, for those who were not aware of that. I was also the Gold Coast mayor. I mention that just in case people had forgotten. These mosquitoes are serious vectors—vectors means carriers; I have to explain a few things for the members opposite—of these very serious diseases. I believe there have been some casualties from this disease up north. There is nothing we are not doing that we should be doing to ensure the Japanese encephalitis virus does not spread due to the increase in the mosquito population after the very wet season we have had right across Queensland.


Those sorts of issues are very important. I get the fact that the opposition had other issues on their mind in terms of this health bill, but the bottom line is that to call the bill trivial is a very ordinary comment from a member who was in the health system—not very successfully, I might add. To call this a trivial bill and say that no-one should be taking any notice of it is to very much underplay the importance of this parliament and the fact that we legislate for the betterment of Queensland in everything we do. It goes down to very minor issues. The mental health issue is very important. The bill amends the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act to ensure an acting commissioner can be appointed. I think that is very important if the commissioner goes missing.

From my point of view, this health bill is very important and it should not be treated shabbily—like the opposition have tried to do. They have tried to hijack the agenda on many occasions for their own purposes and to create a political scare campaign about an issue that is not even relevant to this particular bill before the House currently. The fact of the matter is—

Mr Mander: They've all come back in.

Mr STEVENS: I take the interjection from the member for Everton. They have come back in to listen to the member for Mermaid Beach. I appreciate that. I advise the members of the opposition to take these matters seriously. They should not turn it into a political dogfight that they would love to have for a headline in the *Courier-Mail* tomorrow, perhaps. This is an important bill and they should be speaking to this important bill rather than just ignoring it or calling it trivial.

This bill will have a mighty effect on people. It will further protect people from the Japanese encephalitis virus carried by mosquitoes, particularly in the north. I commend the minister for his great work on this particular bill. He is the best minister since Lawrie Springborg.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (7.59 pm): The member for Mermaid Beach said we have been shouting all day about proposed amendments. Well, we have plenty to shout about now. We have young lives at risk now because of the LNP. Young Queenslanders in this state will die because of the health minister's actions here today. At no point did he want to admit that they would be bringing these amendments in. They should all be ashamed over there. They tried to duck and weave all day. Now we will have young people in this state going to schoolies this year who will die as a result of drugs.

Mr BAROUNIS: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like to let the member for Bundaberg know we are not deaf.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order, member for Maryborough; please resume your seat.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I do not need your assistance here today. Member for Bundaberg, resume your seat, please.


Mr SMITH: Parents of children who have died do not have deaf ears—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Bundaberg, I would ask you to stand up again, please. I had just directed you to resume your seat. You put your microphone back on and started speaking again. I would ask you to withdraw and apologise to the House, please.

Mr SMITH: I withdraw and apologise to the House and to you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: You are warned under the standing orders.

Under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House, the time for the second reading debate has come to an end. I call the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services for the second reading reply.

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (8.01 pm), in reply: It has indeed been a long day. Nothing demonstrates that more than the style of the comments and contribution of the former deputy speaker. Nonetheless, we are here to sensibly debate some legislation, and I thank all members for their contributions to the debate. This bill does make important and timely reforms to safeguard the health of all Queenslanders and ensure that our health system is ready for the challenges ahead. I spent many hours in here listening to the contributions from members. I have to say that understanding of the bill's contribution to the health of Queenslanders was amply demonstrated on this side of the House but, sadly, less so from those opposite.

This bill readies the new pharmacy ownership licensing scheme for commencement in November, it closes critical loopholes that threaten the integrity of community pharmacies, it aligns our response to deadly dust lung diseases through national reporting, and it equips public health officers to detect Japanese encephalitis virus ahead of the summer mosquito season. The bill also ensures continuity in mental health leadership and clarifies rules for the safe disposal of radioactive materials. I would like to address some of the issues raised during the debate.

I will turn to the member for Miller first, the current shadow minister for health. He has dismissed this bill as threadbare, thin and trivial. The only thing that is threadbare is the member for Miller's grasp of health policy and basic facts about our hospitals—whether it his grasp of matters relating to elective surgery or his grasp on reality when it comes to the Toowoomba Base Hospital and their surgical lists. The member for Greenslopes made a contribution—or should I perhaps describe him as the future minister for health. He is putting a stake in the ground pretty early.

As I mentioned earlier, I am grateful for the committee's consideration of the bill. The committee's single recommendation was that the bill be passed. It does concern me that the member for Greenslopes considers the committee reviewed the bill, to use his words, 'only on the papers'. I distinctly note from the report, and I distinctly remember, members of the health department appearing before the committee to provide a fulsome response to all of the committee's questions. They appeared before the committee to provide that response. That is not 'on the papers'. As the member for Southport rightly pointed out, the committee's report included no statement of reservation. It is therefore unexpected—and, frankly, inconsistent—for the member for Greenslopes to now voice discontent with the process that he was intimately involved in and very much a part of. The committee—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Methinks the member doth protest too much. The committee—including, presumably, the member for Greenslopes as the deputy chair of the committee—made the decision not to hold a public hearing about the bill. There were five submitters in relation to the bill, and I note that all of them were supportive of the amendments contained within the bill, so it is disappointing that the member for Greenslopes advised the House today that he has given the bill less than 10 minutes of his attention. Nonetheless, the reforms the bill delivers are important and necessary, and the committee's recommendation to pass the bill reflects that.

Returning to some of the other opposition commentary and the member for Miller's bizarre contribution to the debate, he managed to ridicule and undermine so many aspects of our health system and those working within it. This bill makes reforms that go to the heart of community health and safety. We heard from many members on both sides of the House about community health and safety, in particular about the role of community pharmacies. Protecting the ownership of local pharmacies, strengthening the fight against deadly dust lung disease and keeping our communities safe from

mosquito-borne illness are the things this bill does. To write these off, as the member for Miller did in his contribution, as trivial is to write off the patients, families and frontline professionals whose lives are directly affected.

A government member: Shame!

Mr NICHOLLS: I take that interjection; shame indeed on the member for Miller. It is not the first time and no doubt it will not be the last. If the shadow minister thinks these issues are trivial, then that says everything about his priorities and nothing about the substance of this bill.

These amendments are not technical niceties; these are essential protections for Queenslanders. This bill makes important amendments to the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act—the act that industry stakeholders such as the Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia have agreed are crucial before licensing commences under the act. That was their submission.

For example, the bill enables appropriate and necessary information sharing between Queensland Health and the new council to ensure both the council and Queensland Health can perform their mandated legislative functions. It ensures that a shareholder of a corporate pharmacy business owner cannot hold shares on trust for someone unless they are a pharmacist or a close adult relative of a pharmacist, which is in line with the clear intent of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act. These are not trivial matters; they are amendments that anyone who supports community pharmacies would support. Indeed, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia considers these reforms critical to ensuring that Queensland communities and patients are protected from the increasing corporatisation of health care.

The member for Miller and other opposition members also questioned the definitions of ‘core pharmacy services’ and ‘material interest’. I find it very interesting that the opposition would raise these concerns given that in fact this very proposition was put before the Labor government during the development of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act in 2024 but they did not accept them. Similarly, amendments to the Public Health Act support the transition from Queensland’s dust lung register to the new national registry. Dust lung disease is not a trivial matter. These are serious and deadly diseases that cause immense suffering and sadness in families and communities. The harmonisation of the reporting and tracking of dust lung disease is critical to early detection and intervention and supports the goal of eliminating these preventable and deadly diseases. Doctors and public health experts have welcomed the national registry as a lifesaving tool. These are the things that the member for Miller thinks are trivial.

