



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 10 February 2026

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TUESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2026

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.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Messenger admitted to the House and presented to the Speaker a message from Her Excellency the Governor.



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

Message

The Governor informs the Legislative Assembly that Bills intituled:

“A bill for an Act to amend the Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2024, the Health and Wellbeing Queensland Act 2019, the Health Legislation Amendment Act 2025, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Hospital Foundations Act 2018, the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999, the Public Health Act 2005 and the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 for particular purposes”

“A bill for an Act to amend the Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Act 2024, the Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Regulation 2024, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Forest Wind Farm Development Act 2020”

“A bill for an Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009 for particular purposes”

“A bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Defamation Act 2005 and the Evidence Act 1977 for particular purposes”

having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, was assented to in the name of His Majesty The King on 19 December 2025.

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

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM

Governor of Queensland

10 February 2026

Tabled paper: Message, dated 10 February 2026, from Her Excellency the Governor, advising of assent to certain bills on 19 December 2025 [[136](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Parliament House, Artwork



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, continuing from last year this sitting week we are showcasing two more works from the regional council artwork collection assembled in 1979 to celebrate the completion of the Parliamentary Annexe. Our first work is a rural scene from the Laidley shire by Myrtle Guinevere Hermann. Born in the Solomon Islands in 1921, Hermann was entirely self-taught. She gained early experience by painting bookmarks to earn extra income, later taking up painting more seriously during the 1960s and 1970s. This work was donated by the Laidley Shire Council.

The second piece is a scene from the Lockyer Valley by Winifred Davson MBE, FTCL, AASA. In 1947 Davson became the first woman in Australia to achieve a Fellowship of Trinity College London in speech and drama. She went on to found the Mercury Theatre, Wynnum in 1949 and in Gatton in 1951

and was later awarded an MBE for services to theatre, culture and the community. She also established the Ian Fairweather Memorial Art Gallery and Museum on Bribie Island. This artwork was donated by the Gatton Shire Council. Next sitting week we will feature two more artworks, continuing to highlight regional communities represented in this chamber.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Same Question Rule

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have considered the application of the same question rule to the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025. In summary, the same question rule is enlivened by clause 4 of the bill, contrary to standing order 87. A motion to suspend standing order 87 would be required for this clause to be considered. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling circulated in my name. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—APPLICATION OF SAME QUESTION RULE TO YOUTH JUSTICE (ELECTRONIC MONITORING) AMENDMENT BILL 2025

I have considered the application of the same question rule to the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025.

The Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025 was introduced on 10 December 2025. It seeks to amend a provision of the *Youth Justice Act 1992* that has already been considered by the House in this session of Parliament in the context of an amendment contained in the *Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Act 2025*, which was passed by the House on 2 April 2025 and received assent on 9 April 2025.

Standing Order 87 provides the general rule of Westminster parliamentary practice that, once the House has resolved a matter in the affirmative or negative, the same question shall not again be proposed in the same session. Similarly, Standing Order 150 provides for the application of the same question rule in relation to amendments, new clauses or schedules of a Bill. As previous Speakers have noted, the matters do not have to be identical but merely the same in substance as the previous matter. In other words, it is a question of substance, not form (Speaker Reynolds, Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2008, p. 2559).

Clause 4 of the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025 proposes an amendment to a provision of the *Youth Justice Act 1992* that is substantially the same as an amendment previously considered and agreed to by the House in the same session of parliament due to the passing of the *Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Act 2025*. This is contrary to Standing Order 87.

Accordingly, I rule that the same question rule is enlivened by clause 4 of the Bill contrary to Standing Order 87. A motion to suspend Standing Order 87 would be required for these clauses to be considered.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Barambah, Ms M

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it is with great sadness that I inform the House of the recent passing of Turrbal elder Maroochy Barambah. Maroochy was a familiar presence in the parliamentary precinct and was known by many members. A passionate storyteller, songwoman Maroochy broke barriers as Australia's first Aboriginal opera singer. Maroochy held a strong commitment to celebrating and passing on her culture, and we are thankful for the knowledge she shared in her welcome to country speeches and ceremonial songs here at parliament. Our sincere and deep condolences go out to her children, family and friends.

Acknowledgement of Country

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, earlier this morning we were joined in the Premiers' Hall by Refiti Tovi, who was here with us today to deliver a welcome to country ceremony on behalf of the Turrbal people of Brisbane to mark the first parliamentary sitting day for 2026. I thank Refiti for coming to parliament to provide a welcome to country. I also thank our First Nations liaison officer, Peter Yagmoor, for his work in coordinating today's ceremony, along with all members and staff who attended.

Bondi, Deaths

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I would like to contribute a few words regarding the events that unfolded at Archer Park at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025 and, on behalf of the Queensland parliament, extend our condolences to the family and friends of those who lost their lives, as well as to everyone injured or affected by this devastating event.

On that evening, an estimated 1,000 people had gathered at Archer Park to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah. This gathering was made up of families, parents, grandparents and children. What had been a joyous event was interrupted by an attack by two gunmen who fired indiscriminately into the crowd killing 15 innocent attendees and wounding many more.

The victims ranged in age from Alex Kleytman, who was 87 years of age and a Holocaust survivor, to a child, Matilda, who was just 10 years of age. The victims never stood a chance. The attack was conducted in a manner to kill and maim as many victims as possible in a calculated, cruel and heartless manner.

There were many stories of incredible bravery by members of the public and emergency services including the police officers who were quickly on the scene and engaged with the gunmen, killing one and wounding and capturing the other. Ambulance officers were on the scene, alongside local surf lifesavers, treating the wounded while gunshots were still being fired. Many lives will never be the same after the events of that tragic day—the families who lost loved ones and those still recovering from both physical and psychological wounds. The first responders will also need support to deal with the scene that they were confronted with that day.

The entire Jewish community has been deeply affected by the event that unfolded at Bondi. Whilst charges have been laid with respect to the events of that terrible day and the investigation commenced into the motives that led to it, the Jewish community have been expressing concern about the rising level of anti-Semitism for some time. This claim is indisputable—we have all seen it—and it is deeply concerning that this level of hatred is being fostered in this country.

It is my understanding that legislation is to be introduced into this parliament regarding this issue, so I will not comment further at this stage, except to say that that is the role of parliament. If the current laws are failing then they need to change. That is not to say that it all should fall on lawmakers. We can all play a part to increase tolerance and inclusivity and call out anti-Semitism when we see it.

When I was elected to the role of Speaker, one of the first things I did was to rewrite the acknowledgement that I read at the beginning of every sitting day. I felt it was important to make it more inclusive. It consists of three paragraphs: the first acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait people of the state, as is only proper; the second acknowledges the former members of this chamber for their contribution over the years; and the third acknowledges all who have come to make this their home from all parts of the world and contributed to the life and culture that we all enjoy. They came for all sorts of reasons. In my case, the Weirs came from Portadown in Northern Ireland to escape conflict and poverty. We need to do all in our power to ensure that those who come to our country feel safe. On 14 December 2025 that did not happen.

I express my sympathy to the Jewish community. I express my sympathy to those directly affected on that tragic day. Together we need to do all we can to ensure that this does not happen again. I am sure all members of this parliament will join me in extending condolences and thoughts to those impacted by this terrible tragedy.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

MOTIONS

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.40 am), by leave, without notice, I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders:

1. the Premier be allowed to immediately move a motion without notice with the following limited speaking list, order and time limits to apply to the debate of the motion—
 - 5 minutes for the Premier; and
 - 5 minutes for the Leader of the Opposition.
2. agreement to the motion is to be signified by a minute's silence.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Bondi, Deaths



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.41 am): I move—

That this House:

1. expresses its profound sorrow and conveys its deepest condolences to the families, friends and loved ones of the 15 innocent people murdered by Islamic extremist terrorists at Sydney's Bondi Beach on the first night of Chanukah.
2. expresses its admiration and gratitude for the extraordinary acts of heroism performed by both first responders and members of the public.
3. condemns antisemitic hatred in all its forms, and reaffirms the fundamental right of Jewish Australians to live and worship proudly, openly and safely in our community.

Mr Speaker, 14 December 2025 will forever be remembered as one of our nation's darkest days. That evening, as families and friends gathered at Bondi to celebrate Hanukkah, an horrific and senseless attack unfolded. It was planned and deliberate. It was targeted at a specific community: our Jewish friends. It violated their fundamental right to celebrate their faith without fear. It was an act of terror driven by anti-Semitism. First responders and members of the public showed remarkable bravery, exemplifying the Australian spirit. Today we should all acknowledge the police, paramedics, health workers and innocent passers-by whose courage undoubtedly saved many more lives.

The attack has shaken the Jewish community and the country. We felt that in Queensland. Today this parliament mourns and remembers the victims. On behalf of all Queenslanders I extend our deepest sympathies to the victims, those who were injured and the families and loved ones whose lives have been forever changed by this act of violence. No words spoken in this chamber can ease their pain, but it is important we say clearly that we stand with you and we share in the grief.

Each victim was more than a name. They were sons and daughters, partners, friends, colleagues and community leaders. They will live on in the memories of their loved ones. As a nation we should not let them be forgotten either: little Matilda, named to be an Aussie, Edith Brutman, Dan Elkayam, Boris and Sofia Gurman, Alexander Kleytman, Rabbi Yaakov Levitan, Peter Meagher, Reuven Morrison, Markia Pogany, Rabbi Eli Schlanger, Adam Smyth, Boris Tetleroyd, Tania Tretiak and Tibor Weitzen—15 innocent lives callously taken.

This was a targeted, violent attack entirely based on faith. Although it happened in Bondi, the impact has been felt deeply right across the nation, including Queensland. Many have asked, 'Could this happen here?' Sadly, it is a question our Jewish community has been asking for far too long. As anti-Semitism grew across the country, fear in the Jewish community grew as well. They were sounding the alarm, warning that anti-Semitism was escalating. Too many remained silent or did not stand up. Not enough was done, and in Bondi their worst fears were realised.

For many this outcome was inevitable, but it does not make it any more comprehensible. Hatred, fear and extremism must never be allowed to fracture the values that bind us. Queensland is a diverse state. Our strength comes from this diversity. People of different backgrounds, beliefs, cultures and identities choose to live here, and we associate ourselves with your remarks, Mr Speaker. The Jewish community has been amazing contributors to Queensland for so many generations. No-one should have to second-guess their place based on faith—no-one.

My message to Queensland's Jewish community is: you matter. This is your home. We are determined to make sure you can worship, you can go to school, you can go to the shops, you can go to university without having to look over your shoulder. We stand with you. We will stand up for you against anti-Semitic behaviour. We cannot allow this terror to spread deeper into our state.

In the weeks and months following the attack we have spent time listening to the Jewish community. They have told us we must focus on delivering stronger legislation backed by real enforcement. Our Jewish friends must be free to walk amongst us without fear. Where others have failed to act or show leadership, we will send the strongest possible message that we do not tolerate anti-Semitism in our state or in our nation. We cannot afford to return to inaction and silence where words became vandalism; vandalism became violence; violence became murder. Today and every day we stand with Australia's Jewish community. We stand against hatred which has no place in our country. Today we choose light over darkness.



Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.45 am): On behalf of the Labor opposition, I rise to express support for the motion moved by the Premier. What happened at Bondi on 14 December was a national tragedy. It was an act of hate, of violence and of vile anti-Semitism. A day that was supposed to celebrate the start of Chanukah instead was marred by the unnecessary loss of

15 innocent lives: Matilda, Edith Brutman, Dan Elkayam, Boris and Sofia Gurman, Alexander Kleytman, Rabbi Yaakov Levitan, Peter Meagher, Reuven Morrison, Markia Pogany, Rabbi Eli Schlanger, Adam Smyth, Boris Tetleroyd, Tania Tretiak and Tibor Weitzen.

Today we remember them and the pain this hideous act has caused their families, friends and communities. Today and every day since 14 December we have grieved with the Australian Jewish community. I thank Jason and the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies for all they have done here in Queensland, for gathering us all together in those early days and for supporting their community through advocacy.

This senseless act of hate broke hearts across Australia. It is a hate that has no place in Australia. It certainly has no place in Queensland. Our diverse multicultural communities have made this country what it is today and we stand firmly with Jewish communities across Queensland and Australia in rejecting anti-Semitism. It is only by standing together we can send the message that this hatred, this senseless act to divide us, will not be tolerated because Jewish Queenslanders and Australians should not be ashamed of whom they are. They should not live in fear to raise their kids, educate them or participate in their faith publicly. While Jewish communities around the country have been incredibly resilient, they should not have to be.

We all believe that something like this should never happen here, that gun violence like this only happens in America. The confronting scenes at Bondi prove otherwise. They prove that unless we are vigilant in stamping out hate and violence something like this could, and will, happen again. It is why we all here in this chamber must do what we can to prevent that.

We cannot let hate divide us, because this issue is bigger than politics, bigger than party lines. This is about doing what is right. All of us must leave this House this week and categorically say that we did everything we could. We owe it to every Queenslanders today, tomorrow and in a generation's time to do what is right. Hanukkah is a celebration of resilience and light—the story of a community that has persevered through hardship in the face of oppression. Let us draw on that strength now as friends, as members of this House, to do what is right. Their light remains unbroken.

Mr SPEAKER: Will honourable members indicate their agreement by standing in silence for one minute.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

PETITIONS

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

Anti-Semitism, Royal Commission

Dr Rowan, from 1,084 petitioners, requesting the House to request the Federal Government call a Royal Commission into Antisemitism [\[112\]](#).

Gender-Affirming Care

Ms Boyd, from 3,123 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to protect access to gender-affirming care for trans youth [\[113\]](#).

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

Flying Foxes, Damage Mitigation Permits

4,165 petitioners, requesting the House to prevent amendments to the Nature Conservation (Animals) Regulation 2020 which would remove the end date of 1 July 2026 for damage mitigation permits being granted, which allow for the inhumane shooting of flying foxes [\[114\]](#).

Warrego Highway, Speed Limits

1,349 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate the 100 km/h speed limit along the Warrego Highway, east from the Mount Crosby to Warrego Highway onramp over the Bremer Bridge and for TMR to only reduce the speed limits at the times windfarm components need to travel that section of the highway [\[115\]](#).

Brisbane CityCats and Ferries, Cats

384 petitioners, requesting the House to allow cats on Brisbane CityCats and ferries [\[116\]](#).

Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, Referendum

683 petitioners, requesting the House to conduct a referendum or a statewide postal survey before changing the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025 [\[117\]](#).

Temporary Local Planning Instruments, Home Insurance Premiums

1,708 petitioners, requesting the House to protect residents from home insurance premium costs driven by Temporary Local Planning Instruments [\[118\]](#).

Wolston Park Hospital Patients, Apology

284 petitioners, requesting the House to provide closure to former patients and to the families of former patients of Wolston Park Hospital by providing an apology [\[119\]](#).

Water, Fluoridation

719 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that any decision by a local government in relation to the fluoridation of water can be overruled by the community [\[120\]](#).

Anti-Semitism, Response

953 petitioners, requesting the House to support serious penalty and consequences to antisemitism acts, strengthening legislation on antisemitic conduct and intimidating protest activity [\[121\]](#).

Education, Prep

354 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to provide flexible early entry to Prep for children with disabilities and diverse needs [\[122\]](#).

State and Local Government, Legislation and Regulations

1,074 petitioners, requesting the House to put forward a referendum to enshrine the right of citizens to veto recent parliamentary legislation or government and/or local government regulations [\[123\]](#).

Water, Fluoridation

902 petitioners, requesting the House to mandate fluoridation of water [\[124\]](#).

Toobeah, Land Tenure

2,092 petitioners, requesting the House to cause an independent review of the Toobeah transfer, suspend its legal effect and the Indigenous Land Use Agreement, and honour the Premier's commitment to repeal treaty in Queensland [\[125\]](#).

Electricity Providers

1,463 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure electricity providers make themselves available in all areas of Queensland [\[126\]](#).

Hospitals and Psychiatric Facilities, Patient Safety

882 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to address the mistreatment, neglect and abuse occurring in Queensland hospitals and psychiatric facilities as reported in the Disability Royal Commission [\[127\]](#).

Barron River Bridge

833 petitioners, requesting the House to design and build the new Barron River Bridge to accommodate microbots [\[128\]](#).

General Practitioners, Fees

1,488 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure all medical clinic appointment fees for doctor-referred test results be free of charge if the appointment is within 30 days of the doctor receiving the results and the doctor has requested the patient schedule an appointment to review the results [\[129\]](#).

Tamborine Mountain, Growth and Development

1,775 petitioners, requesting the House to restrict further development and population growth on Tamborine Mountain [\[130\]](#).

Noosaville, Dental Clinic

352 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that the Noosaville Dental Clinic remains open [\[131\]](#).

Residential Rail Corridors, Klaxon Horns

813 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce and eventually phase out the use of train Klaxon horns on all residential rail corridors [\[132\]](#).

Animals, Torture

2,068 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to stop social media platforms showing the online torture of animals [\[133\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

12 December 2025—

- [2014](#) Education, Arts and Communities Committee: Report No. 11, 58th Parliament—Inquiry into elder abuse in Queensland
- [2015](#) Childrens Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2016](#) Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management: 2025 Significant Weather Events—Summary Report
- [2017](#) Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management: North and Far North Queensland Tropical Low and Associated Flooding (29 January-28 February)—Event Report
- [2018](#) Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management: Tropical Cyclone Alfred and Associated Severe Weather (1 March-16 March)—Event Report
- [2019](#) Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management: Review into The Western Queensland Surface Trough and Associated Flooding (21 March-19 May)—Event Report
- [2020](#) Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management: 2025 Significant Weather Events—Summary Report, North and Far North Queensland Tropical Low and Associated Flooding (29 January-28 February)—Event Report, Tropical Cyclone Alfred and Associated Severe Weather (1 March-16 March)—Event Report, Review into The Western Queensland Surface Trough and Associated Flooding (21 March-19 May)—Event Report, government response

16 December 2025—

- [2021](#) Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority—Annual Report for the Financial Years 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23
- [2022](#) Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority—Annual Report 2023-24
- [2023](#) Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2024](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 241, 58th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on 30 October 2025 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings

17 December 2025—

- [2025](#) Auditor-General Report 8: 2025-26—Major projects 2025

18 December 2025—

- [2026](#) Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee: Report No. 4, 58th Parliament—Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland, government response
- [2027](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers (Hon. Leahy), to an ePetition (4278-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,843 petitioners, requesting the House to amend the Sunshine Coast Regional Council's Proposed Planning Scheme 2025
- [2028](#) Response from the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. Perrett), to an ePetition (4237-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 1,021 petitioners, requesting the House to incorporate the regulation of petting zoos and displayed animals into the Animal Care and Protection Act 2000
- [2029](#) Response from the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. Perrett), to an ePetition (4238-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 879 petitioners, requesting the House to prohibit the euthanasia of animals in non-urgent circumstances unless carried out by a Veterinary Surgeon
- [2030](#) Response from the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. Perrett), to an ePetition (4284-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,248 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to reform the National Fire Ant Eradication Program
- [2031](#) Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) & National Boards—Annual Report 2024-25: Erratum
- [2032](#) Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2033](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to a paper petition (4328-25), presented by the member for Theodore, Mr Boothman, and an ePetition (4301-25), sponsored by the member for Theodore, Mr Boothman, from 37 and 437 petitioners respectively, requesting House to provide village residents increased access to public transport by making minor changes to Route 725 between Coomera and Helensvale stations
- [2034](#) Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Bleijie), to an ePetition (4292-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 6,942 petitioners, requesting the House to suspend any changes to Local Government Flood Overlay Codes and conduct a review of flood studies that cross LGA boundaries to ensure AEP flood levels are consistently applied across LGAs

19 December 2025—

- [2035](#) Public Trustee Advisory and Monitoring Board—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2036](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2037](#) Queensland State Archives—Annual Report 2024-2025
- [2038](#) The Public Advocate—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2039](#) Office of the Public Guardian—Annual Report 2024-25

- [2040](#) Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions—Annual Report 2024-2025
- [2041](#) Queensland Family and Child Commission—Annual Report 2024-25: Deaths of children and young people Queensland
- [2042](#) Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2043](#) Public Interest Monitor—Annual Report 2024-2025
- [2044](#) Office of the Director of Child Protection Litigation—Annual Report 2024-2025
- [2045](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee: Report No. 19, 58th Parliament—Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025
- [2046](#) Governance, Energy and Finance Committee: Report No. 17, 58th Parliament—Appropriation (Parliament) (Supplementary 2024-2025) Bill 2025 and Appropriation (Supplementary 2024-2025) Bill 2025
- [2047](#) Coroners Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2024-2025
- [2048](#) Child Death Review Board—Annual Report 2024-25
- [2049](#) Response from the Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism (Hon. Simpson), to an ePetition (4304-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 866 petitioners, requesting the House to boycott, divest from and sanction all businesses from Israel and Israel the country
- [2050](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity (Hon. Frecklington), to an E-Petition (4294-25), sponsored by the member for Ferny Grove, Hon Furner, from 6,670 petitioners, requesting the House to include the right to adequate housing including rental and social housing in line with international human rights obligations
- [2051](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity (Hon. Frecklington), to a paper petition (4343-25), presented by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(3), from 69 petitioners, requesting the House to amend legislation permitting all costs for the administration of the Body Corporate Certificate (Form 33) to be borne by the seller rather than all owners under the body corporate

5 January 2026—

- [1](#) Response from the Minister for Primary Industries (Hon. Perrett), to an ePetition (4246-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 450 petitioners, requesting the House to review crabbing regulations with input from all stakeholders, and introduce a modern, balanced approach to crabbing management and mud crab population sustainability
- [2](#) Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Bleijie), to an E-Petition (4250-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 1,472 petitioners, requesting the House to reject development proposal (DA57/2024) by Private Energy partners for the purpose of a Renewable Energy Battery Energy Storage facility located at 292 Cawthrays Road Colosseum
- [3](#) Response from the Minister for Education and the Arts (Hon. Langbroek), to an E-Petition (4318-25), sponsored by the member for Toowoomba North, Mr Watts, from 604 petitioners, requesting the House to deliver fit for purpose outdoor hardcourt facilities at Highfields State Secondary College

8 January 2026—

- [4](#) Response from the acting Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership (Hon. Frecklington), to an E-Petition (4336-25), sponsored by the member for Pine Rivers, Ms Boyd, from 982 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to transition to a sustainable, low emission, renewable energy system
- [5](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to an E-Petition (4247-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 1,069 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure vehicles are inspected and tested for compliance with noise pollution maximums
- [6](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to a paper petition (4345-25), presented by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Stevens, and an E-Petition (4316-25), sponsored by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Stevens, from 28 and 183 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to permanently reduce the speed limit on Hooker Boulevard from 70kph to 60kph
- [7](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to a paper petition (4344-25), presented by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Stevens, and an E-Petition (4317-25), sponsored by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Stevens, from 24 and 132 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to install noise mitigation barriers along the northern and southern sides of Hooker Boulevard, Mermaid Waters
- [8](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to a paper petition (4342-25), presented by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(3), from 152 petitioners, requesting the House to design and build the new Barron River Bridge to accommodate microbats
- [9](#) Response from the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation (Hon. Powell), to an E-Petition (4327-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,766 petitioners, requesting the House to permanently protect publicly owned State Forests in the South East Queensland Regional Plan
- [10](#) Response from the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation (Hon. Powell), to an E-Petition (4282-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 469 petitioners, requesting the House to ban the use of wood heaters and fire pits in residential areas

9 January 2026—

- [11](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services (Hon. Nicholls), to an E-Petition (4334-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 652 petitioners, requesting the House to advise all religious bodies that still conduct circumcisions on boys that they should be done by a competent medical practitioner
- [12](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to an E-Petition (4309-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 1,884 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to address boat ramp congestion at Mackay Harbour
- [13](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Mickelberg), to an E-Petition (4312-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 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
- [14](#) Health, Environment and Innovation Committee: Report No. 14, 58th Parliament—Improving Queensland's Container Refund Scheme, interim government response

12 January 2026—

- [15](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Emergency Services (Hon. Purdie), to an E-Petition (4275-25), sponsored by the member for Algester, Hon. Enoch, from 2,228 petitioners, requesting the House to install anti-hooping cameras equipped with automatic numberplate and facial recognition technology across Logan City

14 January 2026—

- [16](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal—Review of the entitlement to additional staff members of cross bench Members of the 58th Parliament—Determination 37/2026, 14 January 2026

16 January 2026—

- [17](#) Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes: Erratum
- [18](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee: Report No. 13, 58th Parliament—Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, interim government response

20 January 2026—

- [19](#) Auditor-General Report 9: 2025-26—Health 2025
- [20](#) Health, Environment and Innovation Committee: Report No. 14, 58th Parliament—Improving Queensland's Container Refund Scheme: Erratum
- [21](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee: Report No. 20, 58th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 17 September 2025 and 18 November 2025

23 January 2026—

- [22](#) Health, Environment and Innovation Committee: Report No. 20, 58th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 October 2025 and 18 November 2025
- [23](#) Report by the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Bleijie), pursuant to section 103 of the Planning Act 2016, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application at 1807 Roys Road, Coochin Creek made by Murray Bell and Associates on behalf of Coochin Creek Property Pty Ltd
- [24](#) Parole Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2024-25

27 January 2026—

- [25](#) Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 25, 58th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 17 September 2025 and 18 November 2025

30 January 2026—

- [26](#) Primary Industries and Resources Committee: Report No. 13, 58th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 27 August 2025 and 18 November 2025
- [27](#) Primary Industries and Resources Committee: Report No. 14, 58th Parliament—Examination of Auditor-General Report 14: 2023-24—Queensland's regions 2023
- [28](#) Health, Environment and Innovation Committee: Report No. 21, 58th Parliament—Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025
- [29](#) Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee: Report No. 8, 58th Parliament—Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

2 February 2026—

- [30](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development (Hon. Last), to an E-Petition (4308-25), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 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

3 February 2026—

- [31](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on overseas visit to Kuala Lumpur by the member for Coomera (Mr Michael Crandon) and the member for Mount Ommaney (Ms Jessica Pugh) to attend the CPA conference 'The Role of Parliament in Shaping the Future of Responsible AI', 28-30 November 2025

6 February 2026—

- [32](#) Education, Arts and Communities Committee: Report No. 12, 58th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 17 September 2025 and 14 October 2025
- [33](#) Education, Arts and Communities Committee: Report No. 13, 58th Parliament—Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025
- [34](#) Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012: Rail Safety National Law National Regulations (Safety Management System) Amendment Regulations 2025
- [35](#) Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012: Rail Safety National Law National Regulations (Safety Management System) Amendment Regulations 2025, explanatory notes
- [36](#) Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 26, 58th Parliament—Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [37](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Solar for Rental Properties Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 156
- [38](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Solar for Rental Properties Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 156, explanatory notes
- [39](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Solar for Rental Properties Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 156, human rights certificate

Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991:

- [40](#) Criminal Practice Amendment Rule 2025, No. 157
- [41](#) Criminal Practice Amendment Rule 2025, No. 157, explanatory notes
- [42](#) Criminal Practice Amendment Rule 2025, No. 157, human rights certificate

Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017:

- [43](#) Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 158
- [44](#) Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 158, explanatory notes
- [45](#) Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 158, human rights certificate

Education and Care Services Act 2013:

- [46](#) Education and Care Services (Removal of Rest Periods) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 159
- [47](#) Education and Care Services (Removal of Rest Periods) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 159, explanatory notes
- [48](#) Education and Care Services (Removal of Rest Periods) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 159, human rights certificate

Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) Act 2017, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994:

- [49](#) Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 160
- [50](#) Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 160, explanatory notes
- [51](#) Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 160, human rights certificate

City of Brisbane Act 2010, Local Government Act 2009:

- [52](#) Local Government Legislation (Empowering Councils) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 161
- [53](#) Local Government Legislation (Empowering Councils) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 161, explanatory notes
- [54](#) Local Government Legislation (Empowering Councils) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 161, human rights certificate

Gaming Machine Act 1991, Liquor Act 1992:

- [55](#) Gaming Machine (Facial Recognition Technology) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 162
- [56](#) Gaming Machine (Facial Recognition Technology) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 162, explanatory notes
- [57](#) Gaming Machine (Facial Recognition Technology) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 162, human rights certificate

Economic Development Act 2012, Planning Act 2016:

- [58](#) Planning (Battery Storage Facilities) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 163
- [59](#) Planning (Battery Storage Facilities) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 163, explanatory notes
- [60](#) Planning (Battery Storage Facilities) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 163, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [61](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Boost to Buy Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 164
- [62](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Boost to Buy Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 164, explanatory notes
- [63](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Boost to Buy Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 164, human rights certificate

Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, Police Service Administration Act 1990:

- [64](#) Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 165
- [65](#) Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 165, explanatory notes
- [66](#) Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 165, human rights certificate

Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Act 2025:

- [67](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 166
- [68](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 166, explanatory notes
- [69](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 166, human rights certificate

Local Government Act 2009:

- [70](#) Local Government (Boundary Change) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 167
- [71](#) Local Government (Boundary Change) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 167, explanatory notes
- [72](#) Local Government (Boundary Change) Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 167, human rights certificate

Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992:

- [73](#) Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2025, No. 168
- [74](#) Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2025, No. 168, explanatory notes
- [75](#) Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2025, No. 168, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [76](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 169
- [77](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 169, explanatory notes
- [78](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation 2025, No. 169, human rights certificate

Fisheries Act 1994:

- [79](#) Fisheries (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Declaration 2025, No. 170
- [80](#) Fisheries (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Declaration 2025, No. 170, explanatory notes
- [81](#) Fisheries (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Declaration 2025, No. 170, human rights certificate

Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Act 2025:

- [82](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 1
- [83](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 1, explanatory notes
- [84](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 1, human rights certificate

Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009:

- [85](#) Greenhouse Gas Storage (Transitional) Regulation 2026, No. 2
- [86](#) Greenhouse Gas Storage (Transitional) Regulation 2026, No. 2, explanatory notes
- [87](#) Greenhouse Gas Storage (Transitional) Regulation 2026, No. 2, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [88](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Community Housing Energy Upgrades Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 3
- [89](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Community Housing Energy Upgrades Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 3, explanatory notes
- [90](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Community Housing Energy Upgrades Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 3, human rights certificate

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995:

- [91](#) Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 4
- [92](#) Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 4, explanatory notes
- [93](#) Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 4, human rights certificate

Fisheries Act 1994:

- [94](#) Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 5
- [95](#) Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 5, explanatory notes
- [96](#) Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 5, human rights certificate

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (Queensland) Act 2003:

- [97](#) Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (Queensland) (Tobacco Laws) Notice 2026, No. 6
- [98](#) Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (Queensland) (Tobacco Laws) Notice 2026, No. 6, explanatory notes
- [99](#) Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (Queensland) (Tobacco Laws) Notice 2026, No. 6, human rights certificate

Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995:

- [100](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 7
- [101](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 7, explanatory notes
- [102](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 7, human rights certificate

Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025:

- [103](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 8
- [104](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 8, explanatory notes
- [105](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 8, human rights certificate
- [106](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999: Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 9
- [107](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 9, explanatory notes
- [108](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 9, human rights certificate

Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000:

- [109](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 10
- [110](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 10, explanatory notes
- [111](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 10, human rights certificate

MEMBERS' PAPERS

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Bundaberg (Mr Smith)—

- [134](#) Nonconforming petition regarding the use of motorbikes and motor vehicles on Lot 201 CK 3242

Member for Thuringowa (Ms Marr)—

- [135](#) Nonconforming petition regarding immediate removal and relocation of the agile wallaby population from 60 North Beck Drive, Condon

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Community Safety, Legislative Reforms

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.56 am): Restoring safety to Queensland is our government's No. 1 priority. We have delivered Adult Crime, Adult Time laws, Jack's Law, Daniel's Law and more police resources. We are restoring consequences for actions. Today we will take the next step in making Queensland safer. Our government will introduce tough new laws to crack down on anti-Semitism and criminal behaviour. Our new laws will deliver strong, decisive action to combat anti-Semitism and to address terrorist motivated offending.

Every Queenslanders deserves to feel safe, respected and protected from vilification or intimidation because of who they are. Anti-Semitism must be called out, but it must also be stamped out. For too long, the embers of hatred were allowed to burn unchecked. What happened in Bondi in December was the culmination of that. With these laws, we are sending a clear message: anti-Semitism, criminal behaviour and terrorist extremism have no place here. Our approach was calm and methodical, and as a result the laws are strong and considered. The legislation is the best of its kind in the country.

The Jewish community has been clear: we need stronger laws backed by real enforcement to drive out anti-Semitism. That is exactly what we are delivering. The Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill will introduce tougher penalties for displaying terrorist symbols. New offences will prohibit the publication of terrorist slogans and address intimidation at places of worship. These changes will be paired with reforms to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists and crooks. It will give Queensland the toughest penalties in the country for illegal weapons. Stronger penalties will apply for drive-by shootings that target a place of worship or involve hate crimes. The bill also creates a new offence to ensure would-be terrorists can be found guilty when actively planning an attack.

Under the laws, a broader scope of history and behaviour will be considered by QPS in assessing firearm licences. Combined with increased penalties for stealing firearms and stronger storage requirements, the changes will help keep weapons out of the wrong hands. The bill also strengthens the firearm prohibition order to further restrict dangerous offenders from accessing weapons. In response to the tragedy at Wieambilla in 2022, a ministerial directive will require mental health reporting to Queensland police for all high-risk patients. Better intelligence sharing and investment in the latest drone and surveillance technology will also form part of our government's response to the coroner's recommendations. These reforms are targeted at criminals and terrorists, who present a high risk to community safety, not law-abiding farmers, primary producers or sporting shooters.

What occurred at Bondi was shocking and confronting, but we cannot ignore the difficult truths that this tragedy has exposed. Anti-Semitism is not harmless; it does real damage. Unchecked, it escalates from words to actions. We said we would address anti-Semitism, and our response focuses on the heart of this issue. We owe that to our Jewish community, and we owe it to Queenslanders to put your safety first. Every Queenslanders, including the Jewish community, deserves to be safe. Our government is determined to do everything possible to stamp out anti-Semitism and terrorist extremism and make Queensland safer.

Community Safety, Legislative Reforms

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (10.00 am): The Crisafulli government is committed to taking strong action to ensure the safety of all Queenslanders. As we have announced, we will be progressing significant reforms which confront anti-Semitism and terrorist motivated offending and strengthen protections for our state's faith-based communities. These reforms clearly draw a line in the sand against hatred and intimidation of the Jewish community. They are about ensuring Queensland remains a place where people can live, worship and gather freely without fear.

In recent years, our Jewish community has experienced an alarming rise in anti-Semitic incidents: from harassment and threats to vandalism and intimidation near places of worship. Bondi was a turning point, one we must never see repeated. We know this situation demands more than words and we refuse to stand idly by and take no action. It requires decisiveness backed by the strong legislation outlined by the Premier. Our laws strengthen penalties for behaviour that threatens religious freedom and community safety while sending a clear message that extremism and hate have no place in our state. Importantly, our laws will introduce a new offence and framework which targets the use of prescribed phrases where they are used to menace, harass and offend.

The legislation also takes a firm step to address the use of terrorist symbols. Penalties for displaying terrorist symbols will be increased and existing laws are being expanded to capture symbols that are linked to terrorist organisations and state sponsors of terrorism, including Hamas, Islamic State and Hezbollah. To better protect places of worship we will increase penalties for assaulting or threatening a person officiating a religious ceremony. We are creating new offences for harassing and obstructing people attending those religious services and introducing a specific offence for wilful damage to those places of worship.

Our reforms reflect the Crisafulli government's unwavering commitment to standing with the Jewish community and protecting Queenslanders from hate motivated harm. These reforms are practical and proportionate and are focused on prevention, accountability and safety. Queensland should be a place where all faith-based communities are respected and protected. Through our nation-leading laws, we are taking strong, decisive action to ensure the safety of all Queenslanders.

Community Safety, Legislative Reforms

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (10.03 am): The Crisafulli government is making Queensland safer, fixing the failures of those opposite and delivering nation-leading reforms to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, terrorists and those who pose the greatest threat to our community. In the wake of the Bondi terror attack this government committed to taking decisive and measured action to limit the risk posed by individuals with extremist ideologies or violent histories who may have access to guns, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Soon we will introduce a bill that delivers a suite of targeted reforms. It includes new nation-leading laws with penalties to match. Those who traffic guns will face life in prison. For the first time drive-by shootings will become an offence. Police will have more power to disrupt crime gangs.

However, it does not end there. We are going after criminals with guns, giving police the tools they need to intervene early before tragedy occurs and ensuring that guns are kept out of the hands of those who pose the highest risk to individuals.

These reforms also form a critical part of the Crisafulli government's response to the Wieambilla tragedy. The senseless murders of constables Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow and neighbour Alan Dare shocked this state and exposed the growing threat posed by violent extremism operating outside traditional law enforcement visibility. We owe it to their families, their colleagues and all Queenslanders to act decisively. We will introduce new mandatory mental health reporting requirements for professional carers in the public health system coupled with the mandatory medical and mental health requirements for weapons licence applicants. It means police will be told about those who pose the greatest risk. We will do this without delay, and I thank the health minister for his swift action.

Also central to these reforms is the strengthening of the firearm prohibition order scheme after it was botched by Labor. Not one single order has been issued under the laws introduced by those opposite. Why? Because they do not trust police. We will act to bring Queensland into line with other states, allowing the Police Commissioner the power to issue an FPO acting on criminal intelligence. FPOs prohibit high-risk individuals from possessing, using or acquiring firearms. That includes extremists, terrorists, bikies and those with murderous intent.

We are also investing more than \$5 million to deliver advanced drone capability for police. This will significantly enhance situational awareness, improve officer safety and strengthen police response capabilities, particularly in high-risk and remote environments. The funding will deliver 60 drones and 30 additional trained police pilots.

From March the Queensland Police will also commence the black spot eradication trial in the Western Downs, equipping police vehicles with modern communication technology and mobile high-speed internet, the first of which will be going to Tara. This delivers on a key election commitment to ensure frontline officers are not left without critical communication when it matters most, particularly in rural and regional Queensland. These changes are what slain constables Matthew Arnold's and Rachel McCrow's families called for and they support the government's measured approach.

The Crisafulli government is taking decisive action to target criminals and terrorists with guns. Stronger laws, tougher penalties, safer communities—because community safety is not negotiable and we will do whatever we can to make Queenslanders safe.

Queensland Health Reporting Obligations, Ministerial Directive

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.07 am): Mr Speaker, at the beginning of my contribution let me associate myself with the Premier's earlier remarks on the motion and your earlier remarks to the House today in relation to the Bondi tragedy. My daughter was, in fact, in Bondi that evening when shots rang out and sent me a message. She was actually there and could observe what was going on, so these events affect us all in different ways.

