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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 11 December 2025

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THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2025

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Pat Weir, Condamine) read prayers and took the chair.



Mr 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 Contempt of Parliament



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (9.31 am): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. Everyone deserves to feel safe in their workplace. I refer to the matter raised by me in this House yesterday in relation to the Deputy Premier's interjections directed at me. After discussions with yourself and the Clerk, I have reviewed the footage of the incident and been provided a transcript of interjections by your office, which I table.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'During Minister Purdie's min stat'.

As stated yesterday, I believe the Deputy Premier has threatened me, despite the assurance of both the Deputy Premier and the Premier on the floor of parliament that he did not threaten me. Due to the very serious nature of this matter, I will be writing to you about the conduct of the Deputy Premier of Queensland.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Absence of Member



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for South Brisbane that she will be absent from the House from 9 to 11 December, inclusive of those dates. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.

Auditor-General



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General *Report 7: 2025-26—Energy 2025*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General Report 7: 2025-26—Energy 2025.

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Contempt of Parliament



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, yesterday in ministerial statements there was an exchange across the chamber between the member for McConnel and the Deputy Premier. Having not heard the exchange, I undertook to check the chamber audio recordings. *Hansard* has provided me with a transcript of the exchange. I subsequently viewed the overwatch footage. In my view, the conduct of both members breached standing order 246 regarding quarrelling in the chamber. The conduct is such that I could refer both members to the Ethics Committee, but I am choosing instead to give both members an opportunity to apologise to the House and withdraw their words.


Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I apologise and withdraw for quarrelling in the chamber.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, as I stated to you when we met this morning to discuss this serious matter, I have reviewed the footage and audio of the incident, and I respectfully believe that I do not have anything to apologise for. Everyone deserves to feel safe in their workplace. The Deputy Premier has clearly threatened me and this matter needs to be further investigated. I look forward to providing strong submissions about this appalling behaviour to the Ethics Committee for its consideration.

Mr SPEAKER: I will deal with that as we go forward.

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Contempt of Parliament

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 3 November 2025 the member for Nudgee wrote to me alleging that the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation deliberately misled the House on 28 October 2025 when he made a ministerial statement saying that Labor had not reviewed the state's Crocodile Management Plan since 2017. The member provided evidence of several reviews undertaken by the Labor government since that time.

I sought further information from the minister about the allegation in accordance with standing order 269(5). The minister submitted that the reviews identified by the member were not comprehensive, unlike the review the Crisafulli government—

Opposition members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: I am making a ruling—was going to undertake, and that his statement was made to contrast these approaches. He also stated that, furthermore, the former government had not completed a review that had resulted in change to the Crocodile Management Plan. As I have said before, the issue is what a member says, not what a member argues they meant to say. Standing order 269(4) requires that in considering whether such a matter should be referred to the Ethics Committee I should take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter.

I note the minister made an apology in the House in relation to this matter on 9 December 2025, and this is recorded at page 3934 of the *Record of Proceedings*. I have considered all of the material put forward by the member for Nudgee and the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation and am of the view that there has been an adequate apology by the minister. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter for the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence relating to an alleged contempt and misleading of the House by the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation and member for Glass House.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Parliament, End-of-Year Event

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, tonight, after the rising of the House, we will be treated to a special performance by the Children's Health Queensland Community Choir, followed by refreshments on the Speaker's Green. This year we are pleased to be supporting the Children's Hospital Foundation toy drive. Thank you to all members and staff who have donated gifts. The brief formalities and choir performance will commence 15 minutes after the House rises. I look forward to seeing you all there this evening and extend season's greetings to members, staff and your families for the festive period.

PETITIONS

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

K'gari (Fraser Island)

6,629 petitioners, requesting the House to review the renaming of Fraser Island to K'Gari and provide the option to the public to use dual names for the island.

Mackay Harbour, Boat Ramp

1,884 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to address boat ramp congestion at Mackay Harbour.

Vehicles, Headlights

854 petitioners, requesting the House to amend legislation to require headlights or daytime running lights be illuminated at all times while a vehicle is in operation on a public road.

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Crisafulli LNP Government, Achievements



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.37 am): Over the last 12 months our government has worked hard to deliver for Queensland. We came to government with a firm focus on the issues affecting Queenslanders—crime, health, housing and the cost of living. Those issues have remained at the heart of our work throughout this year. We always focus on Queenslanders. We will not be heard saying ‘politicking’, ‘media beat-up’, ‘making up stories’—they were weak comments from weak ministers.

We are working to make our community safer, driving down costs, restoring health services and planning for Queensland’s future. Our government promised to bring safety to where Queenslanders live, and we are delivering on that commitment. We expanded Adult Crime, Adult Time to a total of 33 offences. Jack’s Law is permanent, and already more than 400 weapons have been removed from our streets since July. Daniel’s Law was passed, allowing the creation of the state’s first public child sex offender register. We have empowered our police, and we are delivering more of them to the front line.

We have also taken action to ease cost-of-living pressures for Queenslanders. We are delivering infrastructure on time and on budget. We axed the patients tax, we made 50-cent fares permanent and supported families through Play On! and our Back to School Boost. Last night we passed the Energy Roadmap. This bill will deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for Queenslanders. Under our plan, Queensland households will avoid paying an extra \$1,035 a year, which was headed their way under Labor.

We provided a record investment to tackle the housing crisis to deliver one million homes by 2044, including 53,500 social and community homes. Labor’s \$2 billion three-year Housing Investment Fund did not deliver a single Queensland in a home—not one. Our nation-leading package for first home buyers has abolished stamp duty on new builds and introduced the Boost to Buy program. We want more Queenslanders to own their own home but we must activate supply. So we have accelerated the delivery of critical infrastructure through our \$2 billion Residential Activation Fund. At least 50 per cent of that fund will be invested across regional and remote areas. Over 98,000 new homes have been unlocked by the fund already.

We are also delivering the state’s largest ever investment in hospital infrastructure through the Hospital Rescue Plan. The record \$33.1 billion health budget will ensure Queenslanders get access to better health closer to home. Our investment in Surgery Connect has delivered the biggest drop to the elective surgery waitlist in a decade. Over the last 12 months we have been steadfast in our commitment to Queenslanders, and this is just the beginning. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor’s decade of decline.

Yesterday I joined Prime Minister Marape to sign a memorandum of understanding between Queensland and PNG. They are our closest neighbours—less than four kilometres separates Saibai Island in the Torres Strait and Papua New Guinea. The MOU recognises the strong connection between our communities: trade, resources, health, education and sport—and sport. I thank the Prime Minister and the people of Papua New Guinea for their ongoing friendship and commitment, despite his gentle jibing over the Chiefs getting there first. The Cowboys are coming to an NRL game near you!

I would also like to acknowledge our friends in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Malaysia who are experiencing widespread destruction following severe flooding. Thousands have lost their lives and millions have been displaced. Queenslanders are all too familiar with the effects of severe weather and flooding. We are heading into our own disaster season, and it is a stark reminder of the damage that can be done. Our thoughts and prayers are with those impacted as they recover from this tragedy.

State Development, Infrastructure and Planning



Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.41 am): At the conclusion of 2025 the Crisafulli government have demonstrated to Queenslanders what it means to have a government committed to delivering for them. More than a year since the last election the LNP are restoring the

standard that Queenslanders should expect from their state government. They deserve a government that shares their priorities—a government that puts service delivery at the centre of their approach and a government that builds the generational infrastructure they need right across the state.

In the past year we have delivered a 2032 Delivery Plan that gives Queenslanders confidence that when the Olympic and Paralympic Games come to Queensland they will see real benefits. Labor are still trying to have it both ways when it comes to the Crisafulli government's 2032 Delivery Plan. We know the member for McConnel does not support the new 63,000-seat Victoria Park stadium and would rather see Queensland embarrassed on the world stage by using QSAC.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading. I take offence and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: How is that misleading?

Mr SPEAKER: No. She said she took offence, didn't she?

Ms GRACE: I said I took offence and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr Crisafulli: He is not misleading—definitely not.

Ms GRACE: Just to be clear, member for McConnel, did you say you took offence?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I said the member is misleading. I take personal offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. The member for McConnel recently attended an anti-63,000-seat Victoria Park stadium forum. Make of that what you will, Mr Speaker. Draw your own conclusions from that—just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is not correct. I take offence and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. I might leave it to question time actually. I ask my office to grab the photos for me for question time, if they can—

Mr Minnikin: And Facebook.

Mr BLEIJIE:—and the Facebook posts and all the commentary she made, and the media posts. Everyone listening in my office, grab all the intel that I will use for question time. Thank you.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, if you could just concentrate on your ministerial statement please.

Mr BLEIJIE: Premier, I am going to need a few more questions in question time.

Labor managed to erode the trust and goodwill of Queenslanders towards the Olympic and Paralympic Games—an event that the Crisafulli government has got back on track and through which we will deliver generational legacy infrastructure for all Queenslanders, no matter where they live.

We are also unwinding Labor's housing crisis caused by a decade of inaction, paralysis and chaos. Young Queenslanders under Labor did not believe they would ever be able to own their own home. They have become disenfranchised with a system that locked them out of owning their own stake in the best state in the best country in the world.

The government is doing what governments should always do to unlock housing supply across Queensland, reducing red tape, streamlining approvals and empowering local governments and private landowners to build the trunk infrastructure they need. As the Premier mentioned, we have the Residential Activation Fund, with \$1 billion already delivered in round 1, with over 50 per cent being spent outside of South-East Queensland.

Mr Mander: Build, baby, build!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. I have travelled around the state to see the projects which will deliver real homes for Queenslanders, whether they be new roads, sewerage systems, water treatment plants or electricity projects. Round 1 of RAF will deliver more than 98,000 new homes for Queenslanders, and I look forward to updating the House in the new year with our second round.

We are also securing Queensland's sovereign manufacturing capabilities through the \$180.6 million Sovereign Industry Development Fund, delivering on the government's commitment of bolstering defence, creating jobs for all Queenslanders—biofuel, biomedicine and defence.

Finally, the Crisafulli government this year launched our landmark royal commission into the CFMEU—the Wood commission of inquiry—that is getting to the bottom of the CFMEU, a union which was empowered by the former Labor government to embed their culture of violence, of fear and of misogyny in Queensland worksites. No more. No more should Queensland workers feel afraid to go to work, to have their life threatened by a criminal organisation propped up by the former Labor government. Labor knew what they were doing and, as the commission of inquiry has already revealed, former ministers de Brenni and Bailey knew about the risks, were warned about the risks and knew that the implementation of BPIC would embolden and empower the CFMEU. They knew it would cost Queensland taxpayers more and they proceeded anyway.

The bigger question is: what did the industrial relations minister know and why didn't she act on the CFMEU? There has been a lot of lecturing about workplaces by the member for McConnell but for 10 years she remained silent on the CFMEU when workplace health and safety inspectors were raising issues of violence, intimidation, fear, bullying, misogyny and public servants being locked in cupboards and locked in offices with CFMEU officials. What did the former industrial relations minister do about it? Nothing. Labor are guilty.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The CFMEU is in administration. I take offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.


A government member: How can you take personal offence?

Ms GRACE: He said I did nothing. I have taken offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken offence.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. The Labor Party are guilty and the commission of inquiry will continue to reveal the terrible circumstances that were allowed to occur on Queensland worksites and against workers at the hands of one violent, disgraceful union. As long as the Crisafulli government remains in office, we will never let what happened to Queensland workers, women and public servants ever happen again, unlike Labor. Queensland cannot and will not go back to the culture of rot during the decade of decline under Labor.

Police and Emergency Services

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (9.48 am): Mr Speaker, 2025 has been a year of delivering for the Crisafulli government, delivering for Queensland and delivering for police and emergency services. We said we would give police the laws and resources they need to keep communities safe—and we are delivering on that commitment.

Game-changing Adult Crime, Adult Time legislation is ensuring young people face real consequences, and those consequences are acting as a real deterrent. Under Labor, the revolving door of youth criminals created a generation of untouchables. Those days are over—and we will not return to Labor's decade of decline. There are now fewer victims, fewer break-ins, fewer cars being stolen and fewer serious repeat offenders. We know there is more work to do as we continue to restore safety where you live.

The Crisafulli government has also passed landmark domestic and family violence legislation that will protect victims sooner—something Labor would not do despite pleas from police. We have made Jack's Law permanent, removed unnecessary barriers and expanded it to all places—and it is making a difference. Since the new laws were proclaimed over 66,000 people have been wanded and 471 weapons removed from the streets. That is at least three weapons every single day.

I would like to personally pay tribute to Brett and Belinda Beasley for the work they are doing in memory of their son Jack. I know that December is a tough month for them with the sixth anniversary of Jack's murder this Sunday. This year we also passed Daniel's Law, landmark legislation that will help protect children. We were proud to stand with Bruce and Denise Morcombe to deliver Daniel's Law, something they had been campaigning for for a decade.

In January we tripled the size of the State Flying Squad. Since then the 'Flyers' have arrested over 5,500 offenders, including 3,339 juveniles. This is an invaluable resource that is being deployed right across the state. We are committed to bolstering the front line and we are delivering. In the past 12 months we have delivered an additional 472 police right across Queensland, more than double what

Labor delivered in their entire last term of government. Under those opposite police were leaving in droves and attrition skyrocketed. It is now 2.8 per cent, the lowest in three years.

We have also delivered more volunteers. An additional 300 SES volunteers have joined the ranks since the election, giving their time to help their fellow Queenslanders. We are not done yet. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Crisafulli LNP Government, Budget



Hon. DC JANETZKI (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (9.50 am): Our focus on delivering for Queensland has been made clear in this House again and again over the last year. In fact, it is the guiding principle that has driven the Crisafulli government's first year of work. It is the reason why Queenslanders are already seeing practical, real results. But there is more to do.

When delivering Labor's last budget update at the start of the year we were confronted by the realities of a decade of decline and how Labor's reckless fiscal management had made a credit rating downgrade highly likely, even inevitable. The Crisafulli government's first budget laid the foundations for a fresh start. The budget made it clear that we would provide targeted and timely cost-of-living relief, fund the jobs and services that Labor left unfunded, and lay the foundation for budget repair.

We re-established the Queensland Productivity Commission, which had been dismantled by Labor while productivity plummeted. Its first order of business was a comprehensive review into Queensland's construction sector in the wake of revelations that Labor's best practice industry conditions, forced on Queenslanders at the whim of the CFMEU, had driven up project costs by up to 25 per cent.

Helping to ease Labor's cost-of-living crisis has also been central to the budget's work. While Labor's temporary cost-of-living announcements were never funded, we turned our focus to providing cost-of-living relief that was targeted and timely, responsible and recurrent, and permanent. The Crisafulli government is providing a record \$8.5 billion in ongoing concessions in 2025-26. This includes: unfreezing electricity rebates for vulnerable households; 15 hours a week of free kindy for four-year-olds; \$200 Play On! vouchers; and \$100 Back to School Boost. We abolished the patient tax. We are delivering support for first home buyers with our new stamp duty exemption. We extended the \$30,000 first homeowner grant, and of course the Crisafulli government's permanent 50-cent fares are permanently in the budget.

Last night we passed supporting legislation for the Crisafulli government's Energy Roadmap, delivering a pragmatic and realistic plan for Queensland's energy system. It lays an achievable path to deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable power. There is no fanciful world's biggest pumped hydro project or tens of millions taxpayers' dollars for unproven technologies to billionaires. The road map will deliver coal generation for longer, more renewables and additional dispatchable supply, including gas turbines, pumped hydro and batteries for firming and storage.

By improving Queensland's existing energy assets while building what is needed for the future, the Crisafulli government is avoiding \$1,035 in additional costs for Queensland households every year for the next 10 years. Compare this to Labor's failed plan. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Health System



Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): Throughout 2025 the Crisafulli LNP government has been delivering for Queensland and providing easier access to health services no matter where you live. Our record \$1.7 billion investment in elective surgery, including Surgery Connect, delivered on the government's commitment to stabilise the elective surgery waitlist ahead of time. We have gotten Labor's failed Capacity Expansion Program, described as the 'mirage of media releases', back on track through the \$18.5 billion fully funded Hospital Rescue Plan. We are supporting the Queensland Ambulance Service through a \$1 billion budget investment and we have backed local GPs by axing Labor's patient tax. We have grown the workforce by more than 6,000 FTEs this year, including more than 880 first-year doctors, one of our largest intakes ever. In addition, we have worked with our union partners to secure pay rises for more than 116,000 staff. Five out of seven enterprise bargaining agreements have been reached.

I want to say a particular thank you to our Queensland Health staff for what you do for Queenslanders day in, day out. I want to particularly acknowledge this year, through Cyclone Alfred,


the North Queensland floods and the Western Queensland floods, the very many of our health workforce who went over and above requirements. They stayed overnight in hospitals to make sure their communities were never without support. We have also delivered a statewide health workforce gap analysis.

We are doing the heavy lifting to deliver health services where and when Queenslanders need them; however, our efforts and the efforts of our dedicated Queensland Health staff are hindered by the Commonwealth Government dropping the ball in their areas of responsibility: primary care, aged care and NDIS. I would like to update the House on the issue of the Commonwealth Government's stranded Australians who are in our hospitals. Today I am announcing updated data that exposes the current state of stranded Australians in Queensland's hospitals. Statewide data collected in November reveals that the total number of patients stranded in Queensland hospitals has risen by 12 per cent since August alone. The latest data indicates that we have 1,259 stranded Australians in our hospitals, up from 1,126 in August. That is another 133 Queenslanders who are unable to access aged care and disability supports from the Albanese Labor government.

Last night we received an updated offer from the Commonwealth. That offer is underwhelming and does not meet the requirements of Queensland when it comes to stranded Australians, health funding growth and disability reform. Queenslanders who might have been expecting a Christmas gift from their federal government have instead heard from the grinch.

Tomorrow we are hosting health ministers from across the country in Brisbane. I will be calling for the federal minister and the federal government to step up and take a stand for Queenslanders waiting for aged care and NDIS packages, and I will be fighting for a fair share for Queensland. With our record \$33.1 billion health budget here in Queensland we are a government delivering for Queensland, and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Disability Services, Funding

 **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) (9.57 am): I join the health minister in acknowledging our tireless workforce across the health, aged care and disability services sector and thank them because they will be the people at the front line caring for some of our most vulnerable over the festive season, particularly across my department of disability services and accommodation support.


As we head into Christmas there are thousands of young Queensland families who are anxiously waiting to see how the federal Labor government is going to pull services and crucial funding out of their lives. Queenslanders who rely on the National Disability Strategy scheme to help fund their supports will be worse off under the current deal by the Albanese government. Children with autism will have their funding arrangements torn up under the proposed Thriving Kids program which no-one has yet seen any details of—neither state disability ministers nor the parents who rely on these supports for their children. The decision was seemingly made on the fly and unveiled by Minister Butler during a press club appearance without any consultation with the state ministers for health and disability or the very people whom these decisions will affect.

The unconscionable move by the Albanese federal Labor government to shirk their responsibility in the NDIS will potentially result in more stranded Queenslanders entering our health services. In November I attended the Disability Reform Ministerial Council in Sydney with my fellow disability ministers from around the country, while Minister Butler dialled into the meeting without any detail because he did not have the courage to face disability ministers in person. The federal Labor government have shirked their responsibilities and shifted the costs to the states and territories. They have turned their backs on young children when it comes to disability support.

During Disability Action Week I convened a forum with providers and advocates who came together across the state in a first for Queensland. They shared with me their concerns about the failings and the lack of consultation and reform which is resulting in participants being worse off. Providers, carers and families are anxious about what this will mean for their loved ones. For parents and carers with children managing autism, this is raising their levels of anxiety. Do they stop sending their children to crucial appointments and supports because their funding may be torn up, or do they make sacrifices in other parts of their household budget during a cost-of-living crisis? Many will have no choice but to pull their children from going to see occupational therapists and speech therapists because they simply cannot afford it. We the Crisafulli government are fighting for them. We will not allow the Albanese federal Labor government to steamroll the voiceless.

The latest health offer does not go far enough. It is unacceptable to me as the disability minister, and I know that the health minister will be putting forward our concerns tomorrow. Will the Miles Labor opposition do the right thing and join with the Crisafulli government to call on their mates in Canberra and tell them that their offer is unacceptable? Will they stand up for Queensland families, which they failed to do during the last decade? We will not stand for Queenslanders with a disability being short-changed by the Albanese government, ending up stranded in our hospital system or, worse still, being denied the critical support in their formative years of development to get the best start in life. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Racing Industry

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (10.01 am): On Saturday the Crisafulli government unveiled its plan to ensure the long-term viability of Queensland's \$2.5 billion racing industry. In response to the most substantial review of Queensland racing in more than 25 years, I was proud to deliver *The next lap: a plan for the future of Queensland racing*. The positive response from industry has been overwhelming. Unlike the former Labor government—which had no clear plan for this industry—we are delivering a course of action for racing, which employs over 14,500 hardworking Queenslanders.

In summary: this government is retaining standard and feature prize money for participants; we are delivering new racing infrastructure and establishing a \$200 million Racing Future Fund; we are ensuring Queensland racing governance is more effective and efficient; we are enhancing animal welfare and integrity protocols; and, importantly, we are safeguarding the future of country racing. The members for Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South and you, Mr Speaker, as the member for Condamine know how important racing is for their regions as it contributes more than \$170 million to the local economy.


Mr Lister interjected.

Mr MANDER: I am coming to you, member. That is why we are delivering new lights for the Toowoomba Turf Club, correcting one of many broken promises by those opposite. The club wrote to me this week and they are delighted. I thank the member for Toowoomba North for his advocacy. We are rebuilding the Bundaberg greyhound track—yet another broken promise from Labor—and I thank the member for Burnett for his advocacy. Harness racing now has a bright future, after years of infrastructure neglect under Labor. Harness contributes more than \$233 million to the state and we want to see that grow, which is why we will build a new training centre at Marburg and return harness to Toowoomba. Labor had no plan to fix the grandstand at Eagle Farm, but this government will deliver a new grandstand at our feature track in Queensland. We are also developing Albion Park, after Labor's Olympic infrastructure chaos left the harness industry in limbo about the future home for their sport.

Our measures to ensure Queensland racing governance is more efficient and effective will see RQ and QRIC move to a hybrid model of operation. Animal welfare will be strengthened with a range of new initiatives, continuing the good work shown by industry to protect their racing animals. We are delivering integrity enhancements through major increases to swabbing rates, formal education for stewards and a new stewards bunker—a video referee for racing.

Importantly, we are protecting the future of country racing. Country racing is part of the fabric of this state and it went backwards under Labor. Stakeholders in Gregory, Warrego, Southern Downs, Burdekin, Cook and Callide—plus their local members right across the state—are benefiting from the Crisafulli government's plan for country racing. We are boosting participation, reducing the burden on clubs to run race meetings, providing investment opportunities and addressing workforce shortages. We are undertaking a major expansion of the highly popular Battle of the Bush Series to include more towns and increase participation. After a decade of broken promises and budget blowouts, the Crisafulli government has delivered a fresh plan for racing. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Fire Ants

 **Hon. AJ PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (10.05 am): Two weeks ago, representatives of more than two million Queenslanders went to Canberra urging the federal government to support us in our fight against fire ants. Our delegation included representatives from the South East Queensland Council of Mayors, including mayors Jon Raven of Logan, Jason Wendt of Somerset and Tanya Milligan of the Lockyer Valley, as well as Reece Pianta and Jack Gough from the Invasive Species Council. Together, we represent close to two million people at risk from fire ants. We

were on a Team Queensland anti fire ant unity ticket. We were united on two primary objectives. We again called for the Australian government to match the Crisafulli government's additional \$24 million in suppression funding to fight fire ants within the suppression treatment area. We also asked for a commitment to provide ongoing funding when the current eradication program funding ceases in June 2027.

The delegation met with the following people: the federal agriculture minister, Julie Collins; the then acting departmental secretary, Justine Saunders; Queensland senators Corinne Mulholland and Matt Canavan; the Leader of the National Party, David Littleproud; the shadow environment minister, Angie Bell; and the National Farmers' Federation. I have also written to Queensland senators and federal members whose communities are on the front line of the fire ant threat. In a genuine spirit of cooperation, I have offered a briefing about the program, including a visit to the fire ant headquarters at Berrinba and a chance to see operational field work. In May I wrote to the federal Treasurer and member for Rankin, Jim Chalmers. His entire electorate is in the fire ant zone. I am yet to receive a response. We must have a funding commitment in next year's federal budget, which is being prepared as we speak.

Earlier this year the Crisafulli government committed an additional \$24 million over two years for aerial suppression operations to support the Fire Ant Suppression Taskforce. This injection of funding will help to better protect the businesses and residents within the suppression treatment area. The suppression program is in addition to the eradication program. Our suppression efforts are a direct response to the recommendation of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee report. It recommended that the—

... Australian Government work closely with the Queensland Government to commit to additional funding for the FAST to support self-treatment by residents, local governments, and landholders—


It is not surprising that local councils and the Invasive Species Council are united in our calls for additional funding and to extend the eradication funding from 1 July 2027. The councils, the Invasive Species Council and the Crisafulli government are extremely concerned that the eradication program is facing a funding cliff without an early and guaranteed commitment. We want to be ahead of the game because we know the devastating consequences of not having funding locked in place. The August 2021 National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program strategic review warned—

The inadequacy of funding and subsequent loss of momentum ... between 2015 and 2018 set RIFA eradication back some years. We have been forewarned. I will not make the same mistake Labor did. The August 2021 review also said—

If a national cost-shared program is wound down, the spread of RIFA in Australia is likely to mirror that in the USA.

We cannot accept that risk. We need to know that the funding commitment is locked in so there is continuity in eradication. There cannot be a funding cliff. Fire ants have devastating impacts on agriculture, health, the environment, the economy and our outdoor way of life. Beloved activities like picnics, backyard cricket and playing on the grass or even the beach are under threat. It is time to back Queensland. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Local Government

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (10.09 am): Mr Speaker, as you have heard from my colleagues it has been a busy year of delivering for the Crisafulli government. We have also been busy delivering for Queensland councils. Labor treated councils as second-class citizens during their decade of decline. Councils deserve so much better and, as we know on this side of the House, local governments know their communities best. That is why we are working in a partnership with them and we have been delivering for them and their ratepayers.


We have been focused on delivery this year. We have made the Works for Queensland a permanent program. We have delivered the Partners in Government Agreement with the LGAQ, recognising councils as partners in government. We have launched and concluded the Red Tape Reduction Taskforce, having engaged all 77 councils, and received an overwhelming response. We have launched the depreciation taskforce for local government to help reduce costs to ratepayers. We have improved access to gravel for councils after years of gravel rash from Labor. We have delivered on the rural and remote compact for councils as well as the Queensland Indigenous Council Leaders Accord. Talking about Indigenous councils, we have been delivering clean drinking water for Aurukun,

Kowanyama and Woorabinda—communities that were left behind by those opposite. We are getting ratepayers off the hook through fixing Labor's fish passage failures. We have introduced our empowering councils legislation, which councils are eagerly awaiting.

The Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland. We are delivering for Queensland councils and for ratepayers. We will not let councils go back to Labor's decade of decline. We will not let councils go back to being the poor cousins of government, like they were under Labor. We are only just getting started and I am excited for what we will do for Queensland in 2026.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.12 am): I lay upon the table the following report of the Ethics Committee, report No. 240 titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 22 May 2025 relating to an allegation of publishing a false or misleading account of proceedings before the House by the member for Cooper*.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 240, 58th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 22 May 2025 relating to an allegation of publishing a false or misleading account of proceedings before the House by the member for Cooper.

The committee made the following recommendations to the House—

Recommendation 1

That the House make a finding of contempt against the member for Cooper for breaching a condition of the Broadcast Footage Terms and Conditions in accordance with section 58(3) of the POQA and that the member for Cooper make an unequivocal apology to the House at the earliest opportunity.

...

Recommendation 2


That the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, or the Clerk, review and amend the Broadcast Footage Terms and Conditions, as a matter of urgency, to reflect the widespread use of social media by members of Parliament.

While social media offers great opportunities to communicate with our electorates, we must use it responsibly and in line with the broadcast terms and conditions. Members posting excerpts of proceedings on social media must place those excerpts in context to avoid misrepresentation. Dealing with allegations of breaches of the broadcast terms and conditions requires significant resources from the Office of the Clerk, the Office of the Speaker and the committee when matters are referred to it. This would be largely avoidable when members take care to use the proceedings of this House appropriately and within the rules.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.14 am.

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Information Technology

 **Mr MILES** (10.14 am): My question is to the child safety minister. I table an RTI which reveals the director-general's office was told on 16 May 2025 that child safety officers rated Unify as 1.79 out of 10. When the director-general knew Unify was putting vulnerable kids at risk in May, why did the minister only tell Queenslanders in September?

Tabled paper: Document, dated 16 May 2025, regarding a RTI release of email exchange regarding agenda items for Together monthly meeting.

Ms CAMM: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question about the Labor designed, developed and constructed Unify IT system—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: This is the last question time for the year. The minister has just risen to her feet. My tolerance level is very low today. Be warned.

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. I thank the member for highlighting—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you can be first on the list.

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for highlighting that as a new Queensland government that takes very seriously transparency and accountability, the reason those opposite know there was any issue with the Labor designed and developed Unify system is that I as minister stood up and told Queenslanders about the Unify issues. I stood up and told Queenslanders at the earliest—

Ms Fentiman: Months after the union told your director-general.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Waterford.

Ms CAMM: Within three days I stood up and told Queenslanders about the design issues, the functional issues impacting frontline child safety staff that this government inherited from those opposite. Those opposite under the former minister Fentiman when she was the child safety minister commenced in 2017—

Ms Fentiman: I didn't turn it on. You turned it on.

Mr SPEAKER: I have already warned you, member for Waterford. You are joining the list.

Ms CAMM: I take the interjection. She did not turn it on. I cannot wait to get to the bottom of the answers as to why those opposite did not turn it on. That was under the former minister. Then under the member for Bulimba, who was the child safety minister—

Ms Enoch interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Algeester, cease your interjections.

Ms CAMM:—for almost three years, the longest serving child safety minister under the former Labor government and one of the worst under the former Labor government—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms CAMM: I will take that interjection from the member for Currumbin, who is doing an outstanding job in the youth justice portfolio, unlike the member for Bulimba, who was a failed youth justice minister not once but twice. They gave it to her again to see if she could fix it and look where we ended up. After a decade of decline under those opposite we ended up with a youth justice crisis that we on this side of the House have spent a year working hard to fix because of what we inherited from those opposite.

When we talk about systems and failures, we see the hide of those opposite in asking questions about an IT system but who happily sat on a reportable conduct system that was never implemented that let paedophiles impact children in this state.

(Time expired)

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Information Technology

Mr MILES: I table an RTI of an email to the director-general's office in June—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: We will begin that question again, member for Murrumba. You have not stated who your question is directed to.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr MILES: My question is to—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the question in silence.

Mr Power: Warn him!

Mr SPEAKER: Did you just hear me, member for Logan? You are warned under the standing orders. You will withdraw that comment. It was disrespectful. I ask you to withdraw your comment.

Mr POWER: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: You are warned under the standing orders. Let's start again, member for Murrumba.

Mr MILES: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. I table an RTI of an email to the director-general's office in June stating 'staff in crisis since the release of Unify'.

Tabled paper: Document, dated June 2025, regarding a RTI release of email exchange regarding agenda for Monthly Together delegates and DG.

When the director-general knew staff were in crisis because of Unify in June, why did the minister only tell Queenslanders in September?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. Members of this House know—and former ministers on that side of the House should know—that members have an opportunity to ask questions of directors-general during the estimates process. As to emails that the member is referring to—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Woodridge, the minister has just started her response.

Ms CAMM:—I have been open and transparent with Queenslanders, as I have been with the union and as I have been with my frontline staff. Unlike those opposite, with five former child safety ministers, one of whom does not even sit in this House anymore because we welcomed a new member from North Queensland—I hear he has a great job now—I told Queenslanders about the Labor designed and developed Unify system at the first opportunity. I also told Queenslanders at the first opportunity I had in this House about the Services Union survey when it was brought to my attention. What I would like to know is how long those opposite had details of the Services Union survey and whether they listened to frontline—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms CAMM: I will take that interjection once again. Those opposite want to suggest that I have hidden something or we have not been transparent with Queenslanders. What I find very interesting is that in June 2024—and I will be tabling a document by the former director-general Deidre Mulkerin dated 13 June 2024—those opposite wrote to Mr Luke Twyford, the principal commissioner of the QFCC, with regard to the rollout of the Unify system, which at that time was designed, developed and soon to be delivered by those opposite. The correspondence sent to Mr Luke Twyford, who has oversight of the child safety system, highlighted—

On 23 September 2024, ICMS will be replaced by Unify providing an opportunity to transform the way the department works.

I believe former minister Mullen was the minister at the time—maybe child safety minister No. 5.

Ms Mullen: We didn't turn it on. You turned it on. I didn't turn it on.

Ms CAMM: I note that I have had no questions about Unify from the former child safety minister. The letter goes on to say that this was all about transforming the front line, about delivering efficiency and also about data and the timeframe in which data would go missing. I table that letter for the benefit of the House and for the benefit of the former minister, who would have signed off on it and knew about it.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 13 June 2025, from the Director-General, Department of Child Safety Seniors and Disability Services, Deidre Mulkerin, to Principal Commissioner, Queensland Family and Child Commission, Mr Luke Twyford, regarding a transition to a new client management system (Unify).