Similarly, JEV, a disease that can cause serious illness and death, is not a trivial matter. We heard at length from the member for Lockyer, who spoke about the impact in his area—and it goes out to Goondiwindi, in the piggeries out there. That is, in fact, why Queensland Health will provide free vaccination for JEV for people who work in those areas or are a close contact to those areas. As we saw earlier this year, the warm, wet weather of summer is the perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes. Higher mosquito populations mean increased likelihood of JEV infections. These amendments get ahead of our summer season and ensure our public health officers are equipped to monitor and respond to this risk.

It is irresponsible and misguided to trivialise JEV. We know that the member for Miller’s understanding of the portfolio is a bit thin and threadbare, so he has probably forgotten about the 2022 outbreak of JEV. It was unprecedented in scale and severity, prompting Australia’s Chief Medical Officer to declare it a Communicable Disease Incident of National Significance. I would argue that is by no means a trivial matter. It is also disappointing that the member for Miller considers mental health and radiation safety to be trivial, but I want to assure the member for Miller and those opposite that on this side of the chamber we do not trivialise mental health or radiation safety.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those comments obviously offensive and I ask the minister to withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, the member for Miller has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. It is disappointing that those opposite consider mental health and radiation safety to be trivial, but I want to reaffirm to Queenslanders, as well as to those opposite, that on this side of the chamber we consider those matters important. It is important to get ahead of them and it is important to deal with them in a legislatively sensible way.

I do not know about the member for Miller, but personally I want to see radioactive materials dealt with appropriately and safely in our communities, and the bill supports this occurring. I find it passing strange if the member for Miller was a proponent for nuclear power and the unsafe disposal of nuclear and radioactive waste. He considers it trivial, though. The former campaigner for nuclear disarmament does not want to get rid of it; he wants to keep it in the community. I can tell that the member for Miller is struggling. The member for Greenslopes is hot on his heels, nibbling away—in the same way as the member for Gaven is nibbling away at the member for Murrumba. It is all the way through, and the member for Woodridge is nibbling at everyone.

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

Mr NICHOLLS: Here he is!

Mr BAILEY: The minister has been very pointed about sticking to the bill. He is straying far from the bill and I ask that he be brought back to the bill.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Miller. Minister, I have been listening carefully and maybe there is a slight deviation from relevance in some of your recent comments. If you could come back to the bill, that would be appreciated.

Mr NICHOLLS: Of course. There has been a slight deviation from relevance; I accept that. There was a slight deviation in relevance to the bill, but not a slight deviation in relevance to the member for Miller. The member for Miller said that this bill is embarrassingly lacking in policy substance. On this side of the House we think the opposition should be embarrassed about their response to very important matters. I would also like to inform the House that I will be moving amendments—

Mr Bailey: What a surprise.

Mr NICHOLLS: The member for Miller said, 'What a surprise.' Where has the member for Miller been for the last 36 hours? Has he not been reading his favourite journal of record, the *Guardian*? Has he not been tuning in to his favourite radio station, the ABC? Has he not been listening—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on the basis that I was sat down earlier in this debate. The minister is now speaking about matters which I was sat down for. I ask for you to apply the same ruling—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr BAILEY: I ask for him to come back to the bill and not be straying far from the bill into areas other speakers have been sat down for.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Is your point of order relevance?

Mr BAILEY: Yes.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you. I will take some advice. Member for Miller, thank you for your point of order. The minister's comments, as I understood them, were in relation to amendments to be moved by the minister which have been circulated. There is authority from other Speakers that comments about government amendments are relevant in the second reading debate and in consideration in detail. Minister, you have the call.

Mr NICHOLLS: I think the member for Miller's point should have been lack of relevance, and that is the lack of relevance from the member for Miller to this debate.

As I said, I will be moving amendments to the Medicines and Poisons Act and one other act during consideration in detail. These amendments will give effect to the Crisafulli government's position before the election, during the election and subsequent to the election—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Members, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr NICHOLLS: These amendments will give effect to the Crisafulli government's position made clear before the election, made clear during the election and made clear subsequent to the election that we have a zero-tolerance position—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: These amendments give effect to the Crisafulli government's position made before, during and after the election that we take a zero-tolerance position in relation to illegal drugs. The government takes a zero-tolerance position in relation to illegal drugs. I want to make it absolutely clear that there is no safe way to take illegal drugs, and this government does not support publicly or privately funded pill testing. The amendments I will be moving will ensure that pill testing does not take place in Queensland.

Our position, as I said in answer to a question, is no different to many other state and territory governments across Australia, from both sides of politics. In Western Australia, the Cook Labor government said in January 2024 that 'Western Australia will not be changing its position' and, 'The Cook government has no plans to introduce pill testing in Western Australia at this time.' It was a position reinforced by government members in Western Australia and reported in *Hansard* in March 2024.

In South Australia, the health minister, Chris Picton, ruled out pursuing such a scheme in July 2022, stating, 'South Australian Labor was consistent before the election in not supporting pill testing as part of our policy.' He reiterated this in 2025—and the Malinauskas government is the most popular Labor government in the country at the moment—when he told *InDaily*, 'The Malinauskas government does not support the introduction of pill testing in South Australia.' That is from two Labor governments. It is also not supported by the Northern Territory, which has had both Labor and Country Liberal Party governments, and it is not supported by Tasmania or Queensland. We do not support anything that encourages drug dealers. There is no safe way to take drugs. Only the Labor Party is backing drug dealers in this House.

In upholding our commitment to transparency, I am also releasing and tabling the interim and final evaluation reports of the former government's trial of publicly funded drug-checking services in Queensland. Concerningly, these reports reveal that the majority of participants still intended to take illicit substances and that drug-checking services had not changed their attitude or increased their willingness to talk about their drug use with a healthcare provider.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 1 November 2024, titled 'The University of Queensland, Interim Report: Evaluation of the Queensland Drug Checking Services 2024 V2.1' [[1285](#)].

Tabled paper: Document, dated 4 June 2025, titled 'The University of Queensland, Final Report: Evaluation of the Queensland Drug Checking Services 2025' [[1286](#)].

The evaluation report proudly states in the executive summary that 44 per cent of people said they did not use the tested substance. That sounds like a positive—44 per cent of people said they did not use the tested substance—but upon examination of the details, it is revealed that, despite more than 1,000 participants in the trial, only 43 partially completed the follow-up survey. Only 43 completed more than 60 per cent of the survey. So, this figure of 44 per cent represents fewer than 20 out of 1,000 people. Of those surveyed, only five said they had disposed of the substance. That is \$1.15 million for a 12-month trial and evaluation, and only five people reported disposing of their drugs. The evaluation goes further to report that more than half of the people who accessed the fixed sites and indicated their intentions for using said they had not changed their mind about how much of the substance they would take. At the major festivals involved in the trial, 64 per cent of the people said they definitely would use the substance. That is a major concern and, quite frankly, a significant failure of the program.

I will also be moving an amendment on behalf of the Minister for Fire Services in relation to matters of concern. This amendment will be to the Fire Services Act 1990 to clarify the role of rural fire brigades during fires and other significant events impacting our community.

In closing, the reforms in this legislation ensure Queensland's health legislation is contemporary and clear. Protecting our community pharmacy model and preventing Japanese encephalitis virus and respiratory diseases are not trivial matters, as the member for Miller and those opposite would have you believe. They are not threadbare proposals. They are not worthy of less than 10 minutes of the member for Greenslopes' time. They are worthy of proper consideration by the members of this House and the members of the committee.