The Crisafulli government is committed to making Queenslanders safer, and this is not a challenge for the Queensland Police Service to address alone, as the minister has indicated. Finding ways to prevent the harm wrought on victims, their families and the community requires a coordinated, whole-of-government response, and that is what the Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland. All relevant agencies must play their part and that is why we are stepping up to the mark and are working together to deliver that outcome.

Queensland Health already supports the Queensland Police Service by providing information that assists in robust and informed weapons licensing decisions. Under the Weapons Act 1990, professional carers—and that includes doctors, nurses and psychiatrists—are empowered to proactively notify police where they believe a patient is unsuitable to possess a firearm due to their physical or mental health or because they pose a risk to themselves or others.

In 2025 Queensland Health made more than 550 disclosures, with two-thirds of these directly relevant to weapons licensing applications. Today I can announce that Queensland Health will be strengthening this reporting requirement. In the coming weeks I intend to take the extraordinary measure of issuing a ministerial directive that will apply to all professional carers within our hospital and health services. This will be the third time a minister has issued a ministerial directive under the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011.

This directive is proposed to apply when a professional carer, after having undertaken a risk assessment and if having formed the view that a person is a higher risk to commit violence with a weapon, must refer the matter to the Queensland Police Service under section 151 of the Weapons Act. Applicants already have obligations to disclose relevant mental health considerations, as the minister has indicated this morning, and this ministerial directive will be in addition to what is amongst the strongest checks in the nation. If a clinician forms the view that a patient is of a higher risk of committing violence with a weapon, then it will in effect be mandatory for that clinician to report it to the Queensland Police Service.

I have consulted with Queensland Health, including with the Chief Psychiatrist and the executive director of the Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch, and they advise that this is appropriate, feasible and deliverable. Before issuing the directive, as required I will be consulting with experts, including the specialist colleges, and also considering human rights. Queensland Health will continue to support whatever actions are deemed necessary to make Queensland safer.

Bondi, Deaths

 **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) (10.11 am): We are gathered here for the first sitting week since the horrific events at Bondi on 14 December. Today as I stand here there are families and communities still deeply grieving from a horrific act of anti-Semitism—one of the worst terrorist attacks in Australia's history, a modern manifestation of an ancient hate. Loved ones are still less than two months into life without their husband, their daughter, their father, their grandmother. Those in attendance and the heroic bystanders and first responders will still be processing their experience. Rippling far beyond that, an entire community is still rocked by the loss of what sense of safety they still had left. It was a targeted, hate-fuelled attack driven by anti-Semitism and we as a government are committed to the uncomfortable and difficult and vital work of driving out the hate, the fear and the radicalisation that made it possible. We have seen the people of Queensland rally around our shared values of respect, justice and freedom to live and gather in safety, and I would like to acknowledge 160 years of the Jewish community's contribution to Queensland.

In the middle of last year I met one Jewish woman who had moved to Brisbane from Israel three years ago. She said that living in Israel meant you lived in a constant state of alertness and anxiety but, like a balloon, that feeling had finally lifted when she moved to Brisbane. She said that since October 2023 and the Hamas attacks and anti-Jewish protests in Sydney and Brisbane that feeling had returned.

As Queenslanders we have made it clear that those who shatter our values with violence and hate do not reflect who we are and the future we want to build together. As the Premier has said, we must all understand: words become vandalism, vandalism becomes violence and violence becomes murder, and we say that anti-Semitism must be called out and it must be stamped out. The values that have made our nation great—mutual respect, mateship, a free and just society and the safety to live, work, worship and gather in peace—are the values we will continue to champion so that we protect not just those who have been targeted but also the very fabric of our future. We cannot, we must not and we will not allow the darkness of hate and division to win—not here, not now, not ever. This is why we will soon be introducing nation-leading laws. This dark night in the soul of our nation must push us to lead even more decisively towards the value of the light—those values that unite us together for a better, safer and more just future.

Housing Supply

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.14 am): The Crisafulli government knows that after a decade of decline under former Labor governments Queenslanders more than ever feel like they will never be able to afford home ownership and live the good Australian dream of home ownership. The former Labor government was paralysed by inaction and driven by ideology, forcing Queenslanders to pay the price, with rates of home ownership falling to the lowest in the country.

The Crisafulli LNP government is trying to correct Labor's lack of action, and already we are making progress in reforming the delivery of housing in this state. Already the Crisafulli government has abolished a tax so Queenslanders buying or building their first home will pay no stamp duty. We have fixed Labor's failed PDAs in Woolloongabba and Hamilton's Northshore, which were burdened by

red tape, and declared new ones in Mount Peter, North Harbour and Southern Thornlands thanks to the advocacy of the member for Mulgrave, the member for Redlands and our members in the Moreton region and Far North Queensland.

Our \$2 billion Residential Activation Fund is unlocking more than 98,000 lots of land for new homes right across the state, alongside new investment approvals through ministerial infrastructure designation and the LNP's State Facilitated Development planning pathways. We have also abolished BPIC—or the CFMEU tax—which was a dodgy deal done by Labor to serve its masters in the CFMEU and which as a consequence has seen 77,000 fewer homes built in Queensland since 2018.

All Queenslanders will watch with interest as hearings recommence today at the landmark Commission of Inquiry into the CFMEU which will lift the lid on the culture of fear, intimidation and violence that was allowed to fester by the former Labor government and former Labor ministers.

Mr McDonald: Shame.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer—'shame'—and say to the honourable member for Lockyer that, given the commission of inquiry starts back today, I am surprised to see the member for McConnel joining us today. I thought she would be over there in the dock answering the serious questions that she should answer.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: You take personal offence?

Ms GRACE: I take offence and I ask that that be withdrawn. That is a disgrace.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, the member has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Back to your ministerial statement, please.

Ms Grace: Absolute disgrace.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! We will not have quarrelling across the chamber.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the honourable member for McConnel—'disgrace'. It was a disgrace what the CFMEU was doing to construction sites, to women and to children across the state and that it was allowed to get away with it by former failed Labor policies. It is this government that is stamping out the culture of fear, intimidation, violence, sexual assaults and bullying on construction sites in Queensland. When I stand with organisations like Women in Construction, which is thanking this government for our royal commission into the CFMEU, we are on the right side of history on this one and our laws will back it. Because the CFMEU inquiry gets some people in this place excited—or nervous—I will say that the CFMEU commission of inquiry has announced 30 public hearings in the next few months. It is going to be better than the top 10 on Netflix; I guarantee you that, Mr Speaker. It will be binge material, I would say.

As we are fixing the issues of the housing crisis caused by a decade of decline under Labor, I am pleased to announce to the House that for the first time the Crisafulli government has taken the next step in delivering a place to call home for more Queenslanders through our nation-leading Land Activation Program. The Land Activation Program, LAP, will enable the private sector to identify surplus state land which can be brought to market for development and deliver housing for Queenslanders. The LAP will fast-track private sector housing delivery by unlocking opportunities to utilise previously undeveloped sites by the private sector.

I can advise the House that we have announced two LAP sites already through a refocused Economic Development Queensland which have the opportunity to unlock up to 550 new homes in North Queensland in Townsville and Banyo in Brisbane's north. Are you ready for this, honourable colleagues? I only announced this less than a week ago, but the Banyo site and the Pimlico site have already received over 125 registrations of interest in developing housing on these two sites. In under a week there have been 125 registrations of interest from the private sector to develop housing.

A government member: Build, baby, build!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection—build, baby, build—and we will, member, we will! Labor had no plan for these sites, while the Crisafulli government has seized the opportunity to deliver more housing for Queenslanders as part of our commitment to build one million homes by 2044. Labor delay has no chance against ‘Builder Bleijie’.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! When I rise to my feet it should not take that long for the House to come to silence. We are already pushing the clock.

Public Transport, Fares

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.20 am): Today marks 12 months since the Crisafulli government made 50-cent fares permanent right across Queensland. Since the cheapest public transport fares in Queensland’s modern history were made permanent 12 months ago, more than 200 million trips have been taken across the state helping households keep more money in their pockets through real cost-of-living relief, making it easier to get to school, to work and anywhere else on our public transport network. As a result, Queenslanders have saved more than \$423 million compared to what they were paying previously under Labor.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Logan, cease your interjections.

Mr MICKELBERG: This means that someone travelling from the Pumicestone electorate to the CBD for work each day—

Mr O’Connor interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I will take the interjection from the member for Bonney—is saving around \$2,624 a year. Someone from Coomera or Theodore—or, indeed, Bonney—saves around \$3,527 a year, and from Nicklin it is a massive saving of \$9,039 a year. That is real cost-of-living relief. I want to acknowledge the hard work of those members in delivering this for their communities. I know the members for Pumicestone, Coomera, Theodore and Nicklin—and the member for Bonney—know just how tremendous the LNP’s permanent 50-cent fares initiative has been and how it is delivering real cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders. It means that people have extra money available for when the bills arrive, it means they can afford to take the kids to the beach and it means a young Queensland working a casual job can take an extra shift. This is real and ongoing cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders and only the Crisafulli government could deliver it.

Upon becoming a minister I quickly found out that those opposite had left no ongoing funding in the budget to make 50-cent fares permanent. In fact, those opposite spent more on advertising 50-cent fares than they did on making it permanent. By contrast, the Crisafulli government is delivering genuine cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders. Our permanent 50-cent fares deliver long-term cost-of-living support, not short-term pre-election advertising campaigns.

I am pleased to advise that Queenslanders are responding to this great LNP initiative. Patronage across South-East Queensland is up 34 million trips, or 21 per cent, compared to the same period last year. That shows that more people are choosing public transport as the affordable way to travel. In South-East Queensland buses showed strong patronage growth, with 122 million trips taken, followed by trains with 54.6 million trips. It is not just the south-east that is benefitting from the LNP’s permanent 50-cent fares. In regional Queensland, Translink regional bus patronage has risen by 26 per cent in Cairns, 23 per cent in Townsville and 33 per cent in Rockhampton from the start of the initiative through to the end of December last year.

While those opposite focus on gimmicks and spin, our Crisafulli government is focused on delivering real cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders. I encourage all Queenslanders to continue to make use of the LNP’s permanent 50-cent fares on buses, trains, trams and ferries.

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will commence at 10.30 am.

Building and Construction Industry, Productivity

 **Hon. DC JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (10.24 am): The first bill I introduced into this parliament was to establish an independent Queensland Productivity Commission. That is, of course, after Labor axed it, then voted

against its return, because they do not care about productivity as evidenced by flagging productivity not only in Queensland but also across the nation. Now the proof is in. The QPC's definitive 458-page report into construction productivity outlines the productivity decline under Labor and the consequences for Queensland: higher rents, delays and cost blowouts on major projects and 77,000 fewer homes constructed—all because under Labor construction productivity dropped nine per cent since 2018. Labor's BPICs meant millions of small and family businesses were shut out from major projects, while the CFMEU indulged Labor's excesses without improved quality and safety outcomes. The QPC found that if BPIC continued it would have cost the Queensland community up to \$20.6 billion by the end of the decade.

The recommendations cover a wide breadth of policy areas and will require a whole-of-government approach. We have already acted to reform procurement, build skills, slash red tape, transform manufacturing and investigate misconduct in the CFMEU through the Wood commission of inquiry. The QPC report and the government's response have been roundly praised by industry. The Property Council said it was a 'turning point for Queensland's property and construction sector as it strived to respond to the housing crisis'. Civil Contractors Federation Queensland praised the government's focus on productivity and said 'productivity in civil construction is ultimately the driving force of better value for money for taxpayers, higher wages for workers and more prosperous businesses'. QREC said permanently removing BPIC would 'help ensure renewable energy projects, once approved, can be delivered more quickly, efficiently and at lower cost'. UDIA Queensland said the comprehensive report 'pinpointed the many factors which are challenging our industry to deliver homes and jobs at scale and pace'.

The Crisafulli government is delivering a place to call home for more Queenslanders through key initiatives, whether it be the Land Activation Program, the \$2 billion Residential Activation Fund, extending the \$30,000 first home owner grant or the Crisafulli government's nation-leading Boost to Buy home ownership scheme. Under Labor, productivity fell and the housing pressures were created, but we are turning things around and delivering more Queenslanders a place to call home.

Education

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education and the Arts) (10.27 am): At the start of 2026, approximately 895,000 students had begun the school year, supported by nearly 57,000 teachers and over 19,000 teacher aides across Queensland. It is wonderful to see so many students and school staff engaged in learning. I wish them all the best for the 2026 school year. The Crisafulli government is committed to providing the best quality education for our students, as well as easing the cost of living for all Queensland families. That is why this year we have been proud to deliver the Back to School Boost: \$100 per student to use on school supplies such as uniforms, stationery, excursions and textbooks. This is practical and real help for Queenslanders to ease the cost of living.

We hear a lot of talk from the opposition leader about cost-of-living relief so it was disappointing to hear him describe this \$188 million investment in cost-of-living relief as a token amount. How insulting to the hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders who will benefit from this initiative. I table an article from before the election when the chair of P&Cs Qld called for cost-of-education relief for state school parents and guardians to support access to a quality education instead of the \$1.4 billion he wanted to spend on school lunches.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 14 October 2024, titled 'Premier's \$1.4bn lunch cash splash could be better spent elsewhere' [\[137\]](#).

We know that the Leader of the Opposition is not interested in real cost-of-living relief for Queensland parents, not just because of what he says but because of what he did as Premier. As I have mentioned, P&Cs Qld advocated for the Miles government to adopt a similar initiative and we know that he rejected them. The Leader of the Opposition was out of touch then and he is out of touch now. I draw to the attention of the House that in the electorate of Murrumba, the electorate of the Leader of the Opposition, this initiative will mean that people receive \$868,900—so much for a token! In the electorate of Woodridge, the electorate of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, people will receive \$967,400—so much for a token! The Crisafulli government is committed to listening to parents and schools, with the Back to School Boost giving them the support they called for. I encourage students to do their best and I look forward to seeing their achievements firsthand.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Today, question time will conclude at 11.29 am.

Child Safety System, Ministerial Responsibility

Mr MILES (10.29 am): My question is to the Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Media reports revealed in January that the child safety department was unable to say when it was going to check on nearly 40,000 children. Why did the minister go to Africa when nearly 40,000 Queensland children were at risk of physical or sexual abuse?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. Any opportunity we have to highlight the child safety system and the most vulnerable children we care for in this state is an opportunity that I welcome. It is humbling to hold the portfolio that the Premier has charged me with to fix the failed child safety system that we inherited from those opposite. That is why early on our government called for a commission of inquiry into the child safety system. For four years as the shadow minister all I heard about, whether from foster-parents, whistleblowers or child safety officers, was the lack of resources they were receiving, the failings of the system and the need for us to do more. That is why we took to the election the Safer Children, Safer Communities government election commitments. I am pleased with the work that we have underway to deliver them on track.

To address the Leader of the Opposition's question around how many children are at risk, we have many children at risk and they would not be known to our system if they were not, sadly. That is the reality of children—

A government member interjected.

Ms CAMM: I take the interjection. That is the reality of children being cared for by our state and it highlights the very important role that our officers play in intake and assessment. Following the period of the rollout of the Unify system, designed and developed by the former Labor government—and I stood up before the media—there is now online a fully published independent report commissioned by Deloitte. I want to assure Queenslanders that child safety officers have the information of every child across four systems that they utilised in the former system when Unify was switched on. That has impeded the timeframes it takes to be able to assess risk and harm, which is something that I took responsibility for in the media on Saturday. Extra time taken puts a child at risk.

I am pleased to report to this House that, since deploying additional resources into intake and assessment in September last year when it was 40 per cent—we were dealing with a significant backlog—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes.

Ms CAMM:—we have driven that number down and it has dropped to 0.6 per cent this month. That figure is better than what I inherited from those opposite. We will protect children—

(Time expired)

Child Safety System, Public Servants

Mr MILES: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. While the minister was in Africa, did her chief of staff and director-general also take leave while nearly 40,000 children were at risk of physical or sexual abuse and had not been checked on by her department?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. I will grab some more detail on the numbers that we do have and speak about the amount of work.

Mr Crisafulli: It's very important work.

Ms CAMM: It is very important work; I take the interjection from the Premier. I refer to the period April to September last year, after we took forward the Unify system, designed and developed by those opposite. The Leader of the Opposition speaks to the number of children in the child safety system.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Logan, you are warned. I cautioned you before. You are the first on the list.

Ms CAMM: The Leader of the Opposition speaks about the number of children in the system and the number of children at risk. What we on this side inherited was more children than ever in residential care—more children than any other state jurisdiction.

Mr JKelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I cautioned you before as well so you are warned.

Ms CAMM: I have just undertaken a comparison analysis because data has been an issue with the Unify system. I am happy to update the House and the Deloitte report speaks to the findings in the data.

A government member interjected.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection. It is the legacy of those opposite. While I expect a number of questions from many of those opposite, I do not expect any questions today from the member for Jordan or the member for Bulimba. There are a number of former child safety ministers from whom I do not expect any questions. The reason I do not expect any questions from those former ministers about information or 40,000 children is what is contained in the Deloitte report. That report contains the uncovering of a descoped and failed IT system developed by those opposite. Those opposite have the hide to come in here and ask questions about children who are at risk when for almost a decade they oversaw a system in which the numbers continued to grow. Babies in residential care: as the minister, a priority of mine is to make sure that children under the age of five are not placed in residential care.

Anti-Semitism, Response

Mr VORSTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. How is the Crisafulli LNP government taking decisive action to curb anti-Semitism across Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any consequences for not making these changes?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the member for Burleigh for the question. It is a great question. I acknowledge the power of work he has done with the Jewish community and, indeed, all multicultural communities through his assistant minister role. He has done a fine job and I want to acknowledge that today in front of his colleagues.

What we are doing today is nation leading. We have taken the time and worked overtime to get it done. As a result, I genuinely believe that the legislation we are tabling in the parliament today is the best in the country. It has been done in a very calm and methodical way. We have seen the flip side in other jurisdictions. We do not have to spend too much time on this, but the member asked for a compare and contrast. We have seen what happens when there is not that calm and disciplined approach and the mixed messages that sends to our friends in the Jewish community and, indeed, to all Australians who want to be kept safe.

We are dealing with this in three parts. The first goes to the nub of the issue. It is about anti-Semitism, first and foremost. What happened in Bondi was about that. It was not a random attack. It was deliberate. It was targeted at a group of people based on faith. Those words became the violence that we saw and it went right throughout this state so we are targeting those slogans, we are targeting those images and we are making sure people cannot be intimidated at their place of worship.

The second element is around firearms. We are determined to make sure that we have the strongest penalties in the country for stolen and modified illegal weapons and drive-by shootings and for those who are planning a terrorist attack, because if you are planning a terrorist then you are a terrorist and you should be held accountable as a terrorist. That is what this legislation does.

Today the third part, which I have outlined over the past few days, is our response to Wieambilla. It involves mental health reports for all high-risk patients, stronger firearms prohibitions for terrorists and criminals, drone technology and intelligence sharing.

It is a really important piece of legislation. What we are asking for from the opposition is strong bipartisan support for this. The reason is that the forces of hatred and terror are so strong. As a result, we have to send a message that this place is unified. There have been times before when this place could have acted to make the state safer. There were opportunities to vote on stronger firearm laws in parliaments gone by that were not taken. Do not make the same mistake today. Keep the community safe. There were opportunities for those in positions of power to call out anti-Semitic behaviour and yet many of them stood side by side chanting those very slogans that today we will ensure are not said in the future without consequences.

Ms Boyd: What did you say?

Mr Bleijie: We said a lot.

Mr CRISAFULLI: We called it out the whole time. Today is the day to ensure this parliament does it as a whole.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, I have cautioned you a couple of times already this morning so you are now warned.

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

Mr DICK: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. The minister previously said she found out about the Unify frontline staff survey in October 2025. I table the *Hansard* extract. On Saturday, the minister said, 'I was only made aware of that survey and received a copy of that survey in September.' Which timeline of events is true?

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 14 October 2025, from the Record of Proceedings, Queensland Parliament, page 2979, of a speech by the Minister for Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and member for Whitsunday, Hon. Amanda Camm, during Ministerial Statements [138].

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. I am very happy that the member, the former treasurer, asked me a question—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the minister.

Ms CAMM: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the question because timelines are critical, particularly given he was the former treasurer. I will address some timelines with regard to that shortly.

I stood in this House when I was first made aware of and provided a copy of the Together union survey. I was not provided a copy of that survey by the union. I was provided a copy of that survey by a whistleblower within my department. I thank that individual. I have stood in this House and spoken on the issues around the Unify system. I will continue to speak on this each question time and I welcome the opportunity. I wish those opposite had shown this much interest in child safety and Unify when they were in government.

Mr Langbroek: Or transparency.

Ms CAMM: I will take that interjection—or transparency. What the Deloitte report did uncover was a timeline around transparency. What it also uncovered was that outsourced stage 1 of the project completely failed and was a waste of around \$34 million. It delivered zero product to support our front line. This was a system that was designed and developed with the promise to child safety officers to provide the information they need to protect children faster.

I draw the attention of the opposition to page 30 of the Deloitte Unify report, which they can access from the department's website. It states, 'The new delivery approach is endorsed by the Treasurer.' That was in April 2022. Those opposite—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Quarrelling across the chamber will cease. The minister has the call and I think she was being directly responsive to the question when the interruptions became too loud.

Ms CAMM: I know it is a foreign concept for those opposite that on this side of the House we take child safety seriously and that we will be open and transparent about the failings in the system that we inherited. I will also be open and transparent about the fixes. I look forward to answering questions this morning about how we are fixing the failed system endorsed by the former treasurer who approved more funding for a failed, de-scoped system that was ultimately going to put children at risk.

(Time expired)

Anti-Semitism, Response

Ms MARR: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering nation-leading changes to combat anti-Semitism, and is the Attorney-General aware of any approaches that have not prioritised the calls of the Jewish community to keep them safe?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is a great question because on 14 December last year two gunmen took it upon themselves to maliciously gun down and murder 15 members of the Jewish community. Something that is not always talked about is that they also injured 42 other members of that community. It was for one reason: for being Jewish.

From that moment on, the Premier was resolute in saying that hate can never happen in Queensland. He tasked the police minister and me to work with him to make nation-leading laws that will protect and hold our Jewish community in our hearts and ensure that they know that Queensland is the safest place for them to live and raise their children and so they know that their kids can go to school in safety, without fear and without the hate directed towards them.

That is exactly why we have announced these nation-leading reforms. We will prohibit more symbols. We will have a framework to prohibit slang that is offensive and calls for the annihilation of Jews. It is abhorrent. We will protect people at their places of worship where they choose to meet and congregate so that they feel safe. The Crisafulli government has said you are safe. With these laws we are doing everything we can to ensure that that element—that vitally important part of our community—does feel safe.

I thank Jason Steinberg and the Jewish Board of Deputies in Brisbane for speaking out, not just since 14 December but for several years, around the increase in vile anti-Semitism coming through in Queensland. I note he said—

For the past two and a half years, the Jewish community has endured unprecedented levels of hate, intimidation and fear ...

We know that Canberra allowed that to fester. Today, we have an opportunity for everyone in this House to back these important laws and ensure that we have bipartisan support for the nation-leading laws that the Crisafulli government is bringing in.

(Time expired)

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

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the child safety minister. On Saturday the minister said the director-general became aware of issues with Unify three days before her September press conference but an RTI shows her director-general sent an email on 4 June which included: 'Unify is not meeting your needs.' I table a copy of the full email. Which timeline, Minister, of events is true?

Tabled paper: Document, dated 4 June 2025, regarding an RTI release of an email from the Director-General of the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Ms Belinda Drew [\[139\]](#).

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The honourable member asked the question in the first person. She has been here long enough to know that questions have been ruled out of order on that basis.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, could you repeat the question.

Ms McMILLAN: On Saturday the minister said her director-general became aware of issues with Unify three days before her September press conference but an RTI shows her director-general sent an email on 4 June 2025 which included: 'Unify is not meeting your needs.' I tabled a copy of the full email. Which timeline of events is true?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. Firstly, I want to make it categorically clear in this House, as I did in the media, that I did not know anything about the Unify system and the fact it had been descope—that there were critical elements of the Unify system removed by those opposite. That had oversight from multiple former ministers—the members for Bulimba, Jordan and Nudgee—and CBRC. I want to categorically rule out that I knew anything about that, and none of that information was contained in my incoming government briefs. When Unify was deployed and—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms CAMM: If those opposite want to hear the answer—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister is the one who has the call, not those quarrelling across the chamber.

Ms CAMM: When Unify was deployed—and those opposite would know, because there have been multiple ministers across this portfolio—there were governance arrangements in place. In fact, they are the governance arrangements of the project that this government inherited. Those governance arrangements outlined a number of timelines around going live and risk—very little risk; apparently it was all good—and the promise to the front line. This might also shock those opposite, but I take my ministerial responsibility very seriously and I visit the front line—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms CAMM: They are laughing about children—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I thought you would be more aware of the standing orders. You are on a warning. You are interjecting. You can leave the chamber for a period of one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Greenslopes withdrew from the chamber at 10.52 am.

Ms CAMM: For those opposite to laugh at any element of this portfolio or the failure of the system I have had to deal with, left by those opposite, just shows where this rates, that this is just playing politics with children. It may surprise those opposite—and my ministerial diary outlines this, as does my director-general's with regard to briefings—that I monitored the rollout of that system through the discussion I had with the front line. I thank the front line. I take this opportunity to thank our child safety officers and the administration staff. Those opposite were going to cut 95 positions last Christmas—frontline officers whose jobs we saved. Compound that with the failures of the system. We are getting to work to fix the failures that they delivered.

(Time expired)

Police Powers and Resources

Mrs POOLE: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government giving our police the powers and resources they need to combat violent criminals and terrorists, and is the minister aware of any approaches that denied our police the powers and resources required?

Mr PURDIE: I thank the member for the question. The member, as we know, is a former frontline police officer and she knows that of great concern to all of our frontline police officers is the number of unlawful and stolen firearms in the community. Unfortunately, we saw under those opposite, over 10 years, the proliferation of stolen firearms in the community. In 2024 it was reported—

The rate of firearms reported as stolen has also increased by at least 21% within the last decade, with over 779 firearms reported stolen in 2023. Coupled with continuing challenges in recovering stolen firearms and the longevity of a functioning firearm, there is a corresponding increase in the risk that these weapons come into the possession of high-risk individuals ...

Do members know where this was reported? This was in the statement of compatibility for Labor's Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024. There was nothing in that bill to address the explosion of stolen firearms that occurred under those opposite. The statement went on to talk about the 30 per cent increase over the last decade in gun related violence and about 3,500 gun related crimes.

We, in opposition, showed leadership. We tabled an amendment during that debate to drastically increase the penalties for those people stealing firearms, and those opposite did not support it. Their own document—the statement of compatibility for their bill—highlights the concern around the alarming increase in stolen firearms in our community falling into the hands of the wrong people and creating that risk. We showed leadership and those opposite did not support it.

It was not the first time they did not support it. We tabled a similar amendment back in 2019 which they did not support. Similarly, on both of those occasions they did not support amendments that we tabled to introduce a drive-by shooting offence in this state. It had been highlighted the whole time they were in government that these figures were on the rise. The increase in the number of drive-by shootings is a clear indicator of organised crime activity. That is why our offence has a circumstance of aggravation and a penalty of 20 years in prison for an offender who conducts a drive-by shooting. The circumstance of aggravation also applies to those conducting a shooting at a place of worship. Organised criminals will face 20 years in prison with a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in prison.

Only two nights ago there was drive-by shooting offence committed in Townsville. It is recorded on the police system currently, as it always has been under those opposite, as a four-year offence—a four-year offence for the discharge of a firearm. We are changing that to a 20-year offence. We are sending a clear message that we, as a state government, are no longer soft on gun crime. For 10 years those opposite were soft on youth crime and soft on gun crime. That is another reason they failed the FPO scheme, which we are going to fix today. Shame on them! They knew, from their own documents, that this was an issue and they did nothing about it. We will.

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

Mr SMITH: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. Was the minister briefed on 5 June 2025 by her director-general that Child Safety staff rated Unify 1.79 out of 10?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. The member is referring to the Services Union survey. I welcomed the opportunity to meet with the Services Union last year when they presented me with their survey in September—no, it was October.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms CAMM: I stood in this House and told everyone about the survey and the union facilitating the meeting in October. While I correct the record, with regard to the figure I quoted in answer to a previous question from the deputy leader—

Mr Fumer interjected

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove is now warned.

Ms CAMM:—it was not \$34 million in stage 1; it was \$37 million. I want to make sure *Hansard* records the correct figure.

Since the time I was first briefed in September with regard to the issues confronting the front line, I have spent a lot of time consulting and engaging with our frontline staff. It is always a privilege to visit child safety service centres right across this state and to hear firsthand from the front line. Recently, in the electorates of Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South I had an opportunity to speak with frontline officers. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from the front line with regard to the action our government has taken in supporting the front line. I have made the offer to the union to come and be fully briefed on the Deloitte findings—

Ms Bush interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Cooper is now warned.

Ms CAMM:—because I think it is really important that their members understand the history of this system and that their members understand, particularly those on the front line, that this system had been descoped under multiple ministers and under multiple leadership CBRC roles of those opposite.

Mr Bleijie: But one treasurer—multiple child safety ministers but one treasurer.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier—one treasurer. Those opposite were not open and transparent with Queenslanders about descoping the Unify system, about descoping important functionality like individual placement support. Those opposite may not know what that means because that portfolio changed hands five times. One of the major functions that was descoped was court affidavits and funding. Again, it was overseen by the former treasurer and former child safety ministers, including reporting—

(Time expired)

Queensland Health Reporting Obligations, Ministerial Directive

Mr HUNT: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister outline how the Crisafulli LNP government is strengthening mental health reporting and the further steps the government is taking to make Queensland safer?

Mr NICHOLLS: Today we are discussing a range of measures the government is taking to make Queenslanders safer. For too long now, including in December at Christmas time, we have been hearing of these terrible events, whether it is Wieambilla or Bondi. We must take steps to strengthen our system to protect people of all creeds who come here to live a life that we all should be able to live. It is not any one part of government that needs to do it; it is all of government that needs to do it. In fact, it is all of us who need to do it. It is not just the responsibility of government.

In that respect it is important that Queensland Health plays its role because the events that occurred on 12 December 2022 were truly devastating. When I heard and read about it, I remember being shocked that that would happen in Queensland. Our sympathies go to the victims' families, the Queensland Police Service and all those who were affected by that tragedy. It was a tragedy that, sadly, saw the death of two brave Queensland Police Service officers as well as a neighbour.

We are committed to making Queensland safer, and it is our responsibility to do so. Queensland Health will support the Queensland Police Service by providing information that will assist in robust and informed weapons licensing decisions, as I outlined earlier in my ministerial statement. It is our obligation to do so in the appropriate fashion when that information comes across our desk. Last year, Queensland Health made more than 550 disclosures to the Queensland Police Service in accordance with the Weapons Act. In the coming weeks we will further strengthen that reporting requirement.

It is my intention to take the rare step—and it is a rare step—of issuing an extraordinary ministerial directive to all professional carers, including doctors, nurses and psychiatrists, within our hospital and health services. In fact, this is only the third ministerial directive issued since 2011. If a professional carer forms a view that a patient is at a higher risk of committing violence with a weapon, it will, in effect, be mandatory for that carer to report to the Queensland Police Service. I have consulted with Queensland Health, including with the Chief Psychiatrist, as I have indicated, and the executive director of the Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch, who is the former chief psychiatrist, and they have advised this approach is appropriate.

Before issuing the directive, I will, of course, be consulting with experts in our health system, including the specialist colleges—and I note the Bondi Junction recommendations also include consultation with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. This is not something that we have to work on or wait for. It is feasible to take immediate action, and that is why we are starting that today. Queensland Health will continue to support whatever actions are deemed necessary to make Queensland safer. This was our commitment to the people of Queensland at the last election and we remain steadfast in delivering for the people.

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

Mr WHITING: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. RTI documents reveal that on 4 June 2025 the director-general knew there were issues with Unify. It is understood an interdepartmental committee, which includes the Premier's department, also exists to manage the rollout of Unify. Does the minister stand by her statements that no-one advised her of issues with Unify before September?

Ms CAMM: With regard to governance, the member has asked a very important question. First and foremost, I stood up and told Queenslanders about this system. The only reason, in fact, the member opposite would know about it is five former ministers knew about it as well as the former treasurer and cabinet. I take the view that there would be some members opposite who do not know all of the details, and they should go and have a conversation with the former ministers who are well-informed of the decisions to descope, to remove functions and to cut back on the budget. In fact, they failed the child safety officers and the staff who work very hard to protect children. That falls on those opposite.

As I told the media on Saturday, importantly we have now appointed an independent chair as part of our governance and oversight of Unify with regard to fixing it. We have also deployed almost 120 staff, and they have done an incredible job. It is amazing to me that those opposite started asking questions about this system when I stood up and told Queenslanders that we had issues with the system, not six months before or when it went live.

There are many former ministers over there who knew all about the detail. Letters were sent from those departments and from former director-generals to the Queensland Family and Child Commission about the Unify system and the impact it was going to have on corporate data. They were signed off in June 2024.

As the minister, I am briefed and I stay informed across my department. I made it very clear that I was never briefed on the failings of this system either in my incoming government briefs or in every brief provided to me by the department. The second I was informed I stood up three days later and told Queenslanders. Now we are fixing it.

Mr Furner interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove, you were on a warning. You can leave the chamber for a period of one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Ferny Grove withdrew from the chamber at 11.07 am.

Anti-Semitism, Response

Mr JAMES: My question is to the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government prioritising the rights of victims of anti-Semitism ahead of offenders, and is the minister aware of any alternatives where the rights of offenders were put first?

Mrs GERBER: The member for Mulgrave is a fierce advocate for victims, particularly in his own electorate of Mulgrave. Today this House mourns the victims of the Bondi massacre. This House stands with our Jewish community in relation to that massacre. We also stand with the families of the Wieambilla tragedy. That is why today we have announced we are introducing strong legislation targeting anti-Semitism.

We know that the Bondi massacre was an attack on our Jewish community. It was an attack on Jews practising their faith. Our strong laws not only will ensure anti-Semitic conduct is stamped out but also will demonstrate to our Jewish community that we stand with them, that they can go to places of worship, that they can practise their faith and that their families and children can be safe.

Our nation-leading legislation also introduces tough new gun laws. It means that we are keeping guns out of the hands of terrorists and criminals. Quite frankly, for too long Queenslanders, including victims of anti-Semitic conduct, have been left with a government that did not hear them or see them and have been left with laws that did not protect them. For too long victims of crime in this state, under the decade of decline under Labor, did not have the laws they needed to be protected. Under Labor, there were 289,657 victims of crime. Under the decade of decline under Labor, victims of crime rose by 193 per cent.

The Crisafulli government has listened to victims. We have listened to our Jewish community and we are introducing strong laws that target anti-Semitic behaviour, strong laws that keep guns out of the hands of terrorists and crooks. The question for those opposite is: will they support keeping guns out of the hands of terrorists and criminals? Will they support arming our police with the laws they need to keep our communities safe? Will they vote for our strong laws that protect victims of crime, that protect our Jewish community, that stamp out anti-Semitic behaviour? Every single Queensland, including the Jewish community, deserves to live, to worship and to gather safely, and that is exactly what our strong laws deliver. The question for those opposite, who have not stated where they stand on this, is: will they support these laws? This is too important. This chamber needs to have bipartisan support when it comes to these laws. This is too important to victims of crime and to our Jewish community.

(Time expired)

Anzac Day

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. Many Queenslanders cannot observe an Anzac Day public holiday this year because it falls on a Saturday. Will this government, as foreshadowed by the New South Wales government, move the public holiday to Monday so that Queenslanders can have a break from work and an opportunity to properly commemorate the Anzacs?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the honourable member for the question. I have not seen the member reflect a great deal on Anzac Day in his time in this place but I welcome the question. I will tell the House why I welcome the question. It is because we should be proud in this state to have the highest number of veterans in the country. Until this point there has been no veterans strategy in this state. In coming to government, I wanted to make sure we gave the respect and poignancy that it deserves. I took the portfolio myself and, as part of it, I wanted to make sure we had the state's first veterans strategy. I also wanted to go a step further and make sure there was a strategy for veterans and veterans' families. I spent a lot of time speaking with them. I am deeply honoured about what they do for our state. Having spent that time listening to them I know that, overwhelmingly, they want Anzac Day to be a day of commemoration and they want it to be on 25 April. The reason is that that date has so much significance to not just service men and women but also the broader community.

I look at the contribution that people make in this state—those who are serving. I think of great cities like Townsville, which has the Lavarack Barracks there. I think of people here in Enoggera and the sacrifices they make. I see Shoalwater Bay and the massive contribution that is made to the broader Central Queensland region. When we are doing the veterans strategy and we go out to a place like Emerald, we see the proud people who are living in Western Queensland. At every opportunity we should pause and reflect and say thank you to them. Thank you to those who served and did not come

home. Thank you to those who served and came home different from when they left. That is what 25 April is for. It is a day when universally in this nation people, regardless of their views of conflicts either individual or in the past or in the future, honour those service men and women. The day to do that is on 25 April.

Housing Supply

Mrs YOUNG: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House how the Crisafulli LNP government is unlocking housing around the state, and is he aware of any alternative approaches during a decade of decline?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the member for Redlands for her question and for her advocacy in getting a priority development area approved in her area, unlocking thousands and thousands of blocks of land for Queenslanders, because we want people to have Queensland as a place to call home.

Before Christmas I hit the road with the Residential Activation Fund. Last week I hit the road with the Land Activation Program, our LAP program, unlocking underutilised land right across the state and in every corner of the state. We are going to unlock so much land for people to build houses on. There is so much to do because we had a decade of decline under Labor where they just talked about housing but did not deliver housing for people. Compare and contrast our program that I announced last week—just the first two announcements—with Labor. In North Queensland at the old TAFE site at Pimlico, we will deliver 150 new homes. I was at Banyo in the honourable member for Nudgee's electorate. That is going to unlock 400 new homes. The Labor Party have already been out whingeing and whining and attacking our housing policies.

Compare and contrast our policy of unlocking homes with the former government's ground lease model. Here we go: Labor's policy was a ground lease model to unlock state owned land—a ground lease model at a cost of \$1.7 billion to unlock 715 homes. I heard the opposition leader say last week in one of his weird video things he does, 'The LNP are just interested in million dollar homes.' Under their policy, each home was going to cost \$2.3 million to build!