(Time expired)

Health Services

Mr HUTTON: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. How is the Crisafulli LNP government working constructively with jurisdictions across Australia to deliver better health care for Queenslanders, and is the Premier aware of any approaches that have seen healthcare standards fall during a decade of decline?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the member for the question. The member speaks about the importance of maintaining good relationships. I have seen him at work in his community, I know, as he is a former longstanding public servant, how much he values the work of our Public Service and I see in what high regard he is held. The member asks about relationships, and it is important to us in particular to maintain good, strong working relationships with Canberra. I pride myself on making sure we do. It is something I am passionate about because I saw the result of what happens when that is not the case.

I saw what happened when those in the former government launched nothing more than silly political games when it was not their colour in Canberra and then vice versa when it was. That meant that Queensland was unable to secure good deals and it meant that at times senior figures would stand up and say vulgarities dressed up as a slip of the tongue. We all remember that, don't we? I take a very different approach. On the back of that, we have been able to sign an 80-20 funding deal on the Bruce Highway that would never have been signed by those opposite. On the back of that, we have been able to sign an education deal. We did hold out—we were the last jurisdiction—but we signed the best one in the nation, and I am very proud of that.

There is one really big challenge at the moment, and that is in the healthcare space and in the disability services space. At the moment, right across the board, states of all different political persuasions are on a unity ticket about how bad the offer is from Canberra when it comes to that health deal. It is not fair. It is not fair on everyday Queenslanders. It is not fair on the people who work in the system. It is not fair on those whom we call the stranded Australians who are in hospital. Overnight we received another offer, and Canberra's health offer is underwhelming. Our staff are under immense pressure and those patients feel undervalued by a federal government not meeting its responsibilities. We must call it out, and we are across the board calling it out.

Tomorrow there is a really important meeting and our health minister will be taking up the fight. We will not take a backward step. Yes, it will be done respectfully. You will not hear vulgarities. It will be done respectfully but it will be done forcefully, because we have reached the point where there are 1,100 people right now lying in a Queensland hospital bed who should be given the dignity of care in an aged-care setting or—

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection from the member for Aspley, who wants to let Canberra off the hook.

Mr MELLISH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier is being misleading. I take offence and ask him to withdraw.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I will have some silence. I have noticed a trend of putting the fact that a member is being misleading before any personal offence. That will cease immediately. You can take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

Mr MELLISH: I take personal offence and ask the Premier to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, he has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw. We on this side of the House accept our responsibility to heal Labor's health crisis, but we also want Canberra to do the same, and it is not aided when those opposite will not use their weighted voice to help those stranded Australians. We back people and we back Queenslanders; they back politicians.

(Time expired)

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Information Technology

Mr DICK: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. I table an RTI of an email from the director-general on 4 June which states—

Staff report that training has been inadequate, and many are still relying on ICMS for day-to-day work.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 4 June 2025, regarding a RTI release of email from Belinda Drew, Director-General, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety.

When the director-general knew that staff were relying on old systems in June, why did the minister only tell Queenslanders in September?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. I think it is probably a foreign concept to those opposite that a minister would stand up and tell Queenslanders the facts of a matter as soon as they come to hand.

Mr Bleijie: Because they never did!

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier, because—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: This is the second time I have had to do this. Member for Aspley, you are joining the list. The minister has just started her response. Minister, you have the call.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let us look at the timeframe. In March 2019, after multiple child safety ministers had overseen the design and the functionality of the new Unify system that would replace ICMS, the former Labor government approved to replace ICMS with Unify. It oversaw the design and the development of the program over a five-year period. The minister responsible then was minister Farmer, the member for Bulimba. There was a further request for more funding over the five-year period.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question was about matters—

Mr SPEAKER: On relevance?

Mr de BRENNI:—in 2025—

Mr SPEAKER: The point of order is on relevance?

Mr de BRENNI:—not in previous years.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute and 47 seconds. You heard the question around training.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just for clarity for those opposite, I think they are asking questions about when I knew that the system that they designed and developed was a failure, so I think it is important that we recognise the history lesson over five years of those opposite in terms of responsibility. As we saw earlier this week in the House they take no responsibility for any policy, legislation or failure of systems like the Reportable Conduct Scheme that we on this side of the House—myself, the Attorney-General, the education minister—have spent this year fixing by bringing it forward one year earlier. When we identify a system failure we get to work. That is why when I became the Child Safety Minister and we had 500 plus children missing and self-placing in this state I undertook the first census ever. It had never been conducted by five previous ministers because, frankly, they do not care about children and they have never asked me—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms CAMM: I would love to take all of the interjections.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have 26 seconds left to focus on that question, please.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I visit many of my frontline child safety service officers and I want to thank them because they will be working hard over Christmas. On 24 September I had a Unify briefing. On 26 September I had an additional Unify briefing. On 26 September I contacted the commissioner conducting the commission of inquiry. On 27 September I stood in front of the media and told Queenslanders those opposite designed a failed system.

(Time expired)

Health Services

Mr G KELLY: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government continuing to improve healthcare outcomes across Queensland and is the minister aware of any approaches that would hinder the delivery of these health services?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Mirani for his question. I was with the member for Mirani up at the Sarina Hospital just last month. We got to meet many members of the local hospital team, including Pauline the director of nursing. We also inspected the investment that the Crisafulli government is making on repurposing the old Sarina Hospital to provide more beds and spaces up in Central Queensland.

The Crisafulli LNP government has a plan to deliver easier access to the health services that Queenslanders need and deserve. We are getting on with the job, including delivering real-time hospital data which has now been visited over half a million times. We are investing \$272 million in nine new CT and six new MRI machines. We have received over 700 online submissions during the public consultation period for our workforce gap analysis which closed at midnight last night with an almost fifty-fifty representation between metro and regional, rural and remote respondents. We are also pulling all of the levers we can to ease the pressure on our hospitals and to improve hospital flow, including our \$80 million investment in new and expanded transit lounges.

Queensland, like all other states and territories, is doing the heavy lifting when it comes to stranded Australians. Through no fault of their own, these stranded patients are clinically ready for discharge but cannot leave because of a lack of access to federally-funded residential age care facilities or disability supports. We have more than 1,250 stranded Australians languishing in Queensland hospitals alone, up from 553 in May of 2022. That equates to more than 10 per cent of all our hospital beds. To put it in perspective that is equivalent to hospitals the size of Gladstone and the PA being taken offline every day. The Commonwealth government's failure to provide for stranded Australians is costing Queenslanders \$2.88 million a day.

Just last month we were visited in the gallery by Liana whose mother Denise McCauley had been stranded at the Logan Hospital for over 140 days. Liana continues to advocate strongly for her mother who is still stranded at Logan Hospital, despite applying to over 190 aged-care homes. As I said when Liana was in the gallery, we are prepared to negotiate with the Commonwealth and the Premier's indicated that but the Commonwealth must step up and play its part. The Commonwealth must do better. Premier—dare I say it—I am prepared to put the cannoli back on the table but the offer has to be better than what we saw overnight. It was underwhelming.

I am asked about other approaches. We know those opposite had no plan to reduce ramping and waitlists. We know they will not take up the fight to Canberra. It is only the LNP government that will deliver for Queenslanders. We will not go back to a decade of decline under Labor.

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Information Technology

Ms PEASE: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. I table an RTI which reveals that a day after Director-General Drew was told that staff were relying on old systems, the director-general and the minister had a Unify briefing.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 17 October 2025, showing diary appointment for 5 June 2025.

Was the minister told at that briefing that the Unify rollout had failed when the director-general was clearly aware?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. I have been very transparent with Queenslanders.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms CAMM: I hear the shock over there. I understand the shock because five former child safety ministers have never—

Mrs Frecklington: None of them are asking the question.

Ms CAMM: I will take the interjection from the honourable Attorney-General. I believe since I was open and transparent with Queenslanders I have not had a question from a former child safety minister. In fact, earlier this week the shadow treasurer had to ask a question of the Treasurer about the independent Deloitte report that I have now commissioned into Unify. He could not even ask me the question.

I acknowledge the interest of the former Labor government into the system that they designed and developed—all five former child safety ministers who designed and developed the Unify system. I acknowledge the shock that I have been open and transparent with Queenslanders and my frontline staff, the union and Queenslanders in regard to what I knew when. I can over the timeframe over and over again but it is the truth. It is a fact. I told Queenslanders about the flawed Unify system the second I found out it had functional issues. The question that we will get to the bottom of, though, and I am receiving a detailed Deloitte report—

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Lytton, you are now warned.

Ms CAMM: I have seen a draft executive summary and I will get to the bottom of who knew what when because there will be a governance review. There will be potential referrals as they are required. We have taken the appropriate action with officers.

There would be some credibility to the question if it was asked by a former—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Standing order 118(a) requires in an answer that the minister does not debate the matter to which the question refers. We are not asking about who knew what. The question was whether the minister was told at the briefing to which the RTI pertains on 5 June.

Mr SPEAKER: Your point of order is relevance?

Mr de BRENNI: No. That the minister must not debate the question. She has been asked what she knew—not who knew what. I submit to you that she should respond in accordance with the standing orders to that question, not another question. If you like, Mr Speaker, that is a matter of relevance as well.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to the Manager of Opposition Business and standing order 118(a). The minister is not debating the question. She is providing detailed and quality information which is being responsive to the question as asked. I submit to you that not only is she being relevant, she is not debating the question. In relation to the points of order on standing orders 118(a) and (b) she is both being relevant and not debating it and she is also responding to interjections.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have 53 seconds remaining to address the question around the briefing that you received.

Ms CAMM: I have been open and transparent with Queenslanders. I continue to commit to doing that throughout fixing the Unify system that this government has inherited, that was designed and developed by the former Labor government.

My ministerial diary is open and transparent in the briefings I receive from my department. When I was first informed and made aware I told Queenslanders. I am being asked questions by those opposite but not one single former child safety minister who obviously knew. I will continue to be open and transparent with Queenslanders every step of the way. I will uncover exactly who knew what when.

(Time expired)

Seniors

Mrs STOKER: My question is to the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, you are warned under the standing orders. You know the rules about listening to questions in silence. Member for Oodgeroo, could you start your question again, please?

Mrs STOKER: Happily, Mr Speaker, thank you. My question is to the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. How is the Crisafulli LNP government giving our seniors the dignity they deserve in their later years, and is the minister aware of any approaches that have been adopted that deny our Queensland seniors that dignity?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. The member certainly knows what inaction in this space looks like, in particular with her previous service to the federal parliament on behalf of our great party and her local state constituency, as she fights to raise this issue for her community, which has been deeply affected. The member has fought for people like Eric and his wife, Gayle. At the Redland Hospital, speaking alongside the Premier and the health minister, Gayle revealed publicly how Eric, a dementia patient, who had been at Princess Alexandra Hospital since February this year, despite being fit for discharge, sadly had no place to go. That can be placed solely at the feet of the federal government with regard to their failure to provide adequate aged care to Queenslanders.

On Tuesday I stood up in this House and spoke about what happens when a government lets down parents, children and our most vulnerable. I wish that I did not have to stand here again today and talk about what happens when a federal government fails our seniors. Imagine, if you will, living and working your entire life, paying taxes, raising your children and growing a network and then into your golden years the very system that you have contributed to, that should be there as a safety net to support you and provide you with dignity, respect and care, fails you. While those opposite might think that is funny, on this side of the House we take very seriously our responsibility to our seniors population.

Aged-care funding from the federal government is urgently needed. Too many elderly people are languishing in Queensland hospitals. The health minister outlined those startling figures of growth since August this year. In November, the AMA Queensland President, Nick Yim, said in an interview with 4BC in relation to the elderly who are stuck in Queensland hospitals—

But at the end of the day, when we have these individuals waiting in hospitals, this is not the best location for them. They need their assessments so they can be discharged from the acute hospitals into a facility that can manage their ongoing needs.

This is about a standard of care, about certainty and about giving the elderly the dignity they deserve in their final years. The Crisafulli government and those members on this side of the House will continue to stand up to negotiate the best health deal. What those opposite could do, instead of

laughing and sniggering and carrying on, is stand up to their federal counterparts and call upon the federal government to fund aged-care services appropriately.

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Information Technology

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Emails to the director-general's office revealed by the opposition today show that staff workloads ballooned and an assurance was being given that they were not being held personally responsible. Will the minister take responsibility for thousands of children being left at risk in a Unify bottleneck just to save money?

Ms CAMM: Under those opposite, who designed and developed the system, the Unify system has cost in excess of \$150 million. Ministers had to continually to go back to CBRC to seek future funding, including former ministers Farmer, Mullen and others. I look forward to sharing with Queenslanders the full depth of the creation, the development and the cost to the Queensland taxpayer of this system that was developed, designed and overseen by five former child safety ministers. Once again I thank the shadow minister. I know that she is doing the job of a shadow minister and I think she deeply cares for the portfolio—unlike those former ministers, who have not asked me a question with regard to the Unify system that they oversaw the development and design of. I find it quite interesting.

I thank the member for highlighting the frontline staff with regard to the response and the workload. Because of that workload over a decade of decline under Labor, our child safety officers were almost at breaking point. The Unify system was promised by five former ministers and their director-general at the time to be the panacea that would fix all of the challenges. For the benefit of the House, I would also like to table correspondence that was sent to Ms Rachel Atkinson from Family Matters Queensland that talks about the commitment under the former Labor government with regard to improving information, collaboration, streamlined processes and client and case management.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 13 June 2025, from the Director-General, Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services, Deidre Mulkerin, to the Secretary, Queensland Family Matters, Ms Rachel Atkinson, regarding transition to a new client management system (Unify).

It states—

Unify will improve information sharing internally and enhance external collaboration with Queensland Government, social services and justice sector peers for their work with young people, families, carers and services.

It goes on to talk about reform systems and what this great system that was designed and developed by the Labor government would deliver. When it comes to frontline staff, and in particular the union representatives, I quote from one of the union delegates, who is now my union delegate, whom I look forward to meeting with again. We spoke in the meeting about the culture of fear that permeates Child Safety. They said that over the almost eight years they had worked in Child Safety they had found that the link between their clinical and industrial work that tries to connect them—

(Time expired)

Federal Government, Funding

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership. What action is the Crisafulli Labor—Crisafulli LNP government—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BENNETT: Mr Speaker, if I can correct my insidious mistake? I will have to try that again.

Mr SPEAKER: Good idea. Let's try that again.

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership. What action is the Crisafulli LNP government taking to push back against Canberra's funding shortfalls and ensure Queensland gets its fair share, and is the Treasurer aware of any examples where Queenslanders were not prioritised?

Mr JANETZKI: I thank the honourable member for the question. Yesterday I put a line in the sand where Queensland will stand on GST and on gas. Next week as I go to Canberra I will be making clear that Queensland does not want to stand for other states' policy decisions while the federal government is looking to hand emergency powers to AEMO to make Queensland worse off. We will be standing for Queensland's priorities and Queensland's interests in Canberra.

That is not the only area where we might be fighting for Queensland's priorities, as the honourable member has asked. We have heard this morning from the child safety minister. Whether it be on NDIS funding or the federal government leaving vulnerable Queenslanders behind, when it comes to health funding and the over 1,200 Queenslanders now stranded, as we have heard from the Premier and the health minister overnight, the offer on the table is underwhelming. It is not good enough. It is not reflective of those more than 1,200 stranded Queenslanders in Queensland hospitals. It is all about the federal government. It is their responsibility. Funding for the NDIS and aged care is a federal government responsibility.

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, you have been previously cautioned. You are warned.

Mr JANETZKI: They are the Albanese government's stranded Australians. We will always be fighting and the health minister will be fighting for that fair deal at the health ministers' meeting tomorrow because that is what is necessary to prioritise Queenslanders. We never see those opposite standing up for Queenslanders—ever. I remember once upon a time when there was a different colour of government and in Canberra they would talk about fifty-fifty health funding, but nothing now.

A government member: Or the Bruce.

Mr JANETZKI: Pick up the phone whether it be about the Bruce Highway or the GST. I have never heard them talk about the GST funding shortfalls for Queenslanders where the national GST pool has risen 75 per cent while Queensland's take has risen only 28 per cent. Why were they not fighting for Queenslanders? They are silent. It could happen literally next door. The member for Woodridge could go next door and talk to the federal Treasurer. We will never stop fighting for Queenslanders, whether it is on the NDIS or for the stranded Queenslanders when things are falling short simply because of the Albanese government's failure and those opposite are silent.

(Time expired)

Deputy Premier

Ms GRACE: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, the Premier denied that the Deputy Premier made threats towards me. A review of the chamber footage and tabled transcript show that direct threatening comments were made. Does the Premier stand by his statement from yesterday?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. With respect to your ruling this morning and also with respect to the matter of privilege that was already raised, it is my understanding that these matters are already under consideration. I ask whether the question as asked—

Mr SPEAKER: I am taking some advice.

Dr ROWAN: If I can finish my point of order, Mr Speaker. Given that the matter is under consideration, as I understand, by the Speaker, I ask whether this is now undue influence in relation to those processes as already outlined, given your ruling and the matter of privilege.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As I understand it, no ruling or referral has been made in relation to these matters. The question is squarely in the Premier's purview. He is responsible for the parliament and standards of conduct within this parliament. I submit to you that the question is entirely appropriate.

Mr SPEAKER: I will take some advice.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I was taking advice. The next person who speaks will be either warned or removed from the chamber. There is no formal complaint as such, as yet. There is an indication that I am going to receive correspondence on the issue. Broadly I suppose, Premier, it comes under your remit as leader of the party. I will allow the question and allow you to answer.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I can say a couple of things. Firstly, I do hope the matter is investigated because I heard what the honourable member said and it was not threatening in any way, shape or form. The transcript will show that.

Mr Fumer interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove, you are warned.

Mr CRISAFULLI: There were some threatening things. I have heard some threatening things and it came through the CFMEU Wood commission of inquiry. I am going to take the opportunity to talk about it because—

Mrs Nightingale interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Inala, you are now warned.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—of the bullying, the harassment, the misogyny and the intimidation. Something that is completely and utterly factual, and it is very difficult to be offended by this, is that the former industrial relations minister of this state was willing to turn a blind eye to the CFMEU for nine years—for nine years.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I take offence personally and I ask that that be withdrawn.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have already had one ruling on quarrelling across the chamber this morning. The member has taken personal offence and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw. Until the CFMEU was put into administration at the end of the Palaszczuk-Miles government, until that occurred, for nine years the CFMEU was able to conduct its business in this state.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer to standing order 118(b) and the relevance to the question. The question was about whether or not the Premier—

Mr SPEAKER: Your point is on relevance?

Mr de BRENNI: On relevance, whether the Premier stands by his denial of the remarks of the Deputy Premier. It is very clear, Mr Speaker.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier is being relevant and he was answering the question. He answered the question at the beginning and he is now referencing other elements of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: To the point of order, the question was about whether the Premier was going to sanction the Deputy Premier. I think he answered that immediately, early in the piece. The question also asked about leadership so you can talk to the elements of that.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Are you disputing? I will listen to this very carefully.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I wish to submit some assistance in this matter. If it assists the House, I believe that the question asked by the member for McConnel was specifically about the remarks made by the Deputy Premier and whether or not the Premier stands by those. There was no question asked about leadership or about matters outside this place.

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

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, on a second point of order, it continually occurs in this place that, when members rise on points of order seeking to provide assistance or seeking your assistance or rulings in matters, members opposite continuously interject in the conversation occurring with you. I submit to you, Speaker, that this type of attempted influence or dissuasion of members from making their points of order is in direct contravention of standing order 266(9).

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat. I will look after the order of the House and it is not one side.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to the first point of order of the Manager of Opposition Business, it is not an opportunity for the Manager of Opposition Business to raise a large amount of commentary around that. If he wishes to rise in relation to relevance, I would submit to you that that is the case. I also submit to you that it is now becoming an abuse of the standing orders in relation to the question asked. The Premier was being responsive to the question as asked. He answered the first part of the question and there was a broad nature of other elements to the question in relation to leadership and bullying and other elements, as asked in the question, that the Premier is being responsive to and he had already answered the first part of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have the call.

Mr CRISAFULLI: We are 40 seconds in and this has taken six minutes. It is their question time. I know they are not very good at it, but they should not waste this much time. For the better part of nine years those opposite protected the CFMEU—

Ms Enoch interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Algester, you are warned.

Mr CRISAFULLI: For the better part of nine years those opposite protected the CFMEU, and the person who was responsible for industrial relations in this state was the person who asked me the question. When I listen to the evidence to the Wood commission of inquiry there are a few things that really strike me. How could those opposite allow public servants to be locked in a room—a female public servant locked in a room as a union thug comes in? How could somebody's kids go to the gym and be harassed because of where their parents work? They did nothing.

There was a picket line in Central Queensland—I bet the member for Burdekin remembers it—and there were allegations of spitting, of what they would do to their children, and they said nothing. They rolled out the welcome mat through BPIC, sites were blockaded, people pretended to be from Greenpeace, and they did nothing.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, the question was around the Deputy Premier's behaviour. You have 46 seconds left if you have anything more to add to the issue.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I stand by my answer. I stand by my leadership comments about those opposite. I say to the member for Murrumba: leadership looks like standing up when one of your frontbench abuses sex workers. Leadership looks like standing up when someone goes to the crossbench and you still accept every one of their votes. Leadership looks like accepting when you pretend to say a word and you say another about a leader of a country. Leadership looks like accepting an election loss. On the night of the election he did not even have to decency to admit that he got it wrong. Leadership looks like an opposition that after 12 months, following presiding over a decade of decline, has done better. This the worst 12 months for an opposition in this state's history.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove, you were on a warning and you continued to interject. I ask you to leave the chamber for a period of one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Ferny Grove withdrew from the chamber at 11.01 am.

Workplaces, Safety

Mr BOOTHMAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Many people will continue to work over the holiday period, including in retail and hospitality as well as in our emergency services. Can the Deputy Premier advise the importance of respecting workers over the holidays, and is he aware of any employers who will not offer worker protections over the holiday period?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the honourable member for a great question. We on this side of the House, the LNP, support all of our frontline workers—retail and hospitality workers—who will be working over Christmas. That is the first part of the question done and dusted in 13 seconds. The second part of the member's question was: is any worker not protected over the Christmas period? I would say that that would be the honourable opposition leader. It is about the two-year anniversary of Palaszczuk saying she was protected over Christmas and then the Christmas coup happening and the opposition leader stepping in. We know that they are sharpening the turkey knives this Christmas for the opposition leader. In fact—

Mr SPEAKER: Please pause, Minister. Member for Bundaberg, you know the story about props.

A government member: He's on a warning, Mr Speaker.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Are you disputing me? You can leave the chamber for a period of one hour. You were on a warning. I asked you to put that prop down. I have just given a ruling.

Whereupon the honourable member for Bundaberg withdrew from the chamber at 11.03 am.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Leader of the Opposition has had a shocking year. I would never think that an opposition would finish a year in a worse position than where they started. Oppositions should get better

the longer the government is in, but they are getting worse—so much so they recorded the lowest vote in the Labor Party's history in the Hinchinbrook by-election. The more the Deputy Leader of the Opposition went to Hinchinbrook, the more the vote went down for the Labor Party.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Let's lower the tone a little bit.

Mr BLEIJIE: My only Christmas wish is for the honourable opposition to keep the opposition leader in place. The best thing for this government is for Steven Miles to retain the position of opposition leader.

In terms of leadership, what is he doing about the member for McConnel, who continually comes into this place and misleads, speaks mistruths and muckrakes? The member for McConnel jumped up this morning when I talked about anti Victoria Park forums and said that I was misleading. Let me table a few things for the member for McConnel's benefit. On her Facebook site she states—

Our community came together Wednesday night to talk about the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games ...

She was standing next to the member for Cooper who had a 'Save Victoria Park' badge on.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, you can read from or table those documents. I have just removed a member from the chamber for using a prop.

Mr BLEIJIE: Then on 16 December on her own website she said—

On Sunday morning I joined Save Victoria Park to protest plans to locate an Olympic stadium in Victoria Park.

On 1 February she stated—

I was so pleased to speak at the Save Victoria Park protest this morning opposing a possible Olympic stadium development in Victoria Park ...

7News Brisbane covered a protest about Victoria Park stating—

On the ground, long-time political rivals Grace Grace and Campbell Newman joined forces ...

against an Olympic stadium. On 9 May she shared Save Victoria Park profiles and an email response which read—

I will make a submission opposing Victoria Park ...

Then she organised her own forum opposing Victoria Park. I table the documents.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to the member for Cooper, Ms Bush MP, the member for McConnel, Hon. Grace MP and Victoria Park.


So much misleading by the member for McConnel.

(Time expired)

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (11.06 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. Those tabled documents, referring to the statement made earlier by the member that I took offence to and asked to be withdrawn, are incorrect. They were all done before the election when they promised no stadium. It is not correct that they are attached to a statement that he made. The information statement that I organised—

Mr SPEAKER: You can either take personal offence or write to me about that.

Ms GRACE:—was information only and not in relation to the Save Victoria Park protest. He is misleading the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, if you feel aggrieved by that you can write to me.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed.

Housing

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Premier. In response to Queensland's housing crisis, more than 6,600 petitioners have called for a legal right to adequate housing as recommended by last year's independent review of the Human Rights Act. Does this government consider housing is a human right?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the honourable member for the question. Whilst we might disagree on how it should be achieved, the one thing I will say is that we have a shared view on the need for every Queenslanders to have a roof over their head—a place to call home. That is our vision. That is our focus.

I want to unpack a couple of things. I know that there has been a lot of commentary over the years about taxation and all sorts of different pressure points, and whether or not some people should be penalised for wanting to buy a house and others should not be. In the end, we have to get our supply right. There is no way we can deal with Labor's housing crisis unless we get the supply right.

Ms Scanlon interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will take the interjection from the member for Gaven, who presided over a disgraceful record in housing. The member for Gaven should be very embarrassed by that. I will get on to that in a moment.

We have to deal with the supply issue. What is this government doing? Firstly, we are embarking on the biggest Residential Activation Fund, working in partnership with local government, in this state's history—a \$2 billion fund. Already there are 98,000 extra lots that will come out of the ground on the back of that. That gives people an opportunity to buy a house. Secondly, we have removed two taxes already in our time in government, including the tax on someone buying their first new home. That is a really big deal and something we are very passionate about. We are allowing Queenslanders to rent out a room without being penalised. That is a big deal and we will keep focusing on it. A good government also has a responsibility to provide social housing, and I think this is where it goes to the member's question.

Ms Scanlon interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection from the member for Gaven who presided over a multibillion-dollar fund that did not deliver one single home for Queenslanders. Therefore, I will take the interjection. The member for Gaven did not do a good job, but the LNP did unlock the door, giving her the keys to her first home. But she did not do a good job.

Over the course of the last decade in Queensland, the Labor Party delivered just 507 social homes per year. That is a disgrace. Following the election of this government and the work of the housing minister, we will deliver more than four times that per annum in our first term, by the end of the term. Now, that is a big deal—

Mr BERKMAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question was very specific: does the government consider housing is a human right?

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have the call. You heard the question.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Every person deserves a roof over their head. There are also big challenges for people with mental health challenges who are also sleeping rough, and we have to do more in that space and we will. The community housing sector is a sleeping giant in this state. Our vision is to make sure they feel empowered, not victimised, as those opposite did. Our vision for Queensland housing is the following: people who work hard and aspire to own a home should be able to; people who rent should have the confidence to know that when their rent comes up for renewal, there will be enough supply that they do not get kicked out; and the most vulnerable deserve a roof over their head. After a decade of decline, we are delivering for Queensland.

Manufacturing and Resources Industries

Mr McDONALD: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development. How is the Crisafulli LNP government providing the manufacturing and resources industry with the certainty they need to invest in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any approaches where a lack of certainty has caused a manufactured outcome?

Mr LAST: I thank the member for Lockyer for the question. Certainty is the bedrock of investment, and that is exactly what the Crisafulli government is delivering across Queensland in the resources and manufacturing space. If you have a look at what we have achieved in 12 months, you will see that we have hit the ground running. We are restoring confidence in Queensland. It starts with the copper smelter at Mount Isa and saving that community. It continues with Harmony Gold's Eva

Copper Project—\$2.3 billion and 1,450 jobs. It continues with the Centurion Mine as a coordinated project—a \$660 million job. It continues with Fitzroy Resources and the thousand jobs we have secured there across a number of coalmines in Central Queensland. It continues with the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program which we have back on track in Maryborough, thanks to the advocacy of the member for Maryborough, and I want to acknowledge his work in that space. We are open for business. We are open for business, we are getting the job done and we are making it happen.

We know, as we come into the Christmas season, that the question will be asked: what will be on the menu at the Labor Christmas lunch? What will be on that menu? Will it be a plump turkey from Murrumba? I can see the members for Waterford, Woodridge and Gaven smacking their lips, sharpening the knife and holding the fork. I wonder when we come back here in February next year who will be sitting in that chair three from the end on that side. Who will it be? As we know, a couple of weeks ago at Hinchinbrook—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! We are almost there. You have 37 seconds.

Mr LAST: I am doing my best, Mr Speaker. A couple of weeks ago at Hinchinbrook, when the report card was handed in after the by-election, there was a big fat 'F' on the bottom of it. 'Mr Eight per cent'—a big fat 'F'. It was a dismal result under the leadership of the opposition leader, and we are not about to let them forget that. We welcome the member for Hinchinbrook and what he brings to this chamber and what he brings to that community. We are delivering for Queensland after a decade of decline under the former Labor government.

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Contempt of Parliament, Apology



Ms BUSH (Cooper—ALP) (11.15 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I rise to address the Ethics Committee report No. 240 in respect of a social media post I made about a contribution that the member for Everton made in this chamber regarding para-athlete Alexa Leary. I accept the Ethics Committee's finding that I breached a condition of the broadcast footage terms and conditions and, as such, I apologise unreservedly to the House.

ELECTORAL LAWS (RESTORING ELECTORAL FAIRNESS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (11.15 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Electoral Act 1992, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Referendums Act 1997 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025.

Tabled paper: Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights.

I am pleased to introduce to the House the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This bill implements reforms which improve and restore fairness and equality to the regulation of elections in Queensland and increase public confidence in Queensland's electoral process. It builds on the Crisafulli government's commitment to prioritising victims, it implements commitments made to the Queensland people prior to the election, and it begins to level the playing field in Queensland elections.

The Electoral Act 1992, which I will refer to from here on as the Electoral Act, regulates state elections in Queensland. The bill amends the Electoral Act, and makes related amendments to the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Referendums Act 1997, the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and the Electoral Regulation 2024, to restore electoral fairness in Queensland. There are six main areas of reform contained in the bill which I will speak to.

The first reform in the bill is a change to the entitlement to vote for certain persons serving sentences of imprisonment or detention. Currently, prisoners serving a sentence of imprisonment of

three years or longer are not entitled to vote in state elections and local government elections or referendums. Prior to 31 January 2020, prisoners serving sentences of imprisonment of any length were not entitled to vote at state and local government elections and referendums. With the commencement of the former Labor government's Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019 on 31 January 2020, the position was changed so that prisoners serving sentences of up to three years became entitled to vote at state and local government elections and referendums. This allowed a large cohort of criminals to begin voting in our elections from within prison walls. This was unacceptable, and an insult to victims right across our state.

This bill will restrict voting by prisoners at state and local government elections and referendums to those prisoners serving a sentence of one year or longer. The bill will also ensure that persons over 18 years who were sentenced to detention for a period of one year or more as a juvenile offender, and are still serving that sentence in full-time detention or imprisonment as an adult, are not entitled to vote.

The Crisafulli government believes that law-breakers should not be choosing our lawmakers. The people who demonstrate disregard and disdain for our laws should not be selecting the parliaments that enact them. The bill refines the eligibility to vote to a narrower class of prisoners and persons serving sentences of detention, having regard to the culpability of their offending, to enhance civic responsibility. By increasing restrictions on the voting by persons serving sentences of imprisonment or detention, the bill will increase the confidence of Queenslanders in the integrity of the electoral process by not allowing those who show disregard for the rule of law to influence elections and referendums. This reform acknowledges that serious offending warrants the temporary suspension of the right to vote. The rights of the victims whom these offenders perpetrate against must always—and should always—come first.

Serious criminal offending represents a repudiation of the common values which underpin our society and is a direct affront to the rule of law. These amendments send a clear message that participation in the democratic process carries with it responsibilities to the laws which govern and protect society. They will also bring Queensland into line with other states that share similar laws. In New South Wales and in Western Australia, a person who is serving a sentence of detention or imprisonment of one year or longer is not entitled to vote in an election.

The bill includes supporting amendments to ensure relevant information can be provided by the Chief Executive of Queensland Corrective Services about persons serving sentences of imprisonment to the Electoral Commission of Queensland. Similar amendments will also enable information to be provided by the chief executive of the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support to the Electoral Commission of Queensland about persons over 18 serving sentences of detention. This essential information will be provided to the ECQ for the purposes of assessing entitlement to vote in state elections, local government elections and referendums.

The second area of reform in the bill is to remove the ban on political donations from property developers and related industry bodies for state elections and target the ban for local government electoral purposes.

Opposition members interjected.

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

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Putting trade unions—

Ms McMahon: Show us the brown paper bag.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Macalister!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, can I have clarification that the member said she had a paper bag?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, member for Nanango. Carry on with your contribution, please.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This will put trade unions, property developers and anyone else who wants to donate on a level playing field. We are doing exactly what we committed to do.