This is an important bill for the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. I would like to thank Queensland Health's Legislative Policy Unit, in particular Kate, Riaza, Gemima, Angela and Karson, for all of their support in developing this bill. I would like to thank my staff who have made such a tremendous effort to make sure that this bill is in the best interests of Queenslanders. It does protect the health, wellbeing and rights of Queenslanders. It supports the delivery of the community pharmacy model which we on this side value so much. It ensures that this parliament debates important legislation and it is certainly not trivial legislation as those opposite would have you believe.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Mr NICHOLLS (8.24 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr NICHOLLS: I move amendment No. 1 circulated in my name—

1

After clause 1

Page 6, after line 5—

insert—

Part 1A Amendment of Fire Services Act 1990

1A Act amended

This part amends the *Fire Services Act 1990*.

1B Insertion of new s 139A

After section 139—

insert—

139A Helping communities or other entities

(1) For performing a function under section 139(l)(c), a rural fire brigade may carry out activities to help a community or another entity in relation to an event or a disaster—

- (a) at the direction of the commissioner; or
- (b) in response to a request for help by the community or other entity; or
- (c) on its own initiative.

Examples of activities—

- blocking a road to isolate an area in the vicinity of a fallen powerline
- directing traffic away from a flooded creek
- using a chainsaw to remove a fallen tree on a property that is causing a hazard

(2) If the rural fire brigade carries out activities in response to a request for help by the community or other entity or on its own initiative, the first officer of the brigade must notify the commissioner at the first opportunity of any activities carried out, or to be carried out, by the brigade in relation to the event or disaster.

(3) In this section—

first officer see section 140(4).

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

Tabled paper: Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025, explanatory notes to Hon. Tim Nicholls's amendments [\[1287\]](#).

Tabled paper: Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Tim Nicholls's amendments [\[1288\]](#).

Amendment No. 1 is an amendment of the Fire Services Act 1990. Rural fire brigades support our Queensland communities through a range of severe weather events, not just those involving fire. During flooding events earlier this year, our rural brigades were out in their communities, as I am sure we all witnessed and we are thankful for, particularly in North Queensland, where they provided means of communication, ingress and egress to flooded areas. In Ingham and around Townsville they were vitally important in getting people to and from facilities, as they were in Western Queensland subsequently. They moved people across flooded roads, flooded creeks and flooded rivers.

Assisting communities like this is one of the functions of rural fire brigades, as set out in the Fire Services Act 1990. The first amendment clarifies the scope of that function. In particular, it clarifies that brigades can provide assistance if they are directed to by the Commissioner of the Queensland Fire Department. They can provide it if they receive a request for help from the community and, very importantly, because we trust our rural fire brigades, they can provide assistance on their own initiative.

We believe in the skills, the strength and the judgement of our rural fire services. They know their communities. They know them well and they know their locales well. They are often best placed to make the decision that is necessary to provide the support that local communities need.

In normal circumstances, brigades would call into the state Fire Communication Centre for approval to act, but where that is not possible, the amendment says that notification can be given after they have provided the assistance. This caters for any exceptional circumstances such as when communication channels are disrupted by the event itself. Those events happen frequently—that is, the communication channels are knocked out. In fact, when Tropical Cyclone Alfred came across our shores in February this year, we lost the normal Telstra communications that are in place north of Townsville for a number of days. It can take days to get generator sets in, to get backup power in and to get it operational. This caters for those exceptional circumstances such as when those channels are disrupted.

The amendment gives legislative certainty to the great work that our rural fire brigades do each year. I am sure I speak on behalf of all members of the House when I thank them for their dedication and hard work. Even when there are not events occurring, they train and maintain the safety and security of their communities.

Ms LEAHY: I would like to make some comments in relation to the amendments to the Fire Services Act 1990. We know that during the North Queensland floods in January this year, again during Tropical Cyclone Alfred in February and then during the Western Queensland floods in late March, our rural fire brigades were out helping their local communities in relation to not only clearing vegetation but also doing many of those washouts. I do want to place on record my thanks to the member for Theodore for raising this matter with me. Our rural fire brigades are not only helping people through the event itself but also helping them get back on their feet once the event has passed and we are into the recovery phase.

The Fire Services Act 1990 makes it clear that the rural fire brigades play a vital role in assisting communities for events and disasters well beyond fire situations. For instance, they might be there for broader events like traffic crashes and other rescues, and they might also be directing traffic away from fallen powerlines.

Post the incident reviews from those severe weather events earlier in the year, it was identified that it would be beneficial to clarify the act in relation to the circumstances in which rural fire brigades can assist their communities. The amendment before the House provides that brigades can respond to a direction from the Commissioner of the Queensland Fire Department or to a request for assistance from the community. Very importantly, it provides that brigades can exercise their own initiative and autonomy to provide assistance where necessary. This amendment recognises that, on occasions, the fire brigade may need to undertake these activities when they have not been directly tasked but are well placed to provide that help. This will ensure, for example, that a brigade is not restrained from getting out to chainsaw fallen trees that are causing a hazard, directing traffic away from flooded creeks and streams, or blocking roads in an isolated area where there has been fallen powerlines. Not only does our community expect our rural fires to act in circumstances like these, our rural fires want to provide that help in these types of circumstances. That is why they have signed up to volunteer: to be there for their communities when they are most needed.

This amendment provides them with the clear legislative authority to exercise their autonomy and give help to those in need in those circumstances. For both safety and administrative reasons, it is important that they are able to go out not only if they are notified by the commissioner but also if there are no communication channels for them. The amendment provides that reporting can occur after the help has been provided. This amendment recognises that our brigades are well placed to understand their community when they need assistance and they can provide that assistance. I commend the amendment to the House.

Mr BOOTHMAN: This clause is very important for my local community on the northern Gold Coast. This clause allows local rural fire brigades to get out there and work in their local area. Their knowledge of their local areas is something we need to rely on. They know their local areas and what to do in their local areas. We need to allow them to take the initiative to go out there and attend to situations. For instance, earlier this year we had a weather event on the northern Gold Coast and in South-East Queensland. This weather event highlighted the importance of emergency workers getting out there and using their own initiative. They can go out and clear trees from people's driveways and assist locals in clearing dangerous vegetation. This clause enables that.

I say to the Minister for Local Government: my local brigades—and brigades all over Queensland—want to be trusted. They want to be allowed to use their own initiative, because nobody knows their local areas like they do. Therefore, this clause empowers them to go out and service their

local communities like nobody else can. I commend the minister for taking the initiative to bring this amendment forward and for supporting rural fire brigades and local communities.

Ms ASIF: I rise to speak to these amendments—the ones we are seemingly being silenced from speaking on. We will not be silenced in talking about how important those protections are for children in Queensland. I know that the minister does not want to hear the words ‘pill testing’ and—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, I am going to stop you there. I do not think I need to take a point of order because I understand it would be on relevance. Member for Sandgate, the amendment you are speaking to is about rural fire brigades, not pill testing or anything to do with health. If you would like to speak to the amendment moved in relation to the Fire Services Act, you are welcome to. In relation to the health act, that is the next amendment.

Ms ASIF: Absolutely. Thank you for your guidance, Acting Speaker. I think this is relevant for our rural firefighters, some of whom we were able to meet this week. They were in parliament and they were talking about the important work they do to protect people in our communities. They also have children who they want to see protected. That is what this legislation is doing.

Mr LISTER: Mr Acting Speaker—

Ms ASIF: They want protections in our communities for those people because they serve our community.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, pause please. Member for Southern Downs, do you have a point of order?