A government member: Genius!

Mr BLEIJIE: Genius! I take the interjection—\$2.3 million to build a house! We are getting on with the job. It gets better. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the former housing minister and former minister Grace issued a press release about their ground lease model in February 2024 when they talked about this ground lease model and used the Pimlico site as an example. I quote from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who was the deputy premier at the time—

It's great to see new social housing being completed in Townsville, and construction start on new projects in the months ahead.

'In the months ahead,' he said. In the months ahead—nothing. They never built anything. It was a locked-up old TAFE site. They never activated it. A month after they announced the Pimlico site they commissioned KPMG to do a review of whether it stacked up. I can advise the House that the KPMG report said, 'No. It does not stack up.' They announced the policy, then did a review on it and then did not tell Queenslanders that their own policy did not stack up.

Finally, in 2016 member Linard put out a post about the Banyo site: 'We'll let you know what's happening with it.' Ten years later—nothing. We are getting on with the job. We will build the houses in Banyo because member Linard did not do anything.

(Time expired)

Police Service, Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command

Ms FENTIMAN: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Sue and Lloyd Clarke have described the dismantling of the Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command as a 'backward step' and the Red Rose Foundation has also criticised this decision. Has the minister raised these important stakeholder concerns with the police minister?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. Unlike those opposite, I work very closely with the Minister for Police and the Attorney-General. In fact, in doing so we brought forward legislation in this House to deliver the new police protection directions—

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Cairns, you are warned.

Ms CAMM:—framework, which was rolled out as at 1 January. We took to the election a commitment to put victims first and to hold perpetrators to account, and that is what our government is doing.

I observed, particularly across social media posts of a number of those opposite, the scaremongering campaign around the changes that the Queensland police have made with regard to better resourcing our frontline officers, particularly those who have specialist skills and services in domestic and family violence. Over the last decade of the former government—and I think the member was a former minister for domestic and family violence at one point—domestic and family violence incidents had risen by 218 per cent. Our government took action. We moved very quickly on giving police the tools and the resources they need. I am pleased that in the first month we have had 224 PPDs, providing aggrieved persons with immediate protection. Last week I met with a constable in my own Whitsunday community who shared with me that he was able to protect a victim of domestic violence through the use of a PPD.

With regard to the vulnerable persons unit, let me be clear that I look forward to connecting with Sue and Lloyd Clarke, whom I have had the privilege of standing beside many times, as I know many in this House have, to ensure they and other advocates are informed of the facts. That is why I spoke with QDVSN, the peak body this government is standing up. In fact, they will be operational this month with an interim CEO. It is the first independent peak body for domestic and family violence in this state along with QSAN, the first independent sexual violence body in this state. Since we took government in 2024 the Queensland police has increased by 48 the number of officers deployed across the Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command. Because we govern for all of Queensland, we have deployed more resources into the regions at the front line where they need them most.

(Time expired)

Public Transport, Fares

Mr BOOTHMAN: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. How are the Crisafulli government's nation-leading permanent 50-cent fares delivering affordable public transport, and is the minister aware of any approaches that failed to deliver permanent, affordable public transport?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The noise has started already and the minister has not said a word.

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Theodore for his question. The member is a forceful advocate for better public transport in his electorate on the northern Gold Coast, whether it is better bus services or advocating for us to get on with the job of delivering better rail services in the form of Logan and Gold Coast faster rail, something those opposite said they were going to do but never did.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I can hear the member for Miller interjecting. I think he was the one who said it would be \$2.6 billion. It doubled under him and they still did not build it. That is their record.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I take the interjection from the member for Bonney. That is not too bad when you talk about the member for Miller and his cost overruns: just look at Cross River Rail. I can talk about overruns all day, but I do not want to miss an opportunity to talk about our great initiative: permanent 50-cent fares. The now opposition leader—the then premier, deputy premier before that and senior minister before that—said this was something he 'always wanted to do' but never got around to. In the 10 years he was the senior minister, deputy premier and premier he never did it. Then on the eve of an election he announced a six-month trial. It was a little pre-election sweetener they did not fund. Bear in mind this was a deeply held conviction, something he wanted to implement the entire time, but he was frustrated by those above him. So you would think that maybe when he became the leader—

Mr O'Connor: The premier.

Mr MICKELBERG:—the premier of this state he might have implemented it. No, he did not.

Mrs Frecklington: 'Blocker' blocked it.

Mr MICKELBERG: 'Blocker' blocked it indeed. In contrast, before the election our government said we would make 50-cent fares permanent and we did it within the first 100 days of coming into office. Within the first 100 days we made the LNP's 50-cent fares permanent. Queenslanders have spoken and they have made it very clear that they love the LNP's permanent 50-cent fares. More than 200 million trips have been taken across the state on public transport under the LNP's permanent 50-cent fares. More than \$423 million has been saved, providing real cost-of-living relief in the budget, in the forwards; locked in under the LNP and not by those opposite. They could not do it. They had 10 years to do it; they never did. It is only the LNP that has delivered permanent 50-cent fares for Queenslanders.

For the member for Theodore's benefit, a commuter who travels to Brisbane from his electorate is saving approximately \$3,527 a year in their pocket under the LNP's permanent 50-cent fares. That is delivering for Queensland.

(Time expired)

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you have joined the list. You are warned.

Police Service, Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command

Ms McMAHON: My question is to the Minister for Police. The Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command is currently led by an assistant commissioner. Can the minister confirm whether there will still be an assistant commissioner with the sole responsibility of protecting domestic, family violence and vulnerable people in Queensland despite the decision to abolish the command?

Mr PURDIE: I thank the member for the question. The domestic violence command has now been elevated directly under the new Office of the Commissioner. The member opposite knows the rank structure in the Queensland police. The commissioner is at the top above an assistant commissioner, and that was part of the 100-day review. The commissioner is bringing that department directly under his control under the new Office of the Commissioner. As Assistant Commissioner Rhys Wildman said at the time, the policing of domestic violence in Queensland and protecting vulnerable people, particularly women and children, is a top priority for police. It is and it always will be.

As the minister just pointed out, in the last 12 months since we have been in government we have increased the number of specialist police on the front line in the DV and vulnerable persons unit by 48. That means there are 48 more frontline officers in communities across Queensland since we came to government. We know the record of those opposite. Under the member for Waterford domestic violence calls went up 200 per cent over 10 years year on year, and that member wrapped police in red tape as calls for service went unanswered.

That is why, working with the Attorney-General and the minister, we did give police the power to act more rapidly to protect victims with PPDs, of which over 200 have been issued. The feedback we are getting from victims when police can rapidly put a protection notice in place to protect them and they do not have to go to court and relive that and be retraumatised has been compelling, so I am glad we did it. We want to make sure we continue to give our police the resources they need to protect vulnerable women and children. As the assistant commissioner addressed, it has been elevated and some of those staff have been disseminated out across communities to support the extra already 48 officers.

That is why it was so disgusting for that member to launch this campaign. It was fake news. The assistant commissioner addressed the concerns. That minister misled the Clarke family and ran an online campaign. That member has form. That member is a serious repeat offender when it comes to taking comments out of context and putting them online. She has had to remove them in the past. She has form when it comes to taking matters out of context and using them for her own political gain. After she raised this the assistant commissioner immediately put this to bed. It is being elevated and those staff, coupled with extra staff across the state, will protect vulnerable women and children from domestic and family violence. Our police will continue to police that as a top priority. That campaign you ran is disgraceful—

(Time expired)

Gas Industry

Mr WATTS: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. How is the Crisafulli LNP government expanding Queensland's gas industry, and is the minister aware of any approaches where this important industry was neglected?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute.

Mr LAST: I thank the member for the question. When it comes to gas in Queensland, what a good news story that is for this state. Late last year we assessed those nine tenements and earlier this year I was pleased to announce the successful tenderers for those areas: Santos and Drillsearch.

Today I can announce that the successful tenderers for the 750-square-kilometre Taroom Trough south of Miles have been named: Omega, Tri-Star and Drillsearch. They are excited to be named as the successful tenderers for that area. It gets even better, and you heard it here first. They have also found oil in that area, so we now embark on the search for, and development of, oil in this state. I see the Treasurer is smiling at the potential that will bring for Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION



Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (11.30 am): I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 37:

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

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

Ind, 2—Bolton, Sullivan.

Contrary vote, 1—Dalton.

NOES, 50:

LNP, 50—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Blejje, Boothman, Camm, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, 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.

FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM AND KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Hon. DG PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (11.40 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Service Administration Regulation 2016, the Queensland Community Safety Act 2024, the Weapons Act 1990, the Weapons Regulation 2016, the Youth Justice Act 1992 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: Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026 [140].

Tabled paper: Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026, explanatory notes [141].

Tabled paper: Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026, statement of compatibility with human rights [142].

I rise to introduce the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026, which meets the Crisafulli government's commitment to tackle the scourge of anti-Semitism in the wake of the Bondi Beach terrorist attack. On Sunday, 14 December 2025, two gunmen opened fire on hundreds of community members at a Hanukkah celebration at Bondi Beach. This horrific attack tragically claimed the innocent lives of 15 individuals, including that of a 10-year-old child. The impact of this event has been enormous and rippled through all of Australia.

This was a targeted anti-Semitic attack, one that has caused deep pain and trauma to the Jewish community and strikes at the very heart of who we are as a nation. Such an act has no place in society, and this government will ensure it is met with the strongest condemnation. This attack stands as the deadliest act of terrorism in Australia's history and the second deadliest mass shooting our nation has

ever witnessed, which emphasised the need for stronger laws to combat anti-Semitism, hate crimes and serious and organised crime, to protect community safety and to prevent firearms from falling into the hands of those who pose the greatest risk to Queenslanders. This government is resolute in ensuring every person in Australia has the right to practise their faith, celebrate their culture and live their lives free from fear, hatred and violence.

This bill provides for a range of Criminal Code amendments focusing on strong penalties and targeted measures and addressing terrorist symbols, hateful expressions and protections for faith communities in order to provide a balanced and considered criminal justice response to the rise of anti-Semitism. The other aspect to this bill delivers a suite of reforms that ensures our laws are the strongest in the nation when it comes to disrupting and deterring criminal conduct involving weapons and hate crimes. This bill will meet these objectives by strengthening responses to hate crimes, strengthening the penalties for offences involving the misuse of firearms and weapons, giving more powers to police to assess the suitability of applicants for weapons licences, and providing additional mechanisms to prohibit extremists and organised crime syndicates from obtaining weapons. It will also impose limitations on most non-citizens accessing and using firearms and improve information-sharing and disclosure arrangements.

I want to make clear from the outset that the reforms contained in this bill are not targeting law-abiding firearms owners. Rather, they are intended to minimise, to the greatest extent possible, the risk of firearms falling into the wrong hands while prioritising the safety of the Queensland community. I turn to the first set of reforms in the bill.

The bill amends chapter 7A of the Criminal Code to strengthen the existing prohibited symbols so that our laws remain responsive to emerging threats. The bill does this by allowing terrorist organisations or state sponsors of terrorism listed under Commonwealth laws to be prescribed for the purpose of prohibiting in Queensland the display of symbols used to identify these entities. In speaking today I will refer simply to a prescribed terrorist organisation where this could encompass a prescribed state sponsor of terrorism as well.

The prohibited symbols offence under section 52D will apply to the symbols of a prescribed organisation so that it will be a criminal offence to publicly distribute, publish or display a symbol used by a prescribed terrorist organisation or its members to in any way identify that organisation. In line with the existing offence for displaying prohibited symbols, a person will commit an offence if they display a terrorist organisation symbol in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause a member of the public to feel menaced, harassed or offended.

A prescribed organisation may use many symbols to identify itself, including some that may be obscure and rarely used. Because of this, the bill provides an additional safeguard which only applies where the prohibited symbol relates to a prescribed terrorist organisation. In these cases the prosecution will also have to prove that the accused knew, or ought reasonably to have known, that the symbol was used by a prescribed organisation or its members to represent that organisation. However, let me be clear. This additional safeguard, which only applies where the prohibited symbol offence relates to a prescribed terrorist organisation, is not a loophole for those who claim ignorance.

In practice, the court must be satisfied that a reasonable person in the same circumstances as the accused would have recognised the symbol's association with the prescribed terrorist organisation. In other words, individuals will be held accountable if it is clear they should have known better. For those rare occasions where display of these symbols is warranted, the existing non-exhaustive list of reasonable excuses that applies in respect of the display of prohibited symbols will also apply in the case of prohibited symbols of prescribed terrorist organisations. These excuses ensure that individuals will not be held liable if their conduct is for legitimate purposes, such as artistic, religious, educational, historical, legal, law enforcement or public interest purposes, or to oppose the ideology represented by a prohibited terrorist organisation symbol.

Importantly, the bill increases the penalty for all prohibited symbol offences from 70 penalty units, or six months imprisonment, to 150 penalty units, or two years imprisonment. These amendments send a clear and unequivocal message: there is no place for hate symbols in Queensland. The public use of chants or phrases rooted in hate and extreme prejudice strikes at the very heart of our values as Queenslanders. Such expressions are not mere words; they are weapons of division that undermine social harmony and cohesion, threaten public safety and cause profound harm to our communities. That is why this government is taking decisive action and introducing a new framework under the bill that will allow hateful expressions to be prescribed by a regulation so that their public use can be banned in Queensland.

In order to introduce a ban in relation to a particular phrase or slogan, a number of requirements must first be met. These requirements are similar to those which must be met before a symbol can be prescribed as a prohibited symbol. An expression may only be prescribed if it is widely known by the public or members of a relevant group as being solely or substantially representative of an ideology of extreme prejudice against a relevant group. Importantly, 'relevant group' includes people who identify with each other on the basis of race or religion. This means that anti-Semitic expressions calling for violence against Jewish people inspiring hatred may be considered for prescription provided all the criteria under the bill are met. In addition to the criteria I have just outlined, it must also be shown that the expression is regularly used to incite discrimination, hostility or violence against a relevant group, such as race and religious groups.

Before making a regulation to prescribe an expression, and consistent with the approach for prohibited symbols, the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner, the chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission and the Commissioner of Police will be consulted. These requirements are extensive, and rightly so. They act to ensure that only those phrases that have the potential to incite hatred and sow division within our community can be prohibited. Ultimately, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity has responsibility under the legislation to consider what expressions should be prescribed having regard to the criteria set out in the bill.

The bill introduces a new offence to criminalise publicly reciting, distributing, publishing or displaying a prohibited expression, carrying a maximum penalty of 150 penalty units, or two years imprisonment. This offence will apply to expressions that have been prescribed by regulation in line with the process I have just referred to. This offence will target both written and spoken expressions where they are spoken or displayed in such a way that could reasonably cause a member of the public to feel menaced, harassed or offended. As with the operation of the existing prohibited symbols offence, a reasonable excuse defence will also apply.

The amendments I will address next are of profound importance. They focus on protecting Queensland's faith communities. The Crisafulli government wants to ensure that every Queenslanders, no matter what religion they follow, can worship and express their faith freely—without fear, harassment or violence. To address this, the bill introduces several measures targeted at protecting our faith communities. Firstly, the bill amends section 206 of the Criminal Code, which deals with offering violence to officiating ministers of religion. These amendments modernise the language of the offence to reflect contemporary language and practices. The amendments also increase the maximum penalty from two years imprisonment to five years imprisonment. This sends a clear message that assaults against religious leaders, who play such a vital role in our communities, will not be tolerated.

Secondly, the bill strengthens section 207 of the Criminal Code which criminalises the wilful disturbance of lawful religious worship. The maximum penalty for this offence will be increased to 20 penalty units, or six months imprisonment. For cases where the offence is motivated by hatred or serious contempt for a person or group based on their personal characteristics such as race or religion, the penalty will be further increased to one year imprisonment.

We also recognise the importance of ensuring that all Queenslanders can access places of worship safely and without fear. To this end, the bill introduces a new offence to criminalise conduct that hinders or impedes access to places of worship by intimidating or obstructing individuals entering or leaving a lawful religious gathering without a reasonable excuse. The offence carries a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment. This will ensure that, where protest action crosses a line and people are intimidated as they go to and from a place of worship, offenders can be charged with an offence that reflects the seriousness of their conduct.

The bill establishes a special case of punishment under section 469 of the Criminal Code for wilful damage to places of worship, increasing the maximum penalty to seven years imprisonment. Put simply, acts of vandalism or destruction targeting places of worship will not be tolerated in Queensland. These sacred places must be protected, and those who seek to deface or otherwise damage them will face the full force of the law.

As the Premier said when responding to the appalling attacks on Bondi Beach, the Queensland government has been working carefully, thoughtfully and methodically to finalise its response, and this is what these reforms to the Criminal Code achieve. They are balanced and they ensure that our laws are amended so that all Queenslanders can feel safe no matter where they live, their cultural beliefs or their religion. The Crisafulli government is also delivering strong, decisive action to combat anti-Semitism. A comprehensive package has been delivered to crack down on anti-Semitism and terrorist symbolism, restrict terrorist slogans and bolster safety around places of worship.

This government will make no apologies for enforcing strong penalties for the misuse of firearms. The Queensland community expects those who misuse weapons to be held accountable, and this bill will deliver on that expectation.

One of the key facets of this bill is an increase to the maximum penalties for a specific range of Weapons Act offences. This suite of reforms equips Queensland with the strongest laws in the nation to deter criminal behaviour that threatens community safety through increasing the maximum terms of imprisonment for the following: stealing of firearms or ammunition, from 10 to 14 years imprisonment; unlawful possession of weapons, from a range between two and 10 years imprisonment to a range between seven and 20 years, subject to the category of the weapon; unlawful supply of weapons, from a range between four and 13 years imprisonment to a range between 10 and 20 years, subject to the category of the weapon; shortening of weapons, from four to 14 years imprisonment; modifying the construction of weapons, from four years imprisonment to 15 years imprisonment; altering identification marks on weapons, from four years to 14 years imprisonment; unlawful trafficking of weapons, from 15 years imprisonment to life; and unlawful manufacture of weapons, from a range between four and 10 years imprisonment to a range between 10 and 20 years. These reforms send a clear message: the misuse of firearms and weapons will not be tolerated in Queensland and those who commit these offences will face serious consequences.

Hundreds of firearms are stolen in Queensland each year. The recovery rates for these stolen firearms are low. Of the almost 600 stolen firearms last year, just 102 were recovered—a recovery rate of just 18 per cent. These low recovery rates translate in real terms to an increase every year in the number of illicit firearms circulating in Queensland. The bill amends the storage requirements for category A, B, C, E and M weapons to provide that these weapons must be stored in solid steel containers rather than storage containers made of timber. This will provide greater protection to the community by making it more difficult for weapons to fall into the wrong hands.

This bill introduces a new offence to tackle a particular form of gun crime—namely, drive-by shootings. This offending behaviour presents a significant risk to the safety of the community and is often associated with organised crime groups. In 2025 there were 131 charges for dangerous conduct with a weapon and 37 charges for discharging a weapon in a public place. Both carry a minor penalty. The new offence will prohibit the reckless discharge of a firearm towards a building or vehicle and will also introduce aggravation provisions to ensure higher penalties apply where the offender is an organised crime participant, is motivated to commit this offence as part of a hate crime, or where conduct is targeted at places of worship. An additional circumstance of aggravation will apply if the person is a participant in a criminal organisation and the offence meets specific conditions that represent an unacceptable risk to the safety, welfare or order of the community. The penalty imposed will mean that an offender must be subject to at least seven years imprisonment.

Additionally, this government recognises the emerging threats posed by evolving technologies. The increasing availability of 3D-printed firearms presents a serious risk to community safety as digital blueprints can be easily accessed online, allowing individuals to manufacture fully operational firearms without regulation, oversight or accountability. To address this, the bill introduces a new offence prohibiting the possession and distribution of blueprint materials used to manufacture firearms with a 3D printer. This government has considered the creation of these new offences and the harm or perceived harm that this type of conduct causes, with long-term psychological and social impacts for victims. Therefore, these two offences will be prescribed under section 175A of the Youth Justice Act 1992 as Adult Crime, Adult Time offences, reflecting the seriousness of offending in the community.

This government recognises the evolving nature of threats to our community and the need for laws that allow police to act early and decisively. This bill will introduce a new offence in the Criminal Code to prohibit acts done in preparation for the commission of serious violence. This offence will apply in circumstances where an offender may not yet have settled on a precise course of action but is nevertheless engaged in planning or preparatory conduct for offences likely to cause the death or grievous bodily harm of another person. This new offence addresses a real and not theoretical legislative gap where grievance-fuelled, lone actors can plan and prepare to commit violent attacks, not amounting to terrorism, potentially without committing any criminal offence. This legislative gap has been acknowledged here in Australia and overseas. Just in the last week with the Perth attempted bombing case, we have seen the difficulties in gathering sufficient evidence to prove that conduct aimed to cause significant harm to the community satisfies the definition of 'terrorist act'. In that matter, it took specialised state and federal police nine days to be satisfied there was sufficient proof of a 'terrorist act' to charge. The words of Mike Burgess, the previous director-general of Security, in his 2025 ASIO Annual Threat Assessment are ringing true as we experience a more dynamic, more diverse and more degraded safety environment.

The new offence is modelled on the existing offence located under section 101.6 of the Commonwealth Criminal Code of acts done in preparation for, or planning, terrorist acts. The significant difference is Queensland's new offence will not require proof of the motivation behind the offending. The bill will also amend section 540 of the Criminal Code to clearly state the offence provision applies in relation to dangerous or offensive weapons and instruments, including firearms, knives and other bladed weapons. Together, these amendments ensure police have the powers they need to take proactive action to protect the community, particularly in relation to potential acts of violence with mass casualties, such as the Olympic Games.

Firearm prohibition orders are an important scheme adopted by Australian jurisdictions to minimise the risk that certain individuals represent to the community through their potential misuse of firearms. Firearm prohibition order schemes deter these people from possessing and acquiring firearms by imposing specific offences and enhanced police search powers to ensure compliance with these orders. The current firearm prohibition order scheme established under the Queensland Community Safety Act 2024 introduced an authorising environment that significantly departed from all other Australian jurisdictions.

Currently, respective police commissioners in other jurisdictions are allowed to issue prohibition orders, whereas in Queensland this authority is granted to the commissioner for a temporary order but then the court. This hybrid scheme has raised complex evidence admissibility issues. Therefore, this government is giving the Commissioner of Police the authority to be the decision maker for all firearm prohibition orders. The commissioner is best positioned to consider the information and criminal intelligence needed to make the decision to issue a firearm prohibition order against an individual. This will ensure that those individuals who pose a threat to our communities may be prevented from possessing and acquiring firearms without any unnecessary procedural delays.

This bill will provide a clear statutory framework, enabling police to proactively manage threats involving firearms and respond to emerging risks in Queensland. The bill achieves this by providing police with additional powers to stop, detain and search individuals under specific circumstances, including when the person is:

- in the company of someone subject to a firearm prohibition order;
- in or in relation to a vehicle to which section 141ZF applies (i.e. power to search vehicle linked to a person subject of an FPO); or
- at premises to which section 141ZG applies (i.e., premises owned or occupied by an individual subject to an FPO).

The bill also addresses an anomaly with the giving of directions by police officers for firearm prohibition orders which is inconsistent with directions given under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000.

This bill will also expand and strengthen the decision-making scope and criteria for weapons licence applications. To better equip police when making weapons licensing decisions, the bill will allow police to consider a broader range of relevant information. The bill ensures protection to the community is maintained and permits an authorised officer to consider relevant factors when determining if a person is a 'fit and proper person' for a weapons licence, including details of a relevant offence where a court has ordered that no conviction be recorded or the rehabilitation period for the conviction has expired. 'Relevant offence' is defined in the bill to include offending that related to:

- improper use of weapons, firearms or the storage of firearms; or
- the use or threatened use of violence; or
- the possession or distribution of a digital blueprint of a firearm on a 3D printer.

In order to enhance and simplify the background checks conducted on applicants, the bill will also limit who is eligible for a weapons licence to a resident of Queensland who is an Australian citizen. Exceptions will be provided to those persons who, although not Australian citizens, can nonetheless demonstrate that they require a licence for genuine purposes, for example, to allow them to participate in sports or target shooting or an occupational requirement such as for rural purposes. These amendments will strengthen the integrity of Queensland's weapons licensing and ensure the decisions are grounded in public safety.

The bill amends the list of 'approved agencies' with which the QPS is authorised to share information for a law enforcement purpose to include the Australian Defence Force. This will enable the QPS to assist the ADF by sharing information with them efficiently.

Currently, chapter 11 of the Police Service Administration Act 1990 authorises controlled operations for the purpose of obtaining evidence that may lead to the prosecution of persons for relevant offences. It does not currently permit the authorisation of controlled operations for purposes of disruption or prevention of criminal conduct. This bill will allow the authorisation of controlled operations to frustrate criminal activity and better protect the community.

Currently in Queensland, controlled operations, controlled activities and surveillance device warrants are generally limited to offences that carry at least a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment. This is inconsistent with model laws adopted by other Australian jurisdictions that have a much lower threshold of three years imprisonment. In practical terms, this means that these advanced police investigation strategies cannot be deployed for significant offences that may be linked to hate crimes such as section 69—going armed so as to cause fear—or section 75—threatening violence—of the Criminal Code. The bill will rectify this deficiency by lowering offence thresholds for controlled operations, controlled activities and surveillance device warrants from seven-year-imprisonment offences to three-year-imprisonment offences. This government is committed to ensuring that law enforcement has the powers necessary to act decisively in the interest of public safety. This reform will ensure that our police have the tools they need to proactively intercept criminal conduct and keep Queenslanders safe.

A reform introduced under the Queensland Community Safety Act 2024, which is set to commence in August 2026, created an unnecessary administrative burden on police when issuing consorting notices and banning notices electronically. These provisions are out of step with the pre-existing electronic service requirements provided for under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. The bill will ensure that the existing legislative framework is maintained to allow police to continue serving these notices efficiently.

The Crisafulli government is committed to taking firm, proactive and assertive action in combating terrorism and anti-Semitism. This bill represents a decisive step forward in responding to the scourge of anti-Semitism, protecting community safety and ensures that guns are kept out of the hands of terrorists and criminals. This bill protects Queenslanders, supports our police and justice system and ensures our laws are fit for purpose, evidence based and shaped with consultation from relevant experts.

We will be moving that this critical piece of legislation be passed as an urgent bill. We all know that the first duty of a government is to keep its people safe, and that is exactly what the Crisafulli government intends to do. We intend to pass this important piece of legislation at the next parliamentary sitting week, with the majority of changes commencing from assent. I commend the bill to the House and urge all members to support its passage because every Queenslanders deserves the right to live safely and free from fear, regardless of their religion or background.

First Reading

Hon. DG PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (12.08 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

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

Declared Urgent, Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (12.08 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill and the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the bill by Friday, 27 February 2026.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTORAL LAWS (RESTORING ELECTORAL FAIRNESS) AMENDMENT BILL**YOUTH JUSTICE (ELECTRONIC MONITORING) AMENDMENT BILL****MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order**

Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (12.09 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That, under the provisions of standing order 137:
 - (a) the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill, with the minister called to reply to the bill by 8.20 pm on Tuesday, 10 February 2026 and all remaining stages of the bill to be completed by 9.00 pm on Tuesday, 10 February 2026;
 - (b) the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill, with the minister called to reply to the bill by 12.20 pm on Thursday, 12 February 2026 and all remaining stages of the bill to be completed by 1.00 pm on Thursday, 12 February 2026;
 - (c) the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill, with the minister called to reply to the bill by 8.10 pm on Thursday, 12 February 2026 and all remaining stages of the bill to be completed by 9.00 pm on Thursday, 12 February 2026.
2. If all stages have not been completed by the time specified in 1, Mr Speaker shall put all remaining questions necessary to complete consideration of the bill, including clauses and schedules en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill, without further amendment or debate.

I will briefly address the motion. This motion provides for the orderly management of business before the House this week, including arrangements for debate on three important pieces of legislation. The bills before the House are significant and reflect clear commitments made to Queenslanders. Providing a structured framework for debate on these bills ensures that members are aware of the arrangements for the week ahead and that the House can progress its work in a calm, efficient and methodical way. Members of parliament will have the opportunity to contribute and the Queensland parliament will be able to make decisions in a timely and responsible manner.

As I have said previously, this approach reflects the orderly manner in which the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government is committed to operating the 58th Parliament. Queenslanders expect their parliament to function in this way with clarity and discipline and to focus on delivery for all. This stands in stark contrast to the 55th, 56th and 57th parliaments under Labor when the management of business often descended into disorder, uncertainty, chaos and confusion. What the Crisafulli LNP state government is doing is different. We are setting out the program clearly, providing certainty to members and ensuring that all legislation that is proposed for this week progresses in a structured and orderly fashion.

These bills are about delivering our commitments to Queenslanders, restoring fairness to our electoral system, strengthening youth justice responses and supporting major infrastructure across the state, particularly in preparation for the 2032 Olympics. They are also about continuing to enhance community safety and confidence in the systems that serve Queenslanders every day. This motion strikes the right balance. It allows for meaningful debate while ensuring the parliament can progress its responsibilities and deliver outcomes. As such, I commend this procedural motion to the House.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (12.12 pm): I rise to address the motion moved by the Leader of the House which seeks to limit and constrain the time that members of this House have to debate several important bills. Whilst the Labor opposition supports the concept of the orderly management of this House, I take the opportunity to point out that under this LNP government Queenslanders have seen anything but the orderly management of business before this House. What Queenslanders have seen is a government that lurches from one sitting week of chaos to another sitting week of chaos. Any member sitting in this House and any observer of this parliament saw that chaos just half an hour ago when the government whip did not know how to record the votes of his own members.

A government member: Stick to the motion.

Mr de BRENNI: The motion and the reasons behind that motion, as put by the Leader of the House, are about the orderly management of this House. I have a very strong view that members of this House are quite at liberty to debate elements of reasons for motions that are put by others and

rebut the reasons that are put by others. Therefore, I will not take interjections from those opposite when we outline the hypocrisy, which this motion reminds us of, in terms of the LNP abuses of the provisions of the standing orders in this House.

As I said earlier, we do not object to provisions around the orderly conduct of the House. What I want to make very clear is that Labor governments provided this House with the dignity of significant and adequate notice of the business of the House—at least the day before. The member for Glass House used to sit in this seat and complain ad nauseam about business program motions when significant notice was provided to the House about matters that would be debated and how much time would be allowed for that debate. That does not exist in this place anymore and the views of the opposition or the crossbench are not taken into consideration by the government. I reject the notion that previous governments did not take that into consideration. Just because we did not agree did not mean that we did not take it into consideration. My point is—if those opposite are missing the point, and the member for Glass House seems to be missing the point—adequate notice was given.

At its heart, this motion limits the available time for consideration in detail. When bills are due to be scrutinised by a committee of the whole in this place, which is a very important stage of the legislative process, adequate time should be allowed to scrutinise those bills and to look through the detailed text of them. It is the only stage of the legislative process in this chamber in which all members have the opportunity to do that. The Speaker himself rightly indicated in a ruling that he takes very seriously the opportunity for members to contribute to debates on bills and I presume that also means during consideration in detail.

It also occurs to me that the seeming aspirations of the government this week are to talk about anything but the motion of and the leave sought by the member for Traeger to bring into this House the opportunity for members to speak on issues that are important to Queenslanders and not be gagged from debating the things that Queenslanders want to talk about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Springwood, could you tell me, please, how that is relevant to the procedural motion before the House?

Mr de BRENNI: Deputy Speaker, I am rebutting the suggestions of the Leader of the House that the purpose of his motion is around the orderly conduct of the House. I am simply reminding the House that members acted in accordance with the standing orders earlier today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you could stick tightly to the motion then that would be appreciated, member for Springwood.

Mr de BRENNI: Deputy Speaker, thank you for your guidance. I certainly will. In conclusion, we note the hypocrisy of the government, which objected to a business program motion and which complained it did not have enough notice about the orderly conduct of the House and then, once in government, dispensed with those legitimate practices that supported the ability of all members of this House to express views on behalf of their electorates. That is what we are here to do. We are here to bring into this place the views of those who elected us. This motion, brought by the government, stops elected members on that side of the House, elected members from regional Queensland, elected members from Western Queensland, elected members from South-East Queensland and all other elected members of this House from being able to speak on behalf of those who elected them.

As I said, we support the orderly conduct of business before this House, but we think all members are entitled to have a say on behalf of their community. We think it is incumbent upon the government to provide greater notice of the business before the House in at least the way we provided it to them when they were in opposition. We will not be supporting this motion.

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (12.20 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the motion moved by the Leader of the House. It was the last sitting week of parliament that we spoke about the Wieambilla recommendations having been released. This was before the events at Bondi. We made a commitment that it would be our top priority to review those recommendations and come back to the parliament at the earliest possible time, which is now. After the events in Bondi in December, the Premier and the Deputy Premier made it quite clear that we would bring this back—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Members, if you want to make a point of order, I would ask that you do that in the regular way.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In accordance with standing order 236, relevance, I think maybe the minister thinks we are debating the urgency motion that he moved and has been settled by the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I take your point of order on relevance. Minister for Police, the motion is that of the Leader of the House in relation to the procedures of the House this week in considering a number of bills and the timeframes for that. I would ask you to keep your comments to that motion.

Mr PURDIE: I was getting to the point that at the time the Leader of the Opposition wrote to me saying that he was prepared to work with us in the House to ensure these important bills are passed in a timely fashion. I remind those opposite that whether it is what we were speaking about earlier or this motion, the Leader of the Opposition has extended his hand to highlight the fact that he is happy to work with us to ensure the efficient working of the House.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.22 pm): In the 15 steps it takes to go from the position of Leader of the House to the position of Manager of Opposition Business on the other side of the House, we have seen the epitome of hypocrisy by the Manager of Opposition Business in terms of his new penchant for whining and whingeing about matters that he considered in his previous occupation as being the prerogative of a government doing good business. I support the Leader of the House in the efficacy of making these bills pass this week for the benefit of Queensland.

We heard from the Manager of Opposition Business that they are probably very important bills and he probably would be supporting them. The fact of the matter is that he wants to drag these matters out when Queensland wants the Crisafulli government to get on with governing for Queensland. That is what the Leader of the House is doing. I congratulate him on ensuring that this legislation is passed this week. These are very important bills to deal with, particularly when it comes to youth justice. In Mermaid Beach I had young hoodlums, a matter of a couple of weeks ago, causing all sorts of problems. Youth justice monitoring will assist police. That is why it is important that we pass that bill this week.

Ms Grace interjected.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Before I take your point of order, Manager of Opposition Business, member for McConnel, you are on a warning and interjecting in the House. I would ask you to leave the House for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for McConnel withdrew from the chamber at 12.24 pm.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I submit to you that the member is anticipating debate and should confine his comments to the motion before us rather than to the bills to which it pertains.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. Member for Mermaid Beach, I would strongly advise you to remain relevant to the procedural motion before the House rather than debate any issues in the bills.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you for your advice on the matter, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I understand it, one of the bills to be debated according to the Leader of the House's motion is this bill. It is necessary for this bill to be enacted this week. That is why we are ensuring that these bills are passed this week. That is why I was referring to that, without going into the intricacies of the bill. When I have my opportunity later, as will many other members of the House, to speak to this bill I will certainly be making clear references to why this bill is great for Queenslanders.

The Leader of the House has said that these bills need to pass this week. The Manager of Opposition Business said, 'No, we need to drag them out, talk for longer and have more parliamentary investigations.' The people of Queensland want this government to act and act quickly on the issues that these bills deal with. That is why the Leader of the House has moved to declare these bills urgent.

We remember what the Manager of Opposition Business did when we were in opposition and the number of guillotined bills. That seemed okay for good governance back then, but now that the Manager of Opposition Business has taken the 15 steps across to the other side of the House he now believes that it is not fair and reasonable for his team not to have elongated discussions about the matter.

I support the Leader of the House. He is doing a great job. We should agree to his program for the House.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTORAL LAWS (RESTORING ELECTORAL FAIRNESS) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 11 December 2025 (see p. 4078).

Second Reading

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (12.27 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025 will improve and restore fairness and equality to the regulation of elections in Queensland and increase confidence in Queensland's electoral processes. As I stated last year on introduction, these reforms build on the Crisafulli government's commitment to prioritising victims, implement commitments made to the Queensland people prior to the election and begin to level the playing field in Queensland elections.

The bill amends the Electoral Act 1992 and makes related amendments to the Local Government Act 2011, the Referendums Act 1997, the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and the Electoral Regulation 2024. I note that the bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee—I thank them very much for their detailed consideration of the bill—in the last sitting week of 2025.

It cannot be said that the Crisafulli government has shied away from scrutiny on electoral reform. Unlike the previous Labor government, which moved amendments at 18 minutes to midnight—with 18 minutes notice—without any warning, debate or scrutiny, the Crisafulli government has given the parliament way more than 18 minutes, over two months, to scrutinise this important legislation.

Through its examination the parliamentary committee received 83 submissions, held public hearings and a public briefing and tabled a well-considered report, ultimately making one recommendation to this House: that the bill be passed. Again, I would like to thank the committee, ably chaired by the member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt, for their thorough consideration of this bill.

In line with the Crisafulli government's commitment to put victims first, the first reform is to remove the entitlement to vote in state elections and referendums and local government elections for persons serving sentences of imprisonment or detention of one year or longer and in full-time imprisonment or detention at the time of an election. This revises the current position whereby persons serving sentences of three years or longer cannot vote. These amendments are intended to enhance civic responsibility and increase public confidence in the integrity of the electoral process by not allowing elections to be influenced by those who show disregard for the rule of law.

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 enable them. The Crisafulli government is taking action through this bill to ensure restrictions on voting have better regard to the culpability of that criminal offending.

In the Queensland context, sentences of one year or more reflect the court's recognition of serious criminal offending. A sentence of one year or more is considered substantial and is typically reserved for conduct that violates core societal standards, results in significant harm, or presents a considerable threat to public safety. Prisoners serving sentences of between one and three years imprisonment could have committed serious offences including burglary, assault occasioning bodily harm, unlawful use of a motor vehicle, sexual assault, indecent treatment of minors—and the list goes on. Are these not serious enough crimes for the Labor opposition? The approach in this bill brings Queensland into line with New South Wales and Western Australia, which also restrict voting to this limited, smaller class of prisoners. We promised to prioritise the rights of victims and we do that with these reforms, ensuring perpetrators of serious offences cannot vote from within prison walls.