Ms Scanlon: You never said you were going to do that. You didn't go to the election—publicly.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to take that interjection. The Premier stood on stage at the leaders' debate and committed to it, shadow attorney-general. I will get to that a little bit later. Maybe the shadow attorney-general was not listening to the leaders' debate because she was too busy trying to write her own leaders speech.

Under the Electoral Act and the Local Government Electoral Act, political donations from property developers or industry bodies which have property developers as the majority of their members are prohibited. The ban was implemented by the previous Labor government via the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2018. That act implemented the previous Labor government's response to certain recommendations of the Crime and Corruption Commission's report *Operation Belcarra: a blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local government*. Recommendation 20 of the Belcarra report states—

That the Local Government Electoral Act, the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act be amended to prohibit candidates, groups of candidates, third parties, political parties, associated entities and councillors from receiving gifts from property developers.

The previous Labor government went well beyond this recommendation, extending the ban to state elections as well, to their own electoral advantage. This property developer donations ban was, as a consequence, applied to both local and state government electoral laws.

For the shadow minister's information—and for the information of everyone else in this House—at the pre-election leaders' debate on 16 October 2024 the now Premier and Minister for Veterans vowed the LNP would repeal the ban on political donations from property developers at state elections. We are now delivering on this pre-election commitment with this bill today. The Premier made it very clear before the election. He was right when he said that we cannot have one rule for one class and another rule for the unions. This bill will right that wrong. The Premier was also right when he said that this property developer donation ban was fundamentally and philosophically an electoral financial gerrymander by the former Labor government. This bill will right that wrong. The bad old days of Labor's sneaky electoral amendments are over.

The bill makes amendments to the Electoral Act to repeal and remove these donation bans for state elections and for other purposes unrelated to a local government election. This will mean that political donations in the form of gifts or loans to registered political parties and candidates in state elections or to other types of entities for certain purposes, including incurring electoral expenditure for state elections, will no longer be prohibited under the amended law. The removal will allow property developers to participate in state elections by making political donations in the same way that other donors are currently entitled to, levelling the playing field. The donations made for state electoral purposes will be subject to donations caps and the usual disclosure and transparency requirements in the same way all other donors are.

This reform will also promote freedom of expression by allowing donations to be used for state electoral purposes, including campaigning. The ban will continue to apply to political donations for a local government electoral purpose. Refining the ban to only apply to local government elections is more consistent with recommendation 20 of the CCC's Belcarra report, tabled in 2017.

Amendments to the Local Government Electoral Act will ensure political donations to a political party will not be subject to the ban when made for a purpose unrelated to a local government election. To maintain the integrity of the ban at the local government level, the amendments to the Local Government Act also include anti-circumvention measures, including continued requirements for declarations, as well as an added offence and recovery provision which apply where a donation is used in contravention of the ban.

We took a principled stance that supported fair elections and gives all members of the community the opportunity to donate—trade unions and every other class of donor—to the parties and candidates at state elections whom they chose to support. We opposed this ban in opposition and we oppose it in government. We are doing what we said we would do with a bill that removes it from state elections and targets strong offences on local government elections, as it was supposed to do.

The third measure is to apply existing caps on political donations for state elections to financial years. The Electoral Act caps the value of donations that a single donor can make during the donation cap period to a registered political party or candidate in an election. Currently, the donation cap period applies to the four-year period between general elections, being 30 days after polling day until 30 days after the next general election. Also under the current arrangements, if a candidate contests a by-election the donation cap period renews and will apply from 30 days after election day for the by-election until the next election contested by the candidate. The donation cap amount is currently indexed 30 days after each general election. Under current donation caps, during the donation cap period a donor cannot make political donations of more than \$4,800 to the same registered political party; of more than \$7,200 to an independent candidate; or of more than a total of \$7,200 to candidates endorsed by the same registered political party. Those figures remain in place.

The bill amends the donation cap to be each financial year, with amounts to also be indexed each financial year. It simplifies the electoral donation framework, making it easier to understand for electoral participants. The Commonwealth government has amended the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 to introduce gift cap periods for calendar years, so the length of the donation cap period of 12 months broadly aligns with this.

These amendments will also bring Queensland into line with the financial year donation caps in New South Wales. The new donation cap period in the Electoral Act will apply retrospectively to 1 July 2025. This will ensure that the policy objective of applying donations caps on a financial year basis can be applied as soon as possible. These amendments will reduce the current restrictions on funding sources which may be applied to electoral expenditure at state elections, while continuing to limit potential risks of corruption and ensuring a level playing field between donors.

The fourth reform in the bill concerns the treatment of loans under the Electoral Act. A loan from a financial institution cannot currently be used to fund electoral expenditure for a candidate or registered political party for a state election. However, loans from other sources, such as third-party lenders, can be paid into the state campaign accounts for candidates and parties provided the required records are maintained.

The bill amends the definition of 'loan' under the Electoral Act to no longer exclude loans made by a financial institution and therefore allow loans from financial institutions to be paid into state campaign accounts and applied to electoral expenditure in a state election. This change will ensure that funding sources for electoral expenditure by registered political parties and candidates are not unfairly restricted to private unregulated lenders and other types of loans. Broadening electoral funding sources to include regulated lenders and reputable financial institutions is an appropriate step, preventing parties and candidates from being forced to turn to unregulated lenders. The existing disclosure obligations on parties and candidates remain.

The fifth reform in the bill is to enhance the independence of political parties in relation to preselection ballots. Preselection ballots are internal political party processes of selecting a candidate to be endorsed by a party for a state or local government election in which a member of the party votes in a ballot for the candidate. Currently, part 9 of the Electoral Act provides for the Electoral Commission of Queensland to oversee the conduct of preselection ballots by performing inquiries or audits.

The bill will omit part 9 of the Electoral Act to remove the oversight requirements of preselection ballots and also remove the administrative burden on the ECQ in undertaking audits and inquiries. This will allow registered political parties to undertake preselection ballots in accordance with their own constitution without any interference or intrusion from the state. This will remove restrictions and burdensome regulations that do not apply equally to all political parties, given some parties do not require a preselection ballot process or choose not to follow a democratic process when the factions decide. No other state or territory, or the Commonwealth, has any Electoral Commission involvement and oversight of internal party preselections. These are outdated provisions and their repeal is a necessary step in enhancing and protecting the internal independence of political parties and ensuring the rights of their members are protected.

The sixth reform in the bill is in relation to the authorisation of election materials under the Electoral Act. Under section 181 of the Electoral Act, a person must not print, publish, distribute or broadcast any advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice containing election matter, unless the material includes the name and address of the person who authorised it.

Ms Fentiman: It's 'advertisement'.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I beg your pardon? Oh, I should have said 'advertisement'. I apologise. I went to Guluguba State School.

Ms Fentiman: Here to help, honey.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I beg your pardon?

Ms Fentiman: I am here to help.

A government member: She said 'honey'.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I take offence at that comment and ask her to withdraw.

Ms FENTIMAN: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Waterford, thank you for your withdrawal.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I understand the member is on a warning.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, I thank you for your assistance. I am going to give you the call.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: We did not have mean girls at Guluguba State School. She just called me 'honey' and then asked me to get some help. It would be interesting if someone on our side said that.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Waterford!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Can you imagine, gentlemen, if any of you said that? Imagine the absolute outrage. We would be ripped to shreds. They would have us before the Ethics Committee, but when a Labor member is so disrespectful, honestly—

A government member: On a warning.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: And who is on a warning, yes. I take that interjection. I cannot even remember what she was correcting me about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Carry on, Attorney. We will have less quarrelling across the chamber and we will proceed in a better fashion today.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The address details cannot currently be a post-office box. There are also similar authorisation requirements for how-to-vote cards being distributed in section 182 of the Electoral Act. How-to-vote cards must include the name and address of the person who authorised the card, as well as the name of the relevant political party or the word 'candidate' for an independent candidate. The address included in a how-to-vote card cannot currently be a post-office box.

The authorisation requirements for election materials and how-to-vote cards apply during an 'election period'. The 'election period' is currently defined as the period beginning on the day after the writ for the election is issued and ending at 6 pm on the polling day for the election. The authorisation requirements help voters to assess the accuracy, balance and fairness of published electoral material and help to prevent irresponsibility through anonymity.

This bill makes two changes to these authorisation requirements. The first amendment changes the definition of 'election period'—referred to in the bill as authorisation period—so that in an ordinary general election the period will begin one year prior to polling day and end at 6 pm on polling day. That will in effect create a 12-month authorisation period. For any other election, such as a by-election, the current meaning will be retained and will begin on the day after the writ for election is issued and end at 6 pm on the polling day for the election. The second amendment allows post-office boxes and other prescribed addresses to be used to authorise election material and how-to-vote cards.

These amendments to authorisation requirements will ensure greater transparency and awareness about who is authorising election material for a longer period of time for ordinary general elections. The amendments will also respond to privacy and safety concerns of candidates, particularly for those who would previously have had to provide their personal residential address to meet the requirements in authorisations. This change complements similar proposed amendments to the types of addresses that must be included with election material and how-to-vote cards in the Local Government Electoral Act in the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025.

At the last election we saw a huge scare campaign mounted by those opposite which turned out to have no merit whatsoever. Queenslanders are crying out for more truth in political advertising and they are crying out for more transparency when it comes to who is behind the political scare campaigns which they are confronted with in Queensland elections. This measure ensures that the people behind political advertisements used in election material are required to authorise the material even 12 months before a general election. These amendments enhance transparency in the political and electoral process and will improve the integrity of our political and electoral debates. They go a long way to keeping electoral participants accountable for the things they say and communicate to voters.

Amendments in the bill related to voting by persons serving sentences of imprisonment or detention will commence on proclamation to ensure that there is adequate time for implementation. All other amendments in the bill will commence 28 days after the day the bill is assented to.

To conclude, this bill implements reforms long overdue to Queensland's electoral and referendum laws. The Electoral Act and Local Government Electoral Act both provide significant and

important frameworks in our democracy in Queensland, and fairness should be a key guiding principle which fundamentally underpins them.

With this bill, we are restoring some electoral fairness in Queensland. We are finally bringing an end to Labor's electoral and financial gerrymander. This bill will improve the equality of participation in Queensland elections, enhance civic responsibility and also improve transparency in electoral campaigning. We are doing what we said we would do and we are continuing to deliver for the people of Queensland with fairer elections.

First Reading

Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (11.39 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.


Referral to Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

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

DEFAMATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 14 October (see p. 3004).

Second Reading

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (11.40 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I note that the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for detailed consideration. Throughout its examination of the bill the committee received five submissions, held a public briefing and tabled a report making one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its consideration of the bill.

The bill will amend the Defamation Act 2025 to implement the changes to the Model Defamation Provisions agreed to by a majority of the Standing Council of Attorneys-General in September 2023 following the stage 2 review of the Model Defamation Provisions. The Model Defamation Provisions are underpinned by the principle that maintaining nationally uniform defamation laws is the preferred approach. It provides certainty for parties where publications extend across jurisdictions and prevents forum shopping.

As the committee outlined in its report, this bill aligns Queensland's defamation laws with Model Defamation Provisions which were agreed to by SCAG on 22 September 2023. That is two years ago. What did Labor do to implement these reforms? Well, obviously nothing and once again it is left to the Crisafulli government to get on with it and bring Queensland in line with all of the other states. Given this, the Crisafulli government has acted quickly and the bill will commence seven days after receiving royal assent so the changes can commence as soon as possible.

Turning to reforms concerning digital intermediaries, the bill will introduce two conditional statutory exemptions from defamation liability that apply to digital intermediaries. The first exemption will apply where a digital intermediary's role in the publication of the matter is limited to providing a caching service, conduit service or storage service that did not take an active role in the publication. The second exemption will apply where a digital intermediary is a search engine provider which simply provides an automated process for users to generate search results identifying or linking to a webpage on which the matter is located.

The bill also introduces a new defence for digital intermediaries, who will now have a defence for defamatory digital matter posted by a third party. To benefit from the defence the digital intermediary

must have an accessible complaints mechanism and, if the complaint is received by the intermediary, take reasonable steps to remove or prevent access to the matter within seven days of receiving that complaint.

To be clear, we are putting the internet trolls on notice. We are closing the loophole for those trolls who try and hide behind social media pages to defame others and cause chaos. Those internet trolls are now on notice. We are protecting our community groups and the mums and dads who operate or manage social media pages, by ensuring they have the protection of this new defence. We are ensuring media organisations can get on with the job of reporting the news without being burdened by the constant threat of defamation for their online content.

In addition to these amendments, for consistency between civil and criminal provisions the bill will also amend the existing criminal defamation offence in section 365 of the Criminal Code to ensure the new defence for digital intermediaries and the new statutory exemptions from liability also operate as a lawful excuse in criminal defamation proceedings.

Under the Defamation Act, an aggrieved party is required to provide the publisher of the alleged defamatory matter with a concerns notice and provide the publisher reasonable time to make an offer to make amends. To address this concern, the bill amends the Defamation Act to allow an offer to make amends in relation to the publication of digital matter to include an offer to take access prevention steps, which could include removing the matter or blocking, disabling or otherwise preventing access to the matter. This will provide greater flexibility to publishers in dealing with complaints about defamatory digital matter.

The bill also makes changes to preliminary disclosure orders. As the identity or address of posters of defamatory digital matter is often unclear or uncertain, courts are sometimes asked to make preliminary disclosure orders to assist in identifying those posters. However, as the North Queensland Women's Legal Service noted in its submission, a common issue in all jurisdictions is systems abuse, where domestic and family violence offenders abuse court systems to obtain sensitive information about a victim such as their residential address.

The bill introduces a requirement that courts must now take into account the objects of the Model Defamation Provisions as well as privacy, safety and other public interest matters when making a preliminary disclosure order in relation to defamation proceedings. This new requirement will better protect individuals who would have their safety or privacy unnecessarily put at risk if a preliminary disclosure order is made. I would sincerely like to thank the North Queensland Women's Legal Service for its submission supporting this provision and for the important work it does to protect women across North Queensland.

Amendments also include a new power for courts to order a digital intermediary that is not a party to a defamation proceeding to take access prevention steps, including removing or disabling access to digital defamatory matter. Further, the bill modernises the Defamation Act to allow a document or notice to be given to a person or body corporate by email, messaging or other electronic communication to an address or location indicated by the recipient. This ensures the legislation will reflect modern practice by enabling notices to be given electronically.

I now turn to the defence of absolute privilege. It is well known that abusers exploit court processes by threatening defamation proceedings to deter victims from making complaints to police services. This is known as the chilling effect. Both the Victims' Commissioner and the North Queensland Women's Legal Service noted in their submissions the impact the chilling effect has on victims. The Victims' Commission gave stark statistics, noting that only 13 per cent of victims of sexual assault make a report to police. As the committee noted in its report, there is currently no provision at law for the defence of absolute privilege to apply to publications to police forces or services, whereas complaints made to many other agencies in Queensland already have this defence through enabling legislation.

For example, under section 275 of the Health Ombudsman Act 2013, a person who honestly and on reasonable grounds gives information to the Health Ombudsman for the purpose of a health service complaint has a defence of absolute privilege in any defamation proceeding for giving the information. Under section 38 of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010, a person who makes a public interest disclosure to a public sector entity or member of the Legislative Assembly has a defence of absolute privilege in any defamation proceeding from making that disclosure.

This bill will amend the Defamation Act to extend the defence of absolute privilege to a matter published to police, providing a complete defence for liability for defamation. As stakeholders submitted, extending this defence to complaints made to police will make it safer for victims and their advocates to come forward to police for help without fear of legal repercussions. I am proud to be part of a

government that will always put victims first, and this amendment will ensure victims can confidently communicate with police without fear of being sued for defamation.

At this point, I would like to foreshadow that I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail of the bill. Firstly, I will move amendments to the Criminal Code to ensure that justice is not denied to victims as a consequence of the past deficient DNA testing practices. Cases affected by the historical deficient DNA testing practices are being reviewed and, where appropriate, samples are being retested. In cases where retesting indicates there may have been an unjust acquittal for a serious offence, there is a strong public interest in pursuing a conviction under the double jeopardy exception framework.

Under this framework, the court may order that a person acquitted of a prescribed serious offence be retried if there is fresh and compelling evidence and it is in the interests of justice. For evidence to be fresh it must not have been adduced in the proceeding where the person was acquitted and it must not have been able to be adduced with the exercise of reasonable diligence by a police officer or prosecutor. The amendments I will move will clarify that a police officer or prosecutor will be taken not to have failed to exercise reasonable diligence only because they relied on advice or forensic services—which includes testing and analysis or scientific interpretation—provided by the former Forensic and Scientific Services or Forensic Science Queensland. Police officers and prosecutors should have been able to rely on the advice and forensic services provided by these entities without being expected to interrogate the particular tests, methodology or practices. The amendments put this beyond doubt.

Secondly, I will move amendments to the Evidence Act 1977 to ensure the effective operation of reforms that were passed by the former Labor government in this parliament with respect to tendency and coincidence evidence. The amendments I intend to move will provide that tendency and coincidence evidence can be tendered and relied on during committal proceedings, but when this evidence is being tendered the special rules under part 7A of the Evidence Act that govern its admissibility do not apply. These are important amendments to avoid unintended consequences, such as magistrates, instead of trial judges, making determinations about the value and admissibility of this evidence.

In conclusion, this is an important bill to modernise Queensland's defamation laws. Sadly, it comes two years too late because of Labor's lethargy during their decade of decline. Because of Labor, Queensland is yet again the laggard when it comes to having modern defamation laws. While Labor sat idly by and did nothing, New South Wales, the ACT, Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory all took steps to implement the model defamation laws.

This bill strikes the right balance between protecting reputations and freedom of expression in the context of modern digital challenges. It will also remove barriers to reporting criminal or unlawful conduct to police and creating a safer Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Before I call the member for Gaven, it might be timely to remind the following members that they are on warnings: the members for Greenslopes, Waterford, Logan, Aspley, Lytton, Bundaberg, Bancroft, Ferny Grove, Inala and Alger.



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (11.53 am): I rise to speak on the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Queensland Labor opposition supports this bill that implements the Standing Council of Attorneys-General approved stage 2 amendments to the Model Defamation Provisions, modernising Queensland's defamation laws and ensuring they remain both fair and fit for purpose, particularly in an evolving digital landscape. I will come to the substantive principles of the bill in a second, but I think we need to take a moment to address the circumstances requiring this bill to be deemed as urgent.

When a non-contentious bill suddenly attracts a queue of no doubt government speakers with a newfound enthusiasm for defamation law, I think it is abundantly clear that the real reason is not actually to debate this legislation but to justify guillotining the debate on the health bill, the Energy Roadmap bill and the greenhouse gas storage bill. Just like it was hard to ignore all of those government members who suddenly had a keen interest in the urgent Trusts Bill—which was urgent but then it was not urgent—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I will seek some advice on the point of order. Member for Gaven, I understand the point you have been making and I would encourage you to come back to the bill.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am just talking through the circumstances in which this bill is being debated in the House today. I suspect this was a deliberate ploy by the government to try to eat up time and avoid scrutiny and questions on topics that they do not want to answer. I will turn to the bill itself.

Our defamation framework has long played an important role in balancing two fundamental values: the protection of individual reputation and the protection of freedom of expression. The Model Defamation Provisions adopted across jurisdictions in the early 2000s were originally designed when publishing was the domain of traditional media. Of course, what we face today is profoundly different. The pace of technological change, the rise of social media and the growth of digital platforms have transformed how people communicate, how information spreads and, importantly, how harm can occur.

In recent years the High Court has handed down several significant decisions on the liability of digital intermediaries. Those decisions—such as *Fairfax Media Publications Pty Ltd and Others v Voller* in 2021 and a range of other cases—have shaped case law and have informed the amendments before us. In *Voller* the High Court confirmed that those who maintain Facebook pages or other online forums can be considered publishers for the purposes of defamation law, even when the defamatory material was posted by a third party. This decision had major implications for community groups, local organisations, media outlets and everyday Queenslanders who manage online spaces, including those of us in this room.

In another case, the court found that Google had not acted as a publisher when its search engine automatically generated hyperlinks to defamatory content. The court recognised the difference between active publishing and the passive, automated functions that underpin much of the digital world. These decisions highlight the need to update our laws so they can properly reflect the different roles and responsibilities of digital platforms, search providers and content hosts.

The part A amendments contained in this bill do exactly that. They clarify when a digital intermediary should and should not be held liable for defamatory material posted by others by providing certain limited protections. Under these amendments, digital intermediaries are exempt from defamation liability where their role is limited to providing a caching, conduit or storage service and where they have not taken any active steps to initiate, promote or edit the material. This change further helps balance those two fundamental values by providing digital intermediaries a new defence to liability if the intermediary can demonstrate they have an accessible complaints mechanism. This defence also provides for clear timeframes of seven days to action a complaint after it was given. This timeframe both addresses the complainant's need for a prompt outcome and provides sufficient time for a digital intermediary to take action where necessary.

Search engine providers are also similarly exempt from defamation liability where their role is limited to an automated process that simply produces search results identifying or linking to a page where the content appears. These targeted measures ensure that passive intermediaries are not unfairly held liable, while still ensuring that individuals can seek redress when genuine harm occurs. The bill amends section 365 of the Criminal Code to ensure that this new defence and these statutory exemptions from liability operate as a lawful excuse in criminal defamation proceedings.

The bill also strengthens the approach to resolving disputes early and without unnecessary litigation. Currently, the Defamation Act 2005 encourages parties to resolve matters through mechanisms like an offer to make amends. The amendments will now allow those offers to include access prevention steps such as removing content, blocking it or restricting access to it. This gives parties a practical, proportionate way to address harm before matters escalate to court and reflects the reality that online harm often spreads quickly and needs rapid resolution.

We also know that one of the most challenging aspects of defamation matters involving digital platforms is identifying the person responsible for the publication. Posters may use pseudonyms, temporary accounts or platforms that do not readily disclose identifying information. In Queensland, our Uniform Civil Procedure Rules, specifically rules 208C and 208D, already allow the courts to make orders to help ascertain the identity or whereabouts of a prospective defendant or to enable preliminary disclosure in certain circumstances. The bill builds on these existing provisions by requiring courts, when making orders for preliminary discovery, to consider the objects of the Defamation Act and any relevant privacy, safety and public interest concerns. This is a careful and necessary safeguard. It ensures that, while plaintiffs may seek the information they need to pursue a claim, courts must also consider whether disclosing a person's identity or address may put them at risk. The bill specifically contemplates situations such as domestic violence, where an alleged perpetrator may seek disclosure of a victim-survivor's location. The amendments ensure that courts must consider the potential for harm

before making such an order. This is a thoughtful balance, protecting the rights of applicants by safeguarding vulnerable individuals whose safety may be jeopardised by disclosure.

The bill also empowers courts to make orders requiring digital intermediaries, whether or not they are parties to proceedings, to remove or block access to defamatory digital matter. This reflects the reality that digital spaces are interconnected and that platforms often hold the technical ability to restrict or remove content more effectively than individuals.


Finally, the bill modernises how notices and documents can be given or served under the Defamation Act. Currently, the act allows notices, such as concerns notices, to be emailed to an address nominated by the recipient, but in many cases today communication occurs through a range of digital channels. The amendments, therefore, allow for these notices to be served through an electronic communication method, including direct messaging, where the recipient has indicated an electronic address or location for receiving documents. This is a practical reform that reflects modern communication habits and ensures legal processes remain accessible and efficient. It also helps parties communicate quickly, which is essential in resolving disputes early and limiting the spread of harm.

Part B amendments address a gap in the current defamation framework concerning the defence of absolute privilege. It is a defence under both general law and section 27 of the Defamation Act if the defendant in proceedings for the publication of defamatory matter proves the publication occurred on an occasion of absolute privilege. At present, neither the general law nor the act extend the absolute privilege to publications made to police forces or services. This gap has created circumstances where individuals may be deterred from reporting alleged unlawful conduct out of fear that disclosure could expose them to defamation proceedings. To address this, the bill amends section 27 of the Defamation Act to extend the defence of absolute privilege to publications made to officials of Australian police forces or services when those officials are acting in an official capacity. This will ensure people can provide information, make complaints or raise concerns with police without risk of defamation liability for the act of reporting. I do note, though, that the Crime and Corruption Commission submission also sought for this protection to apply to CCC officials as a complaints-handling body, as allowed for by the Model Defamation Provisions. However, as both the CCC and the department have noted during the committee process, the CCC does already have an equivalent protection under its governing legislation.

Notably, the CCC submission also referred to the consultation process. While the CCC were consulted during the Standing Council of Attorneys-General process review of the model provisions, the CCC did note that they had requested further consultation with the Queensland government ahead of the implementation of this legislation. The CCC was rather blunt that that never happened. When the department were asked about this during the public briefing, they acknowledged the consultation that was already undertaken during, as I said, that SCAG review. Effectively, the government have washed their hands of doing what I think was a pretty reasonable request by the CCC and engaging with them in good faith in the introduction of this bill. We all know that those opposite have long grandstanded about the CCC for political pointscoring purposes and we all know they have made many promises—the Premier and his cabinet ministers—about listening to experts. However, just like we consistently see, they have continued to disregard those experts. The CCC asked the LNP government to be consulted and evidently, based on the evidence that was provided during the committee process, that did not occur.

Collectively, these amendments strike the right balance. They modernise our defamation laws to reflect the digital environment in which Queenslanders live and communicate; they clarify responsibilities, provide appropriate protections and strengthen pathways for early and fair dispute resolution; they recognise the important role of digital platforms in our daily lives without imposing unfair or reasonable burdens; and they protect vulnerable people by ensuring safety considerations are central to the court's decision-making and by removing barriers to report complaints to police.

Queenslanders should be able to interact online, express their views and participate in community life without fear that digital platforms will become places of unchecked harm. That is why the Labor opposition will be supporting this bill.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (12.05 pm): I rise to speak on the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. As chair of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee, which examined the bill, I indicate that the committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. The committee undertook a detailed inquiry into this bill, considered five written submissions and received a departmental briefing on 10 November 2025.

This bill represents a significant and necessary step in modernising Queensland's defamation laws. It ensures that our legislation remains consistent with the nationally agreed Model Defamation

Provisions and, crucially, that it keeps pace with the realities of communication in the digital age. When the original Defamation Act 2005 was enacted, its primary purpose was to implement nationally consistent laws, reducing forum shopping and ensuring that publications occurring across state boundaries were subject to uniform legal treatment. At that time, social media was barely emerging, search engines operated in fundamentally different ways, online community forums were small and relatively localised, and the concept of global platforms hosting user generated content at scale had not yet transformed public conversation. Today, the situation could not be more different. Digital platforms have become central to how people communicate, how they share information and how they express ideas. They have also become places where reputations can be unfairly damaged within moments.

Existing defamation laws, drafted for a different era, have struggled to adapt to the complexity and speed of modern communication. The Standing Council of Attorneys-General recognised this challenge and initiated a national stage 2 review to assess the suitability of the Model Defamation Provisions in relation to digital platforms as well as the role of absolute privilege. The outcome of that review was the endorsement of the Model Defamation Amendment (Digital Intermediaries) Provisions 2023 and the Model Defamation Amendment (Absolute Privilege) Provisions 2023. It is these nationally consistent reforms that the bill before us now implements for Queensland.


During the departmental briefing I asked about national implementation timelines. Mr Leighton Kraa advised that all jurisdictions except Western Australia and Queensland had met the agreed target of enacting reforms by 1 July 2024. Again, we are here to pick up the slack left by the Labor Party, who could not get it done during their decade of decline, but we are happy to help. This bill introduces modern definitions and a structured approach to determine when a person is considered a digital intermediary in the publication of digital matter. These definitions are central to the operation of the reforms. They recognise that in the online environment not all involvement in the transmission of content amounts to an act of publication. Some services merely act as technical conduits, caches or storage providers without any knowledge or control over what passes through their systems. The bill, therefore, provides statutory exemptions for intermediaries whose role is passive and technical. This includes cellular communication carriers, email service providers, cloud storage services and others who simply facilitate communication infrastructure. Similarly, search engine providers, whose automated systems generate links to third-party material, will also be exempt. This is an essential correction. Without it, passive digital infrastructure providers could be unfairly burdened with liability for material they neither created nor meaningfully controlled.

Secondly, the bill introduces a tailored defence for digital intermediaries that host user generated content. These platforms, such as social media services, online community pages, discussion boards or websites that allow comments, do not fall within the passive exemption. They provide a space for public conversation and therefore have a more direct relationship with what happens on their services. Under the bill, such intermediaries will have a defence if they maintain an accessible complaints mechanism and take reasonable steps to remove or restrict access to defamatory content within seven days of receiving a complaint. This is a balanced and sensible approach.

Thirdly, the bill amends the criminal defamation offence under the Criminal Code, ensuring that the new exemptions and defences operate consistently across both civil and criminal law.

Fourthly, the bill modernises the offer to make amends process, allowing it to include steps to remove or block access to defamatory digital content.

Another significant reform is the extension of absolute privilege to communications made to Australian police forces acting in their official capacities. This promotes the reporting of suspected crime and misconduct without fear of defamation liability. The committee supports this reform as a necessary measure to uphold the integrity of our justice system and encourage public cooperation with law enforcement. The Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill brings Queensland's defamation laws into alignment with national reforms and ensures they remain contemporary, fair and effective. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (12.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The purpose of this bill is to modernise Queensland's defamation laws by implementing the nationally agreed stage 2 reforms to the Model Defamation Provisions as endorsed by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General. The committee has received and considered a range of submissions from across Queensland—from integrity agencies, victim advocates, community legal services and local government. I wish to acknowledge the contributions of the Office of the Victims' Commissioner, the Crime and Corruption Commission, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the North Queensland Women's Legal Service, whose insights have been invaluable

to our deliberations. This bill ensures Queensland remains consistent with other jurisdictions, including New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, while addressing uniquely Queensland concerns. It strikes a careful balance between protecting reputations and enabling free communication in the digital age.


The first major reform in the bill concerns the liability of digital intermediaries—those that host or facilitate online content created by others. Until now, defamation law has struggled to keep pace with the realities of online communication. Digital intermediaries such as website hosts, social media platforms and community page administrators can be caught by defamation actions, even when they have no knowledge of the offending content. The bill introduces a limited defence for intermediaries, provided they act responsibly. They must, for example, have accessible complaints handling mechanisms and take reasonable steps to remove or restrict access to defamatory material once notified. This change encourages responsible online conduct without unfairly penalising those who act in good faith.

The Local Government Association of Queensland welcomed this as a necessary modernisation. Councils across the state maintain digital forums and community pages where residents engage in debate and commentary. The Local Government Association of Queensland noted that these reforms enhance certainty for publishers and platform operators alike and will clarify the extent to which councils acting as administrators of online spaces may be responsible for user generated content. However, the Local Government Association of Queensland also identified practical challenges for councils, including resource implications and the need for clear guidance on whether council-run platforms qualify as digital intermediaries. It recommended the government provide practice notes and model complaints protocols to ensure consistent application across local government. I believe this is sound advice. As we transition to this modernised framework, it is critical that councils and community administrators understand both their protections and their obligations.

This bill also grants courts enhanced powers to manage defamation material. Courts will be able to order intermediaries, even if they are not parties to the case, to remove or block defamatory content and to disclose the identity of anonymous posters, subject to appropriate privacy safeguards. The committee heard compelling evidence about the harm caused by anonymous online attacks. Local councillors, community leaders and ordinary citizens have been targeted with abusive or false material spread rapidly through digital platforms. The new powers will help address these situations swiftly and fairly, ensuring that individuals are not left defenceless against faceless defamation.

The North Queensland Women's Legal Service particularly welcomed the provisions dealing with preliminary discovery of digital posters' identities. However, it cautioned that such orders must take into account the privacy and safety of victims of domestic violence. The service supported the bill's requirement that courts consider the potential for harm if identifying information is released. It suggested that any existing domestic violence orders between parties should be disclosed to the court before such orders are made. That is a practical and victim-centred recommendation which deserves careful attention during implementation.

Perhaps the most significant and widely discussed reform in this bill is the extension of the defence of absolute privilege to cover communications made to police officers acting in their official capacity. This issue goes to the heart of access to justice. For many victims, particularly survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, the threat of defamation has been used as a weapon of intimidation. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (12.16 pm): Today I rise to speak in favour of the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This is another bill overseen by the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee—a committee I have been proud to serve on this year. I want to take this opportunity to recognise the parliament's staff and committee members for what has been a busy year and thank them for their dedication and hard work.

This bill is a vital update to our 2005 Defamation Act, aligning Queensland with national standards and delivering a powerful shield against the rampant dangers of online defamation. In our digital age, words spread like wildfire across platforms, often anonymously, damaging reputations and silencing voices. They ignite harm, spreading across digital platforms to bully, harass and sometimes endanger lives. This bill cuts through the chaos with precision and it shields passive digital intermediaries like search engines from undue liability while mandating accessible complaints systems that demand action within seven days to remove or block harmful content. Critically, it extends the defence of absolute privilege to publications of defamatory matter to officials of Australian police forces or services while they are acting in their official capacities. This means Queenslanders, especially victims of crime and

domestic violence, can report offences to police without fear of being sued for defamation. They speak truth to the power, safe in the knowledge that the law stands firmly behind them.