Mr LISTER: Yes, it is on relevance to the clause. The member for Sandgate took guidance from you and has then strayed into an extraneous matter. Time is short and I would like the call once she is done with her irrelevance.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, I appreciate your effort to be relevant, but you were straying into an irrelevant part again. I will give you one more opportunity to speak to the amendment in relation to the Fire Services Act. If you are not relevant, there are consequences for that as well. You need to be relevant to the amendment before the House.

Ms ASIF: Thank you. I am happy to conclude.

Mr HEAD: It is my pleasure to talk on this very important amendment for our rural fires. It is an incredibly important amendment for the people of Callide, because I have over 3,000 volunteer rural fires in the great electorate of Callide. That is over 10 per cent of the rural fires of this great state represented across the great electorate of Callide in over 150 brigades. The unfortunate thing with a lot of those brigades is that they are out of range for phone service. We all know how atrocious phone service is. Across the electorate, there are a lot of communities that live without the appropriate telecommunications. When incidents happened and fires needed to go and do things for communities but they could not contact those commissioners, there were not clear guidelines for them to go and work with their community. That, frankly, was incredibly frustrating for those volunteers, as the member for Theodore said. He uncovered it in his patch. We have better communication with Starlink and the like, but you cannot have our fires out on their own, out of service for extended periods of time and unable to get the appropriate communications to undertake activities.

This amendment allows them to continue to help communities and other entities and undertake activities on their own initiative when they do not have the ability to contact the commissioner or seek formal direction. Those activities include things like blocking a road to isolate an area in the vicinity of a fallen powerline. There are a lot of powerlines across the electorate of Callide. There will be a lot more built across the electorate of Callide as well. Another example is directing traffic away from a flooded creek. We all know how dangerous it is to drive through floodwaters.

Mr Purdie: If it's flooded forget it.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection from the minister: if it's flooded forget it. We have, fortunately, not had flood damage in the electorate of Callide for a very long time. Then there are fallen trees. We have a lot of storms that come through the electorate, and those fires need the ability to go on and get the job done. Then they can notify the commissioner at the next opportunity. This is a great amendment and I commend it to the House.

Mr CRANDON: This amendment is absolutely essential.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left! Member for Coomera, pause please. Pause the clock. Members on my left, the member for Coomera had not even commenced and I could not hear him. If your interjections are not being taken, give the member the respect to make his contribution.

Mr CRANDON: This amendment is so important for our people. I refer to the comments of the member for Theodore in relation to the events that occurred earlier this year. I can speak from personal experience, in fact, about what actually happened. I know in all of our electorates during the period of that weather event we spent time travelling around, sometimes at great risk, to explore what was going on in the area. Indeed, I myself came across a tree across a road. It was quite a dangerous situation.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, please cease your interjections.

Mr CRANDON: The tree had not touched any powerlines but it would have been difficult for people who were perhaps less experienced in driving to get around that tree. I vividly recall contacting the local fire warden, Ian Holm from the Ormeau Rural Fire Brigade, to advise him that this particular tree was down. It did not seem to be in a dangerous situation, but it could have been dangerous for people with less experience. I asked him if he would be good enough to arrange for the Ormeau rural fire to come along and clean up that tree, take it off the road and make it safe for the people in and around the area. As it transpired, I went out a couple of hours later and I drove past this tree. Sure enough, the tree had been—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

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

Mr CRANDON:—cleared up and taken off the road. It had been chopped up quite nicely and put off the road, and it had been made safe for people traversing that area. I rang him and thanked him for his efforts in that regard. In thanking him for his efforts he said, 'Michael, just so you know, as a rural fire brigade we were unable to come out to do that job. We were not allowed to come out and do the job.' In fact, two of those rural fires, off their own back, as private citizens, came to the rescue of the people of the Ormeau area. These are people who have been with the rural fire brigade—some of them for more than 50 years. They came out, cleared that tree and put it off to the side of the road. They came out under their own power, not under the rural fire brigade protection.

Mr BAILEY: I rise to support the first amendment. This disgraceful filibustering by the government to prevent debate is an utter disgrace and I move—

That the question be now put.

Mr LISTER: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The member for Miller was not addressing the clause.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Resume your seat, please, member for Southern Downs. Member for Miller, I have taken advice about the operation of the standing order in relation to this and I have seen numerous people seek to speak to this clause, so I am not putting that motion that you have moved, in accordance with standing orders.

Mr LISTER: I wish to speak in support of this amendment. I think it is a small thing, indeed, for members of the opposition to interject on an amendment that is so important to communities like mine.

Mr Head: The drug dealers are more important than fires.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from the member for Callide. Yes, perhaps they just want to talk about drug dealers. I want to talk about this amendment and the impacts it has—the implications for the hardworking rural firefighters in my electorate of Southern Downs and in other regional electorates like that of the member for Gregory and even the member for Capalaba. I am sure he has a rural fire brigade in his electorate.

One of the major complaints I get from rural firefighters in my electorate is that if they are in a situation where communications have broken down or they cannot get a cogent answer from headquarters but they obviously have the ability to step in to provide support to the community of the kind they are trained to provide, they ought to be able to do that rather than be stifled by the requirements to get command authority in advance. This amendment provides that the commissioner can provide direction or the community can act on their own initiative, whether the breakdown in communications is caused by fire or other events such as flooding in severe weather.

We have just concluded an inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. Among the most prolific contributors to the work of that committee were rural firefighters.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members on my left—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: You are warned under the standing orders, member for Pine Rivers. The member for Southern Downs is quite a loud speaker but because of all the noise coming from my left I could not hear what he was saying. Could you—

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Who said that? Member for Aspley, you are warned under the standing orders. Please, members, the member for Southern Downs has the call. I have heard questions about relevance coming my way, but if I cannot hear the member, I cannot give a ruling about relevance.

Mr LISTER: This is specifically providing for situations where communications might break down. In an electorate like mine, where there are terrain shielding issues, the results of a natural disaster could be that service to mobile phone towers is cut or there is damage to the repeater sites that the Rural Fire Service's radio networks operate from. In those situations it is vital that the rural fire brigades be able to operate on their own initiative. I have complete confidence that those rural fire brigades have the necessary skills and judgement to do so. They have in many cases been fighting fires in these areas for 50-odd years and they know the lay of the land. They know where people live and where a fire might go. They know that Mrs Smith down the road might be the very first one to be flooded or have damage to her property that needs to be attended to.

Mrs Poole: They just need a government that's got their back.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Mundingburra, who said they just need a government that has their back. I think this particular clause is a virtuoso proclamation of the fact that this government does have their back.

I will be very proud to go back to my electorate of Southern Downs and consult with the many rural firefighters I know and speak about the benefits of this particular piece of legislation. I have complete faith that they will be able to use this to the best effect, and I really look forward to seeing it happen when the next disaster occurs, which will no doubt be not far down the track.

Ms FENTIMAN: Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr Mander: That's wrong. He's still on his feet.

Ms FENTIMAN: There is so much wrong.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, I have not given you the call, but I know that the member for Southern Downs has resumed his seat. Member for Southern Downs, were you finished, because the member for Waterford was up before you concluded?

Mr LISTER: I have concluded, Sir.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Okay. Member for Waterford.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I rise on this side of the House to support the amendments to the Fire Services Act 1990. There is clearly bipartisan support for these amendments. Mr Acting Speaker, you have provided a list of those members on this side who wish to speak to amendment No. 2, for which there is no bipartisan support. I am happy to table that list.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Speaking list, CID – Health (No. 2) Bill' [[1289](#)].