The Crisafulli government is also fulfilling its pre-election commitment to restore a level playing field for political donations by repealing the property developer donations ban at the state election level and targeting the ban at local government elections only. This will allow previously prohibited donors to participate in state elections by making political donations in the same way other donors are currently entitled to. No longer should Queensland have one rule for trade unions and Labor and another rule for everyone else. The removal will allow donations from previously prohibited donors to be used for state electoral purposes, including campaigning, which will promote freedom of expression.

The amendments in the bill will ensure the property developer donation ban is focused on local government elections only, as contemplated by recommendation 20 of the Crime and Corruption Commission's report *Operation Belcarra: A blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local*

government. I say that again, Mr Deputy Speaker McDonald, because I know that you come from a local government background. It was recommendation 20 of the Crime and Corruption Commission's report *Operation Belcarra: A blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local government.* The Belcarra report acknowledged that anti-circumvention measures would be necessary to prohibit donations from property developers to political parties or candidates at other levels of government from being used for local government purposes. That is why this bill specifically includes amendments to the Local Government Electoral Act to ensure political donations made to a political party for state elections or other purposes unrelated to a local government election cannot be applied to a local government electoral purpose.

I am aware of some concerns raised that the removal of the ban on these donations may increase the risk of corruption. These concerns are unfounded. Under the Electoral Act, caps on political donations will continue to operate to reduce potential risks of corruption and undue influence and ensure a level playing field between donors where donations are made for state elections. Electoral expenditure caps will also continue to operate for state elections and so limit the extent to which any political donations received can be applied to electoral expenditure for a state election.

In addition, on the same basis as other donors, permitted gifts and loans from property developers and related industry bodies will be transparently disclosed, as for all others under the Electoral Act. We heard from the Property Council of Australia how demonised the property industry has become through this unfair ban. We heard from smaller political parties in our electoral system who have talked about small businesses or simple mum-and-dad property investors being unable to support the party of their choice because they have submitted a development application.

Labor's definition of 'property developer' spread far and wide to reach as many people as possible to outlaw their donations. You ask why. It is because this ban was an electoral financial gerrymander by the Labor Party. They knew how it would benefit them electorally. All the while, union members' fees continued to flood the ALP coffers. Their union dues continued to be donated to pay for campaigns that supported Labor candidates, and all the while union heavyweights continued to influence Labor government policies, continued to influence government awards, industrial relations policies, workplace policies and conditions, and, of course, even influence who gets to be the premier or ministers of this state.

The great 'Blocker', Gary Bullock from the United Workers Union, continued to send in demands and hand-pick his premier of choice—I am interested to know whether his premier of choice is still his Leader of the Opposition of choice—and we know the ETU sent in their commands to the mangocube email address. Who knows how many of those opposite were beholden every day to the whims of their union masters? That is even before we begin to talk about the CFMEU.

Those opposite seem very concerned about perceived corruption. They may need to look in a mirror. They seem very concerned about what the CCC might have had to say, but what I found most interesting is that nobody had much to say about the unions. No unions made submissions to the parliamentary inquiry, and no unions attended the committee's public hearing. I would have been very interested to hear what they had to say. That is because the unions are still entitled to donate. Unlike Labor's financial gerrymander, where they did it all to please themselves, the Crisafulli government is supporting the unions, and that is why the unions did not need to submit to the parliamentary inquiry. It is very fascinating to note again that no unions felt the need to make any submissions to the parliamentary inquiry. You would have to wonder about the influence of those who attended on behalf of the Labor Party. Obviously, they do not have a great deal of influence with their unions. Maybe they thought they did, but it has now been told that maybe those unions still support the opposition leader and not the ones who think they want to be.

I would have been very interested to hear the CCC's view about perceived corruption and union involvement in government decision-making. I note that the committee invited the CCC to attend the hearing. We would have been very interested to hear their view about the perceived corruption and union involvement, but they chose, after the invitation, I understand, not to attend. It is wrong to single out one industry or one sector and say, 'You are the problem,' while the rest of the players in the game who were invited to submit did not see the need to attend and also get all the field time.

Ms Scanlon interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is tough in opposition; I appreciate that. That is why the Premier said either everyone should have the same rules or no-one should be able to donate. Queenslanders backed us on that and we are delivering for them, just like we said we would. It is exceedingly interesting to note that the unions could not even turn up on the command of the shadow attorney-general. Again,

the influence is just not there. It is slightly embarrassing for the shadow minister. It is very simple: Queensland's electoral system should treat all lawful participants equally. This reform is long overdue to right this shameful wrong of the former Labor government.

Another area of reform in this bill is to apply existing caps on political donations for state elections to financial years. The new donation cap period in the Electoral Act will apply retrospectively to 1 July 2025. This will ensure the policy objective of applying donations caps on a financial year basis can be applied as soon as possible. The bill will make political donation cap periods annualised in alignment with New South Wales and recent amendments to Commonwealth laws—and I am pretty sure they were Commonwealth Labor laws—which will commence on 1 July 2026.

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 ensure a level playing field between donors through the retention of the caps on political donations. This simplifies our electoral donation framework, making it easier to understand for all electoral participants.

This bill will allow loans from financial institutions to be paid into a candidate or registered political party's state campaign account. This will be achieved by amending the definition of 'loan' in the Electoral Act. This will ensure funding sources for campaigning are not unfairly restricted to private and unregulated lenders and other types of loans not provided by financial institutions. Candidates and political parties should not be forced to turn to loan sharks and unregulated lenders, should they need to borrow funds for election campaigns.

With these reforms, the Crisafulli government is ensuring candidates and political parties can borrow from properly regulated and reputable financial institutions. Under the amendments, a financial institution will be treated consistently with other entities that provide loans to political parties and candidates in terms of disclosure requirements and the application of donation caps and related provisions of the Electoral Act.

The bill enhances the independence of political parties in relation to preselection ballots by removing the administrative burden on the ECQ in undertaking audits and inquiries into preselection ballots. Registered political parties will be able to undertake preselection ballots in accordance with their constitution without having to adhere to other requirements. This will remove restrictions and burdensome regulations that do not apply equally to all political parties, given some parties in Queensland—not the LNP—let their factions or union heavies decide who the candidates are.

As I mentioned in my introductory speech, no other state or territory, nor the Commonwealth, has any electoral commission involvement in or 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 of all colours and ensuring the rights of their members are protected. I know my party—the Liberal National Party—is proud to continue holding democratic preselections involving grassroots rank-and-file members of our party. These democratic processes are enshrined in our party constitution and will continue well into the future.

Finally, the bill includes amendments to authorisation requirements for election material and how-to-vote cards for state elections. These changes will mean that authorisations will be required in the period 12 months before an ordinary general election rather than only applying from the date of issue of the writs for the election. This will ensure greater transparency and awareness about who is authorising materials that are provided to voters and enable voting choices to be formed taking into account not only any information conveyed but also who is responsible for it.

We know how much Queenslanders desire truth in political advertising. They deserve to know who is behind the scare campaigns, and those people need to be kept accountable for the material they send out to voters. This is about integrity, transparency and accountability in Queensland electoral campaigning.

The changes in this bill will also allow post-office boxes or other prescribed addresses to be used to comply with the authorisation requirements. This addresses privacy and safety concerns, especially for candidates who might otherwise be required to provide their personal residential address.

This is an important bill that implements reforms which aim to improve Queensland's electoral laws, restore fairness to our electoral processes and bring an end to Labor's shameful financial gerrymander. The Electoral Act and Local Government Electoral Act both provide significant and important frameworks in our democracy in Queensland. These laws are no longer Labor's plaything to tamper with in the middle of the night in this House.

As I noted in my explanatory speech on the bill, fairness should be a key guiding principle which fundamentally underpins electoral laws in Queensland. We are, at last, beginning to level the playing field in Queensland elections, bringing Labor and the unions back into line. This bill will increase public confidence in Queensland electoral processes, improve the equality of participation in Queensland elections and improve fairness and transparency in electoral campaigning. We are doing what we said we would do. We are continuing to deliver for the people of Queensland with fairer elections. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (12.46 pm): I rise to contribute to the bill that was introduced by the Crisafulli LNP government just before the Christmas break, the so-called Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill. This bill is now being declared urgent and members are being gagged from contributing to this debate, just like I suspect the Premier tried to gag his members on abortion reform, which did not work very well for the member for Mackay today, though.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Gaven, it would be very helpful if you could confine your contribution to this bill.

Ms SCANLON: Certainly. I heard the contribution of the member for Mermaid Beach, who said the people of Queensland want these bills dealt with urgently. I am not sure the people of Queensland think it is urgent that developers be able to donate to the Liberal National Party. Maybe the white shoe brigade that the member for Mermaid Beach hangs out with on the weekends and at the turf club think it is urgent, but I do not think ordinary Queenslanders think that this is the priority of this House. Clearly, it is the priority of the LNP.

This bill says one thing on the cover and does the complete opposite on the inside. This bill claims to restore fairness but it actually weakens integrity. It opens the door to big money and increases the risk of corruption in Queensland politics. At the precise moment this government lifts the ban on property developer donations it is also selling off public land and removing affordable housing conditions.

The state's peak corruption watchdog agrees that there are significant concerns. The Crime and Corruption Commission—the body that is responsible for preventing corruption in this state—told the committee that parts of this 'are a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework', warning that changes 'are out of step with reforms introduced to manage risks associated with political influence, and perceptions of it'. Those are not my words; those are the words of the peak corruption watchdog in this state.

That warning is very real and it is serious. The ban was not introduced lightly. It was introduced deliberately after serious consideration to strengthen confidence in Queensland's electoral system.

Mr Hunt: It's a gerrymander.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the chair of the committee. The recommendations to ban developer donations were from integrity experts. You cannot say that you are pro integrity and transparency and then come in here and trash their recommendations. That is what the LNP chair of the committee effectively just did. These recommendations were supported by integrity bodies—that certain categories of donors warranted tighter regulation because of the nature of the decisions governments are required to make. That is the framework this bill now proposes to unwind. The Labor opposition recognises the role the property developers play in Queensland.

Mr Hunt: You hate them.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection. We do not hate them.

Mr Hunt interjected.

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

Ms SCANLON: We recognise the role that they play in the housing supply system. Increasing supply matters. Those opposite have been quick to criticise me and some of the decisions I made to unlock affordable housing—decisions taken in the housing minister's electorate, the assistant housing minister's electorate and even the Deputy Premier's electorate. Those decisions were not easy and they were not always popular but they were taken for one reason only: they were in the public good. They were about getting homes built where they were needed.

Mr Stevens: Expensive houses in Arundel. Your union mates did it.

Ms SCANLON: They were about affordability, member for Mermaid Beach. They were about using planning powers to deliver affordable housing for Queenslanders. They were not about who donated, not about who asked and not about whether it was politically convenient or not. That is exactly

why strong, clear donation frameworks matter, because when governments act in the public interest they should never have to answer questions about whether money played a role. Good integrity laws protect decision-makers and, as such, they protect public confidence. What this bill does is the complete opposite of that.

We heard an argument during the committee process that allowing more money into politics would somehow reduce the community opposition to development. That argument I think completely misunderstands the problem. Community concern is not caused by a lack of donations; it is caused by a lack of trust. Trust is built through good planning, clear rules and proper engagement, not by changing who can donate to a political party. Developers are part of the solution to housing supply, as I have said, and strong integrity laws protect them too. The Crime and Corruption Commission stated—

The risks associated with political donations have been well-documented, as too are community perceptions of corruption by elected officials. The CCC's 2025 Corruption Perceptions Survey highlighted the importance of ensuring government decision-making is, and is seen to be, fair, impartial and free from influence. Concerns about bribery or receiving gifts and benefits that may influence public sector decisions was considered one of the highest risk areas by community members surveyed.

They were considered one of the highest risk areas by community members surveyed! Queenslanders deserve and expect that their political leaders operate within an environment that is free from political interference or influence, and it is clear from the CCC's submissions that the changes in this bill will increase corruption risk and go against what Queenslanders want, which is to have a government that makes decisions fairly, impartially and free from influence.

I know that those opposite have made a number of comments about the Belcarra report, which I am not sure, frankly, helps their argument, but I think it is important to note what has actually happened since that report was commissioned. The fact is that the Queensland government now has taken more responsibility in the planning space. There are now more ways that the Minister for Planning can enable access and approve developments since Belcarra, including through the state facilitated development pathway and the ministerial infrastructure designation process. At the same time, we see public land being sold off and affordable housing targets and requirements stripped away under what the government calls its Land Activation Program—or LAP, as the Deputy Premier likes to call it, perhaps because he seems so comfortable putting public land and public value straight into developers' laps. The Deputy Premier now appears less like a planning minister and more like 'Blejje White'—clearing sites, clearing conditions and moving land.

When power, though, is concentrated and safeguards are weakened, public confidence matters. It is hardly surprising that on the *Courier-Mail's* own Facebook page Queenslanders are openly making cynical comments about 'brown paper bags'. Integrity laws exist precisely to stop that kind of doubt taking hold in the first place. In fact, do not take my word for it. Let's hear from the Crime and Corruption Commission again where they stand in their submission. They said—

The CCC's observes that the increased risks of actual or perceived corruption in relation to political donations which may arise from the Bill will occur during the significant period in the lead up to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic Games. Queensland is entering a period of increased investment in property and infrastructure development driven by population growth, economic diversification, with major sporting and other events. There is concern that the reintroduction of property developer donations could exacerbate real and/or perceived risks of undue or improper influence, particularly as developer interests align closely with major projects.

There was also a submission from Mr Meyers, a retired public servant who worked in the integrity and ethical standards arena for many years in Queensland, who stated—

The planning powers of the State in Queensland are able to confer greater benefit at scale to developers in a State preparing for the Olympic Games and at a time when all governments are under pressure to address a housing crisis and free up land for urban development.

There are no prizes for guessing who is at the top of the Olympic infrastructure tree in Queensland. That is the Deputy Premier. If this law goes through, what mechanisms will the Deputy Premier put in place to ensure he is not unduly influenced in his decision-making? Will the Deputy Premier refuse to take donations from property developers? I suspect not, meaning if Queenslanders know that property developers can donate to politicians—and, in particular, to an individual at the top of the tree who makes those very planning decisions, Olympic infrastructure decisions, and also now sell off land to developers with no conditions of affordable housing—then I think there is a reasonable case that Queenslanders will think there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest that can arise. Is this the Queensland that we want, where the electoral integrity framework is watered down to a point that enables corruption to occur by decision-makers? While that is a rhetorical question, I will answer it on behalf of Queenslanders. No, it is not.

The bill will make explicit changes in the local government arena to allow a degree of donations to occur by property developers to local government campaigns. Again, the Crime and Corruption Commission said—

A similar risk is identified in the anti-circumvention measures in s127AA of the Bill. The requirement to separately collect and account for property developer donors' 'restricted donations' does not avoid the prospect that the receiving party could then allocate other commensurate funding to a local government candidate giving rise to an indirect benefit, or at least the perception of influence.

What does that mean? It means that a property developer can donate to a local government campaign for administrative purposes—things like hiring staff and renting premises—but cannot donate for electoral purposes—things like printing election materials. This, in effect, creates a back door where a local government campaign can reprioritise money they would have used on administrative purposes for electoral purposes because a property developer has given them funds for administrative purposes. How is that consistent with the Belcarra recommendations? How is it consistent with a strong electoral framework in Queensland? The short answer is: it appears not to be.

Before I turn to the increase in actual money which will flow into the electoral system in Queensland, let me address the elephant in the room or the main attack which those opposite will no doubt repeat like mindless parrots dancing and singing to their political masters' tunes. Unions are different to property developers, as was outlined by the Australia Institute during the public hearing.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Glass House. The member for Gaven has the call.

Ms SCANLON: In the case of a trade union, if there are benefits to their members for industrial relations reform, those benefits accrue to workers in that sector—multiple workers in that sector, let's say—and not directly to the trade unions, so the financial incentives are very different. To be clear, trade unions are not-for-profit entities that stand up for their collective members' interests; property developers are for-profit. They are individuals or a company who generally have one goal, and that is to make money.

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nicklin, you will have your turn.

Ms SCANLON: The Attorney-General in her speech stated that the former LNP leader of the opposition who became the Premier—which for clarity was the member for Broadwater, not the member for Nanango—vowed during the pre-election leaders' debate that the LNP would repeal the ban on political donations from property developers at state elections. While that might be the case—

Debate, on motion of Ms Scanlon, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Error in Division; Divisions, Procedures

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that in the last division there was an error in the advice of votes from the Opposition Whip of 31 ayes instead of the correct tally of 32. Accordingly, the final tally for the division should be corrected as 37 ayes and 50 noes. The *Record of Proceedings* will be corrected accordingly.

I also note that in the last division the member for Mackay moved from his seat to sit in a crossbench member's seat. I advise the House that under current standing orders all votes in the House are by default party votes under standing order 104 unless the vote is to be treated as a conscience vote. Members are always required to vote from their allocated seat and cannot wander the chamber to sit in another member's seat to indicate a contrary vote. The Speaker is to be advised of a conscience vote under standing order 104(2), in which case a personal vote is conducted in accordance with standing order 107.

In the circumstances of this morning's vote, and in the interests of expediency for the House, we proceeded with a party vote, effectively treating the member for Mackay as a crossbench member. However, should a similar occurrence recur, the member should advise their whip and the whip should advise me of the matter and we will proceed to divide the House in accordance with standing order 107. Members cannot just wander the chamber to sit in another member's seat to indicate a contrary vote.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I remind all members that warnings from before lunch have expired, but I will be watching.

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Before I begin, I want to welcome back all of the parliamentary staff for another year and all of our hardworking public servants, especially those on the front line who have worked tirelessly through the holiday season to save lives and keep us safe—our doctors, nurses, firefighters, police officers and emergency service personnel who responded to floods, fires and cyclones instead of spending time with their family.

Do you know who else did not get a holiday? Our dedicated child safety officers, those who are charged with protecting some of Queensland's most vulnerable children from harm. They do not get a break, nor do those kids who are suffering from immense trauma. While the child safety system—the very system designed to keep kids safe—was failing, the minister responsible checked out. She went on holidays overseas on safari. Her excuse was that 'she's only human'. The only reason Queenslanders found out was because the minister's electorate was hit by a cyclone and she was missing in action. As the minister responsible for community recovery, she was missing in action.

All of this is from the Crisafulli-Bleijie government, which promised to be different and promised to improve the child safety system. Instead, after 18 months in office the system is crumbling around her because of decisions this government has made. The reality is that this major failing is the result of the minister's decisions. Minister Camm turned on Unify which, by her own concession, was not ready. The director-general said it was a move made to save money. Children have been put at risk, data is missing or being deliberately hidden, and any accountability over one of our most important frontline services has completely evaporated.

We know that frontline workers warned the department's leadership. We know that the director-general was aware that staff were unhappy with the system and they complained the training was inadequate. It is printed in the right-to-information documents in black and white. Instead of listening, the concerns of child safety officers were ignored. As a result, the minister was forced to admit—

Without a doubt it's a possibility ... that there were children put at greater risk for a period of time ...

And they were. Nearly 40,000 children were flagged as being left in unsafe environments for longer than they should have been. Intake work slowed and backlogs for child safety reports exploded. The department did not even know what their own response times were. Still today the minister cannot tell us how many children have been adversely affected or how many children are currently in care. This blackout has lasted 11 months. There could have been serious or even deadly consequences, all because of this government's decision to go live on a program that they knew was not ready.

Since this whole bungle was exposed it has been a game of 'who knew what when'. The minister has categorically denied any knowledge of the massive, months-long system failure, but the receipts, proof and timelines just do not add up to the cover story. This morning the minister would not answer if she knew when she was briefed, whether it was September or October, and later on she said both. RTI documents show that the warning signs were there. A staff survey rated the system a shocking 1.79 out of 10. That result was shared with the director-general, who made tracked changes and forwarded the email on. You can hardly deny that she was aware.

The Unify situation we are faced with is so concerning to stakeholders that they have started speaking out and sharing how the system has gotten worse under the Crisafulli-Bleijie government. PeakCare CEO Tom Allsop said in the *Courier-Mail*—

We should be (in a better place), but we're not, and that's incredibly disappointing ...

He is right: it is disappointing, but it is not surprising. The industry is calling for the Premier to intervene personally to sort this mess out, hold his failing minister to account and uphold the ministerial accountability that he promised, but he has not and he will not.

It is just like how he has not held the rest of his flailing front bench accountable. We have Minister Nicholls, who is the worst health minister in Queensland's history by the LNP's own yardstick. The LNP minister has overseen the worst ever ramping record in our state's history. He has overseen massive delays to the hospital build program, which means thousands of hospital beds promised by

2028 will not be delivered in time. The dedicated cancer care centre that was to be built near the RBWH has been scrapped and right now he is in denial about serious maternity care failings at Toowoomba Hospital.

Until today it was not clear whether the health minister even believes the women who have bravely come forward to share their stories and their trauma. Now, in a win for the advocacy of these brave mothers and the shadow minister for women, he has instigated a so-called assurance review. What is not clear is why the minister has chosen this kind of review and not a part 9 under the act. A part 9 would offer protections for staff coming forward to blow the whistle and protect women coming forward to tell their stories from defamation. It also means the LNP would be required to publicly release recommendations made. While we welcome an assurance review, there is nothing stopping Minister Nicholls from launching a part 9. It is clear this minister is not up to the job. Instead of improving health outcomes for Queenslanders he is taking us backwards.

It is just like his colleague the education minister, who cannot even guarantee that our state's NAPLAN results will improve—a statement that flies in the face of the promises made by this Premier. He is so checked out that he does not even know where his own schools are.

That takes us down the line to Minister Gerber. She cannot even keep criminals in prison let alone staff in her office. It was reported last week that the minister is now onto her fifth chief of staff after veteran LNP staffer after staffer threw in the towel. They are fleeing like rats from a sinking ship under the leadership of this minister. That is a reflection on the leadership of this Premier, who continues to let this reported behaviour go unchecked.

When Queenslanders were promised accountability, the lack of action under this Premier sends a clear message that it was just another promise he always knew he would break. The Premier said, 'I expect every minister to be accountable as they implement the deliverables of their portfolios.' He also said, 'Those who do not meet their KPIs will be dumped from their portfolios.' Well, Premier, child safety advocates are calling for your intervention now to protect Queensland's most vulnerable. Where is that ministerial accountability now?

Perhaps moves are already afoot for a cabinet reshuffle after weeks of delays and division. Their cabinet room debated legislation at length yesterday, which makes you wonder what was left on the cutting room floor.

Today the member for Mackay bravely broke ranks to voice his support for the Katters' attempt to move a motion. We know that their backbench is agitating for a move on abortion after pressure from stakeholders. Maybe there are moves afoot as the Premier and the Deputy Premier attempt to get their backbench back together. We all read the puff piece about the member for Gregory that was published over the weekend. Is this him gearing up for a transition into cabinet—a soft launch of a move yet to be announced? It is clear that the ambitions of those waiting in the wings are starting to bubble up as those on the front bench fail at every hurdle. The assistant ministry might have time to wait, but kids in harm's way or mothers going through trauma do not.

Labor Party; CFMEU

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (2.12 pm): The only transition plan I have heard about is the opposition leader's transition plan. Before parliament broke for the Christmas break, we talked about the Christmas coup that was going to take place.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Members on my left, your leader was listened to with respect and in silence. I will ask for a similar courtesy to be afforded to the next speaker.

Mr BLEIJIE: I hear from Labor members that the challenge was that they could not launch a challenge over the Christmas period because they could not find the honourable opposition leader. They only had to look to Cotton Tree, and I reckon they could have done the coup at Cotton Tree. The good news is that we hear there is an Easter exit approaching for the honourable opposition leader. There is an Easter exit happening. He has no support from his colleagues. Every day they are just waddling along. There is no vision for Queensland and no plans, other than his former failed policies that Queenslanders overwhelmingly rejected.

As I announced in parliament today, the royal commission into the CFMEU is starting back today. I said that it would rival the top 10 on Netflix, but I have been corrected by my honourable colleagues over the last few hours. I am told there is a very popular show running at the moment called *Heated*

Rivalry. The member for Bonney tells me it is a good show—or was it the member for Everton? I do not know. I hear it is pretty popular. Maybe the member for Everton told me about it. It is tracking at No. 1. From their reactions, it seems some Labor members have been watching a bit of *Heated Rivalry*—and I am not talking about the rivalry in the Labor opposition. I am talking about a very popular show that is running at the moment.

Some quite concerning things came out of the CFMEU inquiry today, in testimony given on day 1 of 2026. We heard that former premier Palaszczuk was told about the proposed increase to the cost of construction and the lost projects and jobs as a result, but she and those opposite sat on their hands and left the left faction and the CFMEU to run their policies. Extraordinarily, an email shows the former minister's department asking ex-CFMEU boss Michael Ravbar about which contractors—who applied for BPIC—should and should not get government work.

There it is in the commission of inquiry today in black and white. Under the Labor Party, government departments were asking Michael Ravbar who should and should not get government contracts. That was the corruption we talked about. We cannot get a clearer example of Labor enabling the CFMEU than Michael Ravbar determining which CFMEU mates the taxpayer was going to be forced to contract with. The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for McConnell and the member for Miller have all been mentioned today in the royal commission in related CFMEU emails. Mr Long from the Civil Contractors Federation told the inquiry that TMR staff were run roughshod over by the CFMEU, with the CFMEU reps dictating to contractors—

It doesn't matter what the cost of the project is, you're going to get paid for it anyway. We've done a deal with the government. You will have an agreement with us, and that's just the way it's going to work.

That is how the Labor Party enabled the CFMEU to do business in Queensland. I hesitate to use this word, but it was corruption. It was corruption between government Labor ministers and the CFMEU, and it is now being exposed before our eyes. Mr Long also detailed the unofficial demerit point system for companies complying with BPIC or not. He said—

If you did not comply with the implementation of BPIC, you could accrue demerit points, and if you accrued sufficient demerit points, you could incur sanctions ...

The inquiry went on to talk about former minister Bailey being accused of helping CFMEU win transport contracts, and this was up online. Mr Long was asked, 'Which minister are you referring to?' and he replied, 'It would have been minister Mark Bailey at the time.' That is the evidence in black and white. The Labor Party have so many questions to answer. I look forward to them being on the stand at the royal commission and answering for their corruption.

(Time expired)

Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Performance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.17 pm): Aren't the cracks starting to appear in the vice-like control of the LNP government by the Premier and his heated rival, the Deputy Premier and member for Kawana? The member for Mackay proved that today when he broke ranks and voted with Labor and the crossbench. The member for Mackay is clearly sick of being silenced, sick of being gagged and sick of being told what to say, when to say it and to whom it should be said by the Premier and his pantomime deputy. It begs the question: who will be the next LNP MP to break Premier Crisafulli's shackles, stand up for what they believe in and cross the floor? Will it be the member for Rockhampton?

Then there are the cracks and divisions in the Premier's ministerial ranks. Make no mistake, the vultures are circling the Minister for Child Safety. The minister could be forgiven for thinking the vultures had followed her back from Africa but, no, there are LNP backbench vultures ready to pounce on a minister who is failing in all of her responsibilities to Queenslanders—a minister whose cover story is unravelling each and every day. The minister's botched Unify IT system continues to put the lives of the state's most vulnerable children at risk. Instead of staying in Queensland to fix it, the minister went on safari just as her timeline was unravelling.

The minister declared she and her director-general became aware of the Unify IT failures in late September, but the documents tell us otherwise. The director-general was emailing staff about Unify issues on 4 June. The email noted that child safety officers rated the system 1.79 out of 10. The very next morning, the director-general briefed the minister—not once, not twice, but three times that day. That was in June. The cover-up is always worse than the crime.

To escape the heat, the minister fled to Africa—putting herself before her electorate and Queenslanders. She is the minister for community recovery as well and she was holidaying in Africa smack bang in the middle of the state's natural disaster season. She abandoned her portfolio in child safety and her portfolio in disaster recovery. It is akin to the Premier going on leave when his used car sales showroom is holding its end of financial year sale. I note that, when quizzed about the timing of her safari, the minister was quoted in the paper as saying—

If I had a time machine, would I go back in time ... there's lots of things you'd like to do in hindsight ...

There is no need for a time machine because the natural disaster season in Queensland is every summer.

We can only assume that after having had a good time on safari the child safety minister is ready to get stuck in. Let's face it, she has plenty to do. First up, the minister could start answering some questions, because the reality is that the minister has never answered questions about the briefings she received from the director-general in May and June 2025. The minister needs to explain why on Saturday she said that the first she heard of the Unify survey was in September, especially when she previously said that the first she knew of it was in October. Queenslanders deserve better, and that is why the vultures are circling.

We all saw the member for Gregory's profile piece in the *Brisbane Times* on the weekend. The Premier's media team is testing the waters before the big reshuffle. The member for Oodgeroo has been trying to get her name in the media as well. She wants a seat in the cabinet room. That is about it, because the rest are too concerned about One Nation and KAP taking their seats. Aren't I right, member for Mirani?

This is also the minister for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence. Whilst she has been preoccupied with safaris and all manner of other things, the government she is part of has axed the Police Service's Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command support unit. Sue and Lloyd Clarke said this is a backward step. The Red Rose Foundation said the same thing. Where was the minister in all of this? Why was she not advocating for the retention of this specialist police domestic violence capability that was recommended by not one but two separate commissions of inquiry?

The minister needs to come clean on what she knew and when she knew it. It is high time this sorry saga of ministerial incompetence came to an end. The Premier needs to put someone in charge of child safety who will put the lives of the state's most vulnerable children before heading off on a safari.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Delivery



Hon. TL MANDER (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (2.20 pm): One of the significant decisions that this government made last year when it handed down its delivery plan for the Olympic and Paralympic Games was the decision to decentralise the venues across the state. Since that occurred the enthusiasm for the games has gone through the roof right across the state. One of the great things that has been seen is that local councils and cities have been out there basically saying, 'We want the games here because we want to be part of that action.'

That is one of the reasons there has been a lot of speculation around where rowing and canoeing will be held in 2032. I state categorically that the rowing will not be held in Sydney. The rowing will not be held in Moreton Bay. The rowing will not be held on the Gold Coast. The rowing will be held in Rockhampton. That is where it will happen. That was confirmed in the delivery plan and that is what will happen.

What some of those opposite fail to remember is that these games, as we were told many times by those opposite, fit into a new paradigm and that is that the games fit the city or the region that is awarded it, not the other way around. We do not have to fit in with what the OIC wants. We dictate the locations of the venues. We dictate what will happen.

The puzzling thing about this is that even the shadow sports minister, a champion of the regions, was quoted as saying it was a silly idea to have rowing in Rockhampton. Let's go further. Even the self-appointed champion of Rockhampton, Robert Schwarten, who is suffering very badly from relevance deprivation syndrome, who gets his article in the *Courier-Mail* every month or so, does not believe that Rockhampton is up to it. He does not believe it. The Labor Party does not believe that Rockhampton should have rowing. It is a disgrace.

Let's look at the contrary view. We have the member for Rockhampton, the member for Keppel, the member for Mirani, Senator Canavan and the federal member Michelle Landry actively lobbied for it because they believe in their region, they believe in their ability to deliver something and they believe that their region deserves all the benefits that will come from hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

What is happening at the moment is happening in every sport where the OIC and the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee go through a process of basically ticking boxes, making sure that this happens here and this happens there. This is no different. We are still waiting for the sports to be confirmed before we go through this process of confirming where the venues will be located. I can assure everybody in this room that the rowing will be held in Rockhampton and Rockhampton will benefit greatly. Not just Rockhampton but the greater Central Queensland area will benefit directly. The unsourced rumours and the unsourced information being reported in newspapers are exactly that: they are unsourced, they are not reliable and they are not true. I can understand why there is speculation by people around the state wanting to have other parts of the games. I can assure—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Members on my left, there are far too many interjections that are not being taken.

Mr MANDER: As we know, Rockhampton has a proud history with regard to hosting rowing. Local schools, like Cathedral College and Rockhampton Grammar School, and, of course, the Fitzroy Rowing Club safely use this river every single day. I had the opportunity to row the mighty Fitzroy, as did the Deputy Premier, and what a great feat that was. The only thing that might be dangerous about Rockhampton is the Labor Party not supporting the regions.

Child Safety System

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (2.25 pm): The Crisafulli LNP government promised Queenslanders a child safety system that would protect our most vulnerable children. They promised transparency. They promised that when signs appeared, this Crisafulli LNP government would act. Instead, nearly 18 months on, the system is not safer; it is more fragile, more opaque and more unstable than it was before. When it comes to child safety, instability is not an administrative problem; it is a risk to children.

Minister Camm turned on an IT system that an independent audit found was 'unfinished'. The minister finally conceded the Crisafulli LNP government's responsibility for the go live. That is right; it was turned on by this minister unfinished, poorly tested and missing critical functions. Frontline workers raised the alarm early. They warned senior leadership that the system was not ready. Those warnings were ignored. The consequences were not theoretical: intake work slowed, backlogs exploded, response times became unknowable and undeniable. Almost 40,000 children were flagged as being left in unsafe environments.

The minister herself admitted the gravity of that failure, conceding that without a doubt there were children put at greater risk for a period of time. That admission alone should have triggered urgent transparency and accountability. Instead, Queenslanders got silence. The minister said she was not told. The director-general says the system was rushed to save money. RTI documents show frontline staff warned leadership months before the rollout. A staff survey rated the system 1.79 out of 10. Executives were removed. Leadership was reshuffled, but the director-general remained and the minister has remained. Then something unprecedented happened. For the first time in more than a decade Queensland stopped publicly reporting child protection data—no data on how many children have been harmed, no data on how long it takes to respond to abuse allegations and no data on how many children are currently in care. That data blackout has now lasted 11 months. Even the Queensland Family and Child Commission have raised the alarm. Queenslanders are being asked to trust a system they are no longer allowed to see while children remain at risk.

This government made clear election commitments on child safety. According to the Crisafulli LNP government's child safety report card from Tom Allsop, the outgoing CEO of PeakCare, the sector's peak body, residential care was meant to stop growing—and it has not; the number of child safety officers was meant to increase by 20 per cent—the figures are unclear and unreported; a professional foster care model was promised—it has not been delivered; transparency was promised—but the data has vanished. Mr Allsop put it plainly: we should be in a better place but we are not.

On the front line, morale is at rock bottom. Workers are reporting dangerous workloads, psychological stress and a fear of speaking up. Leadership instability continues, with constant acting appointments and departures as late as last Friday.

This is not a stable system and it is not a safe system. During the height of this crisis, Queenslanders learned something else: the minister stopped fronting the media because she was overseas on safari. While her electorate was dealing with a cyclone and while child safety data was being withheld, her explanation was that she needed a holiday. No-one denies that ministers are humans, but child safety is not a portfolio that pauses. It does not take leave. It does not wait for convenient timing. Our children do not get a holiday from being abused. When children are at risk when a department is falling apart at the seams, leadership must be present. It is essential. The minister must be present.

That is why leading child safety advocates are calling for the Premier to step in. They say that the system is worse than it was a year ago, that transparency has evaporated and that confidence in the minister has been lost. The Premier promised Queenslanders that underperforming ministers would not last. This is not about politics. This is not about pointscore. It is about the children who rely on this system to keep them safe. They deserve a system that is honest, that is stable, that is transparent and that is worthy of their trust and their protection.

Toowoomba Hospital, Maternity Services



Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.31 pm): I rise to speak on the issue of maternity services in Queensland. As always, the health and safety of mothers and babies is the priority of Queensland Health.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: The health and safety of mothers and babies is always a priority, as is supporting our staff. It is distressing to hear when mothers and families do not have the positive experiences that they expect in hospital. A number of mothers and families have written to my office in the past few weeks to raise concerns with their experiences at the Toowoomba Hospital, and of course they must be supported and their concerns heard and actioned. Every adverse event in a Queensland hospital is investigated as part of well-established and longstanding due process for all hospital and health services. Every adverse event is investigated by clinicians external to the event that occurred, and this is a longstanding process that has been in place in hospital and health services, as I said, for many years.

I want to reassure parents and the community that the Toowoomba Hospital is a safe place to give birth. All who are choosing Toowoomba Hospital for bringing their bubs into the world should have the same assurance, and in recent days we have received evidence of that support. We have seen evidence from patients who have successfully delivered and had delivered their babies. We have had that evidence from clinicians as well, but more work needs to be done, and that is why yesterday I announced that I have instructed the director-general to commission an independent assurance review into the Toowoomba Hospital maternity unit. The review panel will include at least three people including a clinician, a maternity consumer representative and a medico-legal expert, and the panel will examine matters that were first raised about the Toowoomba Hospital maternity unit dating back to 2018 as well as review complaints made by mums and families with regard to maternity services at Toowoomba Hospital since then.

A number of reviews and reports into Toowoomba maternity services have been conducted since 2018, including about maternity services and workplace culture. The panel will have oversight over these previous reviews. It will have full access to these reviews and it will assess whether appropriate actions were taken in light of these reviews and what those actions were and other actions that have been taken by the hospital and health service to date. The panel will review the work and improvements undertaken by DDHS to improve its services. Importantly, the panel will engage with patients to enable the voices of mothers and their families to be heard and to ensure Toowoomba Hospital has accessible and appropriate processes in place for patient complaints. The assurance review will have three months to report back to the director-general.

I mentioned the positive feedback, and it is important because the staff who deliver the services at the Toowoomba Hospital are increasingly distressed by the politicisation of the hard work they do by those opposite and the hard work they do to ensure the safe delivery of it. In particular we recall the member for Miller, who has been noticeably absent from this debate, because he has form when it comes to Toowoomba in telling the wrong story and having to apologise for it. He has form in being

unreliable. He has form in misrepresenting the truth and having to correct the record publicly, even though he does so in a fashion that is mean, disingenuous and cheap and nasty—all words that are applied by many to the member for Miller. Here is what the patients say. The Cole family expressed their gratitude for the outstanding care received for the birth of their third baby on 28 January 2026, noting they felt—

Ms Farmer: Well, that's one.

Mr NICHOLLS: 'That's just one'. There we have it. That is their attitude—'just one', says the member for Bulimba, denigrating the hard work of the staff who work 24 hours a day delivering over 2,000 babies a year.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): The minister's time has expired.

Mr Bailey: You're out of time. Sit down!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, I do not need your assistance. I am going to issue a general caution to all members in the chamber. There has been too much disorderly behaviour and interjections during members' contributions.