The bill also drags our justice system into the 21st century by allowing notices and other documents to be given or served by means of email, messaging or other electronic communication to an electronic address or location indicated by the recipient. There will be no more delays by someone claiming that they never received a letter. This simple change will speed up proceedings and deliver fast justice for victims. These reforms ensure Queenslanders can report crimes without fear of backlash; modernise criminal defamation under the code, with lawful excuses for good faith intermediaries; and give courts authority for rapid take-downs, always prioritising privacy and safety, especially the risks of domestic violence that plague too many families.

My commitment to Thuringowa has seen me fight for tougher legislation that will make families feel safer, and this bill expands on that commitment. They deserve nothing less than ironclad safety. Online smears can shatter community bonds, escalate bullying at schools and heighten real world threats in our close-knit neighbourhoods.

As someone who has volunteered and chaired the Crime Stoppers Townsville committee, I have witnessed firsthand how unchecked family abuse fuels family breakdowns, mental health crises and even violence. This bill is our frontline defence. It keeps our kids safer from cyber torment, empowers parents to protect their loved ones and ensures swift justice so no family endures needless suffering. I am proud to have contributed to this bill. I will always stand guard for your safety, your voices and our shared future.

Finally, the bill will commence seven days after the date of assent. This will ensure the reforms take effect as soon as possible while providing necessary time to advise Queensland courts, key stakeholders and the public. I proudly commend the bill to the House.



Ms McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (12.20 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As many contributors have already raised today, the principles that this bill puts in place follow the nationwide Model Defamation Provisions. I want to clarify that these amendments do not make any changes to what is considered defamation or how defamation provisions generally work; however, they do extend some protection to digital intermediaries. It means that people who organise or run search engines or caching services will not necessarily be liable for defamation that may be found on websites they are involved in. To make this contribution more relevant to the general Queensland population, most people will probably have dealings with this bill in relation to their role as digital intermediaries when they are administrators of social media platform groups.


Many members of parliament are members of various different community Facebook groups. Certainly, a very important part of the role of an MP is to keep check on a lot of the hot topics that are happening in our communities. Those community Facebook groups do a really good job at bringing community together for the most part, but I think we have all seen examples where posts and comments can cause division within the community. Some people behind their keyboards—without having directly attributable comments—can and do tend to make some comments which fall under the definition of defamatory. This bill seeks to assist in relation to people who administer that particular page.

Currently, where a defamatory comment is left on a community page, the administrator—if that comment is left up—might find themselves playing a role in a defamation case against them which names them personally. It has been irrelevant whether that Facebook administrator knew that the post was even there or was defamatory. This particular amendment provides a defence for a Facebook page administrator to be absolved of that defamation as long as, upon receiving information that that post is considered defamatory, it is removed within seven days.

This is a straightforward and logical process; however, I caution members of the Facebook community to check what groups they are an administrator for. Those who have been on Facebook for more than 10 to 15 years may have started a group some time ago that they have completely forgotten about. They may not be monitoring it. Their email address has probably changed so they might not be getting notifications. I urge those who are on Facebook to check what groups they might be administrators for. If they are not actively monitoring that page and if they are not making themselves available to people—either by not having an updated email address or not monitoring it; they have decided to go off Facebook—then they need to check to make sure they are no longer administrators because one day, if they have not removed themselves and they are not actively monitoring those comments and removing them as requested, they might find themselves subject to a defamation case.

While the provision is for active community pages—we know that our administrators generally do a really good job—for those older community groups, those pages that are no longer active and that

may have had more open joining privileges, people should check to make sure they are removed as an administrator lest they find themselves subject to a civil defamation case. Whilst I absolutely endorse the amendments to ensure our administrators are protected, I think some of the real-life realities of the digital footprints we had when we were probably a bit younger need to be acknowledged. Again, I urge all community group pages to make sure that, unless they are going to be monitoring and taking that administrator role actively, they consider whether they want to stay administrators. That is not to say that these community Facebook groups should be limited or removed—again, I thank all those administrators who take on that role on the various community pages in my community; all those lost dogs that are found, all the moving boxes that are shared—but people should make sure they are actively involved or else remove themselves. There are other provisions within this bill that I understand are being supported by the opposition, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (12.26 pm): I rise to address the House on the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. Queenslanders expect our laws to keep pace with how we communicate today. This bill amends our state's defamation laws to implement nationally agreed changes that will ensure consistency between the states. These changes will bring decades-old laws into the modern age to make them fit for purpose with the widespread use of digital platforms. In recent years we have all seen how quickly false information can spread online. Queenslanders deserve laws that protect these reputations without stifling free debate.

The bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for detailed consideration on 14 October 2025. As a member of the committee, I had the opportunity to hear from submitters and stakeholders who provided different perspectives on the proposed changes. I want to thank the committee and the departmental staff for their work throughout this process. After hearing all of the evidence and reviewing submissions, the committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed.

This bill is part of a long-running reform process and is the result of a collaborative effort between the attorneys-general of all states and territories. Back in 2004, the attorneys-general agreed to set up uniform model provisions in each of their states. In Queensland these provisions were enacted by the Defamation Act 2005. All state and territory governments are part of the agreement that allows for a regular review through the Model Defamation Law Working Party. The working party functions as a body to make reports to the Standing Council of Attorneys-General on proposals to amend the Model Defamation Laws.

The first-stage review of the laws was undertaken in 2019 and 2020. This review made recommendations for amendments that were unanimously endorsed by each state and territory. The stage 1 amendments were enacted in Queensland by the Defamation (Model Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021. The second stage, completed in 2021, completed the provisions and made two sets of recommendations, parts A and B. Part A looked at how responsibility for defamation applies to online platforms that host or share material from others. It considered when those platforms should be held to account for content that is published and when they should not. In common law, the term 'publisher' is very broad, and anyone who takes part in publication in any degree can be regarded as a publisher. This amendment does not seek to alter the responsibility of individuals or organisations that create and post defamatory content online; it just addresses the liability for the intermediate platforms that may host the content. Part B of the provisions focused on the defence of absolute privilege, particularly whether it should be extended to cover reports made to police and certain complaints-handling bodies.

The Standing Council of Attorneys-General endorsed both parts of stage 2 by majority agreement in 2023. These reforms were reflected in the national model provisions, now adopted by several states. This bill will enact both parts A and B of the stage 2 amendment recommendations in Queensland. Included in the amendments are exemptions for digital intermediaries to prevent them being held liable for defamatory material in specific circumstances. Exemptions apply where the intermediary's role is limited to providing a caching, conduit or storage service and has not taken an active role in the publication of the material. This refers mainly to social media or communication platforms which host content posted by the public.

Search engine providers are covered by these provisions if their role in the publication of defamatory matter is limited to automatically producing search results that direct users to web pages where the material appears. These exemptions come with strict requirements that reasonable steps need to be taken to remove or restrict the offending material within seven days of receiving a complaint. Platforms will have a responsibility to make sure that accessible reporting tools are available and that


they engage with complainants sufficiently. This will ensure that prompt action is taken to minimise the reach and impact of defamatory material in line with community expectations.

The bill deals with more than just digital platforms, the amendments also extend the defence of absolute privilege to publications of defamatory matter made to police while they are acting in an official capacity. These changes will give Queenslanders confidence that complaints and police reports made in good faith will be without the risk of legal reprisal. The Office of the Victims' Commissioner and the North Queensland Women's Legal Service made the importance of this clear during the committee process to ensure that victims are seen, respected and heard by the justice system. Both of those organisations referred to the way this amendment would better serve victims of domestic violence, as threats of legal action are often used by perpetrators to harass, intimidate and punish their victims. This is another way we are strengthening trust in our legal system by ensuring that complaints can be made safely and responsibly.

As well as the civil law changes, this bill also amends section 365 of the Queensland Criminal Code which covers the criminal offence of defamation. This ensures that the new defences and exemptions also operate as a lawful excuse in criminal defamation proceedings. It means that organisations which may be protected under the new amendments do not remain liable for criminal defamation. By putting these reforms into action we are protecting everyday people and our local businesses from unfair exposure to defamatory statements. We are balancing that with the need to uphold the right to free speech for all Queenslanders. This ensures social media platforms, community forums and search services can operate with clarity about their responsibilities while still enabling free discussion.

For people in Capalaba and across the state it also gives confidence, when someone posts something unjust or malicious, there is a path to remedy and a signal that our laws treat reputations seriously. In turn, it supports healthy online communities where people engage, know their rights and feel secure. This is what Queenslanders expect in a modern digital world.

This bill is about bringing Queensland's defamation laws into line with the rest of the country and modernising them to keep pace with the demands of the digital age. We promised Queenslanders a fresh start, and this bill is part of delivering that. We are ensuring that we have laws that remain fit for purpose and reflect the reality of modern Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.33 pm): I rise to speak concerning the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. Before turning to its provisions I do wish to speak very briefly about why defamation law matters to the very foundation of our civil society. I am reminded of two writers who warned us of how truth can be undermined, not by force but through repetition and the corruption of language. Lewis Carroll, one of my favourite authors, once wrote, satirically, 'What I tell you three times is true.' It was meant as a joke, yet today repetition often does create perceived truth.

Claims repeated online acquire an authority through momentum alone, with algorithms amplifying what engages, not what is accurate. That is not because these digital platforms are inherently malicious, but because they were built for speed and scale and never for verification. Our defamation laws, however, were built for a world of editors, publishers and identifiable gatekeepers. That world no longer exists. A functioning democracy depends on reliable information. When people can tell mistruths about others without consequence trust collapses between citizens, institutions, businesses and the media.

Truth is not merely a personal interest, it is a public good. Without shared confidence in what is actually real, cooperation becomes impossible. Reputation determines whether others will work for you, believe you, trade with you, or vote for you. False statements do not just harm individuals, they distort social decision-making; they corrupt how we choose leaders, partners and paths forward. Defamation law protects the integrity of those decisions by requiring claims about others to be grounded in reality.

In a society with no legal respect for objective truth, whoever controls the loudest story ends up controlling reality. That leads to propaganda overwhelming evidence, mobs overpowering due process and charisma defeating fact. Defamation law draws a hard line. You do not get to rewrite reality simply because you have an audience. There is a paradox here. Defamation law protects free speech rather than weakening it. If lies drown out truth, speech becomes noise; if falsehoods go unpunished, honest speakers retreat; and if reputations are easily destroyed dissent becomes dangerous. Truth-based limits make speech more valuable, not less. Without that objective truth as a legal standard, accusations replace evidence, outrage replaces judgement and punishment replaces proof.

Defamation law insists that moral condemnation must rest on fact, not suspicion, not crowd emotion, not momentum. Truth also requires precision of language. When the boundaries between words collapse, clear thinking collapses with them. Defamation law depends on distinctions between

fact and opinion, allegation and proof, harm and offence. When serious labels are used carelessly, accusations begin to sound like evidence and defence becomes nearly impossible. A healthy society must allow deep disagreement and sharp criticism, while refusing to admit fabricated wrongdoing, invented crime or knowingly false personal attacks masquerading as debate. Defamation law protects not silence, but meaningful speech grounded in reality.

The Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 implements nationally agreed reforms to bring Queensland in line with New South Wales, Victoria, the ACT, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Our defamation laws as they currently stand were drafted in 2004 before social media, smart phones and mass user-generated publication. They assumed a world of controlled publication and professional gatekeepers. They did not anticipate a world where anyone can publish instantly to millions, where comment sections generate thousands of posts and where information travels faster than verification. Yet the law of publication remained unchanged. Anyone involved in publication could be liable as a publisher. This created serious uncertainty. Should internet service providers be liable for content passing through their systems? Should community forum administrators face the same liability as someone who authors a false claim? Should search engines be liable for indexing content that they did not create?

The High Court's recent decision exposed this problem. Media organisations were held liable for third-party comments that they did not write or approve. The law worked as it was designed but for a world that had long vanished. This bill closes that gap. It preserves the core principle that authors remain fully liable for what they publish. It does not create immunity for defamation; it clarifies responsibility in a digital ecosystem that the original law could never have contemplated. It recognises that some intermediaries are genuinely passive, merely transmitting or storing data. Others operate at such a scale that real-time moderation is practically impossible. These reforms balance clarity for intermediaries with clear pathways for victims to seek redress, acknowledging those realities. The bill also removes barriers that deter victims from reporting crime because, again, this is a government that is forever on the side of victims. When survivors fear defamation for making a complaint to police, the law has gone wrong. These reforms address that injustice.

As I mentioned, these laws are part of a Commonwealth harmonisation effort. It pays to make the point that national consistency in this case is essential. Queensland publishers and users operate across borders. Different defamation rules create uncertainty and forum shopping. The only market should be the market for justice.

Carroll, one of my favourite authors, warned that repetition could be mistaken for truth. Another favourite author, Orwell, warned that blurred language makes clear thinking impossible. Both understood that when the mechanisms for recognising reality are corrupted the truth itself becomes fragile. Defamation law preserves those mechanisms. It insists that reality is not created by repetition, that truth is not from momentum and that reputations cannot be destroyed by claims untethered by fact. In doing so, these reforms protect not silence but the possibility of reasoned disagreement grounded in truth and, with it, the foundation of civil society.

We live in turbulent times and it is important that our laws meet the challenges that confront our society, that confront democracy. I am so very pleased to be part of a government supporting the fine work of our Attorney-General that will meet those challenges and meet them in a timely way, at the very early stages of this government, after the former Labor government refused to act, exposing community administrators to risk and publishers to prosecution and also robbing the public square, online and in person, from objective truth, which is the foundation of democracy itself. I commend the bill to the House.



Mrs KIRKLAND (Rockhampton—LNP) (12.42 pm): I rise to speak to the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This is an important bill that amends and modernises legislation that is over 20 years old. With technology moving at an incredible pace, it is important that we as a government keep step with legislation that supports those advances. As I read through these amendments, I could not help but notice that this is yet another amendment bill that could have been and should have been delivered by those opposite. I wondered why it is that there are so many pieces of legislation that the Crisafulli government has had to amend and why it is that we keep finding errors, oversights and cumbersome legislation left by the previous Labor government for our state to try to work with. Then I realised that it is because the previous Labor government was a government that delayed, deferred and denied Queenslanders sensible, practical governance and protection such as the Reportable Conduct Scheme. I am honoured to be a part of the Crisafulli LNP government that develops, drives and delivers good governance and protection for Queenslanders.


We find ourselves living in a world where many people are scrambling to keep up with technological advances and then fighting between the democratic right to speak your mind and the exercise of assassinating someone's character online without consequence. It is incumbent upon a government to take measures that protect victims from serious and harmful acts of defamation. All states and territories are part of the Model Defamation Provisions. Attorneys-general from across Australia formed the intergovernmental agreement that underpins those provisions. As early as 2021, discussions began around the Model Defamation Provisions and resultant papers were released for public consultation in August 2022, with a wide range of stakeholders participating in that consultation. All recommendations were approved by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General in 2023 and yet again Queensland remained one of the last states to step up and implement changes that would potentially save lives.

The Crisafulli government is determined to keep Queenslanders safer, and this is another piece of legislation that works towards that goal. The bill introduces greater protections for victims to remove the threat of defamation proceedings when reporting to police. It offers a new defence for administrators of online community forums and social media pages where defamatory comments from a third party have been made. The bill also gives courts new power to order the removal of defamatory content, even if a platform is not part of a legal case. The introduction of this bill ensures Queensland defamation laws remain uniform with other states and territories. It is imperative consistency exists in law where publications do extend beyond our jurisdictional boundaries. These reforms offer an opportunity for platforms to make amends where defamatory digital matter has occurred and there is allowance for platform administrators to take steps to remove or prevent access to that matter.

Because Labor failed to deliver these reforms in a timely manner, the Crisafulli government is now acting quickly, allowing for this bill to commence seven days after receiving royal assent, ensuring changes commence as soon as possible while still providing the necessary time to advise the courts, key stakeholders and, of course, the public.

As politicians, we are all too familiar with the defamatory comments that arise on social media and other forms of electronic communication, but this is not about us; this is about the people of Queensland. It is about my constituents in Rockhampton and Gracemere. It is about mums and dads. It is about children. It is about business owners. The bill is about protecting victims. It is about keeping Queenslanders safer and delivering a fresh start.

This bill is another example of the Crisafulli government mopping up the mess of the previous Labor government. The people of Queensland deserve to have legislation that is modern and up to date, working for Queenslanders and not against them. The Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill works towards achieving that. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.47 pm): I rise to address the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This legislation represents a timely and necessary update to Queensland's defamation framework. Our laws must keep pace with modern communication, particularly as so much of today's public discourse occurs in digital spaces that transcend electorates, states and even national borders. This legislation implements the agreed national reforms endorsed by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General—reforms that reflect careful review, broad consultation and a clear recognition that consistency across jurisdictions is essential to prevent so-called forum shopping and to provide certainty to both publishers and individuals.

Importantly, this legislation strikes an appropriate balance. It preserves longstanding protections for freedom of expression and for responsible public commentary whilst ensuring individuals have recourse when their reputation is harmed. It achieves this by recognising the genuine difference between those who actively publish defamatory content and those whose functions are merely technical or facilitative in nature. For example, a conduit or caching service, whether provided by a telecommunications service provider or a cloud-based platform, is not in the business of content creation; nor is a search engine that simply indexes material through an automated system. It is appropriate that services of that kind are exempt when they have no meaningful role in the publication of a defamatory matter. Equally, it is appropriate that digital intermediaries such as social media platforms and digital page hosts are required to maintain an accessible complaints mechanism, and once notified of potentially defamatory content they must take reasonable steps to remove or restrict access within seven days.


This is a fair, clear and balanced approach. It provides an incentive for the responsible administration of digital forums, without curtailing legitimate engagement or debate. It also modernises related aspects of the law by allowing offers to make amends to include the removal of content by

enabling courts to make orders relating to unknown posters, and by ensuring service of documents can occur through contemporary electronic means. The extension of absolute privilege to police acting in their official capacity is likewise sensible and overdue. These reforms are not theoretical. They respond to very real challenges that communities, individuals and governments confront daily.

Many of us have seen within our own communities examples of how poor administration of digital forums can foster misinformation, disinformation and content that is, at times, blatantly defamatory. The 4070 & 4069 Action Group page on Facebook is one such example where administrators routinely allow material that has no factual basis, and in some instances can be defamatory, to be amplified and spread. This is not harmless chatter. The content is often inflammatory, designed to provoke conflict and has the potential to cause genuine social harm. There is also a direct linkage between the approach undertaken by the administrators of this page to foster and incite conflict and social and community harms and unrest which, undoubtedly, by setting poor standards of behaviour, can inevitably lead to mental health harms for children and adolescents for future generations.

It is also concerning when content on this page is manipulated for political purposes, including to advance a Labor Greens narrative that bears little resemblance to the lived experiences or values of local residents. In fact, some of the contributions, including by the editor of the *Local Bulletin* magazine are poorly constructed, lack basic factual grounding and seek only to divide the community. Some contributions are often so lacking that local residents often call it out as puerile, facile or simply juvenile. Content can also stray into defamatory territory, although this is unsurprising given the increasing irrelevance of the publication's broader contributions to civic and civil debate.

This legislation will not stop people from expressing views, and nor should it, but it will require those who host digital spaces to meet minimum standards of responsibility and to act promptly when content crosses the line. It reinforces that while public debate is welcome it must not come at the expense of a person's reputation or wellbeing. This legislation reflects sound policy, national consistency and a pragmatic response to modern communication. It strengthens protection for individuals, encourages responsible digital behaviour and reinforces confidence in the law. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. AJ PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (12.51 pm): I rise to speak briefly to the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill aims to implement changes that have been agreed to nationally. This has been a long process since the early 2000s when jurisdictions across the country agreed to work together to establish uniform laws. In that time, we have also seen an explosion in the use of electronic and digital information and the sharing and consumption of information. The amendments will deal with digital content, the defence of absolute privilege for police forces, the servicing of documents and make changes regarding the transition to the new legal framework.

This bill forms part of the ongoing national defamation reform process which was endorsed by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General. It will align Queensland's defamation laws with the model provisions agreed between all Australian jurisdictions. This supports greater national consistency, improves certainty for stakeholders and promotes a coherent and contemporary legal framework across Australia. More specifically, the objectives of the bill are to provide a digital intermediary some limited protection from liability and a defence for third-party consent. It will allow for an offer to make amends, including the removal of, or restriction of, access to defamatory digital content. It will also enhance court powers so they can order intermediaries, even if they are not parties to a case, to remove or block defamatory content and require disclosure of the identity of anonymous posters, considering specific factors.

As the Attorney-General said in her introductory speech, the Model Defamation Provisions were originally developed with traditional media publications in mind. They had not anticipated the continuous growth of the internet, social media and the emergence of new technologies. Provisions need to be amended to reflect the significant shift in the way that information is published and consumed.

A fundamental feature of our increasing digital age is that, as long as you have a device, you can consume information which has been published across the world. It means that anyone with an internet connection can publish information. The publication of that information can be assisted by numerous intermediaries who have a range of roles in the publication process. Think of someone who administers a social media page for a community group for residents of a particular region or a suburb. They would be a digital intermediary as well as the organisation on which the information is published, while the person who posts the information or comments on the post is the author and publisher. These amendments do not change the liability of the creator and poster of the content, what they do is address

the question of liability to those who have participated and enabled its publication. This reform introduces a new defence for digital intermediaries which clarifies the law and provides certainty for them.

In 2021 the High Court affirmed that media companies were liable for third party comments and information which had been posted on their social media pages in response to news stories. The effect of the judgment was that not just media companies were liable. It meant that organisations and people who maintain their own social media pages and websites were also liable. The judgement also meant that it was also relevant to all websites and social media sites not just Facebook which was involved in the original court case.

Under the new defence, digital intermediaries will not be liable where they can provide that, at the time of publication, they had an available complaints mechanism. If a written complaint is lodged, the publisher must have taken reasonable steps to deal with it within seven days. This defence will mean that digital intermediaries do not have to monitor every post or comment, which in some cases can be in the thousands. What they must do is respond to and monitor complaints. This also allows those who feel aggrieved to have a clear mechanism and path to lodge complaints about defamation and a timeframe within which they should receive action or a response. The amendment in this bill brings Queensland into line with changes which have been implemented in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the ACT.

Among other amendments which recognise the prevalence of electronic communication devices, it allows notices and documents to be given or served by email messaging or other electronic communication to an electronic address indicated by the recipient. This also brings the system into the 21st century.

As I foreshadowed earlier, among other changes, this bill will make changes regarding absolute privilege. Put simply, it will extend the defence of absolute privilege to publications of defamatory matter to officials of Australian police forces or services while they are acting in their official capacities. This change removes a potential barrier for victim-survivors to make complaints to police. It is disappointing that the former Labor government did not make changes sooner.

This bill recognises the far-reaching footprint of the modern digital age and devices, protects reputations and assures freedom of expression. I support the bill.



Mrs YOUNG (Redlands—LNP) (12.57 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025—a bill that delivers stronger, clearer and more contemporary defamation laws. These reforms are needed across Queensland, but they are particularly important for communities like ours in Redlands. Redlands is a community built on strong connections. We look out for one another. We stay engaged online and we care about what happens in our streets, our schools and our neighbourhoods. That same sense of connection can also leave people feeling vulnerable. Families, small businesses, volunteers and community groups in Redlands have all felt the impact of the darker side of the digital world—rumours presented as facts, anonymous attacks and online pile-ons that spread quickly. The harm they cause is real.

That is why this bill matters. It gives everyday Queenslanders, including Redlanders, the protections they deserve and updates our law to match the way people communicate today. For too long our defamation laws have struggled to keep pace with online behaviour. This bill delivers nationally agreed reforms endorsed by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General, ensuring Queenslanders have the same protections as people in every other state.

The bill makes several key changes. First, it clarifies that digital intermediaries like Telstra, Dropbox and search engines should not be held responsible for defamatory material when they have had no active role in publishing it. They are the infrastructure, not the publishers. This commonsense approach protects the digital services we rely on.


Second, the bill introduces a fair and workable defence for social media platforms and page hosts, including the suburb and community pages Redlanders use every single day. If they have a clear complaints process and remove harmful content within seven days, they can rely on that defence. This is especially important for volunteer admins—people running community pages out of goodwill—not there to moderate legal disputes. This bill gives them clarity whilst still protecting individuals from harm.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Young, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Under the Crisafulli LNP government, one group of people will have a very merry Christmas indeed—that is, of course, all of the LNP's mates and donors. Take former LNP MP Julian Simmonds, for example. He has been gifted a plum \$312,000-a-year job because apparently, amongst other things, he has a nice personality: no merit selection process, no advertising, no committees—no process at all. Thank heavens he has a nice personality. That would rule out all of the LNP's front bench from ever getting a job doing anything in Queensland.

Then there is John Sosso. He is wearing so many hats we should gift him a hatstand for Christmas. Mr Sosso not only got the director-general's job with the Deputy Premier—again, no process whatsoever; he is also on the Economic Development Queensland board and, on top of all of that, he was appointed to the Electoral Redistribution Commission. His qualifications? Tony Fitzgerald identified Mr Sosso as a person who was actively trying to disrupt the Fitzgerald inquiry. I could go on—I mean, I could really go on—because so far more than 50 LNP mates and/or donors have been gifted a cushy government gig—all of them looking forward to a very merry Christmas and, of course, a very prosperous new year.


There is another group of Queenslanders for whom Christmas is looking a bit grim. That group is comprised of the millions of Queenslanders who are not LNP mates or donors—the millions of Queenslanders struggling with the cost of living, the millions of Queenslanders who are not beneficiaries of LNP largesse, the Queenslanders who will think twice about the cost of switching on the Christmas lights this year, the Queenslanders without a roof over their heads. New data from Domain released today shows that in Queensland you need to earn at least \$114,000 a year to be able to even enter the rental market without going into housing affordability stress immediately. Many Queenslanders do not earn that much. Under the LNP—

Mr Molhoek: Ten years of inaction over housing. Ten years of doing nothing.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member for Southport. After 14 months of your government, more people are struggling to find a house than ever before. Congratulations, LNP! Merry Christmas to all of you!

Under the LNP, car rego has gone up dramatically and universal power bill rebates have disappeared. Queenslanders were promised that crime would be fixed by last Christmas. It is a good thing Queenslanders are a resilient mob, because they need to be with a government like this. To all Queenslanders struggling in this state, I wish you a merry Christmas and I hope 2026 is better for all of you.

Renewable Energy

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (2.03 pm): The Crisafulli government continues to deliver for Queenslanders after a decade of decline and decay under the Labor government. We are backing rural and regional Queensland as we deliver on our election commitment to empower regional communities to have a say on renewable energy projects. Labor's reckless rush to renewables and short-term political pointscore meant that communities, councils and stakeholders were shut out of the approval process for projects across Queensland. Unlike Labor, the LNP is committed to giving all Queenslanders a voice and empowering regional communities on renewable energy developments to ensure long-lasting legacy and community benefits are locked in for new projects at the time of approval and to level the playing field, as per our election commitment.


Less than six months ago, the Crisafulli government passed new, nation-leading laws to ensure wind and solar energy projects are assessed with the same rigour as other major developments. The same rights afforded to residents in the city when it comes to major development in their neighbourhood are now afforded to regional Queensland for wind and solar projects, as it always should have been. As part of the consultation on our nation-leading laws, there was clear feedback from residents and councils that battery energy storage systems should be included in the new rules. The LGAQ and councils like Townsville, Mackay, Bundaberg, Isaac, Gladstone, Lockyer Valley and Central Highlands, to name but a few, made it explicitly clear that they wanted battery energy storage facilities included in the new rules.

I am pleased to announce that the Crisafulli government has heard the concerns from local communities and councils and today we are acting. Within the past hour, the Governor has approved a new regulatory framework for standalone battery energy storage facilities. This new regulatory framework provides one clear set of rules for industry and empowers local communities to be part of the approval process for these projects. Effective tomorrow, all large-scale standalone battery energy storage facilities will be impact assessable, meaning mandatory community consultation and a consistent approach to assessment. These projects will be assessed in a uniform manner by SARA across the whole state. Battery projects which are 50 megawatts or more in scale will be subject to our nation-leading planning laws requiring a social impact assessment and a community benefit agreement being entered into with the relevant local government. This must be done prior to the lodgement of a development application. We are restoring a voice for regional communities and putting them back in the driver's seat for projects in their backyard, just as we promised. I thank the Local Government Queensland of Association—Somerset, Bundaberg, Isaac and Lockyer—for supporting these strong laws.

As I said this morning, what a bad year for a bad opposition leader in this state. We see the theatrics and the stunts they try to pull, all because they are under the microscope of a commission of inquiry dealing with the CFMEU. Labor do not like what they hear, so they engage in theatrics and muster every ounce of fake outrage to distract—'Look over here'—rather than be held accountable for 10 years of not acting on the CFMEU in this state. This Crisafulli government is finally acting on the CFMEU, something Labor did not do for 10 years!

(Time expired)

Cairns Electorate, Events

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.06 pm): Today I rise to express the deep disappointment felt across Cairns and the Far North following yet another series of blows to our events calendar—blows that will have real and lasting impacts on local jobs, our tourism economy and the confidence of a region that has always punched well above its weight.

Before I do that, I want to touch on the fact that on Tuesday evening I stated that there had been no new agreements or announcements under the Connecting Queensland Fund. Since then, the minister has made me aware of an announcement of which I was not aware at the time. We have not found an official press release, but I understand that 24 hours before I made my announcement in the House there was a Facebook post by the Assistant Minister for Tourism. I am not sure if that is how the government is now making announcements. As such, I acknowledge the one announcement. I want to correct the record and apologise for any inadvertent error.

Cairns is not only a beautiful place to live but also one of Australia's most recognised tourism destinations. Events are not an optional extra for us; they are a critical economic driver. Every year, major events inject tens of millions of dollars into our visitor economy, filling hotel rooms, supporting hospitality, sustaining airlines, creating jobs and building the international profile that keeps our region competitive. Crankworx alone delivered more than \$20 million to the state's economy—to our economy in the Far North—between 2022 and 2024. It generated 67,000 room nights, drew 23,000 spectators and reaches 1.9 million viewers globally each year. It cemented Cairns as a world-leading mountain-biking destination, yet under the Crisafulli government this internationally renowned festival has been allowed to slip through our fingers.

The damage does not stop there. Cairns has also been snubbed for the Rugby League World Cup. Despite our world-class Barlow Park, despite recent investment in lighting upgrades to broadcast standard and despite our proven ability to host elite rugby league, we have not been allocated even a single game. Meanwhile, Brisbane, Townsville and other destinations will enjoy this event and share of the 110,000 visitors expected for the tournament.

When the tourism minister visited Cairns and said, 'We've got your back,' the people of Cairns took him at his word. However, that word rings very hollow today because, when we see the real opportunities, the Far North has been abandoned. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Premier's latest announcement on Triple M that Mackay will host a test match against Bangladesh next year—no mention of Cairns—a test match that could quite easily be held in Cairns—


Mr Smith: Or Bundaberg.

Mr HEALY: Or Bundaberg. We have the magnificent Cazalys Stadium in Cairns. More importantly, we need these events for our economy. For a government that claims Queensland to be

the events capital of the nation, the neglect of the Far North exposes that slogan as nothing more than spin.

(Time expired)


Weather Events, Recovery Assistance

 **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) (2.09 pm): The Crisafulli government is a government for all of Queensland. When it comes to community recovery, we ensure there is no daylight between the weather event and the recovery. With that, I acknowledge our local member Bree James, whom I spent time with in Cairns for the second anniversary of Cyclone Jasper. She was a fierce advocate up there, even prior to being elected—out and about across that community ensuring they had food, supplies and everything else in the midst of that disaster. It was a privilege to attend there with our local member as the minister responsible for delivering the election commitment of \$2 million in hall upgrades right across the Far North and to meet with the incredible volunteers from the Machans Beach hall as well as the Stratford Bowls Club. I look forward to going up there and supporting her in opening the renewed infrastructure projects which are part of our commitment to recovery.

From \$2 million in vital upgrades in Far North Queensland, we now move to focus on supporting communities to recover after the storms here in South-East Queensland. I have visited the Pumicestone region, in particular Bribie Island, with the local member and met with residents. Those who have been impacted significantly are our more senior population, and I acknowledge the trauma that they have experienced. I pay tribute to all of those who work and volunteer in our Community Recovery hubs, and I thank my departmental staff who stood up very quickly during the recovery effort across the Moreton and Redlands regions.

On that, I can update the House that we have received almost 60,000 applications for hardship assistance to help people bounce back. That has resulted in over \$10.1 million being paid out, and I can reassure Queenslanders that it has been done at record pace—95.2 per cent of payments were processed within 24 hours. Also, over 4,000 residents had an interaction with our recovery hubs, and over 4½ thousand have been administered psychological first aid by our incredible volunteers at the Australian Red Cross and UnitingCare. I thank each and every one of those who work not only in the disaster response but also in the recovery, which sometimes takes many months or, in some cases, many years. I thank those volunteers, and I thank all members who represent their community in the interests of community recovery and disaster resilience.

Sandgate Electorate, Housing

 **Ms ASIF** (Sandgate—ALP) (2.12 pm): Families in my community are doing it tough. Every day my office gets several calls and emails outlining heartbreaking stories of hardworking Queenslanders who have been forced to choose between keeping a roof over their heads and putting food on the table. The Crisafulli LNP government promised them a fresh start. They promised to tackle the cost of living. They stood in front of the cameras and made this commitment—I know how much the Deputy Premier loves the camera. They said all of the right things about making life more affordable, but what have they delivered? They have delivered cuts and broken promises.