In the interests of everyone in this House having the ability to have a say on those amendments, given there is 15 minutes remaining, I move—

That the question be now put.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members. I am seeking advice. Members, I will put the question as moved by the member for Waterford. The question is—

That the question be now put.

It is a procedural motion that the question be put. Those of that opinion say 'aye'; those against 'no'. I think the noes have it.

Mr DILLON: Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Gregory.

Mr DILLON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I have given the call to the member for Gregory.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, nobody could hear the decision that you made on the vote.

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Mr de BRENNI: The member for Waterford—

Ms McMillan interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield, was that you? You are warned under the standing orders. I will ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language as well.

Ms McMILLAN: I withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Springwood, the noes have it.

Mr de BRENNI: The member for Waterford called a division.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I did not hear that.

Ms FENTIMAN: I did.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: If you assure the House that you called a division, I will call a division.

Ms FENTIMAN: I did.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Okay. A division has been called. Ring the bells for four minutes, please.

Division: Question put—That the question be now put.

AYES, 32:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

NOES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr DILLON: Mr Acting Speaker—

Ms SCANLON: Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I call the member for Gregory.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DILLON: As a rural firefighter—as somebody in this place who will be directly affected by the changes in this amendment—natural disasters can occur at any time, so there is no time to waste. It is not a trivial amendment. I thank the Minister for Fire and the Minister for Health for the collaborative way that ministers in this place have brought in an amendment in a timely fashion to ensure that when the next disaster occurs and there is a lack of communication—as was the case at Jundah in the Western Queensland flooding events this year, when people like Sheriff, whom the Minister for Health met on his recent trip to Longreach, and Blue and Stretch had to respond when there were no Starlink kits for phone service and there was no 4G service—people can be evacuated, like those men did alongside the SES and QPS staff. No lives were lost. This gives them the legal protection to ensure they can notify their involvement post the event.

It is a critical amendment and changes the ability of the Rural Fire Service right across Queensland, not just in the vast reaches of Gregory, to respond and assist disasters in whatever shape. They are eminently trained. They are well resourced in a lot of cases, but the best resource they have is local knowledge. This allows them to bring local knowledge to bear and in a way that will not only

save lives but also protect property and protect other emergency responders who respond from further away and are brought into an area to allow that local knowledge from people like Sheriff.

When we look at the Rural Fire Service in rural areas, whether they be primary producer brigades or the well-equipped urban brigades in places like Gindie, what they do at the front line is as volunteers. Unlike people who are paid to sit in this place and listen to debates, these people turn up when there is no-one else to do it. All those opposite do is make noise and complain about having to listen to a firefighter and a member of parliament talk about how this government, the Crisafulli government, has a strong cabinet whose ministers will combine to ensure that amendments can be put into legislation after being introduced in a timely manner in order to protect lives, protect property and protect the front line.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock, please. Member for Gregory, just pause for a moment. Members on my left, again there is too much noise. I am struggling to hear exactly what the member for Gregory is saying from the back of the chamber. Please keep your interjections to a minimum. They are not being taken.

Mr DILLON: This amendment to this omnibus bill gives protection in order to enable these people to act if called out or to go out themselves if notified by a member of the public. This is critical. This is contemporising the way that volunteer frontline responders act and I commend the Minister for Fire and the Minister for Health for this work.

Ms SCANLON: Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Acting Speaker—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members! The Deputy Premier—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. This side of the House—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, just take your seat for a moment, please. Is there a point of order?

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I move—

That the honourable member for Gaven be heard.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, that motion is to be put without amendment or debate.

Division: Question put—That the honourable member for Gaven be heard.

In division—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right and members on my left!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, cease all interjections, please!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Inala!

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, you are warned under the standing orders. We are going to finish this.

AYES, 33:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Sullivan.

NOES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I will now put all remaining questions necessary to complete consideration of the bill, including clauses en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill without further amendment or debate.

Question put—That the minister's amendment No. 1 be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I note that the minister's amendment No. 2 is outside the long title of the bill and therefore requires leave of the House. Is leave granted? Leave is granted.

Mr de BRENNI: I rise to a point of order. I did not hear you call for the noes.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, let me hear the point of order. Member for Glass House and other members, the question was if leave was granted. The answer was aye. When you are seeking leave, the call is made if it is to be leave is granted. If you wish to call a division, you can. I think leave is granted.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 33:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Sullivan.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the minister's amendment No. 2, as circulated, be agreed to.

AYES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 33:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Sullivan.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as circulated—

2 After clause 1

Page 6, after line 5—

insert—

Part 1B Amendment of Medicines and Poisons Act 2019

1C Act amended

This part amends the *Medicines and Poisons Act 2019*.

1D Amendment of s 4 (How main purposes are to be achieved)

Section 4(c)—

omit, insert—

- (c) providing for a scheme to—
 - (i) authorise additional activities using the substances under approvals or licences; and
 - (ii) restrict the grant of approvals or licences for inappropriate purposes; and

1E Insertion of new ch 3, pt 3, div 4, sdiv 1A

Chapter 3, part 3, division 4—

insert—

Subdivision 1A Restrictions on granting applications

86A Authorisation for drug checking not permitted

- (1) Despite another provision of this part, the chief executive must not grant an application to the extent the grant would authorise a person to deal with a regulated substance for the purpose of drug checking.

- (2) In this section—

***drug checking*—**

- (a) means analysing a regulated substance to identify its ingredients if the substance—
 - (i) has been manufactured or possessed unlawfully or contains unknown ingredients; and
 - (ii) is provided for analysis by a member of the public; but

Example for paragraph (a)—

pill testing at a music festival

- (b) does not include analysing a regulated substance to—

- (i) exercise a power or perform a function under an Act; or
- (ii) detect, investigate, prevent or prosecute an offence; or
- (iii) monitor compliance with a condition of employment; or
- (iv) monitor compliance with the rules of a sporting or racing competition; or
- (v) provide therapeutic treatment to a person or treat an animal; or
- (vi) detect a biosecurity risk or an environmental contaminant; or
- (vii) undertake general research; or
- (viii) carry out another activity prescribed by regulation.

***general research*—**

- (a) means research about a matter relating to a regulated substance that has been manufactured or possessed unlawfully or contains unknown ingredients; but
- (b) does not include research that involves directly advising a particular person about the ingredients of, or risks associated with, a particular regulated substance possessed by the person.

1F Insertion of new ch 8, pt 4

Chapter 8—

insert—

Part 4 Transitional provisions for Health Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) 2025

283 Definition for part

In this part—

drug checking see section 86A(2).

284 End of authorisation for drug checking under existing substance authorities

- (1) This section applies to a substance authority granted before the commencement that, immediately before the commencement, authorised a dealing with a regulated substance for the purpose of drug checking.
- (2) On the commencement, the substance authority ends to the extent it authorises the dealing.
- (3) However, for the 30-day period, subsection (2) does not affect the authorisation under the substance authority of the following dealings—
 - (a) possession of the regulated substance;

(b) disposal of the regulated substance.

(4) In this section—

30-day period means the period—

(a) starting on the day of the commencement; and

(b) ending on the day that is 30 days after the day of the commencement.

285 Existing applications to authorise drug checking

Section 86A, as in force on the commencement, applies in relation to an initial application, an amendment application or a renewal application made, but not decided, before the commencement.

286 No compensation or refund payable

No compensation, or refund of any fee paid under the Act, is payable because of—

(a) the ending of an authorisation under section 284; or

(b) the operation of section 285.

Question put—That clauses 2 to 55, as amended, stand part of the bill.

Motion agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 55, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Division: Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

AYES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 33:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Sullivan.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill, as amended, read a third time.