Child Safety System, Ministerial Responsibility

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (2.36 pm): When you are the Minister for Child Safety, you see, you hear and you read things that are indescribable. Whatever you have seen in the worst horror movie, whatever you have read in the most graphic horror book, whatever has been your worst nightmare, there is nothing that will prepare you for the stories of how people can treat their children—the depravity, the evil, the sheer disregard for human life. As the minister you get the details of all of it, and it is beyond confronting. If as the child safety minister you were not already absolutely committed to doing your difficult job to the best of your ability having been confronted with those details, you would rise to that level of absolute commitment because you would realise that those children need you to be committed. They are depending on you to have that commitment, and that is why this child safety minister must go. It is time this Premier sacked this child safety minister because she is not only incompetent—it is worse than that; she does not care.

What do we know happened as a result of the minister rolling out the Unify system before it was ready just to save money? We know that intake work has slowed, we know that backlogs have exploded, we know that response times have become unknowable and 40,000 children have been flagged as being left in unsafe environments—40,000 of them. The minister was quick off the mark to say that she knew nothing about it until she had to fess up in September last year: 'It was all the public servants' fault.' We know from RTI documents that the former director-general of Youth Justice met with the director-general of Child Safety to discuss Unify early on. The minister's office was briefed multiple times by the director-general on Unify. We know that frontline staff warned leadership months before the rollout, and questions need to be asked about when the youth justice minister knew there were problems with Unify and whether she told the Minister for Child Safety.

The Minister for Child Safety is trying to tell us that, despite all of these interactions, she knew nothing. Honestly, is she being completely dishonest—and how good is it to blame the public servants who are unable to speak for themselves? They are saints. Child safety workers are saints walking on earth for the work that they do, yet they are the people she is blaming. I can tell members that staff morale is at an all-time low with a minister throwing it out there at every opportunity what bad people they are, as if their jobs are not hard enough. Either this minister is being dishonest or she is plain incompetent. She has no idea what is going on under her nose. You would think that when it comes to kids she would put a bit more effort in. What else does she not know?

Either way, this minister is not fit to be a minister. She is not up to it. What is worse is that this minister does not seem to care: she went on an African safari when she has lost thousands of children in her care. She went away without any resolution in sight and so many children who need her to put them first. She is effectively saying to a child at risk of harm, 'I needed a holiday.' She is effectively saying to a child who might have been sexually abused since they were two, 'I needed a holiday.' She is effectively saying to a child who has been addicted to ice since they were five, or cannot rely on a feed every day, or only goes to school a few times a month because there is no-one in their life who cares, who has never had anyone say 'I love you': 'I needed a holiday'. To the hardworking staff who stayed there during January, who did not go on holiday, who were taking the blame, she said, 'I needed a holiday.' This Premier needs to appoint someone as the minister for child safety who cares and who

can do their job, who will be transparent with the children of Queensland and who will be accountable for what happens to the children who need this government to look after them because there is nobody else in their lives to look after them.

Housing Supply

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (2.41 pm): We are in a housing crisis in this state because Labor chose to back the CFMEU over backing Queenslanders. The way that Labor ran construction and procurement policies meant that it took longer and cost more to build here than anywhere else in the country and housing supply just could not keep up. That is why the Crisafulli government swiftly re-established the independent Queensland Productivity Commission and asked them to look at what needed to change. The commission's findings were clear: since 2018 under Labor's policy settings construction productivity in Queensland declined by around nine per cent. That meant that construction costs rose, housing supply did not keep pace with demand, rents increased, and home ownership slipped further out of reach for far too many Queenslanders.

The independent commission found that Queensland has seen 77,000 fewer homes built than it otherwise should have seen since 2018. Its final report shows that today around 15,000 fewer homes are being built each year than were being built 30 years ago. That is despite technological advances and our state having a much larger population and far greater demand for housing. Those homes were not lost to the market; they were lost to Labor's bad management. Queenslanders today are paying the price. Some 53 per cent of Queenslanders aged 25 to 29 owned a home in 1971. By 2021 that figure had fallen to just 35 per cent.

Our response to the Productivity Commission is about fixing a broken system, which is why we have agreed, or agreed in principle, to the overwhelming majority of the commission's recommendations—over 80 per cent of the recommendations. We are already delivering reforms to make it easier to build in our state. Around half of the actions in the government's response are to be delivered by my department. There were few things more damaging than Labor's CFMEU tax, the so-called Best Practice Industry Conditions, BPICs. BPICs shut out more than 99 per cent of subcontractors from major government projects, crushing competition and driving up costs across the entire construction sector. That is why our government has now scrapped BPICs for good. Under our Queensland Procurement Policy 2026 we have overhauled government procurement, restoring competition and backing small and family businesses across our state.

The commission of inquiry into the CFMEU has today heard evidence that BPICs have cost Queensland between \$13 billion and \$40 billion since they were introduced. Imagine what else government could have delivered for that sort of money. It could have delivered homes for our most vulnerable, it could have delivered hospitals, it could have delivered road projects. The evidence is also clear from the inquiry that Labor ministers knew the damage these policies would cause. Industry warned them. They begged them not to put BPICs in place, but Labor persisted. We have heard shocking allegations today that the member for Miller was issuing pro-CFMEU directions to his department in negotiations. The member for Springwood, as late as April 2024 when he ran the public works department, was giving confidential feedback on subbies' prequalifications through a procurement process to Michael Ravbar and running those subbies by him to see if they were acceptable. These are shocking allegations. As the CEO of the Civil Contractors Federation told the inquiry, BPIC was the most damaging policy for construction productivity and the affordability of capital works that he had seen in over 30 years in the construction industry.

We are cutting red tape. We are pausing costly and duplicative requirements. We are reducing reporting burdens that added cost without improving outcomes. We have already delivered three of four tranches of our Building Reg Reno reforms. We have new legislation, to be introduced in coming months, to continue to make it easier to build in our state. We are fixing Labor's mess with practical, common sense changes, including targeted planning and regulatory reforms, and the Queensland Housing Code to improve consistency and reduce delays for straightforward housing types.

A more productive construction sector is not an abstract economic concept—it delivers real benefits for Queenslanders. It means young families can get into their dream home sooner because projects are being delivered on time, it means new and upgraded schools and hospitals are delivered sooner and Queenslanders get the services that they deserve when they need them. Queensland ground to a halt under Labor. This government is turning that around to make it easier to build across our state and fixing the housing crisis we inherited. That is what Queenslanders expect and it is what the Crisafulli government is delivering.

Domestic and Family Violence, Resources

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (2.46 pm): Recent events in Queensland laid bare once again an uncomfortable truth for those opposite: when women speak up it would seem that this LNP government does not listen and does not believe them. A week and a half ago we saw reports of Queensland police scrapping a specialist unit providing support for domestic and family violence victims. We know our frontline, when it comes to those hardworking services who work with women and children escaping violence, are stretched. They are dealing with more and more women coming forward. A frontline DV worker recently told the Labor opposition that women are turning up to domestic violence services with visible bruises, but they are having to be turned away with 20-day wait times because the system is so overwhelmed. Now these same victims are being told that specialist police support is being cut as well. Where are these women supposed to go?

This decision is at odds with the commission of inquiry into how police respond to domestic and family violence. In fact, that commission of inquiry recommended that Queensland police strengthen the resource model of the Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command to enhance its strategic capacity, not for it to be cut. We have had Sue and Lloyd Clarke come out and say that this cut is a step backward. They have said, 'Now is the time to strengthen specialist policing capability, ensuring it is consistent, accessible and effective across Queensland.' We have had the Red Rose Foundation say that they are questioning if police are stepping back from keeping communities safe and holding perpetrators to account.

This government's decision to cut this specialist unit not only is a resourcing issue but also sends an incredibly dangerous message that combating domestic and family violence is not core business. If supporting women and children escaping violence is not core business of the Queensland Police Service then what is? It also feeds the idea that domestic and family violence is somehow less serious. The rhetoric that I have seen after this announcement is appalling. I had one man comment on my social media in relation to this decision to cut the specialist unit, 'Great decision. Police aren't relationship counsellors.' That is the kind of message that this cut sends the community. Violence does not become less serious because it happens at home.

This decision and the message it is sending the community, are actively undoing years of work by advocates and experts educating the community about the realities and risks of coercive control. This Premier and this Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister Camm, must be held accountable for the resourcing cuts that they are making to specialist domestic and family violence supports and they must be held accountable for the messages that they are sending the community. This is yet another example of the Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence not being up to the job and not being around to listen to those stakeholders who have firsthand experience of how this will impact Queenslanders.

We have the same situation of not listening to women when it comes to the Minister for Health. For some time now women and families have been raising concerns about incidents at the Toowoomba Hospital. They are incredibly traumatic stories. One baby has died, one baby has been left with permanent brain damage and another baby had a fractured skull that went undiagnosed. It took demands from those women and from the Labor opposition standing with those families for the minister to finally act.

I acknowledge that today the minister has announced an assurance review, although not a part 9 review, which has far more wideranging powers and protections for women and staff who come forward. I look forward to seeing more information about this assurance review and how people will be protected when coming forward. I welcome the about-turn from the minister, who had started off by saying that there was no need for an investigation and that these women did not really deserve an investigation because they did not complain properly. Thank you to those women who stood up—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at that statement and ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Waterford, the member has taken offence. Would you withdraw, please?

Ms FENTIMAN: I withdraw. I urge the minister to go to Toowoomba today to meet with those families and start listening to and believing them and not use this investigation as an excuse not to do so.

(Time expired)

Rockhampton, Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (2.51 pm): Today it is very exciting to see the media reports that have erupted around the Olympic and Paralympic Games rowing and canoeing schedule to be held in Rockhampton on the mighty Fitzroy River in 2032.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order, members on my left! That was completely inappropriate. If I had not been getting advice from the Clerk, a number of you would have been warned just then.

Mrs KIRKLAND: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. This gives me the opportunity to—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

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

Mrs KIRKLAND:—repeat that the Olympic and Paralympic Games rowing and canoeing will be held in Rockhampton. It is disappointing that the Labor Party have come out in opposition to that games decision, with Labor influencer Robert Schwarten weighing in and the member for Gladstone also on the record as being against that games choice. This is against the regions. It is another demonstration of how Labor have always been against the regions and anything that will lead to economic development and community spirit.

Because the LNP believe in the regions, a robust bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Games rowing and canoeing to be held in Rockhampton was submitted by stakeholders and current elected members at all three levels of government, including: Senator Matt Canavan and the federal member for Capricornia, Michelle Landry; the member for Keppel, the member for Mirani and myself; and the Mayor of the Rockhampton Regional Council, who is now a part of—wait for it, opposition—the Host Mayors Advisory Group. That group consists of mayors from across Queensland who advise the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee on regional involvement, planning and legacy outcomes for the games.

The Crisafulli LNP government is getting on with delivering the games. We have, in fact, activated our legacy advisory group, which includes multiple stakeholder groups from across the region. Rockhampton will proudly host the Olympic and Paralympic rowing on the Fitzroy River, as outlined in the 2032 Delivery Plan, and any reports to the contrary are nonsense. Representatives of the International Canoe Federation were in Rockhampton this year and, along with all other representatives, are excited and energetic about the games rowing and canoeing events to be held in Rockhampton.

We have been rowing on the Fitzroy River since the 1800s. We have hosted state events and international rowing teams and now we will showcase this world-class freshwater rowing course to the world. Along with all of my Central Queensland colleagues, including the member for Keppel and the member for Mirani, I celebrate this opportunity to showcase these Olympic and Paralympic events in Rockhampton with a fantastic display of rowing and canoeing on the Fitzroy River. At the same time we will deliver, because the LNP government is a government that delivers incredible economic stimulus and legacy infrastructure.

Ms Boyd interjected.

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

Mrs KIRKLAND: We are just over six years away from this incredible event and already the City of Rockhampton is excited and our children are getting excited. It has activated people right across Central Queensland. Our businesses are getting prepared as the preparations start now. We do not dillydally—

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lytton, you can join the warning list.

Mrs Kirkland:—as those opposite did for over 1,000 days, trying to make up their minds about what they were going to do. The Crisafulli government is getting on with the job of delivering a remarkable event that will showcase our region to the world and leave a lasting legacy for growth. This indeed is the games for all of Queensland, and those opposite are jealous because they did not think of it.

Hinchinbrook By-Election; Traeger Electorate, Floods

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.56 pm): Because I was eagerly awaiting the birth of my fourth daughter I missed the December sittings of parliament. We had just gone through the Hinchinbrook by-election and I missed the debate on the member for Knuth's crocodile bill. This is probably a good time to comment, because hopefully the hype and tension has settled and we can address this more objectively.

I worked out that I have been working on campaigns since I was seven years old, I have rarely missed a federal or state campaign and I have never experienced the cheap, nasty, malicious campaigning that I saw at the Hinchinbrook by-election. I sincerely hope that other people in this House, from both sides, are not subjected to that sort of treatment. It is disgusting and it really erodes the integrity of government. I think some of the better, more decent members of parliament who came up seemed to be ashamed of being associated with that. There was the character assassination of candidate Mark Molachino. It was heavily focused on ruining his character. I encourage people to stay away from that in the future. We have to be better than that. We have to provide something better for the Queensland people. You can play the game—

Mr Kempton interjected.

Mr KATTER: There are stupid comments from the member for Cook. You are exactly the sort of person who would indulge in this stuff and celebrate it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Traeger, direct your comments always through the chair, please.

Mr KEMPTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I take offence and ask that that be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Traeger, I ask you to withdraw your comment, please.

Mr KATTER: I withdraw. It is always difficult when someone is making commentary while we are trying to speak and deliver a sincere message. We are talking about deceit, and the crocodile bill is a good segue because we were talking about gag motions today and that was effectively another gag motion. It is a pivotal issue in North Queensland. While you can decide whether or not you believe in culling crocodiles, I would say that it was pretty deceitful to keep that from the voters during the Hinchinbrook campaign so that people could not make any judgement calls based on your delivery on that issue. That is precisely what happened.

There was a really profound statement at the end of the committee report into the crocodile bill: '... Queensland does not have a crocodile problem; Queensland has a people problem.' I guess that defines your attitude and how you feel about this. I would say that we have a crocodile problem because people who want to swim in our waterholes cannot. When working on the booth during the Hinchinbrook campaign, many times young people came up to say, 'Mate, what are you going to do about the crocodiles because we can't swim in our swimming holes?' It really means something to a lot of people and they were denied the opportunity to vote in a way that might have generated some sort of outcome for them. The last point I should make on the Hinchinbrook by-election is that the government did not need the seat. It was not pivotal that the government win the seat so why would it go so hard and below the belt in a campaign like that? It has to be said that that was a poor reflection on the government.

The floods were a very big issue in my electorate. The government has done quite a good job of being on the ground and seeing those parts of my electorate that have been affected. There has been damage done everywhere. It is often said that the people on the ground do a tremendous job. It was especially the case in some areas where we could not get government services in. Local people did a lot of it themselves. They coordinated hay drops. It was amazing to watch communities come together after being ripped apart.

There were mixed views on some of the assistance. The SES were overzealous in Normanton and interrupted some of the great work done by the locals. The ministers were very helpful in that respect. The SES received glowing praise in Einasleigh where they were helping with clean-ups. Sometimes people who come in can do more harm than good when they are trying to help. There are a lot of losses there and a lot of repair work that needs to be done.

I think back to 2023 when Burketown was smashed and evacuated. The Running Creek, Barkly Crossing and the four creek crossings that cut off access to Burketown and Doomadgee in 2019 are still not fixed. This is due to bureaucratic red tape. It is disappointing to see the issues with the Gilbert

River bridge. Over time we should be inching closer to ensuring that these places are not cut off every time there is a flood and people should not be worried about supply boats and barges and power being cut off. We should not be just going in and repairing but building resilience in the future.

(Time expired)

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Orders



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.01 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing orders 87 and 150 be suspended to allow the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025 and any amendments circulated by the minister to be moved and considered.



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (3.02 pm): I will briefly address this motion to suspend the application of the same question rule—effectively the suspension of standing order 87. I put on the record that there will be several instances I can foresee of applying a suspension of the same question rule to the suite of laws brought in by this minister because I think it is widely acknowledged in the community that this is a government which, through its legislation, is failing to deliver for Queenslanders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Manager of Opposition Business, I will pull you up. I consider you are anticipating debate on the bill itself rather than debating the procedural motion before the House. I ask you to bring your comments back to that motion.

Mr de BRENNI: I will be very careful to confine my remarks as you have instructed. We submit to the House that a government that put more effort into its policy initiatives and maximum effort into the work of this House and less effort into political pointscoreing would see less need to bring to this House a suspension of standing orders in these circumstances. We saw earlier today another motion which will limit consideration in detail—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance in terms of the procedural motion before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order, Leader of the House. Manager of Opposition Business, although you had not completed that sentence, I anticipate that what you were about to say involved referring to a prior motion before the House. I would again urge you to address this motion relating to standing orders 87 and 150. Do not debate or anticipate debate on the bill itself.

Mr de BRENNI: I have just been furnished with a copy of the motion. It does assist in contributing to a debate on a motion to have been provided with a copy of it. I thank the chamber staff for circulating that motion to me.

Our point is that maximum effort needs to be made by legislators to bring comprehensive reform to get their bills right. Less time figuring out how to line their pockets with big money donations would assist that. We will not be opposing this motion. We have put on the record that this will continue to be a feature of the way this government approaches legislating in this House.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTORAL LAWS (RESTORING ELECTORAL FAIRNESS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 44, on motion of Mrs Frecklington—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (3.06 pm), continuing: While it might be the case that the then opposition leader and now Premier said that he would lift the ban on developer donations, we are not aware of any commitment to increase the donation limit and change the periods before the election. We are also not aware of any commitment that will see a quadrupling of the donation limit someone can make to a particular political party in any term of parliament. We are also not aware of any commitment that would make the laws we are debating today retrospective to the beginning of the financial year. Maybe if the Crisafulli LNP government released the election commitment tracker, which was transparently released by the former Labor government at regular intervals, then we might be able to see what commitments were made. Unfortunately, we see cover-ups from those opposite.

The crux of the issue here is that the Crisafulli LNP government are effectively increasing the risk of corruption in politics in Queensland. By increasing the amount of private money that can flow into politics you are increasing the perceived and actual risk of corruption. We on this side of the House are not aware of any other jurisdiction in the country that is regressing on its electoral laws. It has been a few minutes since I quoted the Crime and Corruption Commission so here we go again. They stated in their submission—

The Bill changes are coupled with an increase in real terms on the cap for political donations. With the change to the political donations cap period from an electoral term to a financial year, this effectively quadruples the sum that property developers, along with all other political donors, may donate in an election cycle.

Instead of actually ensuring that the electoral system in Queensland is fair, those opposite clearly want to open the floodgates and let private money flow in. What I found particularly interesting were some of the comments by some of the submitters, and particularly Mr Geoffrey Watson SC, the Director of the Centre for Public Integrity, who, I am advised, said in relation to these laws on 9News in January of this year—

I'm very disappointed because this is quite a retrograde step, not only does it reintroduce the possible corrupting influence of property developers, but it also greatly enhances the amount which they can donate to a campaign, thus increasing their power of influence.

Mr Watson went on to say—

And if people are using money, deep pockets, to distort that process, everyone should be concerned about that.

Regardless of the source of money, the quadrupling of the donation limit will have a potential distortion on the electoral system whereby people with deep pockets may be able to influence decisions.

Members might recognise the name Geoffrey Watson because he is in fact the same Geoffrey Watson the Deputy Premier associates himself with in respect of his work on addressing matters related to the CFMEU. It is interesting that the LNP government on the one hand want to respect the views of Mr Watson, but on the other hand dismiss them when it does not suit the political narrative they are trying to push.

The increase of private funds in our political system is a retrograde, backward step, and many stakeholders in the committee process and even those experts in the field, such as people like Geoffrey Watson, agree. In fact, these laws could mean that individuals associated with gun lobby groups could increase their political donation to parties like the LNP.

I am advised that since 2012 the LNP have received approximately \$280,000 of donations from firearms dealers or members of the firearms industry. Under these proposed laws, these groups could now donate four times more. Submission 43 to the inquiry stated—

I don't believe there should be any political donations accepted by any political party from Gun Lobbies or Gun manufacturers/companies.

For political parties to accept these donations, it can sway their decisions about the availability and use of guns, which can impact on the safety of the public.

Of course, we continue to wait to see the full implementation of the Wieambilla coroners report recommendations by the Crisafulli LNP government, and we join many stakeholders, including the family members of Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow—

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The member is straying into other areas to do with firearm laws.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I will seek some advice on that point of order.

Ms SCANLON: It is not relevant to those laws.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, I do not need your assistance.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is your point of order on that point of order?

Ms SCANLON: It is. Those laws do not at all respond to the Wieambilla recommendations.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Gaven. Member for Nicklin, thank you for your point of order. I was seeking some advice around that. Member for Gaven, I will caution you not to stray outside of the contents of the bill. I have been listening. I will give you the call and urge you to continue relevantly in relation to the bill.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I am talking about donations from the gun lobby. This is a bill that would allow the gun lobby to quadruple the amount they can donate to a political party. I am talking about a submission that came to the committee, of which the member is the chair, and I am simply putting the point that it is interesting that the gun lobby can now quadruple how much money they can provide, yet seemingly the government is not responding to the Wieambilla recommendations. That is not pre-empting the debate of the bill before the House because those laws do not respond to the Wieambilla recommendations, which is why we are so disappointed. That is the point.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, I will again give you some guidance in terms of anticipating debate on a bill that is now before the House. Perhaps you could move on to another point.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I will move on. The risk of this bill is to increase private money in Queensland politics. I think that is incredibly concerning. That is why the Labor opposition is carefully watching the implementation in jurisdictions like South Australia, which has put a ban on private donations in its political system. The actions of the Labor government in South Australia will remove all of those private donations except for a small subset. That will level the playing field and make the electoral system fairer—that is the intent of those laws, in fact—and its aim is ultimately about de-risking and reducing the perceived or actual conflict-of-interest and corruption risks. It is a shame that this Crisafulli LNP government did not have the gumption and the ticker to continue Labor's integrity reforms in this place and implement maybe something similar to South Australia, but I am not particularly surprised, given their track record.

Speaking of their track record, with all of that in mind—the quadrupling of private donations able to come in and the widening of the scope of the donor pool—it is always important to look at the history and actions of the LNP when in government through the prism of this legislation, because I am advised that it was former deputy premier and now CS Energy deputy chairperson Jeff Seeney who moved amendments in this very chamber to retrospectively amend legislation to legalise certain actions of Karreman Quarries. Guess how much they donated to the LNP? \$50,000. I am further advised that Jeff Seeney, when deputy premier, also used ministerial powers to rezone the privately owned Maroochy River Caravan Park, owned by a donor to the LNP, which reportedly resulted in the property value going up. It must be a thing with LNP deputy premiers who have the planning portfolio.

Ms Enoch interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection about Sibelco. There are two examples that come to mind, and I am sure there are many more, where the potential for influence or the perception of influence from donations is clearly there.

In the time remaining, I wish to talk about the process of getting to where we are today. Members who have been listening would have noticed that I quoted the Crime and Corruption Commission a lot, and that is because that institution is important to Queensland. The Queensland Labor opposition values the work of the CCC, and we thought the LNP might, too. However, what we unearthed during the committee process is alarming. The Crime and Corruption Commission were not consulted by this government on the preparation of this bill, the very bill which unwinds many of the integrity measures which the CCC have been, in fact, advocating for. When the Department of Justice were asked, they said—

As public servants, we take instructions from the minister of the day. Again, I think any questions in relation to consultation should be referred to the Attorney-General.

My question to the Attorney-General is: why were the CCC not consulted by the Attorney-General or by the LNP government on the preparation of this bill? Was it because she would have received a nasty shock that they did not support these laws? Or did the LNP know and purposely not consult them? I suspect it is the latter—hardly the actions of the government that advocated for the sun to shine in.

While we respect the Electoral Commission of Queensland and the work they do, it was also surprising to learn that they had already started preparing for the implementation of these new laws, even before the committee process had started, and seemingly they had not consulted with the CCC either. You would think the CCC would provide oral evidence at the committee hearing, but unfortunately they were not available on the day of the hearing. There were many submitters who remarked on the fact that this bill was introduced right on the eve of Christmas and it was difficult for a number of organisations to appear before the committee. I want to be clear: neither I nor the opposition are reflecting on the CCC for not being able to appear before the committee, but I do want to table a *Courier-Mail* article by Hayden Johnson which was published the day after the hearing. It says—

Government MPs have blocked a push for the Crime and Corruption Commission to give evidence about its warning that reinstating political donations from property developers would increase corruption risk.

I table the article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 17 January 2026, titled 'Corruption watchdog silenced over fears developer donations risk tainting 2032 Olympics' [143].

The Attorney-General, during her introductory speech, stated that 'it begins to level the playing field in Queensland elections', the operative word in this sentence being 'begins'. What is it that the Attorney and the Crisafulli LNP government have up their sleeve to do next to our electoral system in Queensland if they are just beginning? We have seen a lot of commentary about other electoral reforms. Will the LNP increase the expenditure caps or remove them completely? The bill quadruples the amount of funds that can be donated by an individual, so it would seem likely that expenditure caps might increase as well. We call on the Attorney-General to come clean to the people of Queensland and advise if there will be any changes—

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The member is speculating about other legislation that might be brought before the House. It is not relevant to the current bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hear your point of order.

Ms MULLEN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I note that in the statement of reservation this is actually referenced as part of the debate, so I ask that you consider that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Jordan. I will seek some advice. Member for Gaven, you are referring to something that is in the statement of reservation?

Ms SCANLON: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order, member for Nicklin. The member for Gaven can continue, being relevant to the bill.

Ms SCANLON: We call on the Attorney-General to come clean to the people of Queensland and advise if there will be any changes not already prescribed in law to expenditure caps for elections in Queensland. Will the LNP increase the number of seats in this chamber? Will the LNP bring back their idea of requiring identification to vote, which impacted a number of marginalised members of the community?

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b), again. Just because they put irrelevant material in their statement of reservation does not make it relevant to the bill, I would submit.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order, member for Nicklin. I will seek some advice on that point. I will ask the member for Gaven to assure the House again that this matter is referred to in the statement of reservation. If it is, she may continue.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you give that assurance to the House, that the matters you are referring to are referred to in the statement of reservation?

Ms SCANLON: A number of these matters were referred to in the statement of reservation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The ones that you are referring to?

Ms SCANLON: Yes, Deputy Speaker, I believe they are, but I will move on.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right.

Ms SCANLON: I am happy to keep going. We already know that the LNP are trying to rig the Redistribution Commission outcome by putting people like John Sosso on the commission, so anything at this point is possible.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I urge you to remain relevant to the bill, member for Gaven.

Ms SCANLON: The bill before us deals with a number of matters, including changes to the preselection ballots of political parties to enhance their independence, amendments to allow loans from financial institutions to be used for electoral expenditure, increasing the period that materials have to be authorised for and the use of post-office boxes.

In respect of authorising material for elections, the increase to the period that materials need to be authorised within to 12 months seems on the face of it sensible and reasonable, particularly in a modern age where campaigns start earlier. In 2028 Queenslanders will go to the ballot box three times for local, state and federal government elections, so it is important that people know who is issuing materials and for what.

However, allowing post-office boxes to be used rather than physical addresses to authorise materials may seem sound in respect of protecting an individual's privacy, but it also limits Queenslanders' ability to find out who is actually authorising and putting out materials. Under the proposed new system, someone could put out materials and remain anonymous, as the use of a post-office box does not readily allow individuals—

Government members interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I hear the interjections from those opposite. These are their own changes, so I do not know what their problem is. It is bizarre.

There have been many examples in the past of the media undertaking their important work and finding out that some cooker or rogue agent has authorised materials because they had to use a physical address. While it is noted that materials under \$6,000 do not need to be registered with the ECQ, there is a risk here to our democracy, which should be considered.

In respect of financial institution loans being able to be used for electoral expenditure, we on this side of the House assume that this change is to enable the LNP to get a loan from a bank to fund their campaigns rather than, as has been the case, from candidates and former MPs. Again, we are not going to die in a ditch over some of these measures.

This bill changes the eligibility criteria for prisoner voting. Currently, a person sentenced to imprisonment for three years or less can vote, but that will change to 12 months or less, meaning anyone sentenced to a period of imprisonment of more than 12 months cannot vote. While the failed leader, now Attorney, outlined when this change to three years was implemented in her introductory speech, what she failed to do, unsurprisingly, was outline why this change has been made. As was clearly outlined in the explanatory notes in 2019, which I am sure the Attorney can get a copy of and read, the amendment at the time was 'aligning Queensland's position on prisoner voting with the Commonwealth position post the High Court decision in *Roach v Electoral Commission*'. As was outlined in the Queensland Law Society's submission, which I am sure as a solicitor and the current first law officer of Queensland, the Attorney may have read—

The High Court's decision ... provides critical guidance on establishing a non-arbitrary threshold for prisoner disenfranchisement, grounding such restrictions in the seriousness of offending and individual culpability. The Court determined that while a blanket ban on prisoner voting is unconstitutional, a three-year imprisonment threshold is a reasonable measure because it serves as a reliable proxy for what constitutes a serious crime.

They go on to state—

The Explanatory Notes and Statement of Compatibility do not provide any detailed consideration of evidence or empirical data to justify the proposed lowering of the disqualification threshold.

This is another example of the Attorney and the Crisafulli LNP government not backing up their position with facts and evidence. It is a bit like how they are hiding behind the Expert Legal Panel to change youth justice laws, but we will leave that for another day.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I would not be talking if I were the member for Currumbin. The Queensland Labor opposition will always stand up for the rights of victims in Queensland. We were the government that established the Victims' Commissioner to support all victims in Queensland. We were the government that brought in many laws to protect Queenslanders; however, we as parliamentarians cannot let laws go through this chamber without calling out the views of a wide variety of stakeholders, including the legal profession, of which the Attorney-General is supposed to be a member.

The Queensland Labor Party is the party of integrity reform in Queensland. Successive Labor administrations have increased transparency and accountability in Queensland's democratic institutions. These strong integrity reforms—and I remind those opposite of them—include: reducing the threshold for donation disclosure to \$1,000; implementing real-time disclosure laws for political donations, which is why we know about some of those on the opposite side; and implementing recommendations from the CCC to prohibit property developers from making donations.

We are proud to be part of a team that champions electoral integrity reform. Those LNP members opposite should hang their heads in shame for being associated with laws that are watering down and regressing our strong electoral laws. The question before this House is simple: does this bill strengthen confidence in Queensland's electoral system, or does it introduce new questions that did not previously exist? The CCC has expressed concern. Integrity experts have urged caution. Queenslanders expect us to listen.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (3.26 pm): I was a member of the opposition in February 2020 when the then Labor government came into the parliament to pass their financial gerrymander laws, which were deliberately designed to frustrate political donations whilst they pocketed the millions of dollars in union cash they knew were available to them. As chair of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee, I am proud to stand here today to reverse those laws with the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. I thank my fellow committee members and the secretariat for their great work and the many submitters to the bill.

Under Labor's laws introduced before the 2020 election, the definition of 'prohibited donor' not only unfairly singled out an important industry in Queensland but also was so deliberately vague in its more than 700 words it caught mum-and-dad investors and many other ordinary people trying to save for their futures, effectively marking them all as untrustworthy and uniquely susceptible to corrupt behaviour. The deliberate vagueness of the previous definition saw the Electoral Commission able to rule on applications and find that someone was not a prohibited donor under the definition, but they could not provide a ruling to declare a person was a prohibited donor. This caused immense confusion, and that is exactly what the Labor Party wanted.

It was an outrageous singling out of an industry, an industry we know that those opposite hate—and it showed. This unfair demonisation of an industry in the middle of a Labor-caused housing crisis was a move that put projects in jeopardy. As noted in evidence to the committee by Jess Caire, an executive director of the Property Council of Australia—

The vital role the property sector plays cannot be overstated. Queensland relies on our industry to deliver the homes and the precincts that our growing state needs, yet at the same time singling out the sector and allowing its vilification has reinforced the damaging and unfair narrative. That singling out has had consequences well beyond the original regulatory intent. This discriminatory regulation has not only undermined the confidence of the industry but also contributed to the demonisation of the industry, shaping community perceptions in ways that it makes it harder to have constructive conversations about growth, housing delivery and planning. These narratives do not just damage reputations; they fuel NIMBY sentiment and make it more difficult to deliver the diverse housing and infrastructure that Queensland so urgently needs.

Labor would be scratching their collective heads wondering why there was a housing crisis under them, why Queensland became the lowest home ownership state and why supply stalled as Queenslanders were encouraged to see any property developer—

Mr McCALLUM: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I ask the member to be relevant to the long title of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): I am actually looking through the report and the greens on this bill. Member, you are just within those boundaries at the moment. I ask you to please remain relevant; otherwise we will have to pull you up. You can resume.

Mr HUNT: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am referring directly to quotes from the Property Council and the impact that those laws we are changing had on the property sector, so it is relevant, Mr Deputy Speaker. They unfairly led to mistrust in the very industry that invests and supplies housing for people, as the Property Council said in evidence to the committee. Anyone can make an argument that political donations of any kind hold a risk of corruption, whether it is from mining companies, contracting companies, licensed venues, tourism operators—

Mr Stevens: Unions!

Mr HUNT:—or, dare I say, trade unions, or family and small businesses—all of which rely on government decision-making that impacts them. Thankfully, official corruption findings are very rare amongst members of parliament, with the last two members jailed in relation to dealings with major retailers, training organisations and mining related activities, not property developers. The case simply cannot be made for singling out one group for exclusion above all others, and that case was never made at a state level. That is why the Premier took to the last election a commitment to restore fairness and now has a mandate to do just that with this important bill.

I want to thank the people of Queensland who supported the LNP's election to government and the important restoration of electoral fairness that this bill forms part of. People donate to political parties because of their values and policies, not necessarily to influence them, and that is the important consideration. All of us in this House are rightly subjected to high levels of scrutiny, and our donations are disclosed. This will continue but in a fair and equitable manner by removing Labor's financial gerrymander.

I note in Labor's statement of reservation they quote the Australia Institute several times. I will just point out for the benefit of the House that the submitter from the Australia Institute admitted to the committee that he had been a fundraising coordinator for the Greens party and he had been a member

of that same party. He provided plenty of opinion in his submission, but for an alleged research organisation no empirical data was provided to support any of the opinions provided. With that in mind, members can decide what weight they give that evidence.

On the part of the bill that relates to prisoner voting, most of the submissions received were related to a campaign objecting to this. I want to draw attention particularly to those who would assert that 12 months imprisonment can unfairly target people with minor offences, particularly summary offences. This is not backed up by facts. You need to have a significant level of offending to spend 12 months or more in prison.

A search of the sentencing advisory board statistics on their website reveals actual sentences for breaches of the Summary Offences Act that submitters referred to. The fact is that for the last five years up to July 2025, 12,176 people were sentenced in court for a Summary Offences Act breach for the offences listed in submissions, and of those people only six received a sentence of 12 months or more. That is less than 0.05 per cent. Of those six offenders sentenced for 12 months or more, four of them were for unlawful possession of suspected stolen property—an offence for which people are charged when in possession of stolen property where an owner cannot be located. One could safely assume in these extreme cases that this would have involved a significant amount of property or was coupled with other offences to receive a lengthy prison sentence. The other two instances resulting in a sentence of 12 months or more related to trespass in a dwelling house—so entering someone's home. I do not know of the individual cases but to get a 12-month sentence, in my experience, it is likely that it involved other charges as well.

This alleged sentencing of 12 months imprisonment for minor summary offences just does not occur. These assertions that minor offenders will be excluded from voting are plainly false based on these figures. Every ex-police officer in this House knows from experience the level of offending or repeat offending that sees you get a sentence of 12 months or more. It is invariably significant and a serious breach of the law. I support the bill, which restricts their right to vote whilst they are serving those sentences.

There were also suggestions from some submitters that the amendments in this bill were not compatible with the High Court ruling in *Roach v Electoral Commissioner*. To be clear, that action was related to a blanket ban on all prisoners voting which was found to be invalid, but it is important to note the Chief Justice's actual ruling and I will conclude by quoting it. I note the member for Gaven left this very important bit out. Chief Justice Gleeson in his ruling stated in part—

It is also for Parliament ... to decide the basis upon which to identify incarcerated offenders whose serious criminal wrongdoing warrants temporary suspension of a right of citizenship. I have no doubt that the disenfranchisement of prisoners serving three-year sentences was valid—

and this is the important bit—

and I do not suggest that disenfranchisement of prisoners serving sentences of some specified lesser term would necessarily be invalid.

I commend the bill to the House.



Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (3.36 pm): I rise to speak on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This bill should alarm every Queenslander who cares about integrity, transparency and trust in our democratic institutions. I have reservations about this legislation and the bill.

For decades Queenslanders have learned the hard way that when private money gets too close to political power the public interest is the first casualty. This is why Queensland Labor has led the nation on integrity reform. This is why, following the damning findings of Operation Belcarra, Queensland introduced some of the strongest political donation laws in the country—lowering disclosure thresholds, real-time reporting and a clear prohibition on property developer donations. These reforms were not ideological; they were practical. They were evidence based and, most importantly, they were designed to restore public confidence after a long history of corruption risk in this state. The bill tears at the very fabric of that framework.

The Crime and Corruption Commission, the state's peak integrity watchdog, could not have been clearer. After reviewing this bill, the Crime and Corruption Commission stated that it represents 'a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework' and is 'out of step with reforms introduced to manage risks associated with political influence, and perceptions of it'. When the Crime and Corruption Commission says that a bill increases corruption risk, governments should stop,

listen and rethink. The government did none of those things. Instead, the Crisafulli Liberal National Party government has doubled down on a bad idea—one that increases the role of private money in politics at exactly the wrong moment in Queensland's history.

Let us be very clear about what this bill does. It lifts donation caps by changing the cap period from an electoral term to a financial year. In real terms, that change quadruples the amount that can be donated over a four-year period. A single donor could give \$19,200 to a political party, \$28,800 to an independent candidate and \$28,800 across endorsed candidates of the same party. This is not a technical amendment; it is a fundamental shift in how our democracy is funded.

It is important to say this clearly: property developers play a legitimate and necessary role in our modern society. They build homes, create jobs and help meet the housing needs of a growing state. This debate is not about demonising an industry. It is about recognising the real and well-documented risks that arise when those who stand to benefit most from planning and development decisions are permitted to financially support the very decision-makers responsible for approving them. The concern is not developers as a class but the conflicts, real or perceived, that place public trust at risk.