Parts of Queensland have become the most unaffordable in the country. Three in four renters across Queensland are in rental stress in some suburbs in my community, like Bracken Ridge, Taigum, Sandgate, Deagon and Brighton. Between 80 and 89 per cent of renters are facing rental stress. Ordinary families, who keep the state running, simply cannot afford to pay the bills and pay rent. For them, it is a choice between their bills and a meal on the table. There are parents who are going hungry so their kids can eat. Single parents, single-income families and households relying on government assistance simply cannot afford a rental property in Queensland.

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Southport!

Ms ASIF: Nearly half a million Queensland households cannot afford the basics after paying rent. There is no cost-of-living relief and no energy rebate. Instead, what is this government doing? They are making it worse. This year the Deputy Premier and housing minister have cut more than 10,000 social homes. They have gone and axed even the legislated minimum target requirements for social housing,

while the social housing list skyrockets. I am not surprised. This is who they are. This is what they do. This is their track record.

Let me tell this Premier about real Queenslanders this government is failing. Veronica is drowning in rental arrears. Deb has water leaking in her social housing home and she cannot even get assistance, even after several attempts to get help. Kate, a single mother fleeing domestic violence, is begging for social housing support. Rob called housing services 10 times before anyone even responded to him. Kevin has been homeless for almost eight months and sleeping on the street near my office, while the housing minister has cut social homes. He has no hope of getting housing help.

Where is the minister for these people? Where is the compassion they were promised? Queenslanders voted for a promise of a more prosperous future. They want what they were told they were going to get, not the same old LNP cuts to services, broken promises and complete disregard for working families. It is not just a failure; it is a deliberate choice to abandon ordinary families and prioritise ideologies over people's livelihoods.

If the government will not deliver and build affordable homes, what chance do vulnerable Queenslanders have? We cannot accept a government where essential workers cannot afford to live in the communities they serve and where parents go without food to be able to pay rent. My community and Queensland deserves so much better than what this government is offering them.

Tourism Industry



Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.15 pm): I rise to reflect on a year of delivery from the LNP Crisafulli government after a decade of decline under those opposite. In October last year, Queenslanders voted for a fresh start, and we have hit the ground running. Since then, we have grown our protected area estate by 114,696 hectares, and there is more to come. When we invest in what makes Queensland special—our landscapes, our wildlife, our way of life—we invest in our future.

Under our More Rangers, Better Neighbours commitment, we started by saving the 40 fire rangers those opposite were going to cut. Then we got on with recruiting another 80 Queensland Parks and Wildlife rangers and 30 Indigenous land and sea rangers. That is the largest boost to our frontline staff for the QPWS since it was founded by our side of politics 50 years ago.

We have released a new landmark draft Less Landfill, More Recycling strategy and a \$130 million fund to work with councils across Queensland to reduce landfill and boost recycling. Who can forget the findings of the inquiry into the member for Murrumba's diabolical container refund scheme? Do you know what? He still will not release the cabinet documents.

Meanwhile, we have saved Queensland tourism from Labor's cuts. They planned to slash the tourism division by over \$150 million—a 95 per cent funding cliff. They planned to destroy Tourism and Events Queensland by cutting \$100 million from their forward budget. We rescued them all because investing in tourism is also part of our landmark 20-year Destination 2045 strategy.

We are making this state the home of the holiday. We are backing in agritourism. We have secured events in every corner of Queensland from the Mount Isa Rodeo to our Queensland Day multicode sporting blockbuster. We are unlocking more ecotourism experiences and have delivered the Ngāro Track.

As the member for Cairns had to acknowledge, under our Connecting Queensland Fund we have locked in flights that will bring more tourists to Queensland. Yes, our assistant minister regards her work as more than a title and a pay cheque, unlike those opposite.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Logan, you are warned.

Mr POWELL: We also know the member for Cairns loves our new Tourism Support Hub—our bespoke service to help tourism operators cut red tape. I table the member for Cairns' ringing Facebook endorsement of the Crisafulli government's Tourism Support Hub.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 2 December 2025, from the Facebook page of the member for Cairns, Mr Michael Healy MP, in relation to the Tourism Support Hub.

Do not worry, it is a lot cleaner than the last Facebook post the member made which has been referred to in this place. He comes down here and whinges about what is happening in Cairns, but up there he is backing in the LNP government's initiatives. He is happy to plaster his face all over our

announcement, but his cuts never would have delivered anything. We are delivering for Queensland, just as we said we would, and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

E-Mobility Safety, Parliamentary Inquiry



Mr MELLISH (Aspley—ALP) (2.18 pm): I miss when we had a tourism minister in this House who actually advocated for the industry and backed in jobs in Far North Queensland in particular. I am a big fan of the member for Cairns.

When it comes to cancelling pill testing, this government is quick to act. When it comes to cancelling wind farms, this government is even quicker to act. When it comes to saving lives on our roads and footpaths, this government is sitting on its hands. Last month the government brought forward the end date of the sugar bioenergy opportunities inquiry by three months, yet when it comes to the e-mobility inquiry this government has voted in this House again and again against bringing forward the inquiry end date. They even voted in this chamber against our proposal to have interim measures before Christmas.

They are happy to act on their own ideological issues, but it is tumbleweeds when it comes to community safety on our streets. We have had 13 accidents requiring hospitalisation in just one night over the weekend; 14 deaths so far this year, with three young boys killed in a matter of months; a 150 per cent increase in injuries presenting to our hospital emergency departments, already buckling under record ambulance ramping; health experts warning of the increasing rates of severe head trauma; and motoring and insurance industry leaders who have time and time again pointed to the increased chaos fuelled by illegal devices on our roads—and we have a government that sits on its hands.

This Premier promised that he would govern with stability. He promised that he would listen to the experts. The Premier's leadership on e-mobility is as unstable as an e-scooter ride on a Story Bridge footpath. Experts are lining up to lay out the harsh reality of this unfolding crisis. The committee has received more than 1,000 submissions and heard from more than 50 witnesses appearing before us. The committee has done the work. Now it is time to act. Five out of the six witness groups we heard from this week at our hearing we have actually already met with. We met with them months ago. This is the second time they have been in front of the committee. Even stakeholders are saying we are going round and round in circles. They all share one common message: act and act now, yet the desperate pleas from experts have been met with not only silence but also derision by this LNP government.

Reading from a 2 December *Courier-Mail* article about English cricketers breaking the law by riding e-scooters without helmets, the transport minister said, 'I don't want to see anyone bowled over on our streets—though judging by recent form, the Poms seem to prefer getting themselves out.' That is further proof that this government is not taking this e-mobility crisis seriously. There have been 14 lives lost this year and they are making jokes—14 lives lost and this leadfooted transport minister, who posts videos of himself breaking the speed limit, is making puns.

My office is inundated by Queenslanders who are frightened and fed up. I know that my colleagues hear the same stories. This affects all Queenslanders. It affects vulnerable users like the elderly or those with vision impairment trying to navigate crowded footpaths. We know that everything in this government that does not make for a slick sound bite for the Premier or helps a donor gets relegated to the low-priority pile. They tell us that this government is bogging down because this micromanaging Premier does not trust his ministers to make decisions. I would not trust this mob either, to be fair. When you have a government only concerned with their donor mates, important issues like this fall off the to-do pile.

(Time expired)

Parrella, Mr C



Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.21 pm): I rise on a local matter of importance to the people of the electorate of Clayfield.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: What piece of genius are we getting from those opposite!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Order, members! Member for McConnel and member for Woodridge!

Mr NICHOLLS: Don't worry. You will get a chance.

For more than half a century, Charlie 'the king of barbers' Parrella at the corner of Zillman and Manson roads in Hendra has trimmed the hair of anyone and everyone—from strappers and jockeys to politicians, senators, MPs and high commissioners. Charlie's father arrived in Inglewood from Italy in 1956. When Charlie turned 16, he started work in his first barber shop in the main street of Inglewood. After a number of, I suppose, disputes with his employer, he decided to start off on his own in Inglewood. He ran his own business there until he moved to Brisbane in 1968, to his barber shop on the corner of Manson and Zillman roads in Hendra, and he has been there for 57 years—ever since.

Charlie is an institution in our community and his shop has in many ways become a community hub. Generations of families have sat in the same barber's chair—the original one that Charlie brought with him from Inglewood all those years ago in 1968. Indeed, nearly every four weeks I sit in that same chair and my boys had their hair cut there as well.

At the end of last year I started a petition to install a 'Charlie's Corner' sign outside his shop to recognise Charlie's enduring contribution to our community. Hundreds of people signed the petition to show their support. Charlie has built a remarkable life for himself and his family, but alongside the great joy and success he has experienced he has also faced immense sadness. Charlie recently lost his beloved wife, Rosa, and he has endured the unthinkable heartbreak of farewelling both a son and a daughter. Today I can share with the House that the Brisbane City Council will be installing the sign to mark 'Charlie's Corner' in the coming months to display the cultural significance of Charlie's shop in our community.

I know that this sign will mean a great deal to a man, over 80 now, who has devoted himself to his family and to his community. He supports the Northern Suburbs Bowls Club with the annual Charlie Parrella Cup. The love for Charlie in my community is strong, and that was shown clearly through the many signatures collected in support of my petition.

I would like to thank Charlie for his many years of service to our community including, as I said, cutting my own hair—and, when the taxi and Uber debate was on, nearly my throat—and to Councillor Julia Dixon for her advocacy with the Brisbane City Council in getting this sign. The sign will be a very fitting way to recognise and honour a remarkable man whose story is so much the story of success, community and care for Queensland.

Racing Industry, McGrath Review



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (2.25 pm): Well, it finally arrived following an embarrassing two-month delay after the racing minister was sent to the sin-bin regarding possible changes to the point-of-consumption tax. Of the 110 recommendations made in the McGrath review into the Queensland racing industry, the state government has accepted 79, accepted 26 in principle and rejected five.

The previous Labor government in 2015 inherited a racing industry plagued with integrity issues, governance and debt, with financial year 2016 being the sixth straight year of losses for Racing Queensland. We implemented the MacSporran recommendations and turned around the Queensland racing industry to be worth more than double the \$1.2 billion in financial year 2016 to \$2.5 billion, employing 14,500 full-time jobs—an extraordinary effort and a pleasing result.

Since 2017, prize money and annual club payments have risen from \$165 million to \$370 million—more than double. The infrastructure spend both in the regions and in SEQ has amounted to well over \$400 million including at The Q, the world's best greyhound racing complex, the Gold Coast Turf Club, the Ipswich Turf Club and the Townsville Turf Club, and millions in upgrades to country-rural racing clubs right throughout Queensland. We are the only state that returns 80 per cent of the POCT to the industry—leading the nation.

Any suggestion by the government and this incompetent minister that the Queensland racing industry was neglected is absolute nonsense. I challenge the minister to find any stakeholder—just one—in the racing industry who agrees with him and who does not find such statements simply laughable.

Finally we get the recommendations of the lacklustre review after 12 months of inertia only to discover that things are operating pretty well here in Queensland and we did not need someone from New South Wales to tell us what to do. What are the changes? There will be no change to prize money levels—they will be retained. There will be no change to country racing—just the continuation of our strong investment. There will be no change to the good investment we have—we gave \$25 million in the last budget to replace the BRC stand and not one dollar of this has been spent.


Mr Mander: Big deal. They wanted 100.

Ms GRACE: Big deal! I take that interjection—big deal! I say that right back to you, Minister. Big deal—\$200 million ain't going to cut it. This is so lacklustre. It is such a waste of money.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for McConnel, direct your comments through the chair. That will be helpful.

Ms GRACE: This is so lacklustre and such a waste of money that it is not even worth the paper it is written on. When it comes to QRIC and RQ, there will be no changes. The structure is wonderful! All the things that we did were absolutely fantastic. This is nothing more than tinkering around the edges. It is a review that was done by someone who left a mess in New South Wales and wants to bring it up here to Queensland.

Youth Crime

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.28 pm): It has been a busy year of delivery for the Crisafulli government. Each and every day we have focused on putting victims back at the heart of the justice system and reducing the number of Queenslanders falling victim to crime. Our youth justice reforms are starting to turn the tide on Labor's youth crime crisis. Victim numbers have dropped by 6.5 per cent and serious repeat youth offenders are down 16 per cent.

Contrast this with the decade of decline under the previous Labor government, which led to a record number of victims of crime and the number of serious offenders increasing by 64 per cent under Labor. Why? It is because the former Labor government weakened our youth crime laws and created a generation of repeat youth offenders. Let's not forget that Labor's botched laws also left hardcore adult offenders in youth facilities for months after they turned 18—all while 94 per cent of youth offenders released from detention under Labor reoffended within 12 months.

During Labor's decade of decline, robbery increased by 100 per cent, the number of stolen cars increased by 91 per cent and the number of youths charged with stolen vehicle and robbery offences tripled. They sat on their hands while the number of youths stealing cars skyrocketed and break-ins nearly doubled. We promised Queenslanders we would continue to strengthen our youth crime laws, and that is exactly what we are doing. We passed the Making Queensland Safer Laws—


Opposition members interjected.

Mrs GERBER: I hear them chirping because we know they did not support Adult Crime, Adult Time when it was first introduced. We know they tore themselves apart. The question for them is whether they will continue to support our strong youth crime laws. They removed detention as a last resort, they removed the offence of breach of bail and they closed the Childrens Court to victims, their families and the media. With our Making Queensland Safer Laws we have ensured that the rights of victims are back at the heart of the criminal justice system.

We are making Queensland safer with our early intervention measures and rehabilitation. The first cohort of at-risk teens is taking part in the many intensive Regional Reset camps happening right across the state. For the first time, youths exiting detention get 12 months of support. Under the previous failed youth justice minister, youths would exit from detention with no support. Some of the most serious repeat offenders did not even get their flimsy 72 hours of support. We are making strong progress to restore safety to Queensland communities.

On this last sitting day of 2025, I want to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone across the Currumbin electorate, whom I am so privileged to represent in this House. It has been a huge year of delivery for the Crisafulli government. I love being the voice for Currumbin. Despite Labor on the other side of the chamber continuing to put Queensland down, the Crisafulli government will continue to deliver.

Education

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (2.31 pm): Here we are, just over 12 months into this government, and how has that year gone for the education minister? He started it by saying he did not want the job, but with his defined benefits maxxing out next year we hear that he is thinking of retiring and running for Gold Coast mayor, so maybe he will put himself out of his misery.

He promised school staff they would feel safe, but school staff are increasingly saying they feel like they are punching bags for students. All the minister has offered to do about it via the EB, which

has been withdrawn anyway, is to set up an occupational violence taskforce. He promised to reduce red tape by 25 per cent, but the School Opinion Survey for this year shows that only 42 per cent of school staff feel like initiatives to reduce red tape are making a difference. He promised to address workforce shortages but forgot to budget for more teachers. The dispute lodged by the QTU at the Industrial Relations Commission shows that many special schools principals feel so challenged by the reduced funding available this year for staffing that they believe their students and staff are now at risk.

At the end of last year the minister received recommendations from the comprehensive review of school resourcing that Labor instigated. It was the most comprehensive review in 30 years. He still has neither tabled nor responded to it. He appointed James Power, the founder of right-wing think tank Advance, to the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. I am not sure of his skill set.

Worst of all is the teacher EB. Almost 70 per cent of teachers rejected the offer and went on strike. In fact, this minister has overseen two strikes in three months—something that has not happened for nearly 30 years, and that was also under an LNP government. Now the government is forcing them to go to arbitration, which could take up to two years without any pay rise at all. Who would be that mean to teachers? I have a new booklet from a teacher. I table a copy now.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, describing why teachers are taking industrial action.

It is titled 'Who Sank the Boat?' I will read you out the words.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Order! You are an experienced member. You know that you do not use props in this House.

Ms FARMER: With respect, the Speaker allowed me to do this in estimates.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It does not matter. We are not in estimates and there has not been any prior permission. That is a prop, member.

Ms FARMER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will read out the words.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, you are very close to being sat down for opening that up. You are on very thin ice.

Ms FARMER: Is it okay if I just read the words?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Continue. As long as—

Ms FARMER: These are the words—

Beside the river, in QLD's civic place

There lived a Premier and an Education Minister

They were a team

And one year, when the teachers were updating their EBA, they decided to row far away from the needs of students and schools.


Do you know who sank the boat?

Was it the Premier, as he didn't want to step in, so sat to the side, which made the boat spin?

Was it John-Paul, who sat in the middle, and did not listen but his Rolex he did twiddle?

Do you know who sank the boat, Mr Deputy Speaker? I do know who sank the boat. It was this education minister and it was this Premier, who do not care about our teachers. They are going to send them into Christmas with no pay rise, probably for two years, because they just do not care about teachers and never will.

Sport

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (2.34 pm): What a great year it has been for delivery in the sports sector. We began the year with our delivery plan, putting 1,200 days of chaotic decision-making to bed. Right across the state the vibe has changed. People are happy about the games rather than talking about getting rid of the games. We delivered a delivery plan.

Connected with elite sport is obviously grassroots sports. Our \$250 million Games On! program has been well received right across the state and we have invested in fields, indoor stadiums, dressing rooms and lights. The commitments just keep going and going and they have been very well received. Then there's our Play On! vouchers, the LNP's permanent sports voucher program. The previous government did a sugar hit before the election without any commitment beyond 30 June this year. We

have not only locked it in for the next four years; we have also increased the amount of money. It is a great way to help families and young people afford the cost of being involved with sport.

Returning to elite sport, the previous government had a plan to transition the QAS out of the department and into a statutory body but—wait for this—not this year, but 18 months from the time they made the announcement. We fast-tracked that and it was effective from 1 July. As a result, that organisation is more flexible and has the agility to respond to all of the demands of high-level sport.

I am really proud of the establishment of the Para Sport Unit, which currently has 85 athletes—our aim is to double that over the next couple of years—and Our Project Para Coach Development Program for para athletes. I have put together the Para Sport Reference Panel to help inform us so that, when we make decisions about sports and facilities, we have the para opinion and knowledge to make sure we do that well.

In response to the shadow minister I want to finish with the racing review. The racing review has delivered a new Albion Park racetrack. They were going to put harness racing out at Norwell. We have now brought that uncertainty to an end and made sure that the Albion Park harness racing track will be the jewel in the crown. We will invest more money in Marburg to make it a training centre. We will bring harness racing back to Toowoomba and we will give the money for the John Power stand, the \$25 million which they committed but did not give them. We will make sure they have enough money so we have a grandstand at our primary track here in Queensland that everybody will be proud of.

Disaster Relief



Ms BOYD (Pine Rivers—ALP) (2.37 pm): On Monday, 24 November savage weather ripped through the south-east corner, severely impacting Moreton Bay communities. I want to commend the council, volunteers, SES, rural firefighters, community organisations on the front line and everyone involved in the response and recovery to date.


But there is one thing that you hear right across our city, a common chorus: this LNP government let us down. Action has been lacking, uncoordinated, too slow, too confusing. What qualifies a suburb to be eligible through support payments for disaster recovery? Postcode politics have been on full display. Myself and the members for Murrumbidgee, Morayfield, Bancroft, Kurwongbah and Ferny Grove have all written to the disaster recovery minister seeking a just application of financial support. We pleaded with the small business minister for help. Neither have responded or acknowledged the concern. The fact that there has been not one word from them in this chamber this week says it all.

The member for Pumicestone used this place to attack us—the people supporting her community—rather than to advocate for small business grants in her community. Why hasn't the small business minister been to our city? Why has he not said a word? Why has the energy minister left our community in the dark? Why did it take the disaster recovery minister until the end of the week to board a return plane from Townsville? Where was the leadership in this event? The Premier saw the devastation with his own eyes and it is his job to activate a central response, yet he chose not to.

For the record, the member for Morayfield and I were both invited to Beachmere by business operators. We were there to meet with dozens of them. Many of them were on the brink emotionally and financially. They were exhausted. All they wanted was answers and support. I agree with the member for Pumicestone: they felt exploited and unsupported from this LNP government. That was the message that came through loud and clear before we even said our hellos. To hear that that still exists is very regretful—it is representative of a lack of action from this government, the very people who can fix it.

All small businesses should be able to call for help and support, and it is only ever proper that MPs provide that without fear or favour. It is our job as MPs to support them in those calls. The member for Pumicestone needs to explain to her community why these people are still without the support they are begging for. It is of deep regret to us all on this side of the House that so many vulnerable, hardworking Queenslanders are left wanting by this government in their time of need. The government are more focused on threats, deflecting and defending their ineptitude than they are on doing their job. This LNP need to get on with it and provide the support to our community. These people in need who are hardworking Queenslanders expect that support from their government. The discrimination needs to stop.

Natural Disasters, Recovery

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (2.41 pm): As summer begins, it is important to remember that, while we cannot predict the weather, we can be there for Queenslanders who need our support. That is why the Crisafulli government is working year-round to support Queenslanders to get ready for a disaster and get through a disaster and the disaster recovery process. We are all too well aware that at this time of the year severe weather can strike. It is a case of Queensland being beautiful one day but difficult to predict the next—much like which day will be the Leader of the Opposition's last day in his job. The Crisafulli government is ready to support our communities across this state when severe weather strikes—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Order!

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you are warned.

Ms LEAHY: The Crisafulli government is ready to support our communities across this state when severe weather strikes, whether it is in Coolangatta, Cooktown or Camooweal.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. If you did not hear, member for Greenslopes, you are warned. If there are any further outbursts, you will be removed.

Ms LEAHY: This includes activating disaster assistance for communities under the joint Commonwealth-state Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. In response to the latest series of severe weather, 14 local government areas are already receiving some form of DRFA funding—an area stretching from the Southern Downs to the Central Highlands. Personal hardship assistance has also been extended to the areas hardest hit by severe weather, including Gympie, Moreton Bay, Noosa, Redlands, Somerset and the Sunshine Coast. I want to give a shout-out to the local MP, Ariana Doolan, who joined me on the ground in her community. Disaster-affected Queenslanders are receiving that assistance at a time when cost-of-living relief is needed.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the team at the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and also the volunteers across the region for all of their hard work this year and for the coming season, as well as the various mayors and councillors who have worked collaboratively and speedily to answer the needs of their communities. Despite all of the good work being done to help Queenslanders, what has greatly disappointed me are the actions of the members opposite who have tried to politicise disasters. The former disaster recovery minister implied that suburbs were being activated for assistance based on which party represents them. Shame on her. She knows very well—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Pine Rivers, you are warned.

Ms LEAHY: Shame on her, Mr Deputy Speaker. She knows very well that the suburbs activated are reliant on council recommendation, not state government. In choosing to do this cheap political pointscore, the member demeans not only herself but also the local governments who are on the front line helping Queenslanders recover.

Ms BOYD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence and I ask that the member withdraw her comments.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just one moment, I will seek some advice. The advice I have received is that it was not personal towards you.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Excuse me! We will have silence while we resolve this matter, please. Member for Warrego, you are an experienced member in this House. Was there anything personal included in that?

Ms LEAHY: Mr Deputy Speaker, if it helps the member, I will withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms LEAHY: The Crisafulli government will continue to deliver for Queenslanders. We will not let Queensland go back to Labor's decade of decline.

Albert and Logan Rivers, Recreational Fishing



Ms McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (2.45 pm): We have important responsibilities in this House for various reasons. One that I take seriously is as a custodian of this state, as someone who has the responsibility to pass on this state to the next generation of Queenslanders. On Tuesday night I hosted a large number of youth advisory committees from across South-East Queensland. They came in to the public gallery that night and watched as renewable energy targets were repealed and requirements for public ownership of new generation assets were removed. They were here to see the state that they will one day have responsibility for and custodianship of go backwards.

As the member for Macalister, I take the custodianship of my local area just as seriously. Our local recreational fishers have reached out to me and other Logan MPs to raise their concerns about gillnetting practices in the Logan and Albert rivers. I understand that the details about a good fishing spot are sacrosanct to a recreational fisher, so it has to be pretty serious for them to start discussing it publicly. When a group of fishers approached the member for Logan and me about their concerns about fish stock in the Logan and Albert rivers, it is safe to say they were very concerned.

It may come as a shock to many residents of Logan, but the Albert and Logan rivers have until recently held healthy stocks of threadfin salmon and barramundi. Like I said, it is a well-kept secret. No-one is suggesting that the commercial fishers who are currently working in the river are engaging in illegal practices. There are fishing licences that allow gillnetting in this area. However, the practices currently being used are not sustainable. They are not sustainable for commercial fishers and they are certainly detrimental to the future of the recreational fishing industry in Logan.

I am proud to have been part of a government that commenced the phasing out of gillnetting practices in Queensland. We can see the success of this policy with the booming recreational fishing industry in Rockhampton as a result. I am joining other MPs as well as over 4,000 recreational fishers who have already signed my petition to date calling on the government to ban gillnetting in the Albert and Logan rivers. I am hosting a community forum for recreational fishers on Saturday morning on the Logan River—

Mr Power: I'll be there.

Ms McMAHON: I will be joined by the member for Logan as well as our opposition spokesperson. I invite the minister to come and talk to the locals who just want to protect the future of the river and the fish stocks within. Recreational fishing is a key hobby and industry here in South-East Queensland. It is a shame that our local fishers have to travel some distance to catch the fish that were once just around the corner. They want to make sure this is sustainable into the future so they can enjoy a weekend fishing on the Logan and Albert rivers with their kids in the future as part of our Queensland lifestyle.

Government, Information Technology



Hon. SJ MINNIKIN (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (2.48 pm): Ten years of decline and chaos under Labor have flowed through to our IT systems, but do not just take my word for it. I welcome the recent report from the Queensland Audit Office as part of its ongoing monitoring of government IT systems. The QAO's report highlighted critical risks associated with legacy systems which require ongoing vigilance and coordinated action to safeguard the integrity, security and efficiency of government operations.

Under the Crisafulli government, my department is responsible for data collection to monitor at-risk systems and will continue to emphasise the importance of turning around the decline in our IT systems that occurred under Labor. To give members an idea of the mess left by several former failed Labor ministers, there were 62 at-risk systems in 2015. After 10 years of Labor, there are now almost 200 at-risk systems. They oversaw a decade of decline, a decade of chaos and a decade of failure to invest in our critical systems—the very systems that support our public servants, drive our finance systems and serve Queenslanders. The Auditor-General report stated—


Information technology (IT) systems ... are a vital component of the state's assets. As with any asset, IT systems need active management to maintain them and keep them secure.

This report does not include the failures of two former ministers the member for Miller and the member for Aspley, who allowed 17,000 Queenslanders to renew their driver's licence online without the proper medical information. We have resolved almost two-thirds of those applications and continue to work with affected Queenslanders to fix another Labor mess. Make no mistake, I am determined to get Queensland's IT systems back on track. We have a plan that takes a methodical approach to addressing Labor's decade of decline.

As the QAO report notes, the Crisafulli government's Digital Fund, delivered as part of the 2025-26 state budget, provides a billion dollars over the next four years to support digital and ICT investments. The fund will support targeted investments in digital ICT across the whole of government and provide greater oversight and efficiency in the implementation of key digital systems and services.

The Crisafulli government is taking a collaborative approach to delivering solutions. I note while this report makes no recommendations, it refers generally to IT system control deficiencies within the state entities as well as risks relating to cybersecurity and legacy financial systems across the sector. I further note the report recognises measures already implemented by my department to support the sector to strengthen its approach to information security, cybersecurity and overall digital and ICT capabilities. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of IT decline.

Redcliffe Hospital

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.51 pm): I rise to wish all our residents in Moreton Bay a merry Christmas. It has been another year gone and another year of nothing happening at Redcliffe Hospital.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WHITING: That is such a shame. Let's have a look at what did not happen. On 25 March construction halted on the site and redundancies were issued. Honourable members have heard me say it before that the day the last drilling rig was pulled off site was the same day this government announced they were going to build a brand new sports stadium in South-East Queensland. As they have heard, the piling foundations for this building were already in the ground. There had been consultations with clinicians and non-clinicians; 27 groups were consulted over four rounds in the design of that building, which was halted. However, there is something that has happened onsite. Do members remember those piling foundations that I said were on site? They removed them all; they are gone. They got rid of those and kept those holes in the ground. That is the only construction they have done at Redcliffe Hospital.

Next year what are we going to see? Nothing is happening by the look at it with regard to the clinical services building. We did hear an announcement that they are going to go out to tender for an approved construction partner—whatever that is—but the opposition leader pointed out that September 2026 is when they are going to call for it. That is a year of nothing happening with regard to this clinical services building.

For patients, there is going to be nothing happening as well. We have done some new research on their stats. In terms of planned surgery waiting times for 90 per cent of patients, the median was 142.5 days under us. That has now gone out to a median waiting time of 266.5 days under the LNP. That is 142 days to 266. Not only that, I see from the September snapshot of their information that the number of planned surgeries performed had gone down 24 per cent. This is what we are seeing at Redcliffe Hospital and it is what we can expect next year for many people: nothing will be happening.

Let's be generous. What will happen next year? Maybe we will see the start of that car park extension at Redcliffe. It is interesting that, from what I hear, the contract was awarded for \$36 million, which is about the same as what it cost Labor to build that five-storey car park in 2020. It is the same cost. Costs have gone up, surprise, surprise. I did note that the company that won the contract, RCC, an interstate company, has a CFMEU EBA in other parts of Australia. I do not know what is going to happen on this site. It is interesting to think what the final cost is going to be for the car park and the clinical services building.


Ms SIMPSON: Mr Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Bancroft, please continue.

Mr WHITING: It is going to cost more and more to build this clinical services building and the car park once they enter this Olympic building cycle.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydore, I thought you were rising on a point of order. There was still 10 seconds to go.

Maish, Mr S; Women, Economic Security

 **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) (2.54 pm): Apologies, member for Bancroft. I want to give a special shout-out to a

special person. Stuart Maish, Principal of Maroochydore State School for the last 14 years, is retiring tomorrow. He deserves to be acknowledged for his wonderful service to the children at this very important school. It is a mighty school even if it is a small one. The way he has led that team, the staff and the community deserves to be acknowledged. I also want to acknowledge that his work has gone beyond the classroom, beyond being principal of this school. Before Maroochydore State School he was principal at Delaneys Creek and has been teaching since the early 1980s. In his spare time he has been busy with primary athletics and recently returned from Canberra after organising the national championships at School Sport Australia as a track and field adviser. He has done so much for children in our community as an educator and as a great community servant. I wish him and his wife, Jo, a wonderful retirement.

I want to now turn to a great announcement, a great program where we are delivering for Queensland aspirational opportunities not just for women themselves but for their families and communities as well. This is what Queensland women have been telling me matters to them. As Queensland's first Minister for Women's Economic Security, I am proud to be part of the Crisafulli government that listens to Queensland women. We have been consulting widely as part of the development of Queensland's first ever Women's Economic Security Strategy.

Economic security looks different to different people and for different women. It is about being able to support themselves such as being able to not return to an abusive relationship; for others, it is the opportunity to grow wealth, access leadership and pathways to help themselves, their children or community members. Whatever economic security means for them, it cannot be obtained without a secure income source, which means better access to paid employment and opportunity. That is why the Crisafulli government is proud to provide an additional \$4 million to expand the Future Women Jobs Academy, delivering more opportunities to women who want to get back to the workforce, particularly after a career break that may have stemmed from caring responsibilities. This funding will guarantee an additional 500 Queensland women will benefit from the groundbreaking program in 2026 and 2027. The already successful program is delivered in partnership with Future Women and is designed to be flexible, self-paced and free, thanks to the Crisafulli government's funding. This is a two-year extension coupled with our \$20 million Women's Career Grants. We are a government delivering for Queensland. We will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.

(Time expired)

Federal Government, Environmental Regulation




Mr KNUTH (Hill—KAP) (2.57 pm): Last week the Labor-Greens alliance in Canberra rammed through the Environment Protection Reform Bill 2025. Every Queenslander should be terrified as this legislation could devastate Queensland's economy. This federal legislation is a direct attack on Queensland primary producers and miners and could halt broadscale agriculture east of the Great Dividing Range because of alleged run-off onto the Great Barrier Reef, which the federal environment minister said on ABC Radio recently had to stop. What an absolute load of rubbish.

Our farmers have already been hit with a tirade of draconian vegetation management laws. They have been used as a political football by both major parties regarding the hysteria over the run-off to the Great Barrier Reef. Our farmers have spent millions improving water quality and have worked with governments to comply with already strict rules. The dangerous legislation overrides Queensland's development laws and state rights, and the consequences are extreme. If the Greens have their way, the timber industry would be shut down within three years. The Prime Minister says he wants to build 1.2 million homes. I ask: with what? Imported wood?

We are already importing more than 30 per cent of the fruit and veggies we eat. Dairy imports are rising. Beef processing, sugar mills and seafood production are foreign owned or collapsing. For decades governments have stripped away protections and let foreign corporations take the profits and called it a free market. Farmers cannot survive on a free market if everyone else is playing by different rules. The United States is throwing its full weight behind its farmers, investing US\$12 billion to agriculture support packages to ensure food security, while Australia keeps cutting the legs from under our own primary producers. What is the Queensland government doing to fight these destructive federal laws to protect our primary industries? We should be backing our farmers and expanding food production, not punishing them. We should be building dams, not strangling water access. Our farmers deserve better and I will continue to defend them loudly and proudly against the constant government interference.