Long Title

Question put—That the minister's amendment No. 3 be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as circulated—

3 Long title

Long title, after 'amend'—

insert—

the Fire Services Act 1990, the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019,

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

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.11 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Drugs, Testing



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (9.12 pm): What an absolutely disgraceful display of unaccountability and secrecy from those opposite.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! Pause the clock, please. Members, the member for Waterford has the call in the adjournment debate. We will set the clock to 2.50, please.

Ms FENTIMAN: What an absolutely disgraceful display of unaccountability and secrecy. Do members know how long we debated the health bill today? There was three hours and 40 minutes of debate. Every time someone on this side wanted to speak about pill testing, which the government had confirmed to the media they were moving amendments on, we were sat down. We could not actually talk about those amendments during consideration in detail because of a disgraceful filibuster from those opposite. You make an absolute mockery of this place.

The benefits of pill testing are lifesaving. That is not me saying that as a politician, it is Queensland's peak medical body. Those opposite would not know because they refuse to listen to the experts just as they refuse to listen to those with lived experience such as the family of Josh Tam. Josh died five years ago. He was one of six young Queenslanders who lost their lives in 2018.

Ms Camm interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take that interjection.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock, please.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members to my left, order! The member for Waterford has the call. At that point I could not hear what she was saying.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday. I was talking about Josh, who died five years ago. He was one of six Queenslanders who lost their lives and the member for Whitsunday just said, 'Because he took drugs.' His family are pleading with the government and the Minister for Child Safety to do something to protect our children. I want to thank Josh's family. Unlike the member for Whitsunday, I want to thank them for bravely speaking out and calling for change.

Pill testing saves lives and the evidence is absolutely clear. The evidence that somehow this encourages drug taking is not borne out. According to CheQpoint, the drug-checking service, one in eight people disposed of their drugs, one in five planned to take less drugs as a result of the intervention and 50 per cent had never before spoken to a health professional about taking drugs. If you want to help young people stop a life of addiction, talk to a health professional and stop taking drugs then continue these drug-checking services. That is what the evidence says. That is why the Queensland police support it. It is why our doctors support it. It is why our families support it. I have two young stepdaughters aged 16 and 14. I want a drug-checking service for them and every other person in Queensland. This saves lives.

Drugs, Testing



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (9.16 pm): Didn't that debate just show the division within the LNP on pill testing. I saw the member for Bonney walk out of here with his head down feeling ashamed, and so he should.

Government members interjected.

Ms SCANLON: He is still here! He is very happy now. The member for Bonney said, 'The fact is the current messaging around illicit drugs is not working. We are seeing needless deaths of kids.' Two weeks into the job he sold young Queenslanders out. He said at schoolies, 'Our position is we don't support it and there's no safe way to take drugs.' He embraced the very same failed approach, just like he does on almost every other issue—abortion reform, gay conversion therapy. When there is anything progressive in this state, the member for Bonney says, 'I'm on the side of progressive young Queenslanders,' but when he comes into this House he has to bow to the hard right of his party who get their way every day of the week.


The Liberal Party claim that they are the 'liberal' party. I do not know if they have looked up the definition of 'liberal'. They claim to be these free marketeers, except when philanthropic donors want to contribute to a private drug diversion clinic that the government decided they were not going to have. A private clinic was going to continue providing services, but they said, 'We don't agree with that.'

There are numerous services on the record that support drug testing—the AMA; the Pharmaceutical Society; the RACGP, which says it is sensible and evidence-based; the Queensland Police Service and the Mental Health Commissioner—but those opposite are ignoring the doctors whom they said they were going to listen to. The hypocrisy is that they said they were going to be open and transparent, yet we have not seen the \$453,000 independent University of Queensland evaluation on pill testing that we have called for. Five minutes ago, we just had to debate—

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the member for Southport's interjection. Clearly you read it, but you still voted against the very reform that said it was a good thing to protect young Queenslanders. Two in three people who used CheQpoint—some of them on the Gold Coast, member for Southport—went on to adopt safer measures and 16 per cent threw away their drugs. Those opposite are saying, 'We're going to ignore all of those experts. We're going to ignore measures that actually keep kids safe.' Instead, they are going to put their heads in the sand and be politicians who pretend that no-one is taking drugs. They are going to keep the old school messages and pretend that, somehow, that will change the circumstances.

Greenmount Homestead

 **Mr G KELLY** (Mirani—LNP) (9.19 pm): I rise tonight to talk about Greenmount Homestead in Walkerston—one of the most significant parcels of land in Central Queensland. The homestead itself was built in 1915 by Albert and Vida Cook and has been largely unchanged since 1920. After its construction, the property became the base of one of Queensland's first Aberdeen Angus studs. While the Aberdeen Angus breed had been introduced into Australia in the 1840s, there were fewer than 1,000 head in Queensland when Albert began specialising in the breed. Following his passing in 1948 his son Thomas expanded the stud and in the 1950s introduced Brahmans and Brahman crossbreeds, further shaping our region's cattle industry.


The Greenmount story reaches back even further. The original land was first claimed in 1860 when a group of pioneers from Uralla in New South Wales ventured north in search of new country. This was the first expedition of its kind into the Mackay region, and Greenmount was among the first parcels staked by none other than John Mackay.

Today, Greenmount Homestead is heritage listed because of its rare and intact collection of buildings, outbuildings, gardens, furniture and personal effects, all of which together preserve a way of life no longer common. In 1983, Tom Cook gifted the property to the City of Mackay, and it has since been lovingly maintained with the support of volunteers and museum staff who are dedicated to sharing our history.

This year, 2025, also marks the 25th anniversary of the Queensland government's formal recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct cultural group. This milestone reminds us of the vital contribution South Sea Islanders have made in shaping the cultural, social and agricultural story of the Mackay region. It is fitting then to also pay tribute to the late Glory Arrow, a proud descendent of our South Sea Islander community. Gloria gave more than 60 years of service to Greenmount Homestead. In recognition of her extraordinary contribution, she received the Pride of the Region Award. Her generosity, dedication and passion for preserving our history were remarkable. Few people were more deserving. Gloria passed away peacefully on 9 May 2021, but her legacy endures at Greenmount.

The history of places like Greenmount matters to regional Queensland. It reminds us of where we have come from, the challenges and the contributions of families and communities who built our regions. Well done to Greenmount.

Drugs, Testing

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.22 pm): I would like to thank Mr Mike McLean for taking more time to show concern around pill testing and for sending a letter to his local member, which I now read for him. It reads—

Avoiding the death of a recreational drug user is not a matter for moral judgement. It is a matter of family and community concern. Families want their teenagers and young adult children to survive the experimental stage of their introduction to decision making. Unfortunately some people do and will continue to make poor choices around this.

I table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 30 August 2025, from Mr Mike McLean, to the member for Sandgate, Ms Bisma Asif MP, regarding the shutting down of facilities that test pills and other recreational drugs [1290].

We have come a long way since 2019 when the member for Moggill introduced a petition into this parliament supporting a call for pill testing! Haven't we moved a long way! Haven't we moved a long way since the Premier of this state stood up and said that he was going to reintroduce accountability and transparency!

What have we seen in this place today? We have seen nothing but an absolute disgrace. Speaker after speaker has attempted to deal with pill testing only to be silenced. The health minister stood up and said, 'This was our position before the election and since the election.' Why didn't he put a bill together and put it before the health committee? Tonight he released a report into pill testing. Did he give that to the health committee? Did he give us the chance to scrutinise that. I see the member for Southport sitting opposite not in his seat interjecting. Why was that not put before our committee so we could have considered it and talked to the experts about it? We did not do that.