The bill re-opens the door to property developer donations, an industry that the Crime and Corruption Commission has repeatedly identified as posing one of the highest corruption risks in Queensland. This is not theoretical and it is not speculative; it is based on decades of evidence, investigations, prosecutions and public inquiries. History is precisely why Queensland banned property developer donations in the first place, yet this government wants Queenslanders to believe that those risks no longer exist. At the same time it is concentrating more planning power at the state level, issuing more ministerial infrastructure designations, expanding state facilitated developments and gearing up for the largest infrastructure build in Queensland's history in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Crime and Corruption Commission explicitly warned that the risks created by this bill will occur during this very period. They are their words, not mine.

Who is responsible for planning, infrastructure and development decisions in Queensland right now? The Deputy Premier and planning minister, Jarrod Bleijie. One minister with expanded powers overseeing billions of dollars of development while this bill seeks to increase the flow of private money into politics should concern every member of this House.

The Australia Institute was asked a simple question during the inquiry: were they aware of any jurisdiction that is weakening donation laws? The answer was an unequivocal no. In fact, South Australia is moving in the opposite direction and banning private donations altogether. New South Wales is maintaining its ban on property developer donations. Queensland under this government is the outlier. This was a choice made by the Attorney-General and Minister for Integrity, the Hon. Deb Frecklington. It was a political choice that flies in the face of advice from the Crime and Corruption Commission, the Australia Institute, the Corruption Prevention Network, the Centre for Public Integrity, the Queensland Law Society and numerous individual submitters.

The government will no doubt argue that this bill simply creates fairness because unions are permitted to donate while property developers are not. The comparison does not withstand scrutiny. Unions are membership-based not-for-profit organisations that exist to represent the collective interests of their members, not to secure individual commercial advantage from government decisions. In contrast, property developers often have direct, project specific financial interests before ministers and councils. Treating those two entities as equivalent ignores the very corruption risks that Queensland's donation laws were designed to address. Integrity reform is not something you water down when it becomes inconvenient. It is something you strengthen, especially when corruption risks are rising, not falling.

This bill also creates dangerous loopholes at the local government level. It allows property developers to make donations for purposes not related to an election. The Crime and Corruption Commission warned that this vague wording could permit donations for administrative purposes such as staffing, thereby freeing up other funds for campaigning. This is a back door by any other name. It directly contradicts the intent of the Belcarra reforms. The Crime and Corruption Commission also warned that having different rules at state and local levels will create confusion, uncertainty and noncompliance. Again the government ignored that advice.

What is perhaps most alarming is not just what is in the bill but how it was developed. We understand that the Attorney-General did not consult the Crime and Corruption Commission before introducing it. The Electoral Commission of Queensland confirmed it had not met with the Crime and Corruption Commission despite these laws flowing directly from a Crime and Corruption led inquiry. What is even more concerning is that the Electoral Commission of Queensland has already commenced

implementation work—drafting materials, adjusting systems—before the parliament has debated or passed the bill. This is disrespectful to the House and it undermines confidence in the process. The committee process itself was deeply flawed. It was introduced before Christmas, and with submissions closing on 2 January there was a single public hearing and limited time.

Finally, this bill goes further still, reducing prisoner voting rights from a three-year threshold to 12 months. The Queensland Law Society has warned that this change is unsupported by evidence, risks breaching human rights and may be constitutionally invalid under the High Court's decision in *Roach*. This bill, in my words, is a mess. It increases private money in politics, it weakens hard-won integrity safeguards and it ignores expert advice.

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (3.47 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the electoral amendment bill, another piece of legislation that delivers on the Crisafulli government's election commitments to restore fairness, prioritise victims and enhance safety in our democratic process. In this speech I will touch on three points that have dominated conversations in Thuringowa around this bill: (1) protecting vulnerable candidates by allowing the use of post-office boxes or alternative addresses on authorisation statements; (2) restoring a level playing field in political donations by treating trade unions and property developers equally; and (3) ensuring that serious criminals serving sentences of one year or more cannot vote in elections.

I point out the vital protections this bill affords to those brave individuals who put themselves forward as candidates, especially those who live alone or stand as independents without the safety net of party machinery or extensive support networks. For these Queenslanders, the simple act of running for office should not come at the cost of their personal security or that of their loved ones. By allowing the use of post-office boxes or alternative addresses on authorisation statements, we are erecting a crucial barrier against potential harassment or even worse, ensuring that no-one has to broadcast their home location to the world just to participate in democracy. This is a fundamental safeguard for vulnerable candidates who might otherwise be deterred from serving their communities.

Maybe the member for Gaven should speak to someone who has experienced someone aggressively knocking on their door when they are home on their own. The member's laughter about that earlier would indicate that side of the House has absolutely no idea. Let me share a personal insight that underscores the urgency of this reform. During the last Townsville local election this very issue was brought starkly to my attention by several aspiring councillors—independent voices, some living alone—who voiced genuine fears about revealing their residential details amid a heated campaign. Their stories highlighted how the old rules exposed them unnecessarily to risks, potentially curtailing diverse participation in our electoral process. The Crisafulli government refuses to let such barriers persist. Instead, we are empowering all candidates to step up safely, fostering a more inclusive and secure pathway to public service for everyone.

Let's delve deeper into fairness of electoral donations. The Queensland Labor opposition said in their statement of reservation that under their administration they increased transparency and accountability, and just three lines under that they stated that they implemented recommendations from the Crime and Corruption Commission to prohibit property developers from making donations in relation to the Belcarra report. Let's look at that. The Operation Belcarra recommendation never included the state Electoral Act. That operation was about local government elections. The statewide ban on property developer political donations introduced by Labor was fundamentally at odds with recommendation 20 from the Crime and Corruption Commission's Operation Belcarra inquiry, which concentrated exclusively on local government electoral processes. The existing ban on property developers donating to local government election campaigns in Queensland remains firmly in place, and donors will continue to be required to make declarations as mandated under electoral laws.

The Crisafulli government proudly delivers on another election commitment by restoring a true level playing field in political donations, ensuring that trade unions and property developers are once again treated equally and eligible to support state election campaigns. Equal and fair: two simple words that those opposite could never quite grasp, because their real aim was never fairness at all. No, their cynical intention was always to tilt the playing field deliberately in their own favour—rigging the rules with one hand while preaching purity with the other. They slapped a ban on property developers for state elections, all while letting their union mates pour millions of dollars of funds unchecked—a blatant double standard dressed up as virtue. This was not about cleaning up politics; it was a calculated electoral stitch-up—a financial gerrymander designed to disadvantage one side and protect their own. Queenslanders saw through their hypocrisy, and this Crisafulli government is ending it and restoring true equality so no-one gets special treatment and no-one gets special punishment.

The Premier stated unequivocally during the second leaders debate on 16 October 2024 that he would repeal the ban on donations from property developers and industry bodies predominantly comprised of them, declaring it 'fundamentally and philosophically an electoral financial gerrymander'. He rightly highlighted how the former Labor government imposed a special rule for developers while applying a different standard to unions. The Premier was crystal clear before Queenslanders went to the polls: there should be an even playing field—either the same rules for everyone or no donations at all. Queenslanders heard that message, endorsed it and entrusted this government with the mandate to make this law and others.

In line with the Crisafulli government's unwavering commitment to put victims first finally, criminals serving a sentence of imprisonment or detention for one year or more will no longer be permitted to vote in state and local elections or in referendums. This is about basic justice. Those who break the law in serious ways should not have a say in choosing the very lawmakers who uphold it.

Those opposite not only weakened our criminal justice system at every turn; they shamefully opened the prison gates wider for criminals to influence elections from behind bars. In 2019 they changed the law not to protect society but to prioritise the so-called rights of prisoners—allowing anyone serving fewer than three years to vote. This was a deliberate softening of standards that let serious offenders keep their democratic voice while victims continued to suffer the consequences. As the Attorney-General has rightly declared, the LNP believes law-breakers should not get to elect our lawmakers. We are determined to prioritise victims over criminals. Those who flagrantly disregard the law through more serious offences should forfeit the privilege—not the right but the privilege—of participating in the democratic process that maintains order in our community.

Prisoners serving sentences of between one and three years could have been convicted of offences such as burglary, assault occasioning bodily harm, unlawful use of a motor vehicle, sexual assault or indecent treatment of children—and the list, sadly, goes on. Burglary that shatters lives, assaults that leave lasting scars, sexual crimes that destroy trust and innocence: are these not serious enough for the Labor opposition? Do they truly believe these acts are trivial and unworthy of consequences at the ballot box? Their refusal to draw a firm line exposes their priorities once again: criminals over victims, weakness over justice. Queenslanders rejected that mindset at the election, and this bill ensures we never return to it.

The committee made one recommendation in its report: that the bill be passed. I support that recommendation today.

 **Ms McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.55 pm): I rise to make my contribution in relation to the bill before the House, and I do so as a member of the committee that considered the bill. For those who are unaware, this bill was introduced in the last sitting week before Christmas and submitters were given the Christmas holiday leave to make their submissions to the committee. The Attorney-General has spoken about the length of time the committee had to scrutinise this bill. I am sure the Attorney-General was at work every day and expected all of those organisations and public servants to also be at work every single day to make sure their submissions were done in time. That is the level of scrutiny that was allowed for this bill.

We are here debating what is now an urgent bill. The LNP's priority is clearly to open up donations and repeal some of the current caps on donations. That is the LNP's priority for the first sitting day in 2026. I have heard that this is a mandate and an election commitment. We all heard lots of slogans at the polling booth in 2024, but I do not recall hearing, 'We need more dollars in the pockets of property developers' as voters were taking the how-to-vote cards from a range of different people. I would suggest there were other mandates that the punters themselves were actually interested in, not these dodgy ones.

Queensland has some of the highest anti-corruption frameworks around politics in the country, and I am very proud to have been part of the government that introduced many of those. That was about curbing the influence of money in public sector decision-making. During the committee, the Australia Institute was asked how our state compares with many other states. The concern was articulated that with this bill Queensland is the only state going backwards in terms of transparency and corruption risk.

The public's perception of politicians and corruption predates many of us in this House. All of us here carry the weight of the esteemed title of the least trusted profession in Australia. There is a reason for that perception, and bills like this will only continue that perception. This bill does not pass the pub test. If I went out and told my punters that the first bill we debated and passed in 2026 was to remove property developer caps and increase money to go into political campaigns, they would be absolutely

appalled. This bill is about electoral matters and it is now an urgent bill, and that shows us what the LNP's priority is for Queensland. We are the only state going backwards in terms of anti-corruption measures. This is not a perceived corruption risk; this is a corruption risk.

We did not have the privilege of having the CCC appear before the committee. They certainly foreshadowed late last year that they would be unable to attend on 16 January. Maybe they were all on leave as well; maybe there was a group discount on safaris. Who knows where they all were, but there were still two weeks between that public hearing and the tabling of the report. As the CCC were not available to appear at the hearing, many members may not be aware of the comments from the CCC. I will highlight some of the points from their submission. It is not a really long submission, but it does get to the crux of the problems here. The submission states—

The CCC's investigation revealed widespread non-compliance with legislative obligations relating to local government elections ...'

This refers to the Belcarra report. I do hear a lot of commentary that the Belcarra report and its recommendations did not refer to state government, that they were local government election issues. That is because that was the remit of the Belcarra report.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order, members on my right.

Ms McMAHON: However, one of the outcomes of the Belcarra report was more state government influence in project approvals. In line with the measures that were put in place in the local government area, a lot of decision-making capacity was put into the state government area, particularly around major developments. This included the increased use of ministerial infrastructure designations, the power that the planning minister now holds to approve developments over the top of local governments.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. Could you ask the member to come back to the bill, please?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I notice that the member is actually addressing issues that have been raised directly in the committee report and the dissenting report as well. Will the member please continue?

Ms McMAHON: The Belcarra report has been frequently referenced throughout the report on the bill and in other contributions today. I continue.

The number of decisions that are being made, specifically in property developers' interests, are now sitting at the state government level. We now have the biggest infrastructure spend this state has ever seen going into 2032. The people of Queensland are not stupid. The people of Queensland can do the maths. When you remove developer donation bans and you add that to handing over state owned land to developers and you remove requirements for affordable and social housing, who benefits from that? It is not Queenslanders. Queenslanders are not going to benefit from affordable and social housing when that is being removed. Queenslanders who are struggling to get into the housing market are not going to benefit from increased developer donations as well as the lifting of that cap. Let's talk about donations.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please resume your seat for a moment. The number of interjections is rising. I have asked members twice now to maintain order. I will start warning people if this continues. Please resume.

Ms McMAHON: The people of Queensland have an already fractured view of politics and the influence of money in politics. It means that any step we take backwards increases the likelihood of organisations and companies that exist solely for profit being the ones to benefit from changes, submissions and amendments like these. I put a lot more stock in the intelligence of Queenslanders to see through what is actually happening here. I am more than happy to go back to my electorate and say that today the government has introduced a bill to increase donations so they are going to see more political ephemera in campaigns and they are also going to see more developers benefitting from decisions.

The last part of the bill I want to talk to briefly is the restrictions on prisoner voting. I want to clarify. A lot of the offences that have been rattled off as examples of offences that would be captured under the more than one year imprisonment—yes, they are all rattling off indictable offences. However, the ones I have heard today are all seven-plus year offences, anyway. They are not in that little area of those that would not have been captured previously. Generally when we are talking about an indictable

offence we are talking about those offences that have a term of imprisonment of seven years or more. However, we are talking about the simple offences, not just summary offences. Yes, we have a Summary Offences Act and generally they all have a term of imprisonment of 12 months maximum, so most summary offences are not going to be included. However, there are a lot of simple offences them in the Criminal Code that are three-year offences, including things such as discrimination or harassment of people based on gender identity or sexuality. That is a three-year offence. I hear a lot of public rhetoric that these are just as serious offences—and do not get me wrong, sexual vilification is a serious matter and it needs to be dealt with seriously. However, it is also a three-year imprisonment offence.

Those are the types of serious offences that are also being captured, not just the high-end indictable offences. People are always going to go away for a period of time that would have triggered that ineligibility. This has also now made Queensland vulnerable to a High Court challenge. I am certainly not going to be happy to put my hand on my heart and say that this bill and these amendments would withstand a High Court challenge regardless of some of the rulings. I look forward to seeing how this withstands that and how much this is going to cost Queenslanders.

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (4.05 pm): I rise to address the House on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This bill delivers on our commitment to Queenslanders to restore balance, consistency and fairness to our electoral system. This bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee which, after hearing from various stakeholders, recommended that the bill be passed.

A core pillar of this bill is the restriction of voting rights for prisoners. Following legislation passed under the former Labor government, prisoners who were serving jail sentences of less than three years would be allowed a say in the democratic process. We are reversing those changes because they are an insult to victims right across the state. This means that prisoners serving a sentence greater than one year will be restricted from voting at state and local government elections and referendums. We believe that law-breakers should not get to elect our lawmakers; it is a very simple idea.

Participation in a democracy is a blend of rights and responsibilities. When the individual demonstrates a serious disregard for the law, they forfeit certain civic privileges for the duration of their sentence. This is a standard principle with deep roots in the western legal and philosophical traditions. The 17th century English philosopher John Locke argued the social contract relies on individuals adhering to the laws of a civil society. When a person commits a serious crime they essentially enter what Locke described as a state of war against that society, thereby forfeiting the ability to vote that they enjoyed under that contract.

As Chief Justice Gleeson noted in *Roach v Electoral Commissioner*, it is fundamentally a matter for parliament to decide which prisoners have committed a serious enough offence to temporarily lose that right. By setting a 12-month threshold, we align with this commonsense principle that those who commit serious crimes such as burglary, assault occasioning bodily harm or sexual assault should not influence the laws that govern law-abiding citizens while they are serving their time. It is important to note that it will also apply to adults who were originally sentenced to detention as juveniles. This provision will bring Queensland into line with other states such as New South Wales and Western Australia, which share similar laws.

Furthermore, this bill fulfils our commitment to restore a level playing field for political donations. For too long the former Labor government maintained, as the Premier remarked, a ‘financial gerrymander’, creating one set of rules for trade unions and an entirely different, restrictive set for others. The Premier has been clear: there should be an even playing field where everybody follows the same rules. By lifting the state-level ban on property developers, we are ensuring that all donors are treated equally under the law, enhancing freedom of political expression.

Let me be clear: we are maintaining a strict ban on property developer donations for local government elections. This aligns with the original intent of the CCC’s Operation Belcarra, which was always focused on local government, not state government, elections. We are strengthening this with new offences and anti-circumvention measures, including penalties of up to two years imprisonment for those who attempt to use state-intended developer donations for local purposes.

To strengthen fairness, we are introducing annualised donation caps. By bringing donation periods into line with the financial year—consistent with New South Wales and the Commonwealth—we are streamlining an overly complex system and providing Queenslanders with greater opportunities to show their political support. We are also enabling candidates and political parties to obtain loans

from regulated financial institutions. At present, participants are unfairly limited to private or unregulated lenders. No candidate should have to rely on questionable sources of finance simply to participate in our democracy; they should be able to access credible and regulated lending.

This bill further reinforces the independence of political parties by removing the Electoral Commission's role in overseeing the preselection process. Such oversight is an outdated administrative requirement that exists in no other Australian jurisdiction. Its removal will allow the ECQ to focus on its primary responsibility: administering public elections rather than supervising internal party affairs.

Finally, we are prioritising the transparency of our elections and the safety of our candidates. We are extending the authorisation requirement for election material to 12 months prior to a general election, ensuring Queenslanders know exactly who is behind the advertisements they see. Crucially, we are now allowing candidates to use PO boxes or prescribed addresses for these authorisations. In an era of growing concerns regarding harassment and intimidation, no candidate should be forced to put their private residential address on public campaign material. This bill is about integrity. It is about ensuring that victims are prioritised over criminals, that donation rules are fair to everyone and that our electoral system is transparent and safe. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (4.12 pm): Every time I head into an election I get the experience of standing alongside Greens volunteers for two weeks at the pre-poll and listening to them recite the statement that the Greens do not accept corporate donations. We all know that that is not true, but that is a story for another day. At every election I am also able to respond to that statement with confidence knowing that Queensland has—or had—the toughest political donation framework in the nation, and that is because Queensland's electoral laws were built deliberately over time through successive Labor governments that understood that public confidence in democracy depends on strong rules, clear boundaries and transparency.

It was Labor governments that banned political donations from property developers, recognising the unique risks that arise when private interests intersect with planning and development decisions. It was Labor governments that ensured strict donation caps applied over an electoral cycle, not manipulated year by year, and it was Labor governments that included real-time disclosure so Queenslanders could see who was funding political campaigns in real time. These reforms were not ideological; they were practical and evidence based and introduced in response to serious integrity risks that were identified by Queensland's own Crime and Corruption Commission. This bill dismantles that framework in one sweep. It weakens donation limits, reopens known corruption risks and strips democratic rights from more Queenslanders, with disproportionate consequences for women, for First Nations people and for those with a disability interacting with the criminal justice system.

The first major change in the bill is the dramatic increase in political donations. By shifting donation caps from an electoral cycle to financial years, the bill allows donors to contribute more funds during a parliamentary term. The practical effect is to multiply the amount of private money flowing into politics during that election cycle. This is not a minor technical change; it fundamentally alters the balance of influence in our democracy and moves Queensland in the opposite direction to reform elsewhere. Other jurisdictions are tightening political finance rules and tackling head-on how to reduce the influence of wealth on democratic outcomes. The Labor government in South Australia has now removed political donations entirely, yet here, at a time when Queenslanders are under intense cost-of-living pressures, this parliament is being asked to prioritise legislation that enables politicians and political parties to raise and spend more money. Against that backdrop, expanding the role of private money in politics is not just tone-deaf; it completely undermines the trust that people have in our political institutions. Integrity and affordability are not separate concerns. When people believe political decisions are shaped by money, confidence in government erodes and good economic policy becomes much harder to deliver.

The second major change is the removal of the ban on property developer donations. I want to be clear that this is not about demonising property developers; it is, in fact, the opposite. Property developers play a legitimate role in Queensland's economy. They build homes, deliver infrastructure and employ thousands of people. The ban that was introduced by the former Labor government was never about vilification of any one industry; it was about recognising a structural corruption risk and removing it for everyone's benefit, including developers. Development is uniquely exposed to discretionary government decision-making—planning approvals, zoning changes, infrastructure sequencing and ministerial interventions. That exposure creates heightened risks of actual or perceived influence. Those risks were laid bare during Operation Belcarra.

The Crime and Corruption Commission commenced Operation Belcarra after serious concerns about conduct in Queensland's local government elections and it identified widespread noncompliance and systemic weaknesses that created actual and perceived corruption risks, particularly where political donations intersected with development applications. The CCC's recommendations were designed to remove those risks before they arise, protecting communities, decision-makers and developers alike. In its submission on this bill, the CCC warned that aspects of the proposed changes represent a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework and are out of step with reforms introduced to manage risks associated with political influence and perceptions of it. The CCC also cautioned that these changes are being proposed at a particularly sensitive time as Queensland enters a period of intense development pressure in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Constituents of mine have raised serious concerns over this government's tearing up of longstanding planning frameworks in order to fast-track the proposed Victoria Park stadium. The government has overridden local planning instruments, environmental protections and community consultation processes that exist precisely to balance development with neighbourhood amenity, cultural heritage and environmental values. We have seen, by the government's own admission, the effective sidelining of multiple pieces of planning legislation to create an uninterrupted pathway for this project, with almost no regard for the impacts on surrounding residents, small businesses, green space or First Nations cultural significance.

This same government that has centralised planning power, weakened safeguards and adopted a rushed, top-down approach to Olympic infrastructure is now proposing to allow property developers to donate directly to political parties and candidates, including senior ministers with direct or indirect oversight of Olympic delivery bodies. That includes the Deputy Premier, whose portfolio intersects with the very agencies responsible for coordinating Olympic infrastructure and development considerations. Queenslanders are entitled to ask the simple question: what safeguards does this bill contain to ensure the corruption risks identified by the Crime and Corruption Commission are not realised in precisely these circumstances?

The CCC has warned that reintroducing property developer donations during a period of intense development pressure heightens the risk of actual or perceived undue influence, yet this bill offers no convincing answer as to how the risks are going to be managed. When a government demonstrates a cavalier approach to planning safeguards, prioritises speed over scrutiny and adopts rhetoric that consistently elevates the interests of the powerful over the rights of affected communities, it is not enough to rely on disclosure forms and after-the-fact penalties. Integrity systems exist to prevent temptation before it arises, and this bill dismantles those protections at the very moment that Queenslanders need that type of protection.

These are the serious warnings from Queensland's independent corruption watchdog, yet the committee did not allow the CCC to appear at the public hearing. That decision should concern every member of this House and every Queenslanders out there who cares about integrity. Why would a government refuse to hear directly from the very body responsible for safeguarding the integrity of our democratic society? Strong integrity laws do not punish developers; they protect everyone from pressure, suspicion and reputational harm, and this bill removes those.

The third major issue is the expansion of prisoner disenfranchisement. This bill removes the right to vote from people serving sentences of one year or more. That change is neither proportionate nor justified. It is also not gender neutral in its impact. Women in prison are overwhelmingly incarcerated for low-level, poverty related and nonviolent offences. Many are primary carers. Many are survivors of domestic and family violence and sexual violence. Many have been criminalised through homelessness, mental illness, addiction and coercive control. A one-year sentence does not indicate rejection of civic responsibility; it often reflects profound social and economic disadvantage. Removing their right to vote does not strengthen respect for the law; it severs one of the last remaining civic connections women in prison retain, making it that much harder for them to transition out of prison.

Queensland has long recognised that civic participation supports rehabilitation and reintegration and this bill abandons that principle. It also fits the broader pattern of policy choices that have fallen hardest on Queensland women, weakening economic security, reducing access to services and now stripping political voice from some of the most marginalised women in our state.

I want to talk for a moment about process because process matters, particularly when the rules of democracy are being rewritten. This bill was introduced late in the year. Consultation was conducted over the Christmas and New Year period. Scrutiny was shallow; key stakeholders were sidelined. These

reforms were not taken to the election. Queenslanders did not vote for weaker donation laws, expanded corruption risks and disenfranchisement. When governments change the foundations of democracy they must do so transparently, carefully and with consent. That standard has not been met.

Queensland once led the nation on electoral integrity because it chose strong guardrails over convenience and transparency over interference. This bill dismantles those safeguards. It expands the role of private money into politics, reintroduces risks into Queensland that we had already acted to prevent and removes democratic rights from people who already live at the margins, in particular women. It does so without a mandate, without meaningful consultation and without heeding the warnings of Queensland's very own corruption watchdog.

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.21 pm): I rise to speak to the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This is a bill to amend the Electoral Act 1992, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Referendum Act 1997 and other legislation identified in schedule 1 to the bill. This bill is great news for democracy in Queensland. It closes a dark history in Labor's shameless manipulation and financial gerrymandering of our political donor system.

Firstly, this bill will remove the existing caps on political donations for state elections. A donation cap period currently means the period between general elections—30 days after polling day for the last general election until 30 days after polling day for the next general election. Clause 14 in the bill amends the meaning of the donation cap period to provide that the donation cap period for a registered political party or candidate in an election is each financial year. The new donation cap period definition will apply retrospectively to 1 July 2025 pursuant to a new section 456 transitional provision.

Some recipients who donated prior to 1 July 2025 may benefit, effectively renewing the cap, and other recipients may have received less because they could have exhausted their cap before 1 July 2025. These amendments are necessary to implement our policy objectives and address the current inequities within the donor law. The amended donation cap period brings Queensland into alignment with New South Wales, South Australia and is broadly consistent with the Commonwealth where a donation cap period is defined as a calendar year. The bill does not change the monetary limits placed on donations during the amended donation cap period—that is, donors must not make political donations of more than \$4,800 to the same registered political party, \$7,200 to an independent candidate or a total of \$7,200 to candidates endorsed by the same registered political party.

I will now turn to the bill's proposal to remove the ban on political donations from property developers. In 2018 the former Labor government introduced a ban on political donations from property developers for state elections. Labor politically and manipulatively snatched a statement in the introduction to the recommendations on page 14 of *Operation Belcarra: A blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local governments*, the Belcarra report. It said—

The Queensland Government may consider it appropriate to also adopt these recommendations at the state government level.

The LNP statement of reservation to report No. 7 of the 56th Parliament's Economics and Governance Committee said—

The Crime and Corruption Commission made it clear in their written submission that this bill goes beyond the CCC recommendations and if the government were to consider banning certain donations from state elections a proper review or inquiry would be ideal.

Indeed, the chair of the CCC, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, cautioned against an automatic translation of the property ban without giving it due consideration. He added it needed to be evidence based and proportionate to the identified threat. This sentiment was later echoed in Justice Nettle's dissenting opinion in the High Court case of *Spence v Queensland* where His Honour said—

No one suggests that big business or the union movement should or could be discriminately prohibited from making political donations. What compelling justification is there for the State of Queensland to treat property developers differently?

Labor shamelessly used the Belcarra report to instigate and manipulate a financial gerrymander. The ban did not apply to their CFMEU or other union mates who substantially fund the Labor Party.

This bill will remove the property developer donations ban from the Electoral Act so that it no longer applies at the state level. This amendment will narrow the scope of the property developer ban to apply to local government only so that it is consistent with recommendation 20 in the Belcarra report. The policy underlying this amendment is to restore electoral fairness by creating equal opportunities for property developers participating in state elections, ensure the property developer donations ban is targeted at local government elections only as contemplated in recommendation 20 of the Belcarra report, and to promote freedom of expression in allowing donations from property developers to be used for state electoral purposes.

Our bill will also reform the loans in relation to electoral expenditure for state elections. Currently the Electoral Act provides that a loan from a financial institution cannot be paid into the state campaign account of a candidate or a registered political party. However, loans from other sources, such as individuals, private or regulated lenders, are permitted. Clause 12 of the bill will amend the definition of loan to allow for loans from a financial institution to be paid into a state campaign account of a registered political party providing it does not contravene the records to be kept about loans in part 11 division 8 subdivision 3 of the Electoral Act. The policy objective in this amendment is to ensure that candidates are not unfairly restricted to private and unregulated lenders and to mitigate the risk in candidates and registered political parties being confined to a narrow source of lenders.

The Hon. Deb Frecklington, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity, said in her explanatory speech that in 2020 the former Labor government allowed a large cohort of criminals to begin voting in elections within prison laws. This was unacceptable and an insult to victims right across our state. The Attorney-General has rightly said lawbreakers should not be choosing our lawmakers and that is why this bill restricts voting by prisoners at state and local elections and referendums to those serving a prison sentence of one year or less. This amendment will bring Queensland law in line with New South Wales and Western Australia.

I now turn to the matter of the independence of political parties in preselection ballots. Clause 8 of the bill will omit part 9 of the Electoral Act and remove the Electoral Commission Queensland oversight requirements for preselection ballots. The purpose of the amendments is to reduce the administrative burden on the ECQ in undertaking audits and inquiries into preselection ballots and allow registered political parties to undertake their preselection ballots pursuant to their constitutions.

In clause 9 of the bill a new section 180A will be inserted to amend the definition of 'election period' to an 'authorisation period' so that it will begin 12 months prior to polling day and end at 6 pm on polling day for ordinary general elections. For any other election, including a by-election, the current meaning of 26 days shall be retained.

The bill also amends sections 181 and 182 in relation to the author of election material and the distribution of how-to-vote cards to provide that an address includes a post-office box. This is to allay privacy and safety concerns about candidates or their agents having to provide a personal residential address in election material.

In closing, the Crisafulli government is taking a methodical and measured approach to electoral reform. Our government made a pre-election commitment to restore fairness and balance in our electoral system after a decade of Labor financially gerrymandering our system. I commend the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025 to the House.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (4.30 pm): I want to talk about transparency, fairness and accountability. Those are not buzzwords, even though the Premier likes to treat them as such; they are foundations of public trust in our democracy and they must be demonstrated at every turn. Queenslanders quite rightly expect that decisions made in this parliament are made in the public interest, free from undue influence and protected by strong integrity safeguards. They expect donation laws that limit the role of private money, not laws that invite it in. They expect governments to strengthen those protections over time, not weaken them.

Queensland's integrity framework was not built by accident; it was built in response to hard lessons, community concern and the clear findings of peak integrity bodies. It was designed to ensure that political power cannot be bought and that decision-making is, and is seen to be, fair and impartial. Therefore, it poses the question: in this day and age, when evidence shows how dangerous weak laws are for our democracy and how much of a risk they pose to protecting decision-making bodies from corruption, why is the LNP government winding back those protections? Why are they going out of their way to wind back those protections? At the committee hearing, the Australia Institute said that they were not aware of any jurisdiction anywhere that is moving to weaken electoral donation laws, lift existing donation restrictions or raise donation caps. The CCC said that it was a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework.

When it comes to the part of the bill that deals with developer donations, the Labor opposition acknowledges the very important role that property developers play in modern society, particularly their role in increasing the housing supply in Queensland. However, this does not displace the fact that there is a serious risk associated with increased political donations, being the real or perceived risk of undue or improper influence in our parliament. In their submission the CCC stated—

Queensland is entering a period of increased investment in property and infrastructure development driven by population growth, economic diversification, with major sporting and other events.

They went on to say—

There is concern that the reintroduction of property developer donations could exacerbate real and/or perceived risks of undue or improper influence, particularly as developer interests align closely with major projects.

That is the CCC, the corruption watchdog. It is not the Labor opposition making this point; it is the CCC, and when the CCC speaks members of this House should listen.

Those opposite cannot deny their record on this issue. Campbell Newman, of course, dismantled the Bligh Labor government's tighter donation laws and went on to preside over a government that allowed substantial donations and campaign support from property and mining interests while his government introduced planning and legislative changes that benefited those same interests.

It should be noted that during the committee hearings trade unions were raised as a class of donor said to be capable of seeking influence through political donations. I hear the grumblings of some LNP backbenchers: every time someone mentions developers, they mention unions. I want to be really clear on this: it is not the same thing. Industrial relations reforms deliver benefits that accrue to workers in the relevant sector, not to trade unions themselves. The financial incentives are completely different. Their advocacy benefits working people; it does not benefit financially the trade union. They do not stand to receive direct commercial or financial gain from government decisions in the same way that property developers do. It astounds me that that again needs explaining to members on the other side of the chamber.

In terms of this bill, the extent to which those opposite are actively increasing the real or perceived risk of corruption really comes down to the donation caps. This bill fundamentally increases the amount of private money that can flow into Queensland politics. By shifting the donation cap period from an electoral term to the financial year, the LNP government is effectively quadrupling the amount a donor can contribute. It is a direct and deliberate expansion of private money and therefore influence in our political system. Again, the CCC were pretty clear about this risk in their written submission. The greater opportunity for political donations correlates with a greater risk of actual or perceived corruption. The CCC were not alone. Multiple submitters raised concerns. The Director of the Centre for Public Integrity, Geoff Watson SC, described the bill as a 'retrograde step'. He warned that it reintroduces the power of wealthy donors to shape political outcomes. He said plainly that when deep pockets are used to distort democratic processes everyone should be concerned.

Everyone should be particularly concerned when the one body best placed to interrogate corruption risks was not invited to appear at the committee hearings. Let us not pretend that the lack of verbal evidence from the corruption watchdog was a mere oversight. This was a deliberate exclusion. The explanatory notes to the bill tell us that consultation was intended to happen with the broader community and that this would occur through the parliamentary inquiry process. However, when the shadow attorney-general asked who determines which stakeholders are consulted, the Department of Justice was unequivocal in stating—

As public servants, we take instructions from the minister of the day.

That answer is extraordinary. It makes it clear that the Attorney-General picked who had a say and who did not. The question must be asked: why did the Attorney-General not want the CCC to speak publicly about this issue? Despite the CCC being Queensland's peak anti-corruption body and despite their role in the original Belcarra reforms, the Attorney-General quite deliberately did not want them to provide advice. That should alarm every Queenslanders.

Additionally, during the committee hearing the opposition asked whether the Electoral Commission had met with the CCC about the changes and the answer was no. Not only had consultation not occurred; the Electoral Commission indicated that it expected to speak with the CCC later, during implementation. Even more troubling is the Electoral Commission's admission that it has already begun implementing the proposed changes—all before the CCC was consulted and before parliament had completed its scrutiny. Talk about putting the horse before the cart. The bill has not even passed the parliament.

Those on this side of the House made it clear that they wanted to hear from the CCC during the committee's consideration of the bill. The response was simple and blunt: the CCC was not appearing. Therefore, the shadow attorney-general sensibly moved a motion that the CCC be required to attend a public hearing. The committee went into a private session to consider that. While the standing rules prevent disclosure of what was said in that private meeting, it is a matter of public record that the CCC did not appear. It is deeply disappointing that in considering critical reforms to electoral laws the CCC was not properly consulted.

This government chose to increase private money in Queensland politics, when we know that they cannot be trusted—that is their track record—and then they chose to block scrutiny of that decision. Queenslanders expect better than this. They expect integrity bodies to be consulted, not ignored. They expect fair parliamentary processes where committees hear evidence, not suppress it. They expect governments to strengthen trust in our democracy, not undermine it. Until the LNP government explains why Queensland's corruption watchdog was silenced, serious questions will continue to hang over this bill, the process and the government's so-called commitment to integrity.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (4.39 pm): I am pleased to rise to make a contribution to the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. At the outset, I would like to associate myself with the speech of the Attorney-General earlier today as well as the contribution of the chair of the committee, the member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt, and committee members.

Being a person who grew up with local government, the important word is 'fairness'. Queenslanders understand the concept of fairness. They know when something is not fair. Recommendation 20 of the Belcarra report stated that property developer bans should be applied to local government. We understood and accepted that. It was a very convenient stance of the Labor government of the day that it included in their Belcarra bill that it should also apply at the state government level. That came from left field and created unfairness and a financial gerrymander that applied at the state government level. I thank this government for introducing this very sensible and fair bill that will bring back a little fairness. That is a part of the bill that I am very interested in. It restores a level of fairness at the state government level and brings it back to what the commission recommended in the Belcarra report.

I also appreciate the prohibition on people serving a sentence of imprisonment of one year or more from voting in elections. Judges have said that it is up to the state government who should and should not be able to participate in elections. A sentence of one-year imprisonment is a significant sentence. Somebody either has a very lengthy history of antisocial behaviour or has committed a very serious offence. It may well be an offence of burglary, unlawful use or house breaking that results in a one-year sentence. A one-year sentence is the threshold at which people lose the right to be able to vote. I certainly welcome that.

The application of caps for political donations in state elections is a very fair provision. I use that term again because it aligns with the provisions of the New South Wales government and aligns with the provisions of the Commonwealth government. It is not something that we conveniently picked. It aligns with the standards that have been set. There is a calm and considered approach to these changes.

It is important to remember that back in October 2024 our then opposition leader now Premier made the commitment to Queenslanders that we would restore fairness by removing property developer donations. I stress that I am proud to be part of a government that is doing what it said it would do for Queenslanders. These are some of the changes that will affect local government. There are other reforms around local government that I very much welcome. In terms of fairness around caps, it is also important to note that there are no changes to the recording process and ensuring that any donation is properly reported in a timely manner. It mitigates to a large extent the risk of corruption in that space. Again, it is all about fairness and restoring electoral fairness in Queensland.

It is something that I am not taking my eye off. The government is not taking its focus off crime, health, housing and cost-of-living issues—they are of utmost importance to Queenslanders—but there are also these other changes that we need to make and that we said we would make to ensure we restore a level of objectivity and accountability in government that has been missing for a decade.

Another change is with regard to loans from financial institutions and the ECQ not being a big part of any internal political appointments and processes. No other state or territory has a commission looking over things so it is returning Queensland to a level of fairness and sensibility. I am proud to be part of an LNP government that truly does have democracy at its heart. Our candidates are selected by our local membership and the state executive when they come together. It is conducted in a fair and appropriate way. Everybody gets the opportunity to individually and democratically select our candidates to run at the local, state or federal government elections. I encourage all my members to have their say and I encourage others to join to have a say on who elects the candidates for our seats. In my state seat of Lockyer I encourage people to come along and give me their support whenever the opportunity arises.

This bill certainly focuses on fairness. Queenslanders understand the concept of fairness. When the financial gerrymander and controls were put in place by the former government to directly target and focus on LNP candidates and they did not follow the recommendations as set out in the Belcarra

report I smelt a rat. I thought that it was very clear that that was a targeted attack on the now state government. I am pleased to be standing here today knowing that we have unwound that situation and have gone back to the sensible recommendations in the Belcarra report. They related to corruption risks within local government regarding property developers and planning. They are the things that local government deal with. It is good to see the change.