Clermont, Health Services


 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (3.00 pm): To say I am disappointed that Clermont is again facing challenges in the doctor space would be a gross understatement. Just last week the community was told in a Facebook post that the town's GP clinic faced imminent closure. To make matters even more tense, Clermont is one of the many regional communities where a hospital doctor also runs the town's GP clinic, a system known as 'right to practise'. After five years of lobbying and fighting for a doctor, the current GP arrived just over two years ago, breaking a long drought of permanent doctors at the hospital and meaning the town's GP clinic could reopen. It was a great day for Clermont, especially given the fact that very little assistance was offered by those opposite when they were in government or their federal counterparts.

Let me be very clear: general practice services are the sole responsibility of the federal government. Despite that, Queensland Health via the previous Mackay Hospital and Health Service board provided significant financial support to assist with the reopening of the GP clinic under a licence-to-occupy model that was due to be renegotiated and renewed in January 2026. I am advised that the licence holder, the current GP, opted not to pursue a renewal and subsequently decided to close the GP clinic. In the interests of transparency, I am also advised that a police investigation is currently underway into a serious workplace incident last week that has resulted in a doctor being suspended.

In stark contrast to what we have seen previously, this government has not buried its head in the sand when it comes to the health services that the people of Clermont need and deserve. Despite the obvious challenges, the Clermont Hospital will provide 24/7 emergency care and from 15 January will also provide outpatient clinics. Just as importantly, this government has ensured that work is already underway exploring suitable alternative options to support a GP clinic in open and honest consultation with ClermontConnect and other stakeholders. While some aspects must remain confidential to protect the privacy of individuals and in the interests of fairness, I can say that the current situation is vastly different from what we have seen in the past. I understand the concern and the frustration felt by the community of Clermont, and I share their concerns. I call on all relevant parties to engage respectfully, honestly and genuinely, with the health and safety of all community members the sole priority. Clermont needs a permanent doctor and I will continue to advocate on behalf of this great little community until such time as we secure a replacement.

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, yesterday the member for McConnell raised a matter of privilege to which I indicated that she could write to me on that matter, if she so wished. I also indicated that I would be reviewing the tapes. This morning in matters of privilege the member for McConnell continued the prosecution of a matter of privilege raised by the member the previous day and about which the member had not yet written to me as I had indicated she could. Furthermore, the member for McConnell tabled a proof transcript of the quarrel that had been provided to the member but which was not an official record and was not authorised by me for further publication as it related to a matter on foot. This is a gross discourtesy to me and my office.

Later, I ruled that both members had participated in a quarrel and called upon the member for McConnell and the Deputy Premier to apologise to the House and withdraw their words used in the quarrel yesterday in breach of standing order 246. The Deputy Premier apologised and withdrew. The member for McConnell chose not to apologise and withdraw. The member for McConnell not only chose not to apologise, but the member again continued the prosecution of a matter of privilege. Furthermore, the member for McConnell prosecuted the substance of the same matter of privilege in a question without notice, which I allowed as it went to the Premier's responsibilities for ministers.

The member for McConnell has refused a request to withdraw and apologise for quarrelling. The member for McConnell has abused the proceedings of the House to prosecute a matter of privilege on at least four occasions in circumstances where the member is still to write to me about the matter in accordance with proper procedure. It is clear to me that the member for McConnell has chosen to prosecute this matter irregularly to present her own narrative in the Assembly and ultimately in the media rather than follow due process. I am left with no choice but to refer the member for McConnell to the Ethics Committee for, firstly, quarrelling and not apologising and withdrawing when provided the opportunity to do so by the Speaker; and, secondly, for irregularly prosecuting a matter of privilege and, in doing so, abusing the rules of this House. The reference is made under standing order 266(11)—

misconducting oneself in the presence of the House ...


As the matter is now before the Ethics Committee, standing order 271 applies and the matter should not be referred to in proceedings in the Assembly.

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 20 November (see p. 3812), on motion of Mr Hunt—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 17, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner*, tabled on 5 September 2025.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.06 pm), continuing: In resuming my contribution, I think I was talking about how important integrity is in public life and how it makes every other promise that we make to Australians possible. It gives us the legitimacy to do the work that we do and it is why real and perceived conflicts of interest matter so deeply. A real conflict of interest can skew the decisions that are made and erode fairness that Australians expect from their governments, but even the perception of a conflict of interest can do just as much damage.

I note that in the Integrity Commissioner's report she did reflect that there had been an increase in the number of requests her office received for advice for managing potential conflicts of interest and perceived conflicts of interest. This was one of the questions that came up for me from the Integrity Commissioner's report: at what point does that real or perceived conflict of interest arise? These were the types of scenarios that came to my mind: does a real or perceived conflict of interest arise at a time like maybe when two ministers are spied walking along a beach on holidays together, or is it the time perhaps when two ministers, who have incredible power over funding decisions, are in a formal intimate relationship—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Cooper, can you tell me how this relates to this report?

Ms BUSH: It is the Integrity Commissioner's report and she explicitly talks to managing real and perceived conflicts of interest.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, please continue to refer to that report, thank you.

Ms BUSH: Yes. In the report she talks about the importance of managing conflicts of interest. I guess for me the question is: when does that arise? Is it maybe when one minister relocates major sporting events out of one part of Queensland and into other person's electorate? Is that when—

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As chair of the committee and one of the authors of the report, I submit the member is not being relevant to the report. She is—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr HUNT: Relevance. These are hypothetical situations. She is deliberately trying to make imputations.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nicklin. One moment. I will just seek some advice.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, we will have silence while I am receiving advice. Member for Cooper, there is a question before the House with regard to this report. Hypothetical situations do not answer that question. Am I clear?

Ms BUSH: I am happy to move on, absolutely. I think managing those real or perceived conflicts of interest does protect the integrity—and the commissioner's report goes to the integrity of the institutions that we serve.


In my final moments I congratulate and thank Linda Waugh, the Integrity Commissioner, on the fantastic work that she and her office have done. They do an incredible amount of work processing requests and overseeing Queensland's regulatory framework and I wish them a very merry Christmas.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I want to seek clarity about your ruling regarding hypothetical matters. My understanding of the standing orders is a member cannot ask a hypothetical question but they can, of course, explore circumstances in a contribution which could well include examples or hypothetical matters. The impression you gave—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you member. What is your point of order?

Mr RYAN: I am seeking clarity on your ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order. It is not relevant. Obviously people can tell a story and relate it to a situation, but I have dealt with that matter and we will move on.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Integrity Commissioner's report. I congratulate the team on a job well done. We can see that there has been a lot of use of the Integrity Commissioner and rightly so. They do a very good job. It is an area that the Labor government not only put together but in the 2024-25 budget they raised the budgeted FTE for the office so they could cope with the increase. Thanks to the reforms delivered by the Labor government, Queensland has the most comprehensive scheme in the nation with other state systems being more fragmented.

It is interesting to see that the number of formal requests represented a 56 per cent increase on the previous year, a reflection of the significant reforms that were undertaken and the respect and trust we have in the Integrity Commissioner and their office. Notwithstanding this increase, 77 per cent of requests were finalised within 10 days, a credit to the commissioner and her team. The office records that the lobbying register responded to 108 inquiries about lobbying which I think is very important. The office undertook a significant amount of engagement and training with over 300 meetings and 33 representations. I have sought the assistance of the Integrity Commissioner myself and I very much respect their work.

I want to refer now to section 3.6 of the committee report that specifically outlines where the confidentiality provisions in the Integrity Act apply. I welcome the commissioner clarifying that the confidentiality provisions which I understand some members in this House thought meant they could not then disclose the advice given by Integrity Commissioner. Importantly, she said in the hearing that it only applied to the Integrity Commissioner and the Integrity Commissioner's staff. It clearly outlined in the report that a designated person seeking advice is not subject to any confidentiality provisions. To quote the Integrity Commissioner from page 6 of the public hearing transcript—

The secrecy provisions apply to me and my staff. They do not apply to the advisee: the designated person can share their advice with whomever they like.

The only caveat the commissioner put on this was to explain that her only request is: if advisees disclose the information they disclose it in full. I fully support that. It is an important matter to highlight. When there are questions asked about what advice has been sought—when we look at the promise by the government that they would be open and transparent; that Queensland deserves a government of transparency—when questions are asked about conflicts of interest, we do not think that it is appropriate that all they say is a variation of 'all appropriate declarations were made at appropriate times' over and over again. Australians saw the debacle that happened in New South Wales between the New South Wales Premier and MP Daryl Maguire. ICAC launched a breach of public trust—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to the member for McConnel. I have been listening carefully to the contribution which has until this point been compliant with the actual report but we are now straying into other matters. My point of order relates to relevance and the conflating of issues that are not directly related to the report as submitted to the parliament.

Mr WHITING: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I submit that the member specifically outlined that she was talking to item 3.6 on page 15 of this report. I would submit that she is still within those boundaries.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: One moment. I will take some advice.

Dr ROWAN: Responding to the point of order: I accept the reference to 3.6. In my original point of order I was listening carefully to the contribution which was compliant with the reference to 3.6 but we are now moving into areas which are conflating other issues that are unrelated to the report itself.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: For clarity of the House, I am listening very carefully. There may be a conflation of issues that the Leader of House is referring to. If members take personal offence it has to be that member who raises a point of order on personal offence.

Ms GRACE: For context, I am showing that where there is not full disclosure made, as per the Integrity Commissioner's recommendation, there can be issues. We saw this—

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I was just going to point out that the clock had not restarted but it did restart shortly after I rose to my feet so I apologise.

Ms GRACE: When relationships are kept secret, ICAC got involved and saw serious corrupt conduct. I have no qualms about people and their relationships. I always wish them all the very best from the bottom of my heart.

A government member: How is your integrity?

Ms GRACE: I will take that interjection, my integrity is very good, thank you very much. I wish them all the very best but at the end of the day what we saw here is that if there is nothing to hide—

Mr HUNT: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This report is an oversight into the functions of the Integrity Commissioner and the annual report from last year.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nicklin. I understand the point of order. I am listening very carefully. I will continue to do so and if the member strays I will correct the member or have them sat down. Member for McConnell, I am listening carefully.

Ms GRACE: In line with the Integrity Commissioner about when advice is sought—and the only caveat is that the whole full report is given—we say when does a conflict arise? When there are relationships that are happening before they have been disclosed because this was occurring. What we say is: if ministers have nothing to hide the full report should be tabled. Let the sunshine in. It should be in terms of the Integrity Commissioner's advice. On another point, I wish those relationships all the best. They are on both sides of the House but integrity is important. If you have received advice, table the whole report as outlined—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for McConnell.

Ms GRACE: I am not finished.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Time has expired.

Ms GRACE: No, there was still time left before I finished and you said 'thank you'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for McConnell, thank you. Your contribution has ended. Member for Macalister—

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Can I get your guidance and seek clarity of the ruling? The member clearly had time left on the clock. Were you sitting the member down while she was still speaking with time on the clock?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was watching the clock and I thanked the member for her contribution and was moving on to the next member, but there were two other microphones that were pressed when the member for Macalister stood up for the call. I did not sit the member down.

Mr RYAN: I am making a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr RYAN: The point of order is on clarity around your ruling. You said, 'thank you, thank you' while there was still time left on the clock and the member was still speaking. Is that indicating that you are sitting the member down? If so, I move—

That the honourable member for McConnell be further heard.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Morayfield, no, I was not sitting the member down. I may have had my microphone on when I said 'thank you' and was about to call the member for Macalister. The member had finished her contribution. There was one second to go.

Mr RYAN: I have moved a motion. I moved that the member be further heard.

Ms GRACE: With all due respect, Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There were still seconds to go and I was just wrapping up and, unfortunately—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was one second on the clock.

Ms GRACE: No—

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

Ms GRACE: We are in the middle of this point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand there is a motion that has been moved. Member for Scenic Rim?

Mr KRAUSE: That is the point of order I was going to make: there is a motion that has been moved.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was a motion from the member for Morayfield that the member for McConnel be further heard.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am seeking advice with regard to the complex issue of the fact that we are in committee reports, so please keep order in the House. This is quite an unusual situation. Member for Morayfield, the motion that you have moved is actually out of order because there are only two occasions when you can ask that a member be further heard—that is, question time or in normal sessional orders. There is no motion that is valid. I call the member for Macalister.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Having clear eyesight of the clock, the speaker and yourself, I just wanted to seek clarification for my understanding for the future—

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, what was your point of order?

Mr POWER: I and the member for—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr POWER: We were under the impression that the member was being sat down.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already ruled on that, member for Logan.

Mr POWER: What was the ruling?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat, member for Logan.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is now an abuse of the standing orders. The member for Logan cannot rise under a point of order and question the chair in relation to the rulings that are taking place. I submit to you this is now becoming grossly disorderly.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I submit to you that there has been a strategic and deliberate attempt by the opposition this week to reflect on the Speaker and Deputy Speakers. I ask your consideration of naming the member for Logan and other members who continue this disorderly conduct.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. I am seeking some further advice. Members, firstly this is quite an unusual situation in terms of extension of time. I have sought and been provided with further advice, which is that the motion by the member for Morayfield is a valid motion, in which case there will be a division on the motion moved earlier.

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

AYES, 31:

ALP, 30—Asif, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Ind, 1—Sullivan.


NOES, 52:

LNP, 52—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hutton, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster, Young.

Resolved in the negative.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Kawana sought a ruling on his point of order in relation to the member for Logan being named. I would ask for a ruling in relation to that matter.

Mr SPEAKER: I will take some advice. It is the chair who makes the call for a member to be named. There is no point of order.

 **Ms McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to make what is probably a more prosaic contribution on the debate before the House to review the report by the committee into the work of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. Most members will be familiar with the primary source of contact that we have with the Integrity Commissioner, which provides written advice about ethics and integrity issues. I would imagine that most members of the House are quite familiar with the ability and the availability that the staff of the Office of the Integrity Commission provide to members of parliament. I


would certainly like to thank the Integrity Commissioner and her staff for their assistance over the time that I have been in this chamber.

In the report period, the Integrity Commissioner received an increase in formal requests from designated persons such as members of this House. I would not want to extrapolate that that indicates that there is a particular increase in matters or issues of personal conflicts of interest; rather, I point to members of this House being more aware of the consequences of a failure to do so, the availability of the Integrity Commissioner and the education provided to members of this House. Of 122 formal requests, only 115 required written advice requests. I know last time when I was part of the committee that reviewed the work of the Integrity Commissioner, there was always some debate about whether that written formal advice could or should be tabled in this House when there was some question around it. I understand that that is still a point of contention. However, by and large, I am quite happy that the work the Integrity Commissioner is doing meets the needs of the members of the House.

Another key aspect of the work of the Integrity Commissioner is monitoring the lobbying register. We were provided with a range of information on the work done to monitor the lobbying register and also some of the actions taken against lobbyists. I note that there were 108 inquiries about lobbying here in Queensland, but only one of those resulted in a show cause notice and I think, as the Integrity Commissioner pointed out, that only resulted in a matter of education. I do commend the Integrity Commissioner for taking an education-first stance when dealing with this considering some of the changes that have been introduced recently.

As I said, I take this opportunity to thank the Integrity Commissioner and her staff. They have worked really hard, particularly given the number of new changes and amendments that they were dealing with during the period of this annual report. The education-first principle taken by the Integrity Commissioner means that we can expect an increase in the work that they are doing because, as other contributors have said, the people of Queensland need to have faith in the integrity of the institutions that govern this state.

For various reasons, people do seem to have a level of animosity towards elected officials. We in this House acknowledge that we cannot make everyone happy all of the time, but certainly people need to have faith not only in the work of and the conflicts that our elected members may have but also in the organisations that really do look after and manage the Queensland systems that we need and that we have to have faith in, in order to have a strong and positive impact on Queensland. With that in mind, I thank the staff and I thank the committee that worked on putting this report together. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.36 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, with your indulgence, I would like to quickly add to the comments others have made this week in recognising the recent passing of Bill Hauritz. I had the great privilege of going to the Woodford Folk Festival for a number of years as a punter, a volunteer and even an employee at different points. Bill was a true giant of Australia's festival and folk scene. He will be sorely missed. My condolences go to Ingrid and the rest of the family.

I rise to make my contribution in the debate on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report into its oversight of the Integrity Commissioner. I should start where others have by thanking the whole commission and, in particular, Commissioner Waugh for the work they do. I am grateful for the assistance that I have been able to access through the Integrity Commissioner previously.

Clearly, given the numbers and the increase in the amount of advice that is being offered, particularly to members of parliament, we are all very grateful for that support. It really is important for us not just to understand potential complexities in our roles and our relationships with various stakeholders and people in our lives but also to understand better those potentially very murky grey zones where lobbying comes into the picture and where we really do need the general public to be able to have faith that everyone in this place, particularly those on the ministerial benches, are conducting themselves with the utmost integrity.

One of the functions of the commission, as I mentioned, relates to requests for advice. That is an extraordinary proportion of the commission's work. Eighty-five per cent of the requests for advice were in relation to a conflict of interest. I would certainly like to take a moment to consider and I think the House should consider how that advice is dealt with and how the work of the commission more broadly is dealt with. I will point to a particular example that I am aware of. I will not name names in the interests of protecting the identity of this particular constituent.

There are, for example, provisions where ministers have power around conflicts of interest in relation to statutory office holders. A statutory office holder is required under the Integrity Act to disclose

any conflicts to the respective minister where they identify that they have or may have conflicts between their own interests and their responsibilities in that statutory office.


The instance that I have referred to saw a statutory office holder take advice from the Integrity Commissioner and identify that there was a potential conflict and, as is common practice, the commissioner assisted that person in putting together a conflict management plan. Given how much respect we all have for the Integrity Commissioner, I would have thought that should be sufficient for the minister to satisfy themselves. If the Integrity Commissioner has given advice that a conflict can be managed through the process set out in a management plan that they have assisted in developing, that should suffice. Instead, what we saw in this case was the minister in question—the health minister in this case—actually exercise his powers under the Integrity Act to issue a direction instead. Rather than accepting that everyone is grown up and capable of dealing with a conflict, he issued a direction that the conflict be resolved, which, in effect, means that one or other of the roles in conflict needed to be given up. My question is: why are we going to give the Integrity Commissioner these responsibilities if they are simply going to be ignored by the minister in these circumstances where there was quite clearly a political imperative rather than a genuine concern about integrity?

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I hear your point of order. Member for Maiwar, as it happened, I was seeking advice from the Clerk at that very moment. I have been listening at other times and contemplating the relevance of your contribution. Please come back to the motion before the House which is consideration of the committee report. You have 31 seconds to round it out.

Mr BERKMAN: One of the very simple ways I think we could improve the functions of the Integrity Commissioner is to create expectations around how the commissioner's advice is dealt with in circumstances such as the one I have outlined and demand that folks like the health minister—I am glad to see him here—are actually compelled, one way or another, to listen to the advice of the Integrity Commissioner, not disregard it and not put those folks taking advice at a disadvantage in circumstances where conflicts could be managed if it were not for the political demands of the minister in question.

(Time expired)

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.42 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the committee report on the oversight of the Integrity Commissioner. As a member of the PCCC, which obviously has nothing to do with this report, I place on the public record that I deeply appreciate the importance of the work that the Integrity Commissioner and her team do. They provide crucial integrity and transparency services to Queensland.

As we have heard people talk about today, transparency is a cornerstone of trust in the Public Service, in the parliament and in the executive. Without this trust, the very cornerstones of democracy can begin to erode very quickly. Therefore, I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that the role and responsibilities of the Integrity Commissioner and her team are crucial in upholding our democracy for all the reasons that I have outlined. I think her role is all the more important as we move into a space where public discourse is increasingly influenced by misinformation and things like artificial intelligence. Ensuring we have these fundamental public credentials is vital. The proactive work that the Integrity Commissioner does in providing advice means that the people who seek advice do not have to rely on their own judgement and own guesswork. There is a strong and consistent set of guidelines that people seeking advice can trust and so can Queenslanders.

Like many members of this House, I have personal experience with seeking advice from the Integrity Commissioner. As a member of parliament and a member of the community, I place on record my appreciation for the work of the Integrity Commissioner and her team. It is important work. I think we can see from the increase in requests for information from her office that they will need to continue to receive appropriate resourcing.

Other members have referenced the number of requests for advice, which continue to go up. They have received 122 formal requests from a designated person for advice on ethics, integrity issues or interest issues. That is an increase of 56. That is a substantial jump. They have finalised 115 formal written advice requests. In the report it notes that ministers and assistant ministers were the largest category of designated persons seeking advice, followed by statutory office holders, directors-general and ministerial advisers. About 85 per cent of advice requests—I think we could probably say the overwhelming majority—concerned a conflict of interest. Of those requests, the majority related to personal interests. Also in demand was advice concerning ethics or integrity matters, including recruitment or procurement processes. Sensitive information was also an area of interest, among other issues.

It is important to note, and very commendable, that the annual report states that 77 per cent of the advice requests were finalised within 10 business days. That means that people seeking advice, which can often be an anxious time, were getting that advice very quickly. The committee report notes that if a matter took longer it was often because it was a complex matter and required additional advice and consideration.

I mentioned that I have personal experience with seeking advice, like many members of this House. The member for Maiwar mentioned that he has also sought advice from the Integrity Commissioner. When I was elected to parliament members will know that I was a single parent. I met my husband in Parliament House. We had to seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner when that occurred. It was important to me that I sought that advice early so that I understood my responsibilities. This was very much a new realm for me. Even all these years later I remember being very nervous to ask for that advice. I am not sure why, but I was pleased that I got that advice early on so that I could get a clear understanding of my rights and obligations. I think that nervousness sprung from the fact that I valued my relationship.

As one of many members who has sought advice from the Integrity Commissioner, my view, formed from that experience, is that asking for advice early always leads to the best outcome. It means that you and all Queenslanders can be confident that you are carrying out your role with integrity.

(Time expired)

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I remind the members for Logan, Greenslopes and Pine Rivers that they are on warnings. Further, I would like to remind all members that, pursuant to standing order 244(2), a member must acknowledge the Speaker on entering and leaving the chamber.

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (3.47 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 18, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman*, tabled on 5 September 2025.

I rise to speak on the oversight responsibility of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for the Queensland Ombudsman and the Inspector of Detention Services. Our committee's role is to monitor and review the performance of these offices, examine their reports and bring matters of concern to the attention of the House. This year we considered the Ombudsman's 2023-24 annual report. We held a public hearing in February with the Ombudsman, Deputy Ombudsman and executive director of corporate services.

Whilst the process and report highlighted a damning decade of decline under the previous Labor government, particularly related to prison management, youth detention and overcrowding issues, Labor's big gun, the member of Gaven, was sent in to distract and deflect, asking irrelevant questions during the hearing about modelling for the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws—laws that they supported. They did not say, 'We cannot support these laws until the LNP sorts out all our issues of prison overcrowding and dysfunction in the youth justice system that saw the children in watch houses debacle.'

The committee heard evidence of previous staff shortages at Cleveland, with children confined to cells for long hours and unable to access programs or schooling. The Labor members did not mention at all about their failure to model or plan for the bringing in of 17-year-olds out of prisons and into the youth justice system, how it completely broke that youth detention system and saw young children languishing in watch houses, as indicated in the reports.

The Ombudsman's report on prison overcrowding published last year and referenced in his report remains relevant. High-security prisons were operating under modified unit routines where prisoners were out of their cells for only three to four hours a day. While the new Lockyer Valley centre will provide some relief, the long-term lesson is that infrastructure must keep pace with demand, as opposed to the last decade of decline under Labor, as highlighted in this report.

The member for Gaven came along to the hearing and had to try her best to make it sound like the first four months of the LNP government was the problem. Remembering that the hearing was in February this year, this is a desperate attempt at deflection.

We will continue towards fixing Labor's decade of decline with the wonderful work being done by our Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services over the last year. The Crisafulli government is turning this broken system around.


I think there are many Labor members on the speaking list. It will be interesting to see if, when speaking to this report, they will reflect on the issues their time in office caused—maybe a bit of a mea culpa, some sort of acceptance and responsibility, or whether they will try to deflect and speak on irrelevant issues, as they have done with the last couple of reports.

In 2023-24, the Ombudsman's office responded to 11,479 contacts, they received 6,295 complaints and finalised 1,047 investigations. Of the 178 recommendations made for improvement, 177 were accepted by agencies, which is a clear sign that the office's recommendations are both practical and respected.

The Ombudsman also provides proactive support to agencies. Last year, more than 2,600 public officers undertook training, with 98 per cent reporting improved decision-making capability. These efforts mean fewer disputes arise in the first place and service delivery to the public is improved. A significant development during the reporting period was the expansion of jurisdiction under section 12A of the Ombudsman Act which now allows investigations into outsourced government services. This was a gap for too long. Outsourcing by the previous Labor government often left accountability blurred. This reform ensures Queenslanders enjoy the same protections, no matter who delivers the service.

On finances, the Ombudsman reported that the office remained within budget in the 2023-24 year and expects to do so again this year. Additional funding has been secured to meet the expanded jurisdiction and the new inspection responsibilities. The committee welcomes this prudent financial management.

I thank my fellow committee members for their commitment, the secretariat for their excellent support, and Ombudsman Anthony Reilly and his staff for their cooperation and dedication. I will hand now to the Labor member to see if they can make some excuses about the time of their decade of decline.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (3.53 pm): I rise to address the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report. I remind the member for Nicklin that he is in government. You are in government now and you are responsible—

Mr Hunt: Excellent!

Ms SCANLON:—for the decisions you are making.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order, members! Member for Gaven, if you can direct your comments through the chair that will help everybody, please.

Ms SCANLON: Sorry, Deputy Speaker. Those opposite are now responsible for every night mode and for every staff shortage in our detention facilities, so I would caution the member for Nicklin, particularly given some of the comments made by Mr Reilly during the examination of this report.

The oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman, and in particular the Ombudsman's expanded responsibilities as the Inspector of Detention Services, is incredibly important. Since December 2022, he has taken on the role of Inspector of Detention Services as an independent officer, one with power to go inside our prisons, our youth detention centres and our watch houses and report directly to this parliament about what is really happening.

I take some of the comments by the member for Nicklin. We have reports that transparently provide that information so that governments can respond to that and can improve, so that we know what is actually happening—not just what we might hope is happening but what is actually happening on the ground. There has been a lot of progress that has been undertaken by the inspector, but progress in oversight does not mean progress in the system itself, and that is where some alarm bells begin to ring.

In the February hearing, the committee asked whether the inspector had been provided with any modelling about detention capacity, staffing requirements, or the likely impact of the government's Making Queensland Safer laws. I also take the member for Nicklin's comments that the Labor opposition did vote for those laws, despite the fact that the member for Currumbin suggested we did

not this morning, so they clearly are not on the same talking points. We were all in here and we all voted for it.


However, we did raise some very legitimate questions. We raised those questions with the Inspector of Detention Services. When I asked the Ombudsman in his role as inspector whether he had received any modelling at all—any modelling at all—about these laws, the answer was stark—no, none. Not a single forecast has been provided to the very officer responsible for safeguarding detainees and officers. It is a major legislative change, and yet the independent statutory officer tasked with oversight has been completely left in the dark. That is not a small oversight; that is a dangerous blind spot.

Then, of course, came the issue of night mode, which again I know the member for Currumbin does not like talking about. Throughout this report and during the committee's oversight hearing in February, the Ombudsman spoke about the impact of staff shortages, shortages the Ombudsman acknowledged still impact youth detention centres this year. Earlier this year—

Mrs GERBER: An all-time high under the Labor government.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. Earlier this year, under the Crisafulli government, I asked these questions of the Ombudsman about the use of night mode at Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, a term that appeared in his earlier inspection reports. Night mode does not just refer to the standard overnight lock-in; it also refers to children being locked in their rooms during the day because there are not enough staff to safely supervise them. Daytime, locked rooms, not due to behaviour, not due to risk, but because there is not enough staff. Not enough staff. In the oversight hearing, the Ombudsman confirmed that staffing problems mean they cannot get out of their cells as often as young people in other detention facilities. Staff shortages are locking children in their rooms and cutting them off from education.

This is not a minor operational issue; it is a fundamental failure in a system designed to rehabilitate children. It aligns with what the inspector has already documented. Children are spending long hours in isolation, with minimal meaningful human contact and reduced access to schools and programs. These are not theoretical risks. Some may shrug and say these are tough kids and tough measures are needed and, of course, there do need to be consequences—that is why these children are in detention. However, it cannot just be about punishment; it also needs to be about reducing reoffending and protecting the community. Unfortunately, what we have seen from this government is that that is not what they are interested in.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (3.58 pm): I rise to speak to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report titled *Oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman*. I want to thank the Ombudsman for his ongoing work and specifically in this instance for the work he undertakes in his role as Inspector of Detention Services. I also thank the members of the JICS Committee, a committee I have joined occasionally throughout the year, for their work on this report.

I want to go through some of the key points which were raised by the Ombudsman. The first of these is staffing shortages at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. During the committee's February hearing, the Ombudsman was asked about forecasting staffing needs for future detention centres, given the known staffing challenges in Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. He said—

There will be a challenge for the system as it builds new youth detention centres to recruit sufficient staff to ensure they are all fully staffed ... I think there is an issue in Townsville about the size of the labour market and the pressures on the Townsville labour market for skilled people and the ability to get enough people to work in that particular centre. I think there is a comment on that in our report.


There are a few things I would like to unpack about that. Firstly, I think he has assumed that the system—that is, the minister—is going to build new youth detention centres. They will have to have somewhere to put all these new people they are going to lock up. In fact, the Inspector of Detention Services was asked—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): It being four o'clock, the time for debate on committee reports has expired.

Debate, on motion of Ms Farmer, adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Reports

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made today by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting. The committee

has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee report on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill by 6 February 2026 and that the Education, Arts and Communities Committee report on the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill by 6 February 2026.


The committee has also resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's *Report 6: 2025-26—Information systems 2025* be referred to the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee and that the Auditor-General's *Report 7: 2025-26—Energy 2025* be referred to the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee.

DEFAMATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 4090, on motion of Mrs Frecklington—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (4.01 pm), continuing: Second, the bill introduces a fair and workable defence for social media platforms and page hosts, including the suburb and community pages Redlanders use every day. If they have a clear complaints process and remove harmful comments within seven days, they can rely on that defence. This is especially important for volunteer admins—people running community pages out of goodwill—who are not there to moderate legal disputes. This bill gives them clarity while still protecting individuals from harm. Importantly, it also creates new avenues for accountability for Redlanders who have been targeted by anonymous accounts or faceless posters.

The bill enables courts to identify anonymous users; allows courts to require digital intermediaries such as Facebook to remove defamatory content, even if they are not a party to proceedings; permits offers to make amends to include removing or blocking defamatory material; and modernises communication processes so notices can be given reliably by email or direct message. These reforms cut delays, reduce barriers and allow victims to resolve matters far more quickly.

The bill also extends absolute privilege to publications made by police acting in their official capacity. Our local police do an exceptional job. They must be able to report facts and warnings without fear of defamation claims simply for doing their duty. This reform supports them and strengthens public safety.

Why does all of this matter for Redlands? Small businesses rely heavily on their reputation. One false review or malicious post can undermine livelihoods overnight. Parents, teachers, volunteers and young people are increasingly exposed to online bullying and defamation, and community groups—many run entirely on goodwill—have long told me they feel exposed when moderating their pages.

This bill brings clarity and fairness. It ensures: Redland families are better protected; Redland businesses are shielded from malicious online attacks; Redland police can do their job with confidence; and Redland community pages have a clear, workable framework to manage complaints. It achieves this while maintaining national consistency and supporting the uniform defamation model across Australia. This bill modernises our laws, strengthens our protections for Queenslanders and provides certainty for everyone who uses or manages digital platforms. For the Redlands, these reforms are essential. They mean safer online spaces, stronger protection of reputations and clearer rules for all.

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (4.04 pm): I rise today to express my strong support for the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025—a critical and timely legislative measure aimed at modernising Queensland's defamation laws. Our society is experiencing rapid and far-reaching technological change, with digital communication fundamentally transforming the way we interact, share information and shape reputations. Against this backdrop, our laws must evolve to keep pace, safeguarding the reputation of Queenslanders both offline and online and ensuring our legal framework is fit for purpose in the digital age.

In today's interconnected world, where instant messaging and the persuasive influence of social media platforms dictates much of our daily lives, it has become alarmingly simple to disseminate damaging or defamatory information about an individual in a matter of seconds, often with little thought for the consequences. The viral nature of online content means that reputational harm can be swift, widespread and enduring. The bill before us today makes targeted and considered amendments to the Defamation Act 2005, implementing nationally agreed reforms and bringing Queensland into alignment with other states and territories. This harmonisation is essential for consistency, legal certainty and

fairness across Australia as reputational issues and defamation disputes rarely respect state borders in our digital world.

One of the key features of the bill is the exemption granted to digital intermediaries—those entities that provide services such as caching, acting as conduits or storing third-party content—from liability for defamatory material, provided they do not actively promote, curate or edit the content in question. This recognises the passive role many intermediaries play in facilitating online communication and ensures they are not unfairly held responsible for content over which they have little practical control. Notably, search engines are also exempt from liability where their role is limited to linking to third-party websites, acknowledging the important service they provide in indexing and making information accessible without them being the originators or publishers of the content itself.

Importantly, the bill establishes a defence for intermediaries who act responsibly in good faith. Where an intermediary takes reasonable steps to remove or disable access to allegedly defamatory content within seven days of receiving a valid complaint, this action can be used as a defence in defamation proceedings. This approach encourages prompt redress for those harmed by online defamation, incentivises responsible conduct by digital platforms and strikes a fair balance between freedom of expression and the protection of individual reputation. It also provides clarity and certainty for businesses operating in the digital space about their obligations and for individuals seeking timely removal of harmful material.