This is not accountability. This is not transparency. This is pre-Bjelke-Petersen rubbish and those opposite should be ashamed of themselves. Here is something else the Premier said. He said, 'We want doctors and nurses to be in charge of hospitals. We want doctors and nurses in charge of health care', except when they actually try to be in charge of health care—which is what they are employed to do—and when they give us advice that does not match up with their extreme right-wing ideology. When they give us advice that will keep people safe, particularly young Queenslanders, they ignore those doctors and nurses and put them back in their box and tell them that they are not in charge.

What about this clanger: 'We're going to keep Queenslanders safe where they are.' Except if it is at schoolies. Except if it is at a music festival. Except if it is in a safe night out precinct. Except if you made the mistake of trying a drug, but we could have put something in place to keep you safe. No, you are not going to be safe!

Those opposite are making a moral judgement and young Queenslanders will die! We will see more Josh Tams as a result of this decision made in this House. No wonder those opposite did not want to speak about this! No wonder they filibustered about the very important fire service! No wonder they did that! They are disgraced! They should hang their heads in shame! I will be here every day reminding them! If any young Queenslanders gets hurt, we will be reminding them that they are directly responsible for this! We need pill testing now!

(Time expired)

Tingalpa Pioneers' Chapel and Cemetery



Hon. SJ MINNIKIN (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (9.25 pm): As the state member for Chatsworth, I am honoured to have been invited by the Friends of Tingalpa Cemetery Heritage Group to adopt two graves of great historical significance. These are far more than resting places: they serve as a bridge to our past and are a lasting reminder of the vision and dedication that have shaped our local community. They preserve a vital part of our state's story and embody the values and spirit of two remarkable pioneers: Charles and Elizabeth Coxen.


For those who may not know, Charles Coxen was key to the creation of the Tingalpa Pioneers' Chapel, a landmark that still graces my electorate today. He chaired the original building committee and stood proudly on 27 October 1868 as it was consecrated. Beyond our local history Charles was a passionate naturalist, the founder of the Queensland Museum in 1855 and, of historical significance, a member of Queensland's very first parliament. He also championed the railway line from Ipswich to Dalby, and the first train to travel that route was named, appropriately, *The Pioneer*. Elizabeth Coxen was equally extraordinary. A trailblazer in her own right, she was a skilled meteorologist, conchologist and the Queensland Museum's first female curator. Together, Charles and Elizabeth embodied the pioneering values of curiosity, resilience and service that helped shaped our wonderful state.

There is no greater honour than to be remembered and no greater gift than to be the one who remembers. Today we reaffirm the truth. The Coxens left no direct descendants, so the care of their graves and the preservation of their memory has become a responsibility for the community. I am deeply honoured to help carry their legacy forward. By embracing this symbolic duty we give new life to the Coxens' story and ensure their contributions are forwarded to future generations.

Since my election in 2012 I have proudly served as the state patron of the Friends of Tingalpa Cemetery Heritage Group. I would therefore like to give a special acknowledgment to this remarkable team of volunteers. Since 2002 they have devoted countless hours to caring for these sacred grounds—gardening, maintaining, promoting and educating visitors of all ages to bring our history to life. Their tireless efforts ensure that the stories of those who rest here and the heritage of this place are not only protected but cherished and celebrated. They remind us that community is built by people who quietly give their time and skills, often without seeking recognition.

On behalf of the people of Chatsworth and all who cherish this sacred place, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Tingalpa Cemetery Heritage Group for entrusting me with this responsibility. Your integrity, your heart and your respect for the past are an inspiration to us all. Together we will ensure that the lives of Charles and Elizabeth Coxen remain in perpetuity.

Drugs, Testing

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (9.28 pm): No person deserves to die because they made a mistake. We know, and the evidence base is very clear, that pill checking saves lives and reduces illicit drug use. There is very clear evidence from not just Queensland and the work of CheQpoint but also three other jurisdictions in Australia and more than 20 countries around the world. This is not a radical idea; this is medical best practice.

What we saw tonight was one of most cowardly acts I have ever seen in this parliament by a cowardly government and an equally cowardly health minister—alleged health minister; a so-called health minister. We know that pill checking saves lives. We know that, yet this callous government is willing to listen to ideology rather than evidence and push ideology instead of listening to doctors, who know this is a matter of engaging with young people and making sure they understand the issues better.

That is all the evidence base. This government will not listen to the experts on this and will not even countenance it. I have to quote the member for Mulgrave from the most extraordinary interview. He summed it up by saying—

The last thing you want to do is introduce drugs into an environment when there's already drugs in there.


He did not even understand what it actually was but he knew that he opposed it. That is the tone of this government. I dread to think of what could happen due to the callousness of this government. They think they should ignore best practice. Young people are making decisions that are not always the best decisions so they need advice. They need health professionals and people to show them what is going on. We know this is a harm reduction measure that is not radical. It is best practice. We know that other members on that side have advocated for pill checking, including the member for Bonney and the member for Moggill. The member for Moggill even lodged a petition in 2019, and I table that.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, regarding a petition sponsored by Dr Christian Rowan MP in relation to pill testing [\[1291\]](#).

Where are their spines? They say they support harm minimisation and helping young people, yet they come in here and vote to gag this parliament. Look at all of them; they are as quiet as church mice over there. Some of them have guilty consciences because they know this is going to create harm. Do members know what the kicker is? After tonight, a lot of members of the government will go off and have a nice glass of wine—that is, take a drug—yet the bill actually says that the government does not support taking drugs: 'Oh, but these are legal drugs and regulated drugs.' They will have a cigarette and drink some glasses of wine. They are happy to have their drugs but they are not happy to help young people make good decisions to stop using illicit drugs. Callous, cowardly, every one of them

(Time expired)

Hedges Avenue, Footpath

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (9.31 pm): I rise to speak of the failure of the Gold Coast City council to address an obvious and life-threatening situation in my electorate that I have spoken about in this House previously to no avail. There are literally thousands of walkers, joggers, bike riders, mums with prams and elderly folk exercising on a tiny, cracked and telegraph pole lined footpath with a serious accident, possibly even a death, just waiting to happen.

Hedges Avenue in my electorate is prime beachfront real estate which is levied extraordinarily high rates by the Gold Coast City council, yet it has an antiquated tiny footpath left over from the 1960s and 1970s development that the city council has failed to upgrade. In fact, the council has allowed a

redevelopment on one side of the footpath area to be built over by new construction, making the footpath impassable for pedestrians on that side of the street. Who is in charge of this planning fiasco, and what are they doing to remedy the situation?

Let's be clear: footpaths are a council responsibility, whereas state funding goes to schools, hospitals, police and law courts et cetera. It is a one-way northbound street with a 30-kilometre speed limit, yet there is a nonsensical bike-lane-only designated southbound lane against the road traffic to accommodate bikes racing in the opposite direction to traffic. The council excuse for not taking immediate steps to remedy this life-threatening situation is to say they are waiting for the Oceanway to be built. I table council documents that show that Oceanway in front of Hedges Avenue will not be built until 2031—six years away at least—if the council even decide to go ahead and build it.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, showing an image of a timeline relating to construction on the Gold Coast [1292].

It is their call on Oceanway construction and financing and timing, but the Hedges Avenue footpath cannot wait until 2031 and the local councillor, Nick Marshall, agrees with me that Hedges Avenue needs to be fixed now. We have the adjoining Kurrawa Park three-metre walkway/bikeway that covers adequately for the many locals and tourists enjoying their walks. Hedges Avenue needs to follow suit with a three-metre widening of the footpath that can be accommodated by the inclusion of the cycleway as a footpath rather than a road.