I also associate myself with the words of the Attorney-General when she said that the LNP believes that law-breakers should not get to elect our lawmakers. I thought that was a very astute observation. I believe that the one-year threshold is very sensible. It is a significant offence that a person has to commit to get a one-year sentence. There are usually a number of court appearances before that happens. I think that is a very sensible level.

Mr Stevens: That will help Lockyer.

Mr McDONALD: I think there a lot of seats around the state that may be affected by that change because there are correctional centres in other areas. For me it is not about who could influence an election; it is about who should have the right to be able to vote. If you are in jail facing a serious offence—an offence that has resulted in many victims across Queensland—you should not vote. The LNP is focused in every decision it makes on the rights of victims. If you talk to any victim of a house break-in or an unlawful use and the person who committed that offence received a one-year sentence or more in jail I am sure you would find that those victims would not want to see the right to vote extended to those people while they are in jail. There are plenty of other ways to demonstrate their connection to society or their willingness to be corrected. It does not have to be around their opportunity to participate in an election. I would argue that if I were in jail and I was asked to vote on something I would think that I should not be allowed to do that. That would be wrong. It seems absolutely ridiculous to me.

This bill goes a long way to restoring electoral fairness in our system. I thank the Attorney-General and the Premier for bringing this bill on in the first sitting of this calendar year. I look forward to being part of more changes that we as a government said we would make. We continue to keep our word to Queenslanders on delivering a fresh start for Queensland.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (4.49 pm): I rise to contribute to the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill. Integrity in public life is not an abstract concept. It is the foundation on which trust in this parliament rests, and once that trust is weakened it is extraordinarily difficult to rebuild. That is why electoral integrity matters, that is why political donation laws matter, and that is why decisions made by government in this space demand the highest possible standard of care.

Queensland has spent more than a decade strengthening that standard. Successive Labor governments undertook significant integrity reforms: lowering disclosure thresholds, introducing real-time reporting and implementing the recommendations of the Crime and Corruption Commission following Operation Belcarra. Those reforms were designed to protect decision-making from undue influence and to restore community confidence in politics. They were deliberate, they were evidence-based and they were supported by Queensland's peak integrity institutions.

The Crime and Corruption Commission has been clear: Queensland currently has a strong political donations framework as a result of those reforms. That is not a partisan view; it is the considered assessment of the state's independent corruption watchdog. The Crisafulli Liberal National Party government now seeks to unwind key elements of that framework, not because the system is broken and not because corruption risks have diminished but because this government has chosen a different path—a path that increases private money in politics and does so against the advice of integrity experts.

The Crime and Corruption Commission has warned that the changes proposed in this bill represent a significant departure from Queensland's robust donations framework and are out of step with national and international integrity reforms. That warning alone should have warranted reflection or maybe hesitation before proceeding. Instead, it has been ignored.

The risks associated with political donations are not hypothetical; they are well documented. Community concern about corruption, gifts and benefits influencing government decision-making remains one of the highest risk areas identified by Queenslanders in integrity surveys. Confidence in democracy depends not only on decisions being fair but also on them being seen to be fair. This bill undermines that confidence. It increases the amount of private money that can be donated across an electoral cycle, in effect, as we have heard multiple times already this afternoon, quadrupling the

amount that can flow to political parties and candidates over a four-year term. That is not a technical change; that is a profound shift in the balance between public interest and potentially private influence, and it is occurring at a moment when the power of government decision-making is expanding, not contracting.

Queensland, excitingly in some ways, is entering a period of extraordinary state involvement in planning, infrastructure and development. Major projects, significant investments and long-term decisions are being made by LNP ministers and that cabinet. At precisely this moment, when the stakes are highest, this government is choosing to lower integrity guardrails. The Crime and Corruption Commission has been explicit: increased risks of actual or perceived corruption may arise from these changes during the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That is not conjecture; that is a warning. Integrity is not tested when decisions are easy; it is tested when power is concentrated, money is flowing and pressure is high. This bill is designed pretty much to fail that test. What makes the situation even more concerning is not just what is in the bill but also how it was developed.

The Crime and Corruption Commission, the very body whose recommendations underpin Queensland's integrity framework, was not consulted during the drafting of the legislation. The CCC did not appear at the public hearing, and when the opposition sought to require the CCC to give evidence that request was denied. Queenslanders deserve to ask why. Why would a government committed to integrity proceed without consulting the state's top corruption watchdog? Why would it refuse to hear that watchdog in a public forum? Why would it push such significant changes through a committee process over the Christmas and New Year period when scrutiny is at its weakest and then move the bill as an urgent bill?

Process is not incidental to integrity; it is integral to it. The rushed timeline, the limited hearings, the unanswered questions and the repeated deferral of responsibility back to the Attorney-General all point to a government unwilling to subject its decisions to proper scrutiny. Even basic questions, including whether increased donation caps would inevitably lead to future increases in expenditure caps, were left unanswered. That silence absolutely speaks volumes.

This bill also makes changes to voting rights that have raised serious constitutional and human rights concerns by stakeholders. The Queensland Law Society, for instance, has been clear that these changes are unsupported by evidence and risk unjustified disenfranchisement. Once again, the pattern is the same: sweeping change, minimal justification and inadequate engagement with expert advice.

Integrity reform should not be rushed and it should never proceed in defiance of independent oversight bodies, yet that is exactly what the Crisafulli LNP government has chosen to do. This bill may carry the title 'Restoring Electoral Fairness', but fairness cannot be restored by increasing private money in politics, it cannot be restored by sidelining the Crime and Corruption Commission and it cannot be restored by weakening the safeguards that Queenslanders have come to rely on, especially post the Fitzgerald inquiry of the 1980s which shone a light on deeply entrenched corruption including political misconduct, aka brown paper bags. Queenslanders expect better. They expect a government that strengthens trust, not one that risks eroding it, and they expect integrity to be treated as a core responsibility of government, not an inconvenience.

This side of the House will continue to stand for transparency, accountability and the highest standards of integrity in public life. This bill puts into question much of that. When you put that next to some of the questionable approaches that this government is having even around, let's say, the electoral boundary redistribution, all of these put together put question marks around the integrity of government and of parliament, and that erodes the public trust in the work that we must do here as lawmakers. That is why we will continue to stand for these measures of transparency and accountability and hold this government to account, and we will not stand by and allow those to be risked in any way by this LNP government.

 **Hon. AJ PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (4.57 pm): I rise to speak on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill. This bill aims to deal with voter eligibility, political donations, loans from financial institutions, preselection ballots and authorisation of election material. More specifically, it will: prohibit persons serving sentences of imprisonment or detention of one year or more from voting in state elections, referendums and local government elections; apply existing caps on political donations for state elections to financial years; remove the ban on political donations from property developers and related industry bodies for state elections and target the ban to local government elections only; allow loans from financial institutions to be used for electoral expenditure for state elections; enhance the independence of registered political parties to

conduct preselection ballots with oversight of the Electoral Commission of Queensland, the ECQ; and amend authorisation requirements for election materials and how-to-vote cards, and allow post-office boxes and other prescribed addresses to be used.

Repealing the property developer donation ban delivers another of the Crisafulli government's election commitments. It also implements recommendations from the Crime and Corruption Commission. The former Labor government dressed up its donation ban as a recommendation from the CCC's Operation Belcarra report. Recommendation 20 was about local government elections. The CCC never included the state Electoral Act in the recommendations. It was all about local government elections. We are implementing the recommendations as intended. Our changes regard donations from property developers to state campaigns. The existing ban on donating to local government election campaigns remains. Donors will still be required to make declarations. This bill will also strengthen the ban for local government elections with new offences for a breach and includes new measures to ensure that donations are not made to circumvent the rules.

I note Labor's vehement opposition to the removal of the donation ban for state elections. When Labor introduced the ban, one would have thought it was simply about its objections to donations from property developers, a group it finds so reprehensible. The reality is that it demonised property developers so it could introduce a political fix designed to handicap the then opposition. As the Premier said when he made the election commitment, it was 'fundamentally and philosophically an electoral financial gerrymander'. The double standard is staggering when we consider the Labor Party is always eager to accept millions in donations from unions, even when some union leaders regularly face the courts for criminal, threatening and intimidating behaviour.

Who can forget Labor took money from unions which shredded incriminating documents and hid them in horse floats? That is what the former Labor government and current Labor opposition calls transparency and accountability. Labor's rhetoric never matches its behaviour. A *Courier-Mail* editorial said at the time—

... between the inextricable removal of Queensland's "Just Vote 1" laws that banned developer donations, the Palaszczuk government already has an established track record of reforms that favour itself ... the government (needs) to properly explain to Queenslanders why they must pay a hefty price so politicians aren't unduly influenced by donors after endless assurances that such prejudice doesn't exist ... it is difficult to accept that the ... Labor administration is suddenly motivated by munificence to clean up politics.

Labor now objects to donations from property developers because it is private, not public, money. It said in its statement of reservation—

We have a situation ... where the Crisafulli ... government, is seeking to change the electoral laws to increase the ability of private money in our political system.

It is only the Labor Party which would prefer to use public money—taxpayers' hard-earned dollars—over private money. The truth is Labor's changes to bans on donations were motivated by nothing more than blatant politics, and it still wants to retain the status quo because of blatant politics. This bill also aligns donation cap periods with those in New South Wales and the Commonwealth. There will be no change to the cap. Annualising the cap period will simplify the framework, making it easier to keep track of donations.

In 2019 the former Labor government changed the rules to allow any prisoner serving a sentence under three years to vote. It cloaked its changes as being in favour of the human rights of the prisoners. I ask: where are the rights of victims? Prisoners who were entitled to a vote included those who had been convicted of offences of burglary, assault occasioning bodily harm, unlawful use of a motor vehicle, sexual assault and indecent treatment of a minor. It was a typical response from a Labor government which prioritised offenders over victims.

The Crisafulli government is unashamed in championing the rights of victims. We are determined to prioritise victims over offenders. If someone commits an offence, if they break the law, it stands to reason that they must lose some rights.

The bill also makes changes to allow loans from financial institutions to be paid into state campaign accounts to be used to fund electoral expenditure. Current arrangements unfairly restrict funding sources to individuals or private lenders, including from wealthy individuals or unregulated private lenders. This change ensures candidates and political parties can borrow from properly regulated and reputable institutions.

Other amendments include removing the involvement of the Electoral Commission from internal party preselections and amending authorisation requirements for election materials. Currently, election advertising material needs to be authorised in the 26-day period before polling day. The bill extends the period to 12 months prior to the election. This change will let electors know who is supporting the election material.

The measures in this bill increase transparency and accountability, remove a targeted financial handicap, align caps with those in other jurisdictions, enhance democratic processes in political parties, free up the ECQ from being involved in internal political party processes and increase transparency for voters. I support the bill.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (5.04 pm): I rise to make my contribution on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill. The title of this bill is another spectacular misnomer. Others have made the point, and I will reiterate it briefly, that this bill was introduced at the very end of the sitting year last year. Public submissions were set to be submitted by 2 January, hearings were held at a very difficult time of the year for stakeholders and there was no appearance from the CCC to support their written submission. Clearly, there are massive issues with the committee process. It is little wonder that the LNP did not want any scrutiny of this bill, given that it makes developer donations to political parties and candidates legal again, quadruples the caps that currently exist on political donations and removes the voting rights of anyone serving more than one year in prison.

I will start at the top and talk about the return of developer donations, which are undeniably a corrupting influence on politics here in Queensland. The LNP are very deliberately making developer donations legal again, but only to the state government. Do not worry. There is nothing to worry about there. They are trying to convince us that we need not worry about it because of the recommendations in the Belcarra review—never mind the fact that the Belcarra report only addressed local government concerns. It only looked at complaints and issues around local government elections.

I will read one of the comments that was made in that report. If we take the reasoning, it makes good sense of why we need bans at a state level as well. The review said—

... the inevitably close connections between property development interests and local government decision-making mean that transparency is insufficient to manage the risks of actual and perceived corruption associated with donations from property developers.

Remember, this is in a report that only addressed local government corruption concerns. When we talk about perceived corruption risk and decision-making around development interests, the state government controls the shape of the Planning Act. It controls the caps that exist on infrastructure charges paid by developers. The state government controls tax concessions, like the build-to-rent and land tax concessions handouts that we have seen in recent years. It controls major development approvals whether through a PDA—a priority development area—or a call-in. It decides whether public land will remain in public hands or be sold off, like it is being sold off week in and week out by the LNP at the moment. It determines whether or not affordable housing requirements will be imposed on developers.

The Deputy Premier told us recently—and perhaps it was repeated even as recently as last week—that the LNP had to ditch housing affordability requirements for developers in the Woolloongabba PDA and they were not going to impose them elsewhere on newly privatised state land no less because the developers did not like it—shock, horror! Imagine that! Cry me a river, the developers do not want to have to build affordable housing. They do not want to have to address the shortage of public or social housing because it might impact their bottom line, their profitability.

A quick reminder for the government and for the Deputy Premier in particular: you are in government. You are the ones who decide what the rules are, not the developers. Let's take another example. Murderers do not like the Criminal Code. They do not like being locked up, but does the government remove the offences? No. Who exactly does the government work for? I think this bill makes it pretty clear who the government works for, and I am sure the Deputy Premier is looking forward to collecting his tidy little cheque for the handouts soon enough.

It does not take a genius to work out why developers donate to political parties. It is not rocket science. It is especially clear when you look at the lengths they went to to squeeze over \$500,000 through a loophole to the LNP immediately before the state election—I am talking in this instance about Adani and the reporting that came out recently. Of course, Labor can claim some credit for introducing the ban on developer donations, but they should not get too high and mighty, given there were massive loopholes left in those laws and they have continued to take developer donations at the federal level, as I understand it.

There are so many other corporate donations that do influence government decision-making like this. The only party that is not taking these corporate donations is the Greens. I heard the diatribe from the member for Cooper before. She claims that somehow this is untrue. I put the challenge to her that if there is any evidence that the Queensland Greens take corporate donations—because they certainly have not in the time that I have been in this place—she should stump up the evidence. She should tell us what she is talking about. I have put on the record here that the Queensland Greens do not take corporate donations. She could write to the Speaker and put me up for deliberately misleading parliament, but she cannot because it is the truth.

The answer to the question asked earlier is that we are supposed to govern in the interests of regular people. If those regular Queenslanders thought they were struggling with rent increases or with an impossibly big mortgage then the big developers of Queensland have news for them, because it is actually they who are the victims here! We heard this staggering line of argument from the Property Council of Australia in their submission decrying the demonisation of the property sector in recent years. It makes me so sad. I am so sad for them that they have been demonised! These are the same years that Brisbane house prices grew to become some of the least affordable in the world. Poor developers! These are the same years that the federal government spent more on tax concessions for landlords than on social housing, homelessness and rent assistance combined. These are the same years that our good friend—their mate—Harry Triguboff, the founder of Meriton, was, in his own words, ‘holding a lot more’ than he was selling, literally keeping homes off the market waiting for their value to rise. We are supposed to somehow worry about the demonisation of property developers and the development sector as a whole.

This is the LNP that we are coming to know better and better every time. This is the LNP that do not work for you. They talk about affording the property industry equal opportunity and freedom of expression in our electoral contests, but what they really mean is freedom for the development industry to influence their decisions and to corrupt political institutions and government decision-making processes. The Greens do not take corporate donations because democracy is for everyday people; it is not for corporations. Developers should not be able to fund our politicians because their motivations—profiteering off desperation in a worsening housing crisis—directly contradict the needs of the communities we represent.

I want to turn to the changes to voting rights. The bill adds new rights for property developers and political parties but simultaneously takes them away from prisoners. Anyone serving more than a year—that is more than 2,500 Queenslanders—will have their voting rights removed. This is a totally arbitrary threshold. The Human Rights Act says that the right to participate in public life and to vote should be enjoyed without discrimination.

We saw nothing in the statement of compatibility and nothing in the accompanying material to this bill to address the disproportionate impact this will have on First Nations Queenslanders. About 39 per cent of the adult prison population are First Nations Queenslanders, compared to 4.6 per cent of the population. It clearly has an imbalanced and discriminatory impact. Yes, prisoners forfeited certain rights when they were found guilty of a crime, but they are still citizens. This approach dodges accountability and creates a real catch 22 where the government makes the laws—and the LNP is absolutely hell-bent on locking more people up—but if you break them you do not get to vote on the laws that affect you. You do not get to vote these guys out. It does not sound particularly democratic to me, and I do not know how you are supposed to improve faith in Queensland’s electoral system. Prisoners are some of the people most subjected to the power of the state, and they deserve the right to simply exercise their voting rights.

To wrap up, this government are hell-bent on just giving themselves more power. They want to be able to take property developer cash and they want more and more of it, too. Just like we have been struggling for years to get the Labor Party to ban donations from big coal and gas interests who are ripping us off hand over fist, from the gambling industry and from the big banks who are making incredible profits from everyday people, we need to ban these donations—but the LNP is just intent on lining its pockets year after year after year.

(Time expired)

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (5.14 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025—a comprehensive legislation package that represents our commitment to strengthening Queensland’s democracy. The bill is not merely a set of technical amendments; it is a step towards restoring fairness, enhancing transparency and, most importantly, rebuilding public trust in the way Queenslanders elect their representatives.

The principal aim of this bill is to ensure that every Queenslanders can participate in our electoral system confidently and equitably. The reforms outlined seek to create a level playing field for all participants in state elections, reinforce the integrity of campaign funding and clarify the rules that govern our democratic processes. Through these changes, we are moving from aspirational ideals to tangible realities, where fairness and transparency are embodied in every aspect of our elections.

A cornerstone of this bill is the repeal of the ban on political donations from property developers for state elections. This reform is a direct response to the Crisafulli government's election commitment, ensuring that donation rules are applied consistently and without favour. Under the new provisions, both trade unions and property developers will be eligible to contribute to state election campaigns, thereby eliminating the previous imbalance that favoured certain groups over others.

As articulated by Premier David Crisafulli during the second leaders' debate on 16 October 2024, this measure corrects what was described as 'an electoral financial gerrymander' under the former government—a system that imposed special rules for some while discriminating against others. Our position could not be clearer: there should be one rule for all or none for anyone. This principle was endorsed by Queenslanders at the ballot box, reflecting widespread support for even-handedness and genuine democratic equality.

The bill also addresses the complex and sensitive issue of prisoner voting rights. In line with our commitment to prioritise victims and uphold community expectations, the bill removes the right to vote in state and local government elections, as well as referendums, for individuals serving sentences of imprisonment or detention for one year or more. This reform is grounded in the belief that those who have committed serious offences should not have the privilege of electing lawmakers while serving their sentences.

The previous government's 2019 reforms allowed prisoners serving less than three years to vote, citing human rights considerations. However, our government believes parliament has the authority—affirmed by the High Court's decision in *Roach v Electoral Commissioner*—to determine which offences are serious enough to warrant temporary loss of voting rights. Offences attracting sentences of one year or more such as burglary, assault and sexual offences are sufficiently grave to justify this restriction. This reform not only stands up for victims but also reinforces respect for the law and the seriousness of criminal conduct.

Another important reform is the allowance for loans from regulated financial institutions to be paid into state campaign accounts. Previously, candidates and parties were limited to borrowing from individuals or private lenders, often unregulated and occasionally risky. This system made campaign finance dependent on wealthy backers or sources lacking transparency and regulation. By enabling the use of reputable and regulated financial institutions, this bill reduces reliance on potentially unscrupulous lenders and supports a more transparent, accountable system for financing electoral expenditure. This change is vital for ensuring campaign funds are sourced responsibly and are subject to robust oversight.

This bill reforms donation cap periods by aligning them with the financial year, mirroring practices in New South Wales and at the Commonwealth level. While the cap amounts remain unchanged, this adjustment simplifies the regulatory framework, making it easier for donors and campaign participants to comply with the law. Annualising donation caps maintains safeguards against corruption while enabling legitimate support for electoral campaigns. This reform ensures fairness, clarity and consistency for all involved in the democratic process.

The bill also repeals the requirement for the Electoral Commission of Queensland to oversee and audit party preselection ballots. Registered political parties will now conduct their own preselection processes in accordance with their constitutions, free from external oversight. This measure reduces unnecessary administrative burdens and brings Queensland into alignment with other states and the Commonwealth, where electoral commissions do not intervene in internal party matters. This reform is intended to enhance the independence of political parties and encourage the democratic selection of candidates, removing outdated provisions that have become barriers to participation and were originally introduced to address specific issues within the Labor Party.

The bill extends the requirement for authorisation of electoral materials and how-to-vote cards from the traditional 28-day campaign period to the full 12 months preceding an ordinary general election. This reform will increase transparency and public awareness about the sources of electoral materials, ensuring that Queenslanders are informed well ahead of polling day. Additionally, the bill allows candidates to use post-office boxes or other prescribed addresses for authorisation purposes,

addressing privacy and safety concerns for those involved in the electoral process. These changes promote accountability, protect candidate privacy and ensure Queenslanders are better informed about political advertising.

The Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025 is a comprehensive package of reforms that will make our electoral system fairer, more transparent and more trustworthy. It honours our commitments, responds to community expectations and brings Queensland's laws into alignment with best practice across Australia. These reforms are not only about modernising our electoral laws but also about reaffirming our shared values of integrity, fairness and respect for democratic principles. Together, let us ensure that Queensland democracy remains robust, accessible and fair to all. By passing this bill we will send a clear message to the people of Queensland, and indeed to all Australians, that our democracy is built on solid foundations and that we are committed to protecting and strengthening those foundations for generations to come. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.22 pm): I rise to speak on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. I would like to comment on the member for Traeger's statement earlier today when he spoke about his engagement with the electoral cycle since he was seven years old. I grew up in a politically active family that has been campaigning since I was being pushed around in a pram. I lived through the era of Joh Bjelke-Petersen. I do not know about anyone else, but I am incredibly offended to hear the word 'gerrymander' being thrown around and particularly aimed at the Labor Party, given that the LNP are the masters of gerrymandering.

Government members interjected.

Ms PEASE: Obviously I have touched a bit of a raw nerve because they are very much aware of their behaviour and how their party operates.

This bill in no way restores electoral fairness: it weakens it shamefully. The Queensland Labor Party has been the party of integrity reform in this state. Over successive terms of government we have proudly strengthened transparency and accountability in Queensland's democratic institutions. Let me remind those opposite that we reduced the donation disclosure threshold to \$1,000. Do I need to remind you all that the LNP were so unhappy with that decision that they took the Queensland Electoral Commission to the Supreme Court—that is the LNP, you lot over there—because they did not want to disclose who their donors were. You have the audacity to call me out on integrity when that is what you do? Have I reminded you all clearly enough now?

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Member, I remind you to address your comments through the chair.

Dr ROWAN: That was my point of order.

Ms PEASE: May I remind those opposite of their history in that space. I do not think they have a leg to stand on. The LNP did not introduce real-time disclosures; that is what the Labor Party did. We implemented the recommendations of the Crime and Corruption Commission following Operation Belcarra, including banning political donations from property developers. Queensland has, in the words of the CCC, a strong political donations framework as a result of those reforms.

Government members interjected.

Ms PEASE: They obviously do not like what I am talking about. Here we are with a bill dressed up in the language of restoring fairness when in reality all it does is increase private money in our electoral system. No other state in Australia is winding back electoral donation laws. As was highlighted during the inquiry process, even the Australia Institute noted that they were not aware of any jurisdiction lifting restrictions where they exist. In fact, South Australia is moving in the opposite direction and removing most private donations from politics altogether. The bill put forward by the LNP moves Queenslanders backwards.

Let me be very clear. I have some very good friends who are property developers. Property developers have a legitimate role in our modern society. They build homes; they have great hearts. I have a great property developer, Nick Cave, who is building fabulous social housing because he has a heart, as do many of my local property developers. They build homes, they contribute to supply and they are an important part of addressing our current housing challenges. This debate is not about demonising an industry. It is about the risk—real or perceived—that decision-makers may be placed in positions of conflicts.

In its submission the Crime and Corruption Commission warned that aspects of this bill are a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework and are out of step with reforms designed to manage risks with political influence. The CCC further warned that increased risks of actual or perceived corruption may arise in the lead-up to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games, which will be a period of massive infrastructure and development activity.

Who holds enormous planning power in this state? The Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Since the Belcarra reforms, and particularly in recent months, state planning powers have expanded: ministerial infrastructure designations, state facilitated developments and Olympic infrastructure oversight. When you combine expanded planning power with the reintroduction of developer donations you increase the risk of corruption at the decision-making level. That is a huge concern.

The CCC did not appear at the public hearing despite the opposition calling for them to attend. The committee did not hear from Queensland's peak integrity body, and that should concern every member of this House and indeed every Queenslander. Quite frankly, I do not think that would pass the pub test.

Even more concerning is the creation of what can only be described as a backdoor at the local government level. Under this bill, property developers will be able to make 'restricted donations' for administrative purposes—not directly for elections. However, as the CCC pointed out, separating those funds does not remove the prospect that other commensurate funds could be allocated to candidates, creating at least the perception of influence. Put simply, you free up money on one side and it can flow to the other. This is precisely the type of risk that Operation Belcarra was designed to address.

In my electorate and in my Brisbane City Council ward of Wynnum Manly, there is a significant undertaking going on with regards to upgrading the neighbourhood plan. There is a plan for a huge development in my area. This is a great opportunity to provide housing which would be great for families and affordable living. That is why it is really important we get this legislation right, and I do not think that is happening.

Let us turn to donation caps. As I have already said, we all know that the LNP have never liked the Labor Party donation caps—so much so that they were prepared to spend money with the Supreme Court to try to stifle it. The government says that the monetary cap itself has not changed. What they do not emphasise—or make public, as such—is that by shifting the cap period from an electoral cycle to a financial year they effectively quadruple the amount that can be donated across a four-year term. That is shameful.

We know what the government will say. They will point to the trade unions. However, what they do not say is that unions are not-for-profit organisations representing workers collectively. As was noted during the hearing, any industrial relations reform that benefits members benefits workers broadly—not a single corporate entity seeking a planning decision. The financial incentives are so different. This bill is not about parity; it is about power.

Queenslanders know what happens when electoral laws are manipulated. I have talked about the gerrymandering of the past. We remember the era when electoral boundaries were distorted to entrench power and maintain that power. We remember the corruption scandals that followed. Even in more recent history, we have seen examples of controversial retrospective amendments benefiting donors, rezonings raising eyebrows and decisions that left Queenslanders questioning whether influence was at play.

Integrity frameworks exist for a reason. They exist because public confidence is fragile. That is the message that we as elected representatives should always remember. Being in this place is fragile so you must stand up to represent your electorates and make it very clear on which side of the conversation you want to be. That is why I am really proud to be able to stand here and note what we as the Labor Party have done in this space.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.33 pm): I rise to address the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This is an important piece of legislation, not only because it implements clear election commitments made to Queenslanders but because it restores balance, strengthens integrity and reinforces confidence in our democratic processes. Queenslanders expect integrity, transparency and fairness when it comes to elections. They expect that the rules governing our democracy apply equally to all participants and that no party, no interest group and no individual is given a structural advantage over another. That is precisely what this legislation seeks to deliver.

This legislation will improve equality of participation in state elections, enhance transparency in electoral campaigning, strengthen civic responsibility and increase public confidence in Queensland's electoral framework. Central to this legislation is ensuring that Queensland's electoral laws are brought back into alignment with the intent of the recommendations from Operation Belcarra.

One of the most significant reforms of this legislation is the restoration of a level playing field in relation to political donations. The previous Labor state government imposed what could only be described as a financial gerrymander—that is, banning a specific class of donors at the state level whilst allowing other institutional donors to continue contributing. That approach created an uneven system and, as the Premier rightly described prior to the election, amounted to a financial and electoral distortion.

Operation Belcarra, which was conducted by the Crime and Corruption Commission, was focused on risks in local government elections. Its recommendations were directed at that level, yet the former Labor state government extended the ban to state elections despite that never being the intent of the report. Accordingly, this legislation corrects that. It restores fairness at the state level whilst importantly maintaining—and, indeed, strengthening—the ban in relation to local government elections. It introduces targeted anticircumvention measures, new offences and strong penalties, including significant financial consequences and potential imprisonment for those who attempt to misuse donations in the local government context. The effect is simple. At the state level, we restore equality between donors and participants. At the local government level, we reinforce safeguards against corruption and undue influence. That is not a weakening of the law; it is a strengthening of it.

Importantly, through this legislation, caps on political donations remain in place, as do expenditure caps and disclosure requirements. These safeguards continue to reduce risks of corruption and undue influence. The reality is that transparency and fairness must apply across the board. It cannot be one rule for one group and another for anyone else.

When speaking about electoral reform, it is impossible to ignore the duplicity and hypocrisy that has characterised this debate—not only from the Labor opposition but from the Greens political party as well. The Greens speak frequently about the influence of big money in politics, yet this is from a party that has accepted some of the largest single donations from wealthy individuals and high-value contributors. The Greens political party cannot campaign against so-called big money while relying on it when it suits. Queenslanders are entitled to expect consistency between rhetoric and practice. Similarly, the Labor Party has long criticised others on donations and electoral funding, whilst benefiting from significant institutional support, including union linked funding structures that provide a substantial and ongoing campaign base.

I have long held the principle that when it comes to electoral laws and political donations the system must operate on a level playing field. There are those in the community who have expressed the view that all political donations should effectively be banned. I understand that sentiment, and I am certainly sympathetic to many of the arguments that are made in this respect. However, through complex cases and over a long history, it has been established in Australia that political donations are a form of political communication protected by the implied freedom of political communication recognised by the Constitution. Given that reality, the question is not whether donations should exist but whether the rules governing them are fair, transparent and applied consistently. That is the responsibility of this parliament, and that is what this legislation will do.

I note that this legislation also reforms prisoners' voting rights. In line with this state government's commitment to putting victims first, individuals serving a sentence of one year or longer will no longer be eligible to vote in state or local government elections or referendums. This legislation restores a more appropriate balance, consistent with the High Court's position that it is for parliament to determine when serious offending warrants the temporary loss of voting rights. Queenslanders rightly expect that those who commit serious crimes should not, during their incarceration, determine the lawmakers of this state.

This legislation also modernises electoral financing by allowing loans from regulated financial institutions to be used for campaign expenditure. At present, candidates and parties are effectively limited to private or unregulated sources. This reform opens access to reputable, transparent lending and strengthens accountability whilst reducing risk.

I also note that through this legislation there will be alignment on the application of donation caps with financial years, bringing Queensland into line with both the Commonwealth and other state jurisdictions. This simplifies an overly complex system whilst maintaining the same cap amounts and preserving safeguards against undue influence.

Importantly, transparency around election material will also be strengthened by extending authorisation requirements to the 12 months prior to a general election. Currently, authorisation is only required during the formal election period. By extending that time frame, this parliament will ensure that Queenslanders know who is behind political messaging in the months leading up to an election. At the same time, the bill allows the use of post-office boxes and prescribed addresses, responding to legitimate privacy and safety concerns raised by candidates. These reforms promote greater transparency, whilst recognising practical realities.

Taken together, the measures in this legislation demonstrate that the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government is delivering on its commitments and restoring fairness to our democratic electoral system. This legislation reflects a simple principle: that the rules governing democracy must apply equally to everyone. Queenslanders expect integrity in political funding and electoral processes, they expect transparency, they expect consistency and, above all, they expect fairness. Integrity in political funding cannot be selective. It must apply equally to all parties and to all participants in our democracy.

In closing, I again emphasise the importance of this legislation bringing the laws back to the intent of Operation Belcarra and how it restores balance and strengthens the safeguards that protect public confidence in our elections. This is about ensuring that every voter, every candidate and every party can have confidence that the system is fair, transparent and consistent. This is what Queenslanders voted for at the last state election. This is what this Liberal National Party state government promised and this is what the legislation delivers. As such, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (5.40 pm): I rise to speak to the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. The Queensland Labor opposition has a strong record of upholding integrity and increasing transparency and accountability in the Queensland electoral system. We know that Queenslanders expect their representatives to be transparent in their spending, the donations they receive and what they do during elections. This bill reduces the transparency in an election by quadrupling the amount of money and increasing the amount of private money. More private money in the political system will lead to greater risk.

During the committee process several submitters, including the Crime and Corruption Commission, raised concerns about these risks. In their submission, the commission said—

The CCC considers that aspects of the changes proposed in the Bill are a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework and are out-of-step with reforms introduced to manage risks associated with political influence, and perceptions of it.

It is my understanding that there is no other state in this country that is winding back their electoral donation laws. We know that this LNP government is trying to create its own war chest in an attempt to tip the scales at the next election. This LNP government may even change the expenditure caps if it so suits them, and we await what they will do next. Meanwhile, our South Australian Labor counterparts are doing everything they can to remove as many private donations from the system as they can. The Queensland Labor opposition will be watching their progress with great interest because an electoral system with less money enhances democracy.

Those opposite will point out that under the current law, unions would be able to make donations but property developers cannot. I think it should be made clear that unions are membership organisations which are not set up to benefit any one individual. Unions are not-for-profit organisations, which is where they differ from property developers. While I am on my feet, I would like to acknowledge all of the union members across Queensland for their work, ensuring strong and safe working conditions for Queenslanders. This sentiment was echoed in the Australia Institute's submission on this bill where they said—

... in the case of a trade union, if there are benefits to their members for industrial relations reform, those benefits accrue to workers in that sector, let's say, and not directly to the trade unions, so the financial incentives are very different.

I acknowledge that property developers have an important role to play in our community, particularly at the moment with a shortage of housing, and that certainly is not up for debate. The issue in this instance is that the decision-makers, such as local government and the Minister for Planning, the

member for Kawana, may run into actual or perceived conflicts of interest. That presents a great risk of corruption within our system. It creates a back door at the local government level to allow property developers to make donations for administrative purposes. This back door would then free up money to be used for electoral purposes, something which goes against the views of the Crime and Corruption Commission. In their submission, they stated—

The risks associated with political donations have been well-documented, as too are community perceptions of corruption by elected officials. The CCC's 2025 Corruption Perceptions Survey highlighted the importance of ensuring government decision-making is, and is seen to be, fair, impartial and free from influence. Concerns about bribery or receiving gifts and benefits that may influence public sector decisions was considered one of the highest risk areas by community members surveyed.

That brings me to a rather concerning point. Our state's peak integrity body did not appear before the committee despite the Labor opposition's call for them to do so. What is this government thinking in not inviting the CCC to appear before the committee? This bill is a significant change to the way we handle donations, which will change the way elections are run. The Crime and Corruption Commission should have been at the front and centre of these consultations.

As I mentioned previously, the commission expressed its concerns about this bill being a significant departure from Queensland's strong political donations framework, a framework that was reformed by the Miles-Palaszczuk Labor government. When in government, we reduced the threshold for donation disclosure to \$1,000, implemented real-time disclosure laws for donations and implemented the Crime and Corruption Commission's recommendations to prohibit property developers from making political donations. That is how you put Queensland's peak integrity body at the centre of integrity reforms but, then again, this is not the first time the LNP have made decisions that have brought integrity into question when it comes to their political donations. Further, there is a pattern of behaviour emerging whereby the LNP does not listen to stakeholders or the experts in the field.

I am advised that well before my time and that of many in this chamber there was the Karreman Quarries affair, which saw the quarries donate \$50,000 to the Liberal National Party. Then, on public record, the then LNP deputy premier, Jeff Seeney, introduced retrospective legislative amendments, which passed and effectively legalised Karreman Quarries' gravel extraction activities. This legislation declared those activities as having been legal, despite the department having found significant evidence to prosecute the company for operating without a permit. The then deputy premier denied giving special treatment, but it brings the situation into question. That was not the last time, either. There was the legislation that was introduced by the former Newman LNP government which, in the view of many people, positively impacted mining company Sibelco's interests. Many Queenslanders found it interesting that this occurred after the company spent \$91,000 sending personalised letters to the constituents of Ashgrove endorsing Campbell Newman, the one-term Premier, after his disdain for the Public Service and the people of Queensland—the greatest example of failed leadership in the Southern Hemisphere.

I must recall the time when I was principal at Cavendish Road State High School. We were awarded a hall as a school community. We had documentation from the department. One day I arrived at work and the Cavendish Road State High School hall was directed immediately to a school in Ashgrove, and here we are again with the LNP seeking to line their pockets and create an election war chest with promises of helping a particular sector. I would say: same promises, different government but, then again, their front bench has barely changed since the Newman years. I do not think we can truly call it a different government.

The Queensland Labor opposition knows the LNP cannot be trusted to be strong on integrity either at the state level or at the federal level. After all, their last prime minister secretly made himself the secondary minister for multiple portfolios. We will be watching this Crisafulli government closely—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Mansfield, I have given you a great deal of latitude, but I think you are extraordinarily far from the long title and the provisions of the bill. I ask you please to confine your contribution to the long title.

Ms McMILLAN: We will be watching this Crisafulli government closely and we will hold them to account. Queenslanders deserve a government that will remain transparent about their donations, their expenditure and their decision-making processes.

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (5.48 pm): As I rise to speak, I do so after having just marvelled again at the exquisite beauty of this chamber. It is a remarkable building. One of the things that I lament, however, is that for reasons, possibly due to security, we do not have windows from which we can look and take in this beautiful state and ground us in this city. I lament that because at times, as I am sitting in this chamber, my perception of reality can be challenged by those opposite. I wonder: am I really

sitting in the state of Queensland, because the Labor opposition would have us believe that they are somehow the bastions of freedom, the custodians of democracy and only they have acted with integrity when dealing with electoral matters. That confuses me because that is certainly not the reality that I have been living in, so if there were windows maybe I could ground myself and remind myself that it is us on this side who can be trusted to handle our democracy with kid gloves—in fact, not just handle that democracy but nourish that democracy.

Before moving to the substantive part of my contribution, which will of course deal with the long title of the bill, it would be remiss of me not to reflect on the contributions of some of those opposite. I do so firstly with respect to the comments from the member for Cooper, who led this impassioned speech advocating for the rights of more prisoners serving longer sentences to be able to vote in Queensland elections. That absolutely astounded me, not only because it is quite offensive to common sensibilities, I would have thought, but because it demonstrates that the Labor opposition will concern itself more with standing up for the rights of perpetrators and those incarcerated for awful crimes than victims. Only by removing perpetrators from the electoral process can we have representatives walking into this space with moral clarity to make decisions that set standards representing those who have been victims and those who aspire for a safer Queensland. I found it remarkable that the member for Cooper would make that contribution, or perhaps it is unremarkable because we know that when Adult Crime, Adult Time was introduced she was so hopelessly conflicted that she threatened to leave the Labor Party. Anyway, I will move on.