Another significant aspect of the bill is the clarification and expansion of court powers in relation to digital intermediaries. Courts will now be expressly empowered to order intermediaries, even if they are not direct parties to the litigation, to remove or block access to defamatory material. This is a practical and necessary step, recognising the reality that harmful content can persist online if not addressed at the source.

The reforms also streamline and modernise the process for identifying those responsible for defamatory posts, making it easier for affected individuals to seek redress and hold wrongdoers accountable. Further, the bill extends absolute privilege to police officers acting in their official capacity, ensuring that law enforcement personnel are protected when performing their duties and engaging in necessary communications. The legislation also embraces contemporary communication practices by allowing documents and notices to be served electronically, which reflects the way Queenslanders interact in the modern world and improves the efficiency of legal processes.

The bill also amends the Criminal Code to ensure that the new defences available to digital intermediaries in civil proceedings will apply equally in criminal proceedings. This comprehensive approach prevents unfair outcomes and maintains coherency across our legal system. These significant reforms are the product of an extensive and inclusive consultation process which included written submissions, stakeholder forums and targeted engagement with a broad range of interested parties.

Technology companies, legal professionals, media representatives, advocacy groups and everyday Queenslanders have all contributed their perspectives and expertise. The result is a bill that carefully balances competing interests, upholding free speech, protecting the reputation of individuals and accommodating the practical realities of a digital era. The legislation acknowledges the complexities of these issues and seeks to provide workable, fair and effective solutions for all parties involved.

By aligning Queensland laws with those of other states and territories, we minimise unnecessary legal complexity for individuals and businesses operating across borders and promote greater fairness and predictability nationwide. For Queenslanders this bill means enhanced protection of their reputations, clear and efficient avenues to redress when things go wrong, and certainty for digital and media businesses regarding their responsibilities and defences.

This bill is both practical and balanced. It is a forward-thinking piece of legislation that will ensure Queensland's defamation laws remain relevant and effective in a rapidly changing digital environment. The bill safeguards Queenslanders' rights and reputations, supports a safer online environment and strengthens public confidence in the law's ability to respond to contemporary challenges. I commend this important bill to the House.



Mr McDONALD (Lockyer—LNP) (4.12 pm): I would like to commend the member for Mulgrave on his contribution. It was a very well-thought-out and considered contribution on a very serious subject. At the outset I would also like to thank the Attorney-General for her leadership in this space in making sure that the work has been done. I understand, from reading all of the documents, that the attorneys-general through their then Standing Committee of Attorneys-General got together back in

2023. The Standing Council of Attorneys-General, as it is known now, had agreed to see this implemented midyear—July 2024, I think. Alas, the former government did not do that.

Mr Head: Too lazy.

Mr McDONALD: I do not know whether it was that they were a lazy Labor government or a disorganised Labor government or that all the chaos and crisis that was happening was distracting them from this important work. Anyway, here we are today in December 2025 and the Attorney-General is delivering these important changes for Queensland.

They are important changes because they include some very simple and sensible mechanisms to make sure that Queenslanders are treated fairly. In my former occupation as the officer in charge of police at Laidley or as a police officer on the front line before that, when neighbourhood disputes erupted into a slinging match and sometimes unkind things happened and it ended up in the paper, I would have loved a dollar for every time somebody said, 'It's defamation. I will have them for defamation,' and they wanted to make a complaint about defamation to the police.

There is of course criminal defamation in the Criminal Code, but the standard of proof for that and the elements of that offence are very challenging. You would then have to explain to those good members of the community who were a bit heated and upset about comments made by others that they were not going to be able to activate their complaint of defamation under that legislation.

This legislation, which I am proud to recommend here today, has gone through a number of processes. I want to place on record my thanks to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee—the chair, the member for Nicklin, and its members including the member for Capalaba and the member for Thuringowa—for their consideration of the bill and for listening to the submitters and witnesses to come to some good and sensible outcomes. I would also like to respect the other members of the committee, although I do not know who they were. I thank the secretariat for all of their work on this. It is an important piece of work that was overdue. It could have come before this parliament two years ago but, alas, it is here today.

This bill activates a number of definitions that some may not be familiar with such as 'digital platforms' and 'digital intermediaries'. They are platforms that see social media occur within our community, whether it be the higher level platforms of the Googles, Facebooks and what have you. Then there are also the community pages that are prevalent in our communities. I know that right across my Lockyer and Somerset communities there are a number of vital community pages and sporting and social media pages that keep everyone informed. Those platforms do a wonderful job to make sure that we have social cohesion in the community. We receive a lot of good information from them, but we are also able to disseminate a lot of important information quickly for people.

Sometimes some people get a bit upset by what goes on and they may say, write or post some unkind things. I welcome the changes that this legislation brings to give some protection to those who are managing digital platforms to make sure that they have a defence if they have a complaints platform attached to it and they take reasonable care to address the issues that somebody may be posting. They have seven days to do that. If they meet each of those requirements then there is a defence there for them not to face defamation. That is a system that will be very welcome by each of those different community or sporting pages to know that they have that cover and certainty.

There is some sense of clarity too in having a complaints system but also then having seven days to take reasonable action to undertake whatever actions may be necessary. That may simply be a matter of explaining what the post is about and clarifying it for people. It may also be about removing it. We all have different perceptions about what may be upsetting or defamatory to others.


One of the things that I did pay particular attention too though was the absolute privilege and protection that the police service across the nation will be afforded by this bill, to have protection from defamation when they are acting in accordance with their duties. It is a sensible, calm and considered measure but it is essential protection for our police forces. They are out there often at times of stress and high anxiety giving comfort to the community in the best fashion they can. I know from being in that role and standing up in front of the media on many occasions after critical incidents that you do try to gather the best information you can and disseminate that information as best you can via those media channels. We do not want police to feel that they are going to face defamation action when they are providing good information to the community, so I certainly welcome that large section.

This bill also activates technology to serve and distribute information via electronic means. Email and electronic distribution have been around and available for quite a long time, so that system alone would be a reason to fast-track this legislation and have it delivered as soon as possible, certainly

before midyear 2024. The productivity efficiencies of being able to serve documents electronically instead of having to go through snail mail or personal service should have been activated at the earliest opportunity. The former government should hang its head in shame for not providing that level of productivity to the judicial system and ensuring that the rights of victims and others are protected. I welcome that contribution in terms of activating technology to make sure each of those electronic means is captured.

It is important to note that, overall, this bill activates some good procedural fairness processes and balances natural justice in order for people to respond. That is the cornerstone of justice; it is the cornerstone of legislation; and it is certainly the cornerstone when it comes to a defamation action where people may be aggrieved by certain things. There are some sensible amendments, changes and activations through this bill.

I did mention at the outset that in my former role as a police officer people would come and talk about defamation and criminal defamation. This bill amends the criminal definition to include those defences and mechanisms within the Criminal Code, which is very sensible and provides a great deal of clarity for the community. One of the things I really welcome is that the bill will commence in seven days from the date of assent, so we are going to stop the delay. With that short contribution, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. AJ STOKER** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (4.22 pm): There has been a large amount of concern expressed by families about the role of social media, internet addiction and other matters arising from the predominance of the digital world in the lives of people young and old in this state. It affects all age ranges. There is a real concern about how to protect reputations online, whether that is because of untrue information being spread, to use an analogy, via old-fashioned rumours, or whether it is related to the advent of fake images being generated by AI or modified using digital means. There is a lot of anxiety around this field in the hearts and minds of Queenslanders, so having laws that clearly set the stage for fairness on this front really matters. It can seem like it is the stuff of lawyers until all of a sudden it is your image that is being used or misused online or it is a mistruth about you or someone you love that is happening online, so this is a bill that really matters to Queenslanders and Queensland families.

I can tell you that it does not matter to Labor. They must not think these concerns of Queenslanders matter because, to paraphrase a tourism slogan, where the bloody hell are they? They are not in the chamber, I can tell you that for sure.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Oodgeroo, you can withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mrs STOKER: I withdraw. They are not here debating and refining—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, I gave you a direction to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mrs STOKER: I did. I will do it again: I withdraw.

A government member: I heard you twice.

Mrs STOKER: I did, yes. I have twice withdrawn and I absolutely do. They are not here defining, refining and debating this bill, that is for sure. Who knows where there are more important things to do. They are not fighting for you to have avenues for justice when the online world goes bad. In fact, that lack of care characterises their approach to this issue.

It was September 2023 when the Standing Council of Attorneys-General did all the work needed for a national agreement on these amendments and all bar South Australia got on board. They did not even bother finishing the job when they were in government. Now we are two years on from that point, and amongst all of the activity of getting a new government up and running there has been enough care and effort from the LNP to get the work done to get this bill before the parliament. While I am sad for the delay, at least under this government Queenslanders can see that someone cares.

Much of this bill deals with the scope of the liability of a digital intermediary for publications that are made online, particularly where that publication is effected by a person other than the intermediary. It all sounds a bit technical, but the definition of a digital intermediary encompasses a range of actors in the internet economy. It covers search engine providers, social media services, storage services and internet service providers. It is probably best illustrated by an example like a community Facebook page, where various members of the community can make posts about local events, put out calls for help or share information. There are plenty of them in the Redlands. Those pages are a really important part of our community. Facebook as well as the internet service provider of an internet user would each be considered digital intermediaries in that situation.

The term 'digital intermediary' arose because of cases like *Fairfax Media Publications Pty Ltd v Voller* in the High Court—it became known as the *Voller* case—which held in a majority decision of five judges to two that a social media service provider like Facebook would be held liable for the comments made by users of the site as they post, even though the social media service Facebook did not post the words and did not have a moderation role in the administration of the page. Because of that case and a couple of others that followed on from it, the Standing Council of Attorneys-General—known as SCAG—produced some expert committees. They realised that a new framework was going to be needed that more reliably linked liability for these comments online with the person who actually made them, and that is just common sense.

Here is the solution put forward in this bill, which is the product of the expert committee's work and the subject of that national agreement. If a digital intermediary is a limited one that really just provides what is called a caching service, a conduit service or a storage service, and it does not play an active role in the publication—for example, internet service providers, Dropbox, a cloud storage service provider or simply a provider of communication software like Microsoft providing Outlook email software, even a search engine—it is exempt from liability under defamation law for the publication of digital matter.

That makes common sense because none of those types of services formulate, express or even moderate the words or images that could potentially constitute a defamatory communication. Those types of businesses should have clarity that they are not captured because of some of those very broad decisions over the last few years from the High Court. That clarity is really commercially important. Businesses need to know they are not going to be caught in the crossfire of actions taken by others over which they had no say, they had no role and they had no oversight. We cannot expect people to invest in this jurisdiction without having clarity over the behaviours for which they are going to be held liable.

That brings me back to something I say often in this place. Getting the unglamorous work of government right—making rights and responsibilities clear and providing simplicity in terms of legal obligations and red tape—really is essential to making Queensland an attractive place to invest. That matters because it is key to ensuring that Queenslanders have access to great jobs that pay well, that we have rising productivity and better living standards and that we are getting our state's books balanced. All of those things are the product of doing the unglamorous work of government well.


Where a digital intermediary is one where users are able to leave comments—like the example I gave earlier of a social media page on Facebook—the bill provides for a defence in limited circumstances. To be able to access the defence as a service provider, like a Facebook, that service has to have a clear and accessible complaints mechanism, and if a complaint is received they have to take reasonable steps to remove or prevent access to the matter within seven days of receiving the complaint. That is important to make sure there are fast, free and effective mechanisms for the removal of material that is defamatory. Quite frankly, that is the next best outcome to there being no defamation at all. Sorting these things out in court is notoriously expensive, so any avenues we can make available to nip it in the bud fast are really important.

I have been talking so far about the civil action of defamation, but the bill also provides that these defences apply to the offence of criminal defamation that is present in section 365 of the Criminal Code of Queensland. The bill also makes some changes to the processes for making an offer to make amends. That is a procedural step that is already part of the process for trying to resolve a dispute of this kind, but it makes it so that it is now possible to include an offer to take steps to remove or prevent access to the content that is alleged to be defamatory. Sometimes that is the desired result in itself; people just want the bad things to be gone. Other times it will be a remedy that is needed alongside other steps—like perhaps corrections, apologies, compensation or other measures.

There are amendments to make sure courts are doing the right thing when a party wants to get to the bottom of the identity or address of a post who is posting defamatory material online—like the kind of nasty trolling behaviours that have become all too familiar to us all. It needs to be easier, and this law helps to make it easier to pull the mask off gutless, anonymous trolls who behave online in ways we would never allow in a face-to-face interaction. It allows courts to make orders to digital intermediaries who are not party to court proceedings to nevertheless direct them to remove material or prevent access to it where that material is defamatory. We can then get more effective remedies even where those intermediaries are not a party to defamation proceedings.

The last measure I want to mention is in the amendments. It provides a narrow amendment to the law of evidence relating to fresh and compelling evidence to ensure that Queenslanders affected

by Labor's DNA lab debacle get the benefit of the use of that evidence even where there has already been a trial of an accused and they were acquitted because of the absence of that reliable DNA evidence. This has to happen. It is vital to make right the incredible injustice that came from Labor's incompetence in their management of Queensland's DNA lab. It does not wash and it requires a remedy. In this amendment we are taking the steps needed to make sure that victims right across the state get justice in this field.

 **Mrs POOLE** (Mundingburra—LNP) (4.32 pm): I rise to speak on the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill before the chamber. Firstly, I would like to thank all the previous members on this side of the House who have taken the time to speak on this bill. They have provided very informative contributions. I note what the member for Lockyer said about having a dollar for every time defamation was mentioned to him when he was working as a police officer. I would like a dollar for that as well.

Freedom of expression is a basic human right, but we must find the right balance between this and protecting reputations, especially in the context of our modern digital challenges. This bill brings our defamation laws into the 21st century, making the appropriate provisions for our modern digital world. Too often, governments pass legislation that is appropriate to the current day and then never look at it again. We have a significant amount of legislation that is no longer fit for purpose, and those on this side of the House are committed to correcting that. This bill will take the appropriate steps to ensure that only those who are being defamatory are held accountable. If someone emails a piece of defamatory content, the email software company should not be held liable. That is what this legislation does. It provides exemptions for those digital intermediaries to ensure they are not wrongfully held liable due to the user's action.

This bill also goes a step further to allow parties to defamation proceedings to take steps to remove or prevent access to the content in question. If someone makes a defamatory comment on Facebook, then Facebook should be given the opportunity to remove or prevent access to this before being held liable.

Mr McDonald: Hear, hear! That is natural justice.

Mrs POOLE: I will take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. It is all about procedural fairness and it is all about natural justice.

When it comes to defamation legislation, Queensland is behind. New South Wales, Victoria, the ACT, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and some parts of South Australia have already enacted many of these amendments. The Crisafulli government will deliver modern defamation laws to protect Queenslanders online. That is what this bill is about. We are introducing those reforms to modernise Queensland's two-decade-old defamation laws, bringing them into the 21st century—

Mrs Kirkland: How old?

Mrs POOLE: I take that interjection from the member for Rockhampton. The defamation laws are two decades old. It is giving greater protection for victims to remove the threat of defamation proceedings when reporting to police. There is a new defence for administrators of online community forums and social media pages where comments are made by a third party. In our electorates we have social media groups, neighbourhood watch groups and Facebook pages to help our communities, and they should be protected.

The courts are given a new power to order the removal of defamatory content, even if the platform is not part of a legal case. Everything that this government does is about making Queensland safer and strengthening our laws.

The reforms reflect changes agreed to by the other Australian states and territories following a national review into how the defamation laws were working. We are delivering, as a government, the changes that are fit for a digital age after a decade of decline and inaction under Labor. The bill makes it clearer who is responsible when defamatory material is published online and provides a potential defence for administrators of online forums and social media pages. The reforms will also ensure people who report to police, including for serious misconduct like sexual harassment or assault, are protected from those defamation claims, removing a key barrier that victim-survivors had to overcome when coming forward.

The bill is making it easier for people to resolve defamation disputes by allowing offers to remove or block access to harmful content. It is giving courts clearer guidance when deciding whether to order digital platforms to reveal the identity of anonymous posters. It allows courts to order digital platforms,


even if they are not part of a defamation legal proceeding, to take down that defamatory comment. It also extends legal protections to people who report it to the police.

It is vital that Queensland's laws keep pace with the changing ways that Queenslanders communicate, particularly under the evolving influence of our digital and social media. As I said, bringing our laws in line with other states and territories is crucial to prevent forum shopping and provide certainty when publications are made across borders. No-one should be afraid to speak up about abuse or misconduct because of the threat of defamation proceedings. These reforms also send a clear message that the law stands with victim-survivors who act in good faith to report serious wrongdoing.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee, chaired by the member for Nicklin. Thank you. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Attorney-General for putting this bill forward. Her work in this space is ensuring our laws are kept up to date for our modern society, and she should be commended for that. In fact, I will quote our Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity. She said that these amendments will make Queensland safer and will ensure the state's defamation laws are fit for purpose in our digital age. She went on to say—

We have swiftly acted to introduce these reforms—as it's been 20 years since the Defamation Act was introduced ...

This legislation is striking a balance and bringing our legislation into the 21st century. It is ensuring the safety of families and businesses in the Mundingburra electorate and that is why I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (4.40 pm): I thought I was going to get the jump a bit earlier, but I guess the member for Mundingburra, being a former copper, knows content like this very well, so I had to wait a little longer. I would like to thank the committee for their extensive assessment of this legislation. I see there was overwhelming interest, with five written submissions from stakeholders! I might say that with a tone of jest—

Mr Hunt: Good submissions.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection: they were good submissions, as the committee chair notes. I am sure he thanked everyone for their participation in this important legislation. I dare say if those moderators of social media and a lot of other digital platforms knew how important this legislation is for them, there might have been a lot more interest. Nonetheless, they are very busy people. To the many moderators of social media groups across Queensland and across the electorate of Callide—there are nearly a hundred that my own MP page participates in—I say that this legislation changes very much for them. I do place on record my thanks for what they do. It is a pretty thankless job to be a moderator of social media pages. I know firsthand that they would see a lot of vile comments they would rather not see in a civilised society. That is why legislation like this is important: not only to ensure we protect those moderators appropriately but also have the right controls in place. While this does not change what is defamation, it certainly provides opportunities for people in those positions to have options to deal with third-party content and not always be caught up in a defamation case from something that was not of their own creation.

I note that many members in this House are probably fortunate that there is parliamentary privilege; otherwise, defamation laws might be used a lot more broadly regarding some of the comments that are shared in this House. Probably all members of the chamber are guilty at different points of straying into that. Nonetheless, it is a privilege we have and it serves an important purpose. I know in times past parliamentary privilege has been used to uncover severe grievances across the state. It is a shame that once again the LNP government has to come in and actually get work done for Queensland.

Mrs Poole: A fresh start.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection from the member for Mundingburra. It is a fresh start for Queensland. It has been fantastic to be part of that fresh start under Premier Crisafulli and our fantastic cabinet, who are working hard for Queensland.

Mr Barounis interjected.

Mr HEAD: I apologise to the member for Maryborough: I did not quite catch that. If Hansard did, I take his interjection.

Mrs Poole: Keeping Queenslanders safe.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection. We are keeping Queenslanders safe, with many significant changes that are empowering police. I know that we have many former police officers in the House.

Mrs Poole: And they thank you for that.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection. A lot of them do thank us, and the police minister himself is a former copper.

Mr Hunt: Detective.

Mr HEAD: I am learning a lot about all of the intricacies of the police force from my policing colleagues. As I was saying, we should have had this legislation before parliament a lot sooner. In the former government's grips of chaos and crisis, potentially their laziness, their distractions—whatever you want to call it—there is a lot of legislation that we have had to carry forward that they were meant to bring in and they simply did not—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Callide, it would be helpful if you came back to relevance to the long title of the bill.

Mr HEAD: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mrs Kirkland interjected.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection. I think there was a committee of other states that had met—

Mr McDonald: SCAG.

Mr HEAD:—the SCAG; I thank the member for Lockyer for the interjection—that said they were to make this change by July of last year, but it simply did not happen. Here it is in front of the Queensland parliament, thanks to the Crisafulli government. I thank all of the members of the committee for their work over the year. It has been a very busy year, but we are getting on with doing the job for Queensland. It was interesting that at the start of the week those opposite were in here going on about guillotining debate across the week. We have noticed that suddenly a lot of them have dropped off the speaking list. Maybe they have gone to celebrate Christmas a little early.

Mr Hunt: We'll keep working.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection. We are in here working, with government members speaking back to back on this bill because the opposition has not turned up. I made contributions last night about the member for Maiwar doing more work than the opposition and maybe once again we are seeing the same. I note my thanks to the Attorney-General and all of the department staff behind this important legislation who do great work serving Queenslanders and assisting the Crisafulli government. With that, I commend the bill to the House.



Mr DALTON (Mackay—LNP) (4.46 pm): How do I follow that? I rise to support the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which brings consistency, fairness and modernisation to Queensland defamation laws. I want to thank the committee; some of my ex-colleagues are on that committee and I think they did a fantastic job. The members for Nicklin and Mundingburra recognised the need for better protection when dealing with social media. The member for Lockyer might not have been in the service to deal with Facebook messages—maybe I am aging him a little bit there.

Why does this reform matter? It aligns Queensland with the national agreed uniform defamation laws. That is a pretty good move. It provides clarity for individuals, businesses and courts across jurisdictions and reflects the realities of online communication, especially in communities like Mackay, where digital platforms are part of our daily life, but where is the debate? I am sad. A year ago I came into this House and it was buzzing with information and debate, yet when we come to an important piece of legislation it appears the debate is lacklustre.

We all know that digital addiction is a major issue. We see it in our young people, we see it in our families and we see it in older people, but we are not talking about it in this place where we can make a difference.

Mr McDonald: It can be so hurtful.

Mr DALTON: It can be very hurtful, extremely hurtful. I take that interjection.

Mrs Poole: You would have given some presentations.

Mr DALTON: I have done lots of presentations on cyber safety and digital addiction and this is something which will be able to assist the colleagues I have left behind in the service in doing more work.

With regard to the key reforms, there are clear exemptions for intermediaries, so it protects internet providers, email hosts and cloud services when acting only as conduits, caching or storage services. The bill exempts search engines for automatic search results in that a link is not an

endorsement and reduces unnecessary legal risk for a small business relying on visibility. With regard to visibility, rural parts of Queensland need to use the internet to get messages out about small businesses, their sales, information about their products and we do not want them to have to worry about defamation if somebody jumps on their site.

Another reform is a new defence for digital administrators. These are the people in our communities running the Neighbourhood Watch and crime watch pages that are protecting our community by giving us information. For example, pages such as these tell us about a crash along Mackay-Bucasia Road that is going to slow people up getting to or from work. This legislation protects the administrators of these community Facebook groups and forums when third parties post defamatory material, provided—a great number of them are all volunteers—they have an accessible complaints process and take reasonable steps within seven days to remove or restrict access after a complaint. That seems like a fairly reasonable amount of time—seven days. This is important for Mackay volunteers who run those pages. Courts may consider privacy, safety and public interest when identifying anonymous posters.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DALTON: I take that interjection.

Mrs Frecklington: No, don't.

Mr DALTON: I will not then. Courts may order digital intermediaries, including platforms, to remove or restrict defamatory content. Legal documents can be served electronically, reflecting modern communication. Who would have thought? Absolute privilege has been extended and covers defamatory statements made to police officers acting in their official capacity. My former colleague who has taken my position, Sergeant Steve Smith, will be very pleased about that because he runs a Facebook page within—


Mr Stevens: Isn't he a cricketer? He's a cricketer.

Mr DALTON: He is a cricketer, but I am referring to the other one.

Government members interjected.

Mr DALTON: No, his knees are not ready for cricket. This privilege encourages community members to report wrongdoing without fear of defamation claims and supports public safety and crime reporting in regional areas. The Criminal Code amendments ensure new exemptions and defences also apply as lawful excuses in criminal defamation matters and maintain consistency across civil and criminal law.

In concluding, because I know that other members want to talk about this bill—on this side of the House—this bill delivers fairness, clarity and modern tools for the modern digital age. It supports volunteers and small businesses, strengthens protections for victims and keeps Queensland aligned with national reforms. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.52 pm): I rise to speak to the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. Over the last two decades there has been an explosion in digital technology and that has given rise to a lot of legal challenges, both new and emerging. At the outset let me congratulate the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity on her hard work in bringing this important bill to the House and also my colleagues on the relevant committee. Hervey Bay is not immune from the problems with social media. It has community pages, neighbourhood pages, relevant sporting Facebook pages—

Mrs Poole: Yes, and they're volunteers.

Mr LEE: I take that interjection from the member for Mundingburra. Yes, we also have our fair share of trolls and keyboard warriors. This amendment to the Defamation Act 2005 will ensure that we have contemporary and fit-for-purpose defamation laws that address the digital age.

Mr Dalton: The modern age.

Mr LEE: The modern age; exactly. I take that interjection. This bill also makes amendments to the Criminal Code Act 1899—I will talk about the amendment to section 365—but it is about amending the nationally agreed Model Defamation Provisions in relation to the liability of digital platforms and new and emerging issues in defamation law. We are trailing the rest of Australia—and have been for some time—and these amendments will bring Queensland into line with defamation laws in New South Wales, Victoria, the ACT, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Our defamation laws have been harmonised on the basis that uniformity of defamation laws is desirable to prevent forum shopping and provide certainty when publications widen beyond jurisdictional boundaries.

This bill will enact the reforms agreed to by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General. Clause 5 of the bill provides for some conditional exemptions from liability for publication by digital intermediaries of digital matter in the following circumstances, and there are two exemptions. The first is where the digital intermediary's role is limited to providing a caching service, conduit service or storage service and did not take an active role in the publication, and examples of that will be Telstra, Microsoft, Outlook or Dropbox.

The second exemption is where the digital intermediary is a search engine provider—for example, Google—which simply provides an automated process for users to generate search results identifying or linking to a webpage on which the matter is located. This exemption arises from a High Court case in *Google v Deferos*. The proposition for that case was that a search engine provider is generally not liable for defamatory matters in which hyperlinks are generated organically by the search engine provider. A judicial officer will be required to determine whether a defendant has a digital intermediary exemption as soon as practicable before a trial for the proceedings commences unless satisfied that there are good reasons to postpone the determination until a later stage in the trial. The contextual background that gave rise to these amendments was several problems in litigation, including difficulty in the current defence of innocent dissemination to contemporary digital intermediaries.

With regard to the digital intermediary defence, clause 9 of the bill provides a digital intermediary with a defence in relation to a digital matter posted by a third party if reasonable steps are taken, whether before the complaint was given or within seven days after the complaint is given, to remove or prevent access to the matter. To use the defence, the defendant must establish that they were a digital intermediary in relation to the publication of the digital matter at the time of the publication and had an accessible complaint mechanism for the plaintiff to use. However, the plaintiff may defeat that defence where they can establish that the defendant was motivated by malice in establishing or providing the online service by means of which the matter was published.

The bill also provides for offers to make amends in relation to the publication of digital matter by amending section 15 of the Defamation Act to include an offer to make amends to take access prevention steps in relation to the digital matter or allow a publisher to offer to take access prevention steps in addition to either or both of the remedial offers in sections 15(1)(d) and (e) of the Defamation Act.

Clause 20 of this bill will also amend the existing criminal defamation offence under section 365 of the Criminal Code to provide for a new section 31A defence for digital intermediaries and new statutory section 10C and 10D exemptions from liability to operate as a lawful excuse in criminal defamation proceedings.

The bill also provides for a defence of absolute privilege to publications of defamatory matter to officials of Australian police forces or a service of an Australian jurisdiction while the official is acting in an official capacity—a very sensible amendment. This defence is on the basis that there has been anecdotal feedback that the threat of defamation proceedings has precluded some people from making complaints to our law enforcement agencies. Once established, the defence of absolute privilege is indefeasible.

In relation to giving notices and other documents, this bill provides some technical amendments to allow notices and other documents to be given or served by email, messaging or other electronic communication to an electronic address or location identified by the recipient.

In closing, this bill provides a contemporary fit-for-purpose defamation law that meets the new and emerging legal issues in the digital world. I commend the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 to the House.



Mr HUTTON (Keppel—LNP) (4.59 pm): The speed of communication should never outpace the safeguards that protect truth; however, we who sit in this room know that that is rarely, if ever, the case and that the challenge we face in this digital age is digital defamation. Social media has fundamentally reshaped how individuals, families, organisations and entire communities communicate. In many cases, the impact of social media has been positive. It has allowed for new communities of interest for which geography holds no bounds; however, the speed and the scale—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Keppel, I apologise for interrupting you in your detailed examination and contribution. In accordance with the provisions of the order agreed to by the House, I call the Attorney-General to reply to the debate.



Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (5.00 pm), in reply: I would like to start by thanking all honourable members from

both sides of the chamber for their most valuable contributions to this debate on the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. It is notable that we end this year in the parliament with a bill discussing victims. Many honourable members will remember that we finished last year's parliamentary sitting discussing victims with respect to the government's Adult Crime, Adult Time legislation.

There are many people I want to acknowledge, and I do not want to leave it until the end in case I run out of time. It is important that I acknowledge the people who for many years have worked towards where we are today. I acknowledge the people who work so incredibly hard in the Department of Justice: Leanne Robertson; Joanna Eisemann; Lleyton Kraa, who is sitting in the advisers box; Nina Stirling; Greg Bourke; Lauren Maroney-Vita; Myrella Jane Byroh; and, of course, Trudy Struber. Then there are the incredibly hardworking people in my ministerial office as well. Sam, sitting over there in the advisers box, does a fantastic job and has worked very hard. She has just finished some exams in her law degree. Congratulations, Sammy. Of course, Ben M does an incredible job in relation to all of this. I also mention Codie, Eloise, Jason, the other Ben—I should keep naming the rest of people in my office, but I had better not.

I want to specifically acknowledge in this House the hard work and contribution of the committee—in particular the members for Nicklin, Thuringowa and Capalaba and you, Madam Deputy Speaker Marr—which is one of the hardest working committees in this House. I will not pre-empt debate, but we have given them another bill to consider over the Christmas break, so I thank the committee. Each member of the committee that reviewed this bill has made a valuable contribution to the debate here tonight.

In debate of the final bill of the parliamentary year, it has been refreshing to hear the passion from this side of the House for laws that ultimately will provide better protection for victims and finally modernise our defamation laws, after the Labor government failed to do so during their decade of decline.

Mr Stevens: They did not even speak to it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection; thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. As I outlined earlier, the bill implements changes to the Model Defamation Provisions agreed to by a majority of the Standing Council of Attorneys-General back in September 2023. The bill amends the Defamation Act 2005 to ensure uniformity of defamation law in Australia and clarifies the responsibility and liability of digital platforms for defamatory content published online. I would like to very much thank the stakeholders who made submissions to this bill.

The Bar Association in its submission to the committee indicated its support for the bill, noting it will bring Queensland into line with the Model Defamation Provisions and law across the country. This is important, as uniformity in laws prevents individuals from forum shopping in jurisdictions with weaker laws. I thank the editor of the *Courier-Mail*, Chris Jones, for bringing to my attention when I first took on this role the fact that Queensland had been left lagging behind all of the other states. There was a complete and utter lack of understanding about why the former government had not done anything, which is not surprising. I would like to thank Chris Jones and the other media organisations that have embraced this change, because it is something they have been waiting for—just like our community groups, those organisations run by mums and dads who are, ultimately, volunteers, that are protecting our community and getting information out to our community. It is important that we look after them as well.

I also want to thank the Local Government Association of Queensland, which noted in its submission to the committee that the amendments represent 'a necessary modernisation of Queensland's defamation laws, particularly as they relate to digital publication and intermediary liability'. The Local Government Association noted the bill's utility in clarifying procedures for early determination and access prevention steps to enhance certainty for both publishers and platform operators. The bill closes a gap in the law by clarifying legal responsibility in the digital era, which the original law did not contemplate. As the member for Redlands noted during the second reading debate, this bill will support administrators of online community groups and small businesses by providing them with a clear mechanism to deal with the impacts of the darker side of the digital world by providing a defence to defamatory comments made online by trolls. The trolls are on notice from today with this incredible change. I thank the member for Redlands, who enunciated that so well that there was no point in my trying to rewrite it for my speech.

Make no mistake: a hallmark of this bill is how it protects victims. This bill ensures complaints of alleged unlawful conduct made to police are protected by the defence of absolute privilege. I noted with interest that some of my colleagues spoke to that element of the bill because it is so vitally important.

The Victims' Commissioner in his submission was supportive of clause 8, which extends absolute privilege to complaints made to police, as the amendments 'assist victims to access the justice system and to be respected, seen and heard'. The commissioner noted that extending the defence of absolute privilege 'will facilitate the dignity of victim-survivors and give them greater choice and control'.

I again want to give a shout-out to the North Queensland Women's Legal Service, which noted that it often hears from women that threats of defamation action are made by perpetrators in an attempt to silence and prevent them from coming forward to report acts of domestic violence. The member for Thuringowa, who sat on the committee, ensured those voices of North Queensland were heard. I thank the member for Thuringowa. The North Queensland Women's Legal Service wrote that the absolute privilege defence will make it safer for victims to come forward to police for help without fear of legal repercussions.