I cannot stress enough the importance of council complying with its responsibilities now in this dangerous and highly utilised pedestrian area. Funding should be made available immediately before the council has blood on its hands. We should not prioritise the lycra-clad racers and e-bike riders over mums and dads with prams. This is not about Hedges Avenue residents; it is about the multitude of everyday folks using this much loved passageway. For far too long, the Gold Coast has ignored plans to fix this problem.

Nicklin Electorate



Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (9.34 pm): In every community there are people who step up, who give more of themselves than is ever asked and who make a lasting difference. Tonight I want to shine a light on some of the people in Nicklin—our Nicklin community heroes.

Tracey Mitchell is one of those dynamos. As President of the Nambour and Districts Netball Association, she has grown membership by over 25 per cent this year, built new sponsorships and brought free programs into schools, all while being a solo mum of three and coaching her child's team. Her energy and commitment inspire everyone around her.

Angela Barnes is another quiet achiever whose impact is felt across Palmwoods, Chevallum and Nambour. Whether running a P&C fundraiser, coaching netball or working behind the scenes at the wonderful StrawbFest I attended last week, Angela is the first to roll up her sleeves. Through Palmwoods Psychology, she also supports countless local families. Ange is one of those people who makes communities stronger just by being in them.

Barb White has dedicated more than four decades to education, with the last 15 years being at Nambour Special School. She has transformed literacy outcomes for students with disabilities, mentored generations of teachers and even now, at the close of her career, is still fundraising by swimming 2.5 kilometres in the Island Charity Swim. Barb's legacy will endure long after her teaching days end.

Jack Gaffney is the definition of selfless. As P&C President, he has driven fundraising and inclusion initiatives and created a supportive environment for all students at Palmwoods State School, particularly those who are neurodiverse. On top of that, he is a full-time carer, a father, a husband and the sole income-earner for his family. Jack gives everything he has, not for recognition but for the wellbeing of others.

Finally, there is Cher-Kira Brown, known to everyone as Kira. While studying and working, she still gives one day a week to volunteer as a barista at the wonderful Everyday Foundation in Nambour. Since her school days she has been serving up not just great coffee but warmth and kindness. If you have had a Kira coffee, you know it is made with heart.

These are Nicklin's real heroes. They do not wear capes, but they do lift others up. It is an honour, as their local member, to place their names on the record of this parliament so their dedication is preserved in history and recognised alongside the heartfelt appreciation of our community.

Maiwar Electorate, Schools



Mr BERKMAN (Maiwar—Grn) (9.37 pm): As much as I might like to have a go at the disgraceful performance from the LNP in here tonight, I do have to get on the record some thoughts about local schools. I am becoming increasingly tired of successive governments failing to plan properly and engage with the schools in my community about what they need. I am growing tired of the piecemeal planning that is always playing catch-up with population growth. This LNP government is still relatively new, so I am asking them now to change this trend and to start taking long-term planning seriously for schools in Brisbane's inner west.

Here is a suggested first step: meet with the locals at and around Toowong State School. I know they have been asking the planning and education ministers to do just this. We have been waiting years for this new infrastructure plan at Toowong, and I am genuinely glad it is finally progressing, but, perhaps because it is so long overdue, it seems rushed and ill thought out. The latest plan completely overlooks the need for enough open play space for kids or the fact that the tuckshop and the library are already not fit for purpose at current enrolment levels. For some reason, the department is ignoring P&C suggestions to redevelop the lower campus which would mean more space for Toowong kids and less traffic congestion during pick-up and drop-off times. There is no active travel planning going on either. Again and again, it is planning for the next three years, not the next decade.

Another great example of this is what is going on at Indooroopilly State High School right now. Indro High is an absolutely outstanding school. I can say this as a parent and as the local member, but it is bursting at the seams. The solution so far has been to just stack a bunch of demountables on the oval and crack down on out-of-catchment enrolments, even for specialist programs at the school, but there is no denying now that we need new buildings. Mercifully, we finally have some plans for infrastructure, which is great, but, for reasons I absolutely cannot understand, they are based on projected enrolments of 2,500 students. There are already around 3,000 students at Indooroopilly High School. Meanwhile there is still nothing—zero—in actual funding for new buildings at Indooroopilly and no detailed plans for three out of the four proposed projects. The government moves quickly when it wants to, so why are we not a priority? Why are my community's kids always at the bottom of the list?

Brisbane's inner west was promised a new primary school years ago but for some time now it has been radio silence from the government. Now let me remind the minister because I took notes. I met with his office in December last year and asked for an update on the new school. At the time I was told it was 'definitely going ahead', they just needed to find a site. Fair enough if it took a few months to get across the portfolio but, frankly, I am running out of patience. I want to work constructively with the government to get this new school for the west side. I have been trying and working for years. I very much hope I will be hearing from the government soon on the progress of the new school because the problem is not going away. Minister, you know where to find me.

Toowoomba Electorate; Carnival of Flowers



Mr WATTS (Toowoomba North—LNP) (9.40 pm): I want to invite all of the members here after a long week in parliament up to Toowoomba. Join the half a million people who will be coming to Toowoomba for the Carnival of Flowers. There are loads of different events on. The main parade is this Saturday. The first parade was held in 1950, so it has been going on for a long while. There will be half a million people coming and there are a lot of different events.

You might have heard about our music previously in the park. It has changed this year. This year it will be local artists with local food suppliers, so come and have a glass of wine, come to the 'festivale' where food and music will be re-imagined. It will be a great night out for people to enjoy the parks. People particularly want to come for the gardens. We have some private gardens open where people have spent years and years preparing their garden so that the coaches and the tourists can come through and have a look and just enjoy what is blooming gorgeous in Toowoomba this time of year.

There are a couple of other special things going on this year. For the first time we will have a Paw Parade. Our furry friends and their families will be joining a parade. I have already heard from a couple of the staff here at parliament that they are planning on coming up and bringing their dogs. I really look forward to everybody enjoying Queens Park and all of the parks. The University of Southern Queensland has one of the most authentic Japanese gardens in the world, outside of Japan. It is well worth a visit, with a beautiful new pavilion. For any relatives who are vision-impaired there is a scent garden they can go and visit. It is well worth a family trip up to Toowoomba.

There is a lot of action going on. For us in Toowoomba, it is a really important event. It supports local business. It really supports all of those small businesses in Toowoomba that are waiting for this time of year to spark up and serve tourists as they come for a visit. The schools, the businesses and the volunteers will all be out on the street encouraging everybody to come and enjoy everything that is Carnival of Flowers in Toowoomba.

If you have time this weekend—it also runs for a couple more weeks—come and enjoy all of the great things about our fantastic city, which is just a 1½-hour drive from here. Jump in your car, grab family, friends and a bottle of wine. Come and enjoy some music, take in the flowers and spend a bit of time relaxing and calming down after the excitement of a parliamentary week. Thank you all very much. See you at the carnival!

Division: Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

AYES, 47:

LNP, 47—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 32:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Pair: Hutton, Bush.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, it has been a pleasure to preside over you as your Acting Speaker for the last two days. I declare the House adjourned.

The House adjourned at 9.49 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Asif, Bailey, Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Bourne, Boyd, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Field, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Grace, Head, Healy, Howard, Hunt, James B, James T, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly G, Kelly J, Kempton, King, Kirkland, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Linard, Lister, Mander, Marr, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Shea, Pease, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stoker, Sullivan, Vorster, Watts, Whiting, Young