As noted by the member for Burleigh during the second reading debate, this is a government that stands on the side of victims. This bill ensures victims can report a crime without the fear of being liable for defamation. Further, the bill will amend the existing criminal defamation defence in section 365 of the Criminal Code to ensure the new defence for digital intermediaries and the new statutory exemptions from liability will also operate as a lawful excuse in criminal defamation proceedings.

I will now address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the course of this debate. The shadow attorney-general claims there was insufficient consultation on the development of the bill.

Ms Scanlon: No, the CCC.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am getting to that. However, I just want to be clear for the House that this bill was developed as model law through the Standing Council of Attorneys-General and the CCC was consulted in the development of that model law. That is how model laws are made: you consult on their development and when they are agreed at SCAG by all the states and territories they are then enacted by each parliament. The difference here in Queensland was that the government of the day put it at the bottom of the pile of importance. Once again the Queensland Palaszczuk-Miles government were dragged kicking and screaming to do something about model defamation law.

Ms Scanlon: When are you going to respond to the Wieambilla coronial inquest?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Sorry?

Ms Scanlon: The Wieambilla coronial inquest.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: A coronial inquest in the defamation bill? I think the shadow attorney-general has picked up the wrong piece of paper in front of her. I know it is tough. We are talking about the Defamation Act. I will take that interjection, because I take coronial matters in this state very seriously. I seek advice and, unlike the former government, who let victims of crime languish in the justice system for years and years—

Mrs Poole: What about the DNA debacle?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will get to the DNA debacle. If this shadow attorney-general wants to yell out something that is not relevant to this bill—if I heard her interjection correctly—then I may be given leniency to talk about it. This side of the chamber is talking about protecting victims, protecting their community groups, giving media organisations the right to do the job that they are employed to do, and that is to report the news. Seriously, the government just had to do what all the states had done. It was written for them. They just needed to get it in. Enough said about the former government. We hear about it all the time and it is quite embarrassing.

Coming back to the consultation in relation to the model defamation laws, no doubt the CCC could have raised this issue—the former CCC commissioner, I will just say—because it has been such a time since the model laws were agreed to at SCAG and this bill being finally enacted. We all know why. Obviously the former Labor government stuck it at the bottom of the pile and did not think it was important. Every other state in Australia did. But it was too hard for the former government. While other states and territories got on with the job of enacting the model defamation laws, Labor in Queensland just did not do it, leaving the Crisafulli government yet again to bring Queensland in line with other jurisdictions.

Further, in connection with the absolute privilege defence, I want to clarify for the benefit of the House that the CCC is also one of the many statutory bodies here in Queensland that already has the defence embedded within their enabling legislation. As noted in its submission, the CCC has sufficient safeguards to protect individuals against the making of false and misleading reports and to ensure the

integrity of the process for making and handling complaints. This was also noted in the submission to the committee of the Victims' Commissioner where he identified there were numerous statutory agencies which have existing protections in their enabling legislation. This was a factor the government considered in finalising the bill, with the police being the relevant complaints and investigation body for domestic and family violence and other victims.

Queensland has obviously been left behind because of Labor's laziness. That is as simple as one can put it. Even the Northern Territory did it. A big shout-out to the government up there in the Northern Territory. What a great government they are. Tasmania even did it. I think the ACT might have even done it. I know New South Wales did. I definitely know Victoria did. All the other Labor states—except for the Territory and Tasmania. I am pretty sure South Australia did it. They must have all sat around SCAG scratching their heads saying, 'But we put so much work and effort in.' I know Leighton and his team in the department put a huge amount of work into it and then it just gets parked and put in a drawer. What a waste of time and effort. I want to thank those departmental people once again for all their hard work. This is a really good piece of work.

We have talked about the CCC having sufficient safeguards, we have noted the Victims' Commissioner talking about the other statutory authorities, we considered all of that and then we talked about the fact that Labor left us behind all the other states. I am not sure what we expected from them. It is interesting to note that the Miles government—started by the Palaszczuk government - and I am sure that colleagues in the last parliament remember, ran out of legislation. It beggars belief. One would think they would say, 'We have the model defamation law. Dust it off, put it on the table. Let's give that a run.'

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They are saying they did not, but I ask them to look back into history.

Mr Ryan: There was legislation on the *Notice Paper*.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Really? I will correct myself if that is the case. I will apologise to the House if that is the case, but I would like to see it, member for Morayfield.

Mr Ryan: I will find it for you.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Maybe next year. We are going to end the year on a high.

As is often the case when it comes to the justice portfolio, it falls to the Crisafulli government to modernise our laws and to deliver the reforms Queenslanders deserve.

In the short period of time I have left I will turn to the amendments that I will be moving during consideration in detail. As noted in my second reading speech earlier today, I move amendments to the Criminal Code to ensure that justice is not denied to victims as a consequence of the past deficient DNA testing practices overseen by Labor. I have had several members seek information in relation to that to make sure that there are no further loopholes in relation to the failures of the DNA lab and FSQ. I do think it is important that we do everything we can. We have consulted with the courts, the DPP and police prosecutions in and around that. It is important to note that if and when there are victims with justice being denied to them that we as a government do everything we can to ensure that the perpetrator is brought to justice. We will not rest until that is done.

I want to put on record my very heartfelt thanks to everyone at Forensic Science Queensland, being led by former police commissioner Mick Fuller AO, and to Dr Kirsty Wright and Dr Bruce Budowle, the reviewers who looked into the DNA debacle. As we close out the parliamentary year, one part of the wonderful privilege of having this role that keeps me awake at night is thinking that people have not had justice served and their perpetrator could be still walking around the streets. I want to thank the scientists, bench scientists, hardworking diligent admin people and everyone who works at Forensic Science Queensland. I know it has been a tough year. What they have done is assist victims across this great state. I know that they will not rest until the historical case reviews and testing of those rape kits is done. Know that you have the full backing of the Crisafulli government to ensure that we get to the bottom of it.

Whilst this is an amendment in the defamation bill, it was important that we acted as soon as we were made aware of the requirement to close a loophole because we were not just going to let it linger. If anyone has already been acquitted and this evidence can come back in and be retested then it is important that the courts have an opportunity to do that. I really thank the DPP, the courts and the police prosecution for bringing this to my attention. In particular, I thank FSQ and everyone there. I thank the department staff, the committee and all honourable members for contributing to the debate. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 20, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (5.20 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I move amendment No. 1 circulated in my name—

1 After clause 20

Page 25, after line 23—

insert—

20A Amendment of s 678D (Fresh and compelling evidence—meaning)

(1) Section 678D—

insert—

(2A) For subsection (2)(b), a police officer or prosecutor is taken not to have failed to exercise reasonable diligence merely because the police officer or prosecutor relied on advice or forensic services provided by—

(a) Forensic Science Queensland under the *Forensic Science Queensland Act 2024*; or

(b) the part of Queensland Health that was known as Forensic and Scientific Services before the commencement of the *Forensic Science Queensland Act 2024*.

(2) Section 678D—

insert—

(5) In this section—

forensic services means any type of testing and analysis or scientific interpretation.

Queensland Health means the department administering the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*.

(3) Section 678D(2A) to (5)—

renumber as section 678D(3) to (6).

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

Tabled paper: Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes to Hon. Deb Frecklington's amendments.

Tabled paper: Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Deb Frecklington's amendments.

I will quickly touch on this because it is important, although I do not want to delay people's Christmas drinks. This refers to the DNA matters that I was just talking about and, again, I want to put on the record my thanks.

The double jeopardy exception framework serves as an important function in the criminal justice system. It allows a person acquitted of serious offences to be retried if there is fresh and compelling evidence and it is in the interests of justice. The amendments ensure evidence is not excluded from being fresh in the context of past deficient DNA-testing practices if the police officer or prosecutor did not interrogate the results or request further testing. Police officers and prosecutors should have been able to rely on the advice of forensic services provided by Forensic and Scientific Services or Forensic Science Queensland.

The fact is that the amendment is necessary because of the DNA debacle. This amendment puts beyond doubt and ensures that offenders are not prevented from being retried as a consequence of past deficiencies in testing practices. This ensures that victims of crime can still have access to justice. It is an amendment that is supported by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. It is crucial for parliament to consider this amendment now because one of the statutory requirements for whether a

court should order a retrial on the basis of an exception to double jeopardy is that the police and the prosecution must act to make an application for the retrial. Accordingly, the amendments to the Criminal Code are required as soon as possible.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 21—



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (5.23 pm): I seek leave to move amendments outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I move amendment Nos 2 and 3 circulated in my name—

2 Clause 21 (Insertion of new pt 9, ch 113)

Page 26, line 1, 'provision'—

omit, insert—

provisions

3 Clause 21 (Insertion of new pt 9, ch 113)

Page 26, after line 18—

insert—

769 Application of new section 678D

(1) New section 678D applies, and is taken always to have applied, to evidence against a person to whom chapter 68 applies under section 678A.

(2) In this section—

new section 678D means section 678D as in force from the commencement.

Amendment 2 amends the heading of new chapter 113 of the Criminal Code inserted by the bill to reflect that multiple transitional provisions will be included in the chapter. Amendment 3 inserts a new transitional provision for the amendments to the double jeopardy framework. New section 769 provides that section 678D, as amended, is taken to always have applied to evidence against a person to whom the double jeopardy framework under chapter 68 of the Criminal Code applies.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 21, as amended, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (5.25 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I move amendment No. 4 circulated in my name—

4 After clause 21

Page 26, after line 18—

insert—

Part 4 Amendment of Evidence Act 1977

22 Act amended

This part amends the *Evidence Act 1977*.

23 Replacement of pt 7A, hdg (Admissibility of tendency evidence and coincidence evidence)

Part 7A, heading—

omit, insert—

Part 7A Coincidence evidence and tendency evidence

24 Insertion of new s 129ABA

After section 129AB—

insert—

129ABA Committal proceedings

(1) Coincidence evidence and tendency evidence may be adduced in a committal proceeding.

(2) Sections 129AC to 129AK do not apply in relation to coincidence evidence or tendency evidence adduced or to be adduced in a committal proceeding.

25 Insertion of new pt 9, div 19

Part 9—

insert—

Division 19 Transitional provision for Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025

183 Committal proceedings

- (1) Section 129ABA, as inserted by the *Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025*, applies to a committal proceeding on or after the commencement only if an originating step in the proceeding was taken on or after 20 September 2025.

Note—

See also section 177.

- (2) In this section—

originating step, for a committal proceeding, means—

- (a) the arrest of the defendant in the proceeding; or
- (b) the making of a complaint under the *Justices Act 1886*, section 42 in relation to the defendant in the proceeding; or
- (c) the serving of a notice to appear on the defendant in the proceeding under the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, section 382.

Briefly, this amends the Evidence Act 1977. The purpose of this part is to exclude the rules of admissibility of tendency and coincidence evidence under part 7A of the Evidence Act from applying to criminal proceedings. Tendency evidence and coincidence evidence can be important evidence. Tendency evidence can demonstrate that the accused had a tendency to act in a certain way or have a particular state of mind. Coincidence evidence can demonstrate that the accused had a history of acting in a certain way or having a particular state of mind to prove that it is improbable that the previous events and the charged event happened coincidentally, having regard to similarities in the events.

As a result of the reforms passed by the previous parliament that commenced in September 2025, magistrates are required to consider the probity value of any tendency or coincidence evidence and make a determination on the admissibility of this evidence as part of a committal proceeding. It is not a magistrate's function at a committal proceeding to make determinations about the admissibility of evidence. This is a matter for the trial judge.

New clause 24 of the bill inserts a new section into the Evidence Act to provide that tendency and coincidence evidence can be tendered at committal proceedings but disapplies the special rules under part 7A for the admissibility of this evidence at committal proceedings. This amendment ensures the special rules apply to tendency and coincidence evidence at trial as was intended, effectively closing a loophole in the former bill. New clause 25 of the bill inserts a new section as a transitional provision to provide that new section 129ABA only applies to committal proceedings on or after commencement of the bill, which is seven days after the date of assent, where the originating step for those proceedings was on or after 20 September 2025.

Amendment agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (5.26 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (5.26 pm): I move amendment No. 5 circulated in my name—

5 Long title

Long title, 'and the *Defamation Act 2005*'—

omit, insert—

, the *Defamation Act 2005* and the *Evidence Act 1977*

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (5.27 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 10 February 2026.

Valedictory



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (5.28 pm): I start this year's valedictory by wishing everyone all the best for the festive season and thanking you, Mr Speaker, for your important contribution to the democratic processes this year. The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker took on the additional responsibility of chairing all estimates committees this year. It was a big task, but I know it made a difference to the transparency and fairness of this year's estimates process. I also thank the Deputy Speaker and the Panel of Temporary Speakers for their support in helping to ensure that good robust debate takes place in this House. I acknowledge the work of the Leader of the House in his running of this place. I thank him very much for his wisdom and counsel.

To all staff of the Parliamentary Service, led by the Clerk of the Parliament, Neil Laurie, whether you work here at parliament or in one of the electorate offices across the state: thank you for your dedication and hard work. Thank you for all of the help you provide to members which ultimately impacts their ability to support Queenslanders.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those in the Parliamentary Service who have reached length of service milestones this year. Those with 15 years service are: Jason Freeman from IT; Jill Hopson from the Gladstone electorate office; Kelli Longworth from the committee office; and Bernice Watson from Assembly and Committee Services. Those with 20 years service are: Jennifer Buerckner from the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service; Megan Mackee from the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service; Robert Radulovic from Security and Reception Services; and Mary Westcott from the committee office. Notching up 30 years service are: Angela Atkinson from the committee office; Tania Coluccio from the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service; Annette Mead from the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service; Lloyd Pollard, a legend around here, from Security and Reception Services; and James Robertson from Financial and Administrative Services, who does a great job. Finally, celebrating 40 years service is John Polistena from Security and Reception Services. That is a big effort, John. I also acknowledge Tania Coluccio, Sue Hanlon, Roylene Mills and Margaret Telford who either retired from or left the Parliamentary Service this year.

I also thank the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel, led by the Parliamentary Counsel, Tony Keyes. Their work is vital. They work very hard. They draft the legislation that outlines the policies that the government and other members wish to put before this House.

All 93 members of this House share a desire to make our communities better. When we come together in this place I know we are all driven by that shared goal: to serve our state. In particular, Mr Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the newly elected member for Hinchinbrook and welcome him here.

To the Leader of the Opposition: I wish you and your family a happy Christmas and new year. I extend those wishes to your team and their families.

To the members in my team: thank you for your energy and enthusiasm. I am proud to lead a team so passionate and hardworking. To the cricket-loving, stage-shy, antiroyalist Deputy Premier: thank you for all you do for our team. We do indeed see the world through different prisms, but it is a remarkable partnership. I am so grateful to have you as my deputy. To all of the ministers: your jobs are not easy, but you have worked hard every day to deliver for Queensland and are often away from your own families and communities. To the assistant ministry and every one of the team: you make a great sacrifice to come into this place to serve and it does not go unnoticed. We thank you very much for answering the call. I thank every member of this place.

We are seeing great changes across the state, but there is much to do. I know that is what drives us all to continue to deliver. We are seeing small improvements in victim numbers and we have stabilised the elective surgery waitlist by Christmas, as we promised we would. In fact, we have done a little better. That is a great result for people who need health care. We have accelerated the delivery

of critical infrastructure to unlock new homes sooner, all while respecting Queensland taxpayers' money.

To the staff in the Premier's office, and all ministerial offices: thank you for your service and hard work. Thank you to the staff in my Broadwater electorate office: Genevieve, Lisa and Brandon. We cannot serve in frontbench roles without our electorate staff. I thank them for the work they do.


To the Public Service: thank you for helping us deliver our priorities for Queenslanders. We promised to be a government that empowered you and listened and respected you. Know that you are respected, valued and highly appreciated by every one of us. To those who will work through while others holiday: thank you. To our emergency services personnel who were tested on so many occasions in 2025: thank you. To Queensland's dignitary protection officers who conduct your roles balancing security and democracy: thank you. To those people in retail and hospitality who will work while others do not: thank you. To the media gallery: thank you for the role you play in our democracy—mostly.

To my family: thank you for your love and support. This job is energising, but the absences are difficult. I will be glued to the TV for every ball of the Boxing Day test with you. Will you?

Mr BLEIJIE: No.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection. Finally, to every Queensland: this year we have faced challenges—natural disasters, cost of living and the continued effects of the crime, health and housing challenges. We lost a legend in Sir Leo Hielscher, but won respect by claiming just about every title on the sporting field. We live in the best place in the world.

As we have celebrated what makes Queensland special—our cities, our rural and regional towns, our beaches and rainforests and our proud multicultural communities—we are all reminded why we come into this place to serve. I wish every Queensland a wonderful and safe Christmas and all the best for 2026.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.34 pm): It has been a big year and so I want to start by saying thank you. Thank you to our hardworking and dedicated public servants right across Queensland—those who make our work in this place possible and make the decisions made here a reality. On behalf of the Labor opposition, we thank those public servants who will be working over Christmas and the new year period serving Queenslanders, including our hardworking doctors, nurses, wardies, hospital staff and ambulance officers; our dedicated police officer and staff within the Queensland Police Service, in addition to our State Emergency Service volunteers and staff; our firefighters and staff within the Queensland Fire Department who will preparing themselves for the disaster season ahead; our child protection officers, youth justice workers and corrective service officers who will be working throughout this period just like they do every day to keep Queenslanders safe; and our public transport workers who will be keeping our buses, trains, trams and ferries operating, ensuring that Queenslanders can get around during the festive season. Thank you to current public servants and also those who have left the Public Service. Your service is truly appreciated by my team.

It is not only the Public Service who will be working hard over the Christmas and new year period. There are many Queenslanders who will be putting their time with family and friends on pause to ensure that services continue. Like retail workers ensuring that supermarket shelves are stocked with food, essentials and toys for Christmas. Like hospitality staff working in our cafes, bars and restaurants ensuring that the true Queensland hospitality is flowing over the festive season. Like airport staff and airline workers helping move loved one around the state and country. This is a timely reminder to all that no-one deserves a serve this Christmas.

I said earlier this week that Christmas will be a time for celebration for many, but not all. There are so many families who are doing it tough. We know that due to the cost of living people are worrying about paying the bills, the rent or the mortgage and putting food on the table this Christmas. To those Queenslanders I say: we hear you and we will always advocate for you.

I take this opportunity to thank all of the charities and not-for-profit groups that support Queenslanders not only at Christmas but also throughout the year—places like Meals on Wheels, OzHarvest, Second Bite, Fair Share, Foodbank and all the organisations that ensure Queenslanders do not go hungry. They do more than feed hungry Queenslanders, they provide an opportunity for connection and an opportunity to have a chat. I was privileged to have spent some time on the ground with these volunteers throughout Queensland this year and I look forward to joining them in the years that come. I have also met with and seen firsthand the great work of Orange Sky—a homegrown success story; a charity that is supporting people experiencing homelessness and hardship.

We know that this House is more than just bricks and mortar; it is a symbol of our democracy—a place where we, the elected representatives, come to be the voice of our communities. I know I would not be the only member to say that the positions we hold are truly privileged positions. I know that I am honoured to stand in this chamber each and every day on behalf of my community and in my role as Leader of the Opposition.

We know that this chamber cannot run itself. The parliament as an institution is more than just us 93 members of parliament. While he has been sick this week, my thanks go to Neil Laurie, the Clerk, for his guidance. Thanks also to his executive leadership team—Michael Ries, Craig Atkinson, Monique Harmer, Bernice Watson, Hannah Gowans and James Rasmussen—for leading their respective divisions. We know, like any team, there are great leaders and there are as equally great people who make up the team. While time does not permit me to call out everyone, I do want to thank Tracey who knows my weird breakfast order, Andrew who somehow knows all of our coffee orders, Celina, Danny, Aminya and all the staff in the cafeteria and coffee shop for keeping us fed, in addition to Anthony the executive chef for ensuring the food is mostly healthy and always delicious.

I give thanks to Megan and Mandy, the head gardener and gardener, for ensuring the precinct always looks good, not only for us and the staff but also for all of the thousands of visitors.

Of course, I want to thank the unsung heroes of this place, our mighty cleaners—Azra, Sanja, Denisa, Duska, Kitharina, Stergoula, Michelle, Cade and Melien.

I extend thanks to Jo Mathers, the Chief Hansard Reporter, and her team, who ensure every word—every important word—is captured for future generations forevermore.

To Kate Reilly and her team of chamber attendants including Elicia, Grace, Esther, Jan, Lisa, Cameron, Zoe, Josephine, Sophie, Sienna and, of course, Lynne: we thank you for ensuring the chamber operates.

To Erin Hastie and the committee staff: thank you for ensuring Queenslanders can have their say on our bills.

We know that our democratic system operates best and benefits Queenslanders when there is strong media scrutiny. Thank you to the current and former members of the parliamentary media gallery for the questions you ask and the stories you break to ensure Queenslanders know what is really happening. On behalf of my team, we wish the parliamentary media gallery a safe and happy Christmas.

I am honoured to lead a united team—a team that wakes up every day to ensure Queensland is a better place tomorrow, a team that turns up when times are tough, a team that listens to stakeholders and that listens to Queenslanders, a team that empathises with Queenslanders and listens to what they are going through. I want to thank my deputy, the member for Woodridge, for his unwavering support throughout the year. I thank my leadership team, rounded out by the member for McConnel and the member for Waterford, for the work they do each and every day to not only support me but also ensure our entire team is supported to do their best.

I also take the opportunity to thank our parliamentary leadership team, which includes the member for Springwood as the Manager of Opposition Business, and the member for Morayfield as the Opposition Whip. I thank them both for their enthusiasm and support in ensuring our team is always ready to run onto the pitch when the bells ring.

To all of my Labor team, I say thank you—thank you for your support, for what you do every sitting day and for your commitment to your electorates and, more broadly, Queensland. We have a tough job to do but not an insurmountable one. I wish you a safe, happy and restful Christmas and new year as we head into the second quarter of the term next year.

Our Labor team does not do our job alone. I thank the small but mighty team in the opposition office who support not only me but also our entire shadow cabinet and opposition members. To Courtney and the opposition staff who have supported our team throughout the year: thank you.

Members who hold multiple positions sometimes rely more heavily on our electorate office staff to be the front line in our communities. I want to thank my team in the Murrumba electorate office for the work they do with our Murrumba community, ensuring the constituents I serve get the service and support they need.


While we might be adversaries in this chamber, we all come here with a common goal: to make Queensland a better place. On behalf of the Labor team, I wish you, Premier, Tegan and your family and your entire team a safe, restful and happy Christmas and new year. In that same vein, I wish the

members of the crossbench, who also have an important role to play in this chamber, a safe and merry Christmas and happy new year.

While I am proud of many achievements of our team this year, I am particularly proud as a father of the great milestones my children have celebrated this year. My eldest son, Sam, finished high school a few weeks ago. He has grown into a smart young man who will do great things. My youngest, Bridie, who graduated primary school this week, is a positive young leader and a budding social media star. Aidan is charming, engaging and funny and running his own small business from our garage—it is a barber shop, if you need a haircut. I thank my wife, Kim, for her support, guidance and frank advice over many years. I am looking forward to our annual beach holiday in the caravan park.

It is our families who keep us grounded in this place. They keep us humble, but they also remind us why we do these tough jobs. To all families of members right across the chamber, I say thank you.

Christmas is a time to pause and reflect. It is a time to be with loved ones, family members and friends and reflect on the year that was and the year to come. On behalf of the Labor opposition, I wish all Queenslanders a happy, safe and merry Christmas and a truly happy new year.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.44 pm): It feels like only yesterday that we stood here and gave valedictories, yet so much has occurred. On behalf of the crossbench I am honoured, as always, to share our thoughts and Christmas wishes. Our line-up has changed with the loss of the member for Hinchinbrook, who is now the mayor of Townsville—congratulations, Nick. I mention Robbie and Daisy, who are about to welcome bub No. 4. To the new member for Hinchinbrook, Wayde, we send a hearty welcome to parliament, though I wish you were one row back. The member for Stafford joined us, and we trust he will utilise the freedom in the fight for good. We also have a tourist in the form of the member for Kurwongbah—or maybe a stray. It is an interesting mob back here. Even though we may be diminished in numbers, we still represent 26 per cent of the Queensland land mass—a vast area.

This year has been a bit strange—maybe more ‘normal’ after the years of COVID and the post-pandemic turmoil, however still with resulting challenges: the ongoing housing shortages, ever-increasing DFV, demands on our health system and policing as well financial hardships. Add in the wild weather in the form of ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred and some storms that saw our communities drenched in hail, rain and sweat, with losses of power across the state. Our communities rallied and our emergency services crews, as always, did a phenomenal job. Deeply saddening were the deaths, including in my own community of a much loved youngster from a lightning strike. These challenges and grief unite us.

It is a given that the crossbench has vastly—and I put that in capital letters—opposing viewpoints, yet as always we have managed to disagree respectfully. The many issues that we do agree on are vital for our people and state. They are commonalities. We continue and will continue to fight, as many others do, to address the inequity of our current democratic system, with evidence of these deficits a constant reminder, including legislation pushed through without community consultation and crossbench allocations decreased. Promises to overhaul the estimates and committee system have not been realised, as the minor changes are just cosmetic, like Botox. Queenslanders’ voices are being silenced and sidelined in so many ways, including by the banning of topics in chamber. Regardless of what is done, something must—and that is in capital letters—be done as it is Christmas, and that is where we get our wishes! Even though I did get a ‘no’ for an inquiry into options, I will be writing to Santa tonight as he may have some influence there!

Hearty congratulations to our Premier on his first year and to all members, ministers and backbenchers alike. Even though we may—and I am talking about the crossbench—rail against some of your decisions, we appreciate the enormous expectations and the positives you have brought, such as the end of BPIC and reinstatement of the Productivity Commission. We also appreciate the forthright manner in which you say no. The Christmas grinch may be alive and well!

To the opposition leader, shadow ministers and members: thank you for joining us on this side of the House, which is a really good side, which has the most important role of all. To hold government to account is never easy, especially when playing a very slippery ball; hence, your support for that inquiry we just spoke about is needed and on the Santa list for you as well. Please, get writing!

Writer Betty Anderson-Stanley in 1911 defined success as ‘leaving the world better than we found it’, and we are all incredibly blessed to live in communities that give every day in these efforts. Our businesses and not-for-profits, our sensational volunteers, our frontline workers who are out there day in and day out—police, maritime officers, nurses, paramedics, park rangers, our carers; the list is enormous—everyday Queenslanders who effect change through actions and words what is good and respectful. Gratitude to you all.


To the Premier, ministers, the opposition leader, shadow ministers and especially the Speaker and all of your incredibly hardworking staff, again, I express our appreciation for the year. To fellow MPs across the chamber and your staff, we share so much—thank you. To our masked Clerk and all who work in this precinct, from the fab cleaning team and life-saving baristas all the way to our committee secretariats, I say that the hours, commitment, words of wisdom and cheery attitude are deeply appreciated. To our staff, including my own EO Lisa—who one hour ago became a grandma again, this time to triplets—and to all of your staff, families, interns, volunteers and youth parliamentarians and all who know how vital the now is for our future, I give you a high five.

Everyone, enjoy your break however and wherever you are having it. Amongst that, take a moment to think about how we can ensure all Queenslanders have a safe place to call home and have food on the table. This year in Noosa alone our organisations referred over 700 families with 1,400 children who were experiencing extreme hardship to our Santa's Classy Helpers for essentials over the break. This is just a tiny sample of what is occurring across our state—we can and we have to do better. Let's make it our collective New Year's resolution as together we can. Merry, merry Christmas, everyone. As they say, peace, love and brown rice. See you at the Christmas tree.

Interruption.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Procedural Matters

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to make a final statement before I do my speech. There was some confusion earlier when a temporary Speaker thanked a member for her speech prior to the expiry of time and members took that as the member being sat down. I have instructed temporary Speakers that they are not to make statements other than that time has expired after the speech timer has expired. This should avoid the issue that arose today.


With respect to the other issue that arose, there was some initial incorrect advice that the motion 'that the member be further heard' could not be given in respect of debate of committee reports. That error was corrected because it was realised that sessional orders allow such a motion when it is moved in second reading debates, question time and the debate of motions. The debate of committee reports is essentially a debate of a motion for each report.

I would also caution members about their tone when taking a point of order to a ruling that has been made. Members need to respect the chair at all times, and there are processes in place that can be followed without members disrespecting the chair.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Valedictory

Resumed.

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, before we officially adjourn the final sitting day for 2025, I would like to share a few reflections. We would be here all night if I were to mention every staff member individually, but I do want to extend my thanks to each and every Parliamentary Service team member for their contribution to the effective running of the service.

I wish to echo the comments made by others, and on behalf of all members thank our parliamentary attendants, led by Elicia Phillips and Lynne Richards, for the support they provide us. You are always ready to assist us when needed, and your dedication contributes to the smooth running of the chamber. Thank you to the Hansard and broadcasting team, led by Jo Mathers, who ensure the proceedings of the House are accessible to the public. I thank the outgoing Sergeant-at-Arms and Manager of Security Andrew Hawkins for his service and assistance over the past year, and I thank Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms Phil Flaherty for his continued support and for stepping into the role of Acting Sergeant-at-Arms.

I thank Micheal Griffiths for his work coordinating the ongoing refurbishment works in the Parliamentary Annexe, with works now focused on level 5 colonnade paving and level 5 and 6 interior works. I also thank Mark Richardson and Sean Neagle and the team for overseeing the unexpected works required remediating the Old House following water ingress from Cyclone Alfred. Thank you to Lisa Rayner, Paul Wood and the property and projects team for their ongoing work ensuring the

functionality of the 97 electorate offices across the state. I wish to thank our gardeners Megan Wilkinson and Mandy Lean. I think we can all agree that the parliamentary grounds are beautifully maintained.

As I have said before, as Speaker, I enjoy seeing students and members of the public visit Parliament House. Over the last year, we welcomed 60,731 visitors to the parliamentary precinct, including 22,767 students. Additionally, our education team, led by Rebecca Quinnell and supported by Maria Mead, Kirsten Murray and our First Peoples Liaison Officer Peter Yagmoor, conducted 33 virtual activities with 1,046 participants and organised another 10 activities in regional locations, including Kingaroy, Cairns, the Whitsundays and Central Western Queensland, reaching another 2,497 participants. I was pleased to join the team at several of the outreach visits where I presided over youth parliaments and engaged with students at regional schools.

Thank you to Bernice Watson, Acting Director Assembly and Committee Services; our First Clerk Assistants; committee secretaries and staff; the clerks at the table and our Table Office team. I acknowledge Monique Harmer, Director of Property and Facility Services, and the work of the entire division in maintaining our facilities and heritage buildings.

I thank the catering team, led by Kelly Baker and executive chef Anthony Naylor, for their continued outstanding service. Many members will remember the Showcasing Queensland event held recently, promoting the collaboration between the Lucinda Bar and Strangers' Restaurant with the Queensland Distillers Association. The parliamentary catering team are consistently researching and actively pursuing opportunities to work with local Queensland businesses, continuing the focus of providing an expanded offering from Queensland producers.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all the cleaners, led by Holly Van Blerk, Azra Besic and Sanja Luscombe, for keeping our precinct and historic building spotless and welcoming. Thank you to James Rasmussen and the entire IT team for the ongoing support provided to members and Parliamentary Service staff and for overseeing our digital transformation, which is no small feat. I thank our Parliamentary Library, led by Cecelia Ryan, for their assistance in preparing research reports for members and staff and for overseeing our various catalogues and collections, which are now available online.

I wish to recognise the work of Craig Atkinson, Director of Corporate and Electorate Services, and thank the corporate services division for the important work they do, often behind the scenes, to keep the parliamentary service running. I must not forget to thank our Clerk, Neil Laurie, for his sage and trusted advice, and our Deputy Clerk, Michael Ries, and his team for their vital contribution. Thank you to the esteemed Deputy Speaker and member for Scenic Rim Jon Krause for all the support he provides me and for his assistance in hosting visiting dignitaries. The list is already growing for next year.

I thank the panel of temporary speakers: James Lister, member for Southern Downs; Jim McDonald, member for Lockyer; Natalie Marr, member for Thuringowa; David Kempton, member for Cook; Mark Furner, member for Ferny Grove; James Martin, member for Stretton; Chris Whiting, member for Bancroft; and Barbara O'Shea, member for South Brisbane. I further thank Marty Hunt, member for Nicklin, for his assistance as a temporary speaker.

I would also like to acknowledge the media gallery, led by President Marlina Whop, for the important job they do in sharing the work of this House with the public. I extend a heartfelt thankyou to the staff in the Speaker's office, Coral-Leah Kemp and Jacklyn Hale, for supporting me in my role as Speaker.

I wish all members a very merry Christmas and hope that the break provides an opportunity for you to spend some quality time with family and friends. I look forward to welcoming everyone back in 2026, recharged and ready for the year ahead. I now invite all members and invited staff to join me on the Speaker's Green for a very special performance by the Children's Health Queensland Community Choir. The formalities and performance will commence 15 minutes after the House rises.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (5.58 pm): Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to wish you, all members and all parliamentary staff not only a great Christmas but also a happy new year for 2026. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.59 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Asif, Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Camm, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, de Brenni, Dick, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Field, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Grace, Head, Healy, Howard, Hunt, Hutton, James B, James T, Janetzki, Kelly G, Kelly J, Kempton, King, Kirkland, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Linard, Lister, Mander, Marr, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, Pease, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stoker, Sullivan, Vorster, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Young