The other contribution I want to reflect on is from the member for Macalister. She and I agree on this very minor point, though I am not quite sure whether we are coming at it from the same angle. She said that in this state people have a very dim view of politicians. Can you blame them? After 10 years of decline in this state, as if Queenslanders would have a great view of politicians. How could they? Whenever the former Labor government had an opportunity to keep faith with the people of Queensland by serving their genuine interests and by pursuing policies that mirrored their priorities, they were let down. They were let down on housing and they were let down with the DNA debacle that removed justice from so many. To the member for Macalister, yes, Queenslanders do have a dim view of politicians, but I tell you what: this LNP Crisafulli government is doing a fine job at delivering the fresh start we promised and restoring faith in public institutions.

There can be no institution more important to this great project of ours—the state of Queensland—than a vibrant democracy, yet those opposite did absolutely everything they could to trash that democracy. Not only did they curtail the ability for legitimate actors to speak on issues, but they amplified the cherrypicked voices that they wanted to push their agenda on the state, and of course I am referring to the trade union movement. How is it that Labor can walk in here and pretend to claim moral authority on this issue when it created special privilege for the trade union movement to inject itself into that last state election?

We hear a lot about expenditure caps. Look at how much each individual union could have spent at that last election. How much could they have spent over and above an individual making a single contribution? You can begin to see the outside influence that they wanted the trade union to have, and it begs the question: why did they want that? Because they were completely bought and controlled by the trade union movement. I think about this galling example with the failed former, former, former—whatever he was—transport minister who said at the time that the deal had been done on Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3, but post election we found out that the deal had not been done and it appears as though, if memory serves me correctly, there was a bit of a wait on just to make sure that BPIC could get in place so—

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Acting manager of opposition business, what is your point of order?

Ms SCANLON: Relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, I think you are testing the boundaries somewhat. There is scope to respond to the contributions of others, but this is straying somewhat from the bill. Would you please come back to the long title of the bill in your contribution?

Mr VORSTER: Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you so very much for that guidance. I absolutely will act on it and was merely led there by the long title of the bill which talks to restoring fairness when I found it personally unfair that one class of actor in the construction sector could make a financial contribution in an election whereas others could not, but I will move on, other than to perhaps reflect on the fact that the trade union movement has been able to capture the former Labor government as rent

seekers and extract extravagant conditions that have prejudiced the interests of taxpayers. What is really galling is that I would not say that they laundered the money but they washed that money through their membership to then make political donations to the ALP, and perhaps that explains to me why the Labor opposition was so keen to preserve the interests of those unions and those laws.

I do want to reflect on a failure of the member for Gaven in her time as the local government minister. I refer to the reforms that we are pursuing to protect the safety of candidates at local government elections. As a former city councillor myself—

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member is referring to another bill that is before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you; I will just take some advice. Member for Burleigh, I am not sufficiently across the detail of this matter to be sure, but you are being relevant to this bill. I again encourage you to confine your contribution to the elements of the bill and I encourage you to look at the explanatory notes. The dot points on the front will give you a pretty good indication. I know a number of Speakers in the chair have offered a degree of latitude to speakers—and you will find me so as well—but please take my advice and stick to the points.

Mr VORSTER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and of course I will show complete deference to your ruling, though it is my understanding that this bill allows a candidate at a local government election to use a PO box when providing their contact details in an authorisation. If the member for Gaven has that confused with another bill, then I would encourage the member for Gaven to also be familiar with those explanatory notes. Notwithstanding that, I am very glad that we finally have a government prepared to make this reform because at a local government level we have dissuaded too many potential candidates from putting their hand up and creating some competitive tension in our democracy because of the exposure to risk. I will not talk at length about my own personal experience in that space, but suffice to say I was motivated to write to the Local Government Association at the time putting forward this very suggestion. Shortly after my election I met with the LGAQ and I said, ‘You guys did nothing. Can we get this on the agenda?’ It explained to me that it had been sitting on the desk of the member for Gaven under her responsibility at the time and unfortunately never progressed.

Finally we have a Queensland government that is delivering the fresh start we promised. We are injecting vibrancy in our democracy for local government. We are ensuring that there are stiffer penalties for those taking developer donations. We are ensuring that there is an even playing field at a state level. We are also ensuring that those who are incarcerated for more than one year are not voting at elections—a right that the Labor opposition seems very fiercely keen to defend, quite oddly. Again, we will always put victims first.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (6.00 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill. I think it is pertinent to reflect on the past when we debate bills such as this because there is an element of integrity in this bill. I want to confine my contribution to the monetary aspects of bill that is before us. In 1987 the acting premier of the day, Bill Gunn, introduced an inquiry into the state of Queensland after a period of corrupt behaviour by the then conservative Bjelke-Petersen government. It led to a number of ministers being jailed—from memory, three—as a result of the corrupt behaviour of the coalition government before it was called the LNP government, which it is known as today.

It is incumbent on all of us as legislators, as we legislate on matters of integrity, to listen to those who have skin in the game, those who know where the skeletons are hidden, also those who know that the right integrity measures should be introduced and maintained in the state of Queensland. I will concentrate and confine myself to the monetary aspects of the bill. There is no doubt it is a bill to allow the flow of additional money and influence in elections. It creates the real perception—and some people might say reality—of pay-for-play deals between donors and members of parliament. It will see the return of property developers to the potential donor list, which creates particular moral hazards for local councillors and also for the planning minister. I am not here defending the planning minister—it is the role of the government to do that—but I think he should consider some of the evidence that has been provided and also reflect upon the statement of reservation by the opposition members, who did an excellent job in terms of considering the bill before us.

The changes to the donation caps will effectively quadruple the amount of money individuals and entities will be able to supply to candidates in a single term. The statement of reservation reflected on donations from the gun lobby and gun owners of up to \$280,000 to date. If that amount over a period of time was captured and quadrupled one could do the calculations and work out the amount of money that will flow into the purses of the government as a result of their connections with the gun lobby. The

special category of 'restricted donations' by property developers for 'administration purposes' at the local government level is deliberately vague and is open to interpretation. That was picked up by the submission of the Crime and Commission Corruption. Rather than tightening up corruption laws, this opens councils to the prospect of favours being bought and sold.

One only needs to look at what is ahead of us. We live in a prosperous state. We are in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic Games and the infrastructure to be built surrounding that. There is opportunity for employment. I reflect on the fact that the Premier made a commitment to not build any new stadiums and backflipped on that. Considering that in the next six years the government is looking at increasing the opportunity for donors in respect to developers, that is a reality and perception that could occur. It is important that, as we become exposed to the world through the games, we have a high degree of integrity in terms of the development of that infrastructure and also the development and delivery of those games.

I do not have an issue with property developers. In fact, I can commend one particular developer that was instrumental in delivering the Ferny Grove Transit Oriented Development. It is a matter I campaigned for after engagement with the people in my electorate as the government of the day. When the project was awarded to the developers and construction workers, they acted decisively and with integrity and engaged with the community. I commend that particular developer for the work they have done thus far in regard to the Ferny Grove Transit Oriented Development.

In the last few minutes of my contribution I want to concentrate on a witness that was denied access to appear before the committee and provide relevant evidence: the peak watchdog of this state, the Crime and Corruption Commission. There are standards in the Crime and Corruption Act that people should reflect upon and be cognisant of in terms of their responsibilities and also the act's responsibilities of preventing corruption. I draw to the attention of members section 33 of the act, which is to raise standards of integrity and conduct in units of public administration—including this Legislative Assembly and local governments. The view of a recent survey that the CCC has done in regard to corruption is that there is a level of corruption in government. That is purely a perception at this point in time. There is no real evidence to demonstrate that. But perceptions are real. We know perceptions can change the outcome of elections and we should recognise that when making decisions around this bill.

In its submission the CCC considered that aspects of the changes proposed in the bill are a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework and are out of step with reforms introduced to manage risks associated with political influence, and perceptions of it. The CCC was not given the opportunity to ventilate that further by appearing before the committee. It is a real shame that the peak watchdog of this state, which came about as a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry, was denied access to the committee to provide that evidence.

Mr HUNT: I rise to a point of order. That is misleading. I will be writing to your office in relation to that. The CCC were not denied. I have heard a couple of members say that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Nicklin, I caution you. I warn all members it is not an opportunity to prosecute an argument. If members feel that a member of the House has misled the House there is a procedure to follow in writing to the Speaker and there is nothing further to say.

Mr FURNER: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. Once again I highlight the importance of ensuring government's decision-making is seen to be fair and impartial and free from influence. The CCC observes an increased risk of actual or perceived corruption in relation to political donations which may arise from this bill. They made this point in relation, in particular, to the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That is quite relevant. As I indicated earlier, a lot of infrastructure will need to be built and there is an opportunity for corrupt behaviour as a result of this government extending the donations possible from developers.

At the local government level, the bill proposes to amend section 113A of the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 by refining the property developer ban to permit property developer donations to political parties under certain circumstances.

Once again, I am perplexed by the statements that some people have made today reflecting on unions. I was proud to have worked for the Police Union, which is affiliated with the Queensland Council of Unions. Those who stand in this chamber and reflect upon unions should not forget that unions cover a variety of workers in this state, including the hardworking men and women who wear the blue uniform and who protect us. By making those statements in this chamber today they are reflecting on those people who serve and protect our communities. What a disgraceful attitude and position to take when it comes to people such as the police who work in our communities.

(Time expired)

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This legislation goes to the heart of trust in our democracy and fairness for communities such as mine in Redlands. At its core, this bill restores balance, transparency and confidence in Queensland's electoral system. Redlands is a community of families, small business owners, volunteers and retirees who are fiercely proud of where they live and expect honesty from those who seek to represent them. They expect elections to be fair and free from hidden influence, uneven rules or anonymous misinformation, particularly online.

One of the most significant reforms is the expansion of authorisation requirements for election materials. Currently, election advertising must only be authorised during the short campaign period after the writs are issued, but in today's world, especially online, political campaigning begins months and even years before the polling day. In Redlands, residents are exposed to digital messaging well before an election is formally called. Too often that material spreads quickly, lacks transparency and is designed to inflame rather than inform. Extending authorisation requirements to the 12 months before a fixed state election ensures Queenslanders know who is behind political messaging, whether it appears in a letterbox, on a billboard or on a social media feed. For Redlanders, this means greater transparency, fewer anonymous attacks and stronger accountability. It means clearer information when making decisions about the future of their community.

Importantly, the bill also allows candidates to use post-office boxes or other prescribed addresses when authorising material. This is a practical reform that protects privacy and safety, particularly for women and candidates with families, while maintaining full transparency for voters. Another key pillar of this legislation is restoring fairness by applying the same rules to everyone. Over time, Queensland's system developed uneven restrictions where some participants were singled out while others were not. This bill corrects the imbalance.

By removing the property developer donation ban for state elections, the Crisafulli government is fulfilling a clear election commitment and restoring a level playing field. In places such as Redlands, property developers are part of our local community. They are local businesses that employ our local tradies, support families and help to shape the neighbourhoods where we live. They build the pathways our children ride on, the playgrounds where they play and the houses that give people a place to call home. Throughout this debate we have heard rhetoric suggesting that participation in the democratic process is somehow about profit, but the people behind those projects are also creating jobs, building communities and helping Queenslanders to achieve the dream of homeownership. This reform does not remove donation caps, disclosure requirements or corruption safeguards. It ensures the same rules apply equally, which is an approach that Queenslanders supported at the ballot box in October 2024.

It is also important to note that the Crime and Corruption Commission's Belcarra recommendations were directed at local government elections where risks were identified. This bill keeps and strengthens the ban at the local government level, ensuring integrity protections remain exactly where they are needed.

The bill also improves fairness by allowing candidates and political parties to access loans from regulated financial institutions for electoral expenditure. Under the current framework, candidates without personal wealth may be forced to rely on private individuals or unregulated lenders to finance their campaign. That is neither fair nor sensible. Allowing loans from reputable regulated institutions broadens participation, reduces risk and supports candidates from diverse backgrounds to stand for public office. For Redlands, that means a democracy that better reflects the people it serves and not just those with the deepest pockets.

Transparency is further strengthened by aligning donation caps with the financial year. Queensland's existing framework is complex and difficult to navigate. Annualising caps simplifies compliance while keeping firm limits in place to prevent undue influence. Again, this reform delivers clarity, fairness and confidence for voters.

The legislation also removes Electoral Commission oversight of internal party preselection, bringing Queensland into line with every other state and territory. This change strengthens the independence of political parties and removes outdated, uneven regulation that is not applied consistently across the political spectrum. For my party and many others, democratic preselection is already embedded in our constitutions and our traditions. This bill respects that autonomy while keeping the focus where it belongs: on fair elections for Queenslanders.

Finally, the bill reflects the Crisafulli government's commitment to backing victims. By preventing prisoners serving sentences of one year or more from voting, the legislation restores an important boundary that aligns with community expectations and longstanding constitutional authority. For the

people of Redlands, the impact of this bill is clear: it means elections that are more transparent, more consistent and easier to trust. It means knowing who is behind political messaging. It means fairer participation for candidates and stronger integrity where it matters most. Above all, it strengthens confidence that our democracy works for everyday Queenslanders, families, workers, volunteers and small business owners across communities such as mine in Redlands. This bill is about trust: trust in the process, trust in the outcomes and trust that Queensland's electoral system is fair for all.

 **Mr JKELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.17 pm): I rise to make a contribution in this very important debate. In fact, the issues at the core of this debate were part of my original motivation for developing an interest in politics as a young fella.

Mr Fumer: You're still a young fella.

Mr JKELLY: I am still a young fella; I take that interjection. Like many on this side of the House, I gained political consciousness during a time when this state was riddled with corruption. I saw the impacts that had on ordinary people. I saw the impacts it had on the unions that were trying to help me, people like me and people I knew to live a better life. Thanks to leaders such as Wayne Goss, I saw there was another way.

Corruption is a terrible and corrosive force in any society. Transparency is one of the cures for corruption and transparency is one of the core aspects of any functioning democracy. Accountability and transparency are things that David Crisafulli and the LNP like to talk about a lot and chant as their mantra that apparently guides every single one of their moves. However, I cannot see that mantra at work in this bill. In fact, I would probably scrap the name of this bill, the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, and call it something like 'Jarrod's law (donate baby, donate baby) amendment law'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Greenslopes, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill—not debate the long title of the bill but speak to the long title of the bill—and use correct titles in this place.

Mr JKELLY: I was just foreshadowing a possible amendment, Deputy Speaker. I want to do a bit of comparing and contrasting. During a decade of respecting the Crime and Corruption Commission and building on over 20 years of reforms to increase integrity, transparency and accountability, Labor reduced the threshold for donation disclosure to \$1,000, implemented real-time disclosure laws and implemented the recommendations of the Crime and Corruption Commission to prohibit property developers from making donations.

Compare that to the mercifully short Newman period when we had the Karreman Quarries affair—'Blow those FLPs; let's just make those laws retrospective and go out there and make some money.' Who could forget Sibelco sending over \$90,000 worth of letters into Ashgrove? I will tell members who did not forget it: Sibelco. What about the lovely caravan park on the Maroochy River rezoned by the minister against the wishes of the local council, leading to a very nice and tidy value uplift?

It is clear from the Crime and Corruption Commission submission that they have a few issues with these laws. I would have thought that a government like the Crisafulli government that is committed to transparency and accountability would listen to the views of the state's peak anti-corruption body. Not only did they not listen; we found out through the rushed committee process for this bill—it was slipped through during the Yuletide season; Merry Christmas, everyone—that the government did not even ask the question. They put in place laws that are completely contrary to the views of our state's No. 1 corruption watchdog.

That is staggering. Perhaps Premier David Crisafulli and the struggling Attorney-General think they are tough for standing up against the woke CCC—not just ignoring their advice but not even seeking it. Remember when the Premier was thumping his chest and pandering to the far-right extremists standing up to the UN? I thought it was hilarious. I am sure Antonio Guterres lost some sleep that night! Not content to stop at the UN, we saw today that the sports minister is now taking on the IOC and intends to overrule them. Perhaps rather than having adversarial relationships with the UN, the IOC and the CCC, this government might be better to work in partnership with all organisations.

I do want to get back to this bill and this issue. When you thump your chest and stand up to the CCC, when you not only ignore them but do not even ask for their advice, you do not look clever, you do not look tough, you do not look anti-woke. I can tell you what you look like. You look dodgy. If you look dodgy, you probably are dodgy.

I will deal with this notion that the CCC and the committee could not find a date to meet that was suitable for both of them. I have been on many committees that have bent over backwards to allow a witness to appear. When dealing with what many would perceive to be the most important witness for this bill, one would think that they would try a little harder to get them into the room. Again, if you look dodgy, you probably are dodgy.

I also find it interesting that Mr Geoffrey Watson SC, Director of the Centre for Public Integrity, has deep concerns about this bill. How many times have we heard him lauded for investigating and exposing corruption in the construction industry? I think a guy who had a really hard look at the construction industry should probably be listened to if he is saying something like—

I'm very disappointed because this is quite a retrograde step, not only does it reintroduce the possible corrupting influence of property developers, but it also greatly enhances the amount which they can donate to a campaign, thus increasing their power of influence.

It is fine for them to listen to him on the CFMEU but not on property developers. It seems like a glaring double standard to me. Much like the CCC, Mr Watson can rest assured he has been completely ignored.

I want to talk about developers because I like developers. Labor likes developers. They build things that we need. They take risks and they work in tough environments. I have a good relationship with many local developers and I listen to them when they talk to me. I do not listen to them because they pay me. I listen to them because they live or work in my community. Do members know who else I listen to? Do members know who else Labor listens to? We listen to the CCC.

This bill will quadruple the amount of money flowing around Queensland politics from private sources. Do members know who else I listen to? I listen to my constituents, and they clearly do not support going backwards on this issue. In fact, many of them are watching with interest what South Australian Labor is doing in relation to this, and I am certainly watching that too.

Corruption is clearly a crucial element of these laws, but we should also not forget that the core of these debates is the ability for all Queenslanders to participate in elections. That gets a lot harder when someone with the mantra 'donate, baby, donate' is doing dodgy deals to fill his election war chest. Like a lot of people on this side of the House, I come from a background that is sufficient to meet my needs but that would probably not have afforded me the opportunity to participate in this parliament or represent my community if I was relying solely on my income and my personal connections. I will be forever thankful for the union members and party members who helped someone like me get this opportunity, and some of that came through them helping me to raise money. Whenever we consider these laws or donation laws, we need to ensure that everybody can have a chance to participate fully in democracy. I will certainly be watching what South Australian Labor do.

These laws certainly have the capacity to unbalance the scales of fairness in Queensland politics and that will be detrimental in the long term for our state. One only has to be my age to have lived through this before.

I will now speak to the section of the bill that deals with voting rights for prisoners. I have Stepping Stone Clubhouse in my electorate. They work to empower people who live with mental health issues. I have volunteered for Inspiring Brighter Futures. They help people of all ages to build better lives by exploring and developing their values to make better choices.

Over the years, I have met a number of people who have found themselves in prison. Something that started out as pretty minor, often ignored or poorly managed or poorly understood, resulted in a person ending up in prison. It is not rare for this to occur for people with mental health issues or intellectual disabilities. Just check the statistics, as they speak for themselves. I absolutely support victims receiving full support and justice. Guilty parties should be penalised to the fullest extent of the law, but if we truly want to reduce victims we need to ensure people can rebuild their lives. Of course, this goes against everything most of us instinctively feel. However, if we truly want to reduce victims, we need to reduce perpetrators. Organisations like Stepping Stone Clubhouse and Inspiring Brighter Futures show that people can rebuild their lives.

It is why Sue and Lloyd Clarke put so much focus on offender and perpetrator programs in addition to their support for survivors of domestic violence, not to mention their amazing work in relation to coercive control. Every step we take to disenfranchise and dehumanise people just makes all of this harder. Every time we dehumanise someone we make it easier for that person to continue to operate outside the boundaries of our society.

Is a person suffering from an untreated mental health condition, failed by our health and social welfare systems, who finds themselves in a prison for over a year for a series of relatively minor matters really the person we should we demonising and saying that these laws should be tackling? I think breaking this argument down to a simple dichotomy of 'support this amendment or you are soft on crime' is the absolute epitome of rhetorical laziness. Stick with three years and then organisations like Stepping Stone Clubhouse and Inspiring Brighter Futures will have less work to do when they start supporting people attempting to rebuild their lives and will continue to contribute to reducing victim numbers.

Maybe I will get my amendment up later. Maybe we will change the name of this bill, but it does raise a lot of concerns for submitters, particularly the CCC, who deserve to be listened to. It certainly raises concerns for my community and it certainly raises concerns for Labor. It seems to fly in the face of the government's stated intention of standards of accountability and transparency. Most concerning for me personally, it seems to be taking us backwards to a time that I thought we would never see again. It seems to be taking Queensland in a direction that we should never go in again.

 **Ms DOOLEY** (Redcliffe—LNP) (6.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Queensland Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. This is a bill that goes to the very heart of our democracy: fairness, transparency and public confidence in the electoral system. At its core, this bill is about restoring balance. It is about ensuring Queensland's electoral laws are fair, coherent and applied consistently while also strengthening accountability and civic responsibility. The purpose of this bill is to improve the equality of participation in state elections, improve fairness and transparency in electoral campaigns, enhance civic responsibility and increase public confidence in Queensland's electoral processes.

For my electorate of Redcliffe, where people are deeply engaged in community life and local decision-making, these reforms matter. Residents expect elections to be fair, rules to be consistent and outcomes to reflect the genuine will of people, not distorted by loopholes, complexity or double standards.

One of the most prominent reforms in this bill is the repeal of the property developer donation ban for state elections while strengthening and targeting that ban for local government elections. This reform delivers a clear election commitment made by the Crisafulli government to restore a level playing field. As the Premier rightly said, the previous arrangements amounted to fundamentally and philosophically an electoral and financial gerrymander where one group, the trade unions, were able to donate to candidates significantly above what the electoral donation caps were while other groups like property developers were under different rules. Queenslanders understood that inconsistency and they rejected it categorically at the last election. After a decade of chaos and crisis and a decade of decline under the Labor government they chose a fresh start.

For Redcliffe locals this matters because fairness builds trust. This bill ensures that donation caps remain in place, transparency through disclosure continues and state election expenditure caps still apply, limiting corruption risks while removing an unjustified ban.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

 **Ms DOOLEY:** At the same time, the bill strengthens protections at the local government level where corruption risks are most acute, including new anti-circumvention offences and serious penalties—up to 400 penalty units or two years imprisonment—for misuse of donations. That is a sensible, targeted approach and one that aligns with the Crime and Corruption Commission's Operation Belcarra recommendations, which were always intended to apply to local government and not to state elections.

Another significant reform relates to voting eligibility for prisoners. This bill restores the principle that serious law-breakers should not determine who makes our laws. Under these amendments, prisoners serving sentences of one year or longer will no longer be eligible to vote in state or local government elections. As the Attorney-General has said, law-breakers should not get to elect our lawmakers. Thank you, Minister Frecklington, Attorney-General.

This reform places victims first and reflects community expectations—expectations that I hear regularly from Redcliffe residents who want accountability and consequences and respect for the rule of law. This bill is consistent with the High Court authority in *Roach v Electoral Commissioner*. Chief Justice Gleeson confirmed it is for parliament to determine which offences are serious enough to justify the temporary loss of voting rights. Offences attracting sentences of one to three years can include burglary, assault, sexual offences and serious property crime—offences that our community rightly considers serious, contrary to what the member for Greenslopes was talking about.

This bill also removes unnecessary barriers for candidates and parties by allowing loans from regulated financial institutions. For local candidates in communities like Redcliffe, particularly first-time or grassroots candidates, this reform levels the playing field and promotes integrity by ensuring that funding comes from reputable regulated sources. As someone who has run for office five times before being elected, this really matters.

The bill further simplifies Queensland's complex electoral funding framework by applying donation caps on a financial-year basis, aligning Queensland with Commonwealth and New South Wales arrangements. Importantly, the donation cap amounts will remain the same, but the system becomes easier to understand and comply with. For community groups, mum-and-dad business owner donors and volunteers in Redcliffe, this clarity matters. Simpler rules mean greater compliance, greater transparency and fewer accidental breaches.

This bill also removes Electoral Commission of Queensland involvement in internal party preselections. No other Australian jurisdiction requires electoral commission oversight of internal party ballots. These provisions were introduced following the Shepherdson inquiry but are now outdated and burdensome.

This reform enhances the independence of political parties in conducting their own affairs when it comes to democratically selecting their candidates. It removes red tape while preserving internal democracy, something that grassroots party members in my electorate of Redcliffe value deeply and actually demand.

Finally, the bill strengthens transparency by extending authorisation requirements for electoral material to the 12 months prior to a fixed-date general election. Currently, authorisation is only required in the final 26-day campaign period. Extending this requirement ensures Queenslanders know who is behind political advertisements well before polling day. It also responds to genuine safety and privacy concerns by allowing candidates to use PO boxes rather than personal residential addresses. For Redcliffe residents who are increasingly exposed to political messaging all year round, and in preparation for 2028 when they will face all three levels of government elections in one calendar year, this reform improves accountability and trust while protecting candidates and volunteers.

In conclusion, this bill restores fairness, simplifies complexity, strengthens transparency and helps restore community confidence back at the centre of Queensland's electoral laws. It delivers on our LNP commitment, respects constitutional principles and responds to real concerns raised by voters in Redcliffe and across the state. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (7.36 pm): I rise to add a contribution to the debate and commence by stating that this does nothing to improve public confidence in Queensland electoral donation laws—absolutely nothing. There is nothing in this bill that strengthens our current electoral laws. All it does is weaken it. No matter how much spin those opposite put, in getting up and trying to convince the public that somehow this is tightening the laws around the strong record that this side of the House had in transparency and accountability with our laws, they are simply misleading the public, and they will not be misled. The title alone says 'Restoring Electoral Fairness'. What fairness are they actually restoring? There is no justification in any of the material before us for any of the moves they are making.

It is really remarkable that we are here, after we have just had a significant break, at the end of a process of such important changes to the Queensland robust political donations framework. But when were they conducted? Over the Christmas-New Year period. Absolutely unbelievable! It is called taking out the trash. That is what it is called—taking out the trash. They introduced on the last day of the electoral sitting cycle. It was a late sitting, so it was only a relatively short time before the Christmas break. They were given until January 2, the day after New Year's Day, a public holiday, to put their submissions in—over the Christmas period—and the report was due on 6 February for such important reforms here in Queensland. That process alone and the time allowed for public submission and consultation is a disgrace in itself. Much more time should have been given and it should not have happened over the festive season. It is an indictment on those opposite who talk about fairness, transparency and accountability that they put that much pressure on people over the festive season when people are away. Half of those ministers were not even here! They were overseas everywhere. Half of them were away.

Government members interjected.

Ms GRACE: I am not going to take interjections about who was here and who was not. They were all on holidays having a great time.

Government members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Laws as important as electoral reform—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): One moment, member for McConnel. Can the members on my right please cease interjecting? The member on her feet is not taking the interjections.

Ms GRACE: It is interesting that, when it hits them, it hits them hard. They know that what I am saying makes a lot of sense, so they are all responding. Even though the process was—

Government members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Listen to them. They are still coming. Keep coming. You know I am right.

Stakeholders raised their concerns about the inadequate time for public scrutiny. The fact it was happening during the festive season clearly undermined confidence in the intention of this bill, which lacks full transparency and accountability. We on this side of the House have major reservations and concerns, as outlined in the opposition's statement of reservation, which was very well put together.

There are many who have major concerns with the amendments in this bill. The CCC were not even consulted. They were not even able to address the committee. They did not appear before the committee. As reported in the *Courier-Mail*, government MPs blocked a push for the CCC to give evidence regarding their warning that reinstating political donations from property developers would increase the risk of corruption. It is absolutely unbelievable. The CCC said in their submission, after reviewing the bill—

The CCC considers that aspects of the changes proposed in the Bill are a significant departure from Queensland's robust political donations framework and are out-of-step with reforms introduced to manage risks associated with political influence, and perceptions of it.

They are not my words. They are not the opposition's words. They are the words of the CCC. They warned that removing the ban increased the risk to actual or perceived corruption, particularly in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, won by Labor.

Property developers have an important role to play in our community. There have been thousands of homes and units built in my electorate alone by property developers. At the moment there are three major developments 100 metres from where I live and another one further on. There is not a shortage of developers building units in my electorate. There have been thousands built over the years. If you do not believe me, come to McConnel and take a walk around, look across the road and see what is being built there. They have an important role to play. At the end of the day, the Belcarra report made recommendations regarding donations from developers. I challenge anyone to say—

Government members interjected.

Ms GRACE: We went further. We went robust. There is a lot of infrastructure being built in this state which the state government is overseeing, and as usual it is overreaching into that planning area. That is what we are seeing. Now the developers are being rewarded. There is nothing to do with affordable housing on any development, not even an incentive to say, 'If you build a percentage of affordable housing, instead of, say, 20 storeys you can go up to 25.' At least we would be building apartments for people to live, work and play in.

All of that has gone because the developers did not want it. There is not one thing that incorporates any form of affordable housing in what has been announced. It has all gone in Woolloongabba. There were incentives in the PDA in Woolloongabba. It cannot be suggested that none were built because the PDA was only finalised in mid-2024. How are we supposed to build it when it was only finalised then? It is an absolutely ridiculous assumption. The Australia Institute stated that no other jurisdiction is weakening the electoral donation laws except—where?—here in Queensland. They said—

... I am not aware of any jurisdiction that is moving to lift restrictions on donations where they already exist, and I am not aware of any jurisdiction where they are proposing to raise donation caps ...

They are not just raising the donation caps; they are quadrupling the donation caps. It is contrary to anything. I might add that the LNP are obviously relying upon Geoffrey Watson when it comes to the CFMEU inquiry and their arguments about that. When he was interviewed, he even said how very disappointed he was about this retrograde step because it reintroduces the possible corruption influence of property developers as it quadruples the sum that property developers and others can donate and everyone should be concerned with that. That is what Geoffrey Watson, whose report brought about the inquiry into the CFMEU, said. They did not even listen to him.

Without a doubt this bill increases private money in political elections. That is what this bill does. It will increase the influence of private funds in Queensland politics. What a difference this is to South Australia—which this side of the House is definitely having a close look at—which has banned all donations, making it free of any private money. We want to have a close look at that to see how it goes.

At the end of the day, those opposite said the Belcarra report only talked about local government. What we are seeing now with the changes to local government is there is a restricted donations area, which is just another way for backdoor money to go to local government. The CCC is very concerned that funding to a local government candidate could give rise to an indirect benefit or at least the perception of influence. We had the strongest laws when it came to election donations. This bill does nothing about Belcarra. It increases private money and decreases public confidence in Queensland elections. Shame on you!

Mr KRAUSE (Scenic Rim—LNP) (7.45 pm): I wholeheartedly support the bill brought by the Attorney-General, and I have a contribution to make in relation to that. Before I do, I want to touch on one of the points made by the member for McConnell when she referred to a report by Geoffrey Watson SC leading to the creation of the commission of inquiry into the CFMEU. The member for McConnell erroneously said that Geoffrey Watson was responsible for that commission of inquiry. That is incorrect. The LNP Crisafulli government is responsible for the commission of inquiry that has come into being. It is exposing the shameful acts of economic vandalism by the CFMEU in this state—

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This is not contained in the bill.

Mr KRAUSE: On the point of order: I am responding to an assertion made by the member for McConnell.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): If you could contain your remarks to the bill, that would be great, thank you.

Mr KRAUSE: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. The LNP government has put in place the commission of inquiry into the CFMEU. In coming back to the bill, this bill ends the Labor Party's financial gerrymander on the Queensland electoral system. It was an electoral financial gerrymander put in place by the Labor Party which was not in compliance with the recommendations of the CCC's Operation Belcarra report and which was started by reforms made with under 18 minutes' notice in this very place. I was sitting up there. I watched it happen. With 18 minutes' notice they changed the voting system.

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance in relation to the content in the bill.

Mr KRAUSE: On the point of order: I was referring to the ending of the financial gerrymander under this bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow that. You may continue.

Mr KRAUSE: Thank you. I think it is notable that there were no union submissions, as I understand, in relation to this bill.

Ms Grace: They were on holidays, mate.

Mr Nicholls: They are always on holidays. That's the problem.

Mr KRAUSE: I take that interjection from the member for McConnell—they were on holidays. Yes, that is quite telling.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr KRAUSE: I hear the member for McConnell and the member for Clayfield interjecting across the chamber. It is quite illuminating. There were no union submissions.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for McConnell and member for Clayfield, order! I would like to hear from the member for Scenic Rim.

Mr KRAUSE: If only I could call the member for McConnell to order from here. There were no union submissions. I wonder why that is. I think I know the answer, though: the union movement in Queensland understands that under the law as it is right now, and before it is amended by our honourable Attorney-General, it has a completely oversized influence on the electoral system of Queensland compared to every other sector of the Queensland economy. They do not want to talk about that. They do not want to raise their heads in this debate by putting in a submission because they

have had such a good wicket under the stewardship of people like the member for McConnel and her comrades across the chamber. That is why they did not make a submission. It has nothing to do, member for McConnel, with the fact that, as you say, they were on holidays.

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence and I ask that that be withdrawn. Please, could the member direct his comments through the chair.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Scenic Rim, the member for McConnel has asked you to withdraw. Also, I remind you to address your comments through the chair and not directly to other members.

Mr KRAUSE: I withdraw. Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. When it comes to the electoral laws of this state, I compare and contrast our approach with the approach of the Labor Party—18 minutes notice to change the voting system, no consultation—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Scenic Rim, I think you have covered that area, if you could just go back to the bill. Thank you very much.

Mr KRAUSE: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was just going to say that, in relation to the consultation for this bill, there were several weeks available for people to make submissions. This bill went to committee and people were able to make submissions. People were able to be questioned on their submissions and to raise issues. Many stakeholders did. Compare that to many of the reforms made by the former government in the dead of night, with zero notice. I and none of us on this side will not be lectured to by those opposite when it comes to transparency and consultation in this process.

I referred previously to the Operation Belcarra report, which many members opposite have hung their hats on to say that the laws they implemented were justified. They were not. The decisions made to implement the financial gerrymander were decisions taken by the Labor Party to favour their union mates above every other sector in the economy and in the political system. In this bill we are levelling the playing field against those political decisions that were made by the ALP.

This bill deals with a number of issues, but issues in relation to those I have been speaking about have obviously taken up considerable time in this debate. In relation to the issue of preselection ballots, the bill removes the ability for the Electoral Commission of Queensland to be involved in that process. There has been strong justification for that, because the affairs of political parties in most respects are matters that should be governed by those political parties themselves, in accordance with their constitutions and their by-laws—

Mr Nicholls: And longstanding judicial practice too, by the way.

Mr KRAUSE: Member for Clayfield, you have almost taken the thought out of my brain. There are always avenues for decisions of political parties in those processes to be challenged in the appropriate way. Should this place, the parliament of Queensland, as a public legislative body, be interfering in those affairs? I think many people will think not. There has been some overreach in the past and that has been reversed.

I have spoken about Belcarra a couple of times. This reverses the implementation of that law by the Labor Party which overreached the Operation Belcarra recommendations.

The other issue that is dealt with in this bill is voting restrictions on prisoners. I think out there in the community, especially at this point in time when many people are suffering from the impacts—they have been for four, five or perhaps even more years—of crime in the community, the idea that people who are law-breakers influence those who become lawmakers is anathema to them. While there is always a question of reasonableness and where you draw the line when it comes to the ability of people who are incarcerated to vote, we are taking a stand on this and moving that line back to something which is more reasonable in the community interest. As our Attorney-General has said, the LNP believes that law-breakers should not get to elect our lawmakers.

As I said at the start, I wholeheartedly support the bill. There has been a lot of focus on one particular aspect of it, and for good reason. That is because of the ill deeds of the former government over many years to implement a legal system that favours a particular part of the economy, a particular part of the industrial system—that is, the trade union movement—above all others. We are levelling the playing field with this bill and I give it my full support.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.54 pm): ‘World leader in democratic reform’. That was the headline in South Australia only months ago when their state government legislated to ban all donations to political parties and candidates. This I spoke about in the chamber last year. It was pleasing to see the member for McConnel mention they are now looking at that. I also wrote to our new government about

it, to end the vested interests from big donors and deliver what Tony Fitzgerald KC called ‘enduring solutions’—electoral reform that restores confidence, provides a framework for integrity and transparency, and puts democracy where it belongs: with everyday people, not with those with deeper pockets. It does not matter which side is arguing this or who is giving. We are talking about big donors. That is why my contribution will be on this.

The latest Noosa MP annual survey saw 78 per cent of respondents wanting an end to these big donations, and a dedicated online poll saw 94 per cent. I have no doubt that across Queensland these numbers would be similar; however, even if governments asked the question would they listen? Ultimately, this bill is an opportunity squandered to deliver real reform for Queensland and the antithesis of what Queenslanders seek—that is, an end to decision-making based on donors versus what is needed. Instead of reform, it restores a status quo of the past. Just as with so-called reforms under previous Queensland state governments, it is anything but. It may be fair to political parties and candidates and big donors; however, it is not fair to Queenslanders. We are regressing in a tit-for-tat battle between the major parties.

As stated in submissions, it is outrageous to think any sector could unduly influence governments, especially when there is an ongoing housing crisis. As the High Court found, property developers are highly dependent on decisions by the various levels of government and there should be no real or perceived influence or conflicts on these. We need our developers, but we also need for them to be free of any inferences, as is already occurring with the announcement on the Land Activation Program, which will see sites sold to developers with not even an attempt by government to condition these for genuinely affordable homes desperately needed by Queenslanders. There should be no question marks on this. For years we sought an audit of state owned sites suitable for partnerships with community housing providers to get those affordable homes on the ground. However, when it was finally done we could not get the information to be released, not even from our new government.

These amendments are not stated as a principled stance that enhances civic responsibility or improves transparency. It instead reflects an ongoing disrespect for those we represent and continues the theme of hoodwinking on needed electoral reforms. I have raised this since 2018. These include postal vote applications, which recommendation 21 of the 2023 final report of the Commonwealth Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters identified clearly mislead voters as they are returned to party headquarters first rather than sent direct to the Australian Electoral Commission. In our annual Noosa survey 87 per cent of respondents agreed this needs to stop, yet our new government, as our former, continues to support a practice that does not pass any pub test.

There is more. The bill could have addressed how-to-vote cards, which also misled by failing to list the political parties of those favoured in preference deals. It also could have banned political parties and MPs using constituent contact information, obtained via electorate offices, for campaigning and other purposes. Queenslanders are unaware of this. This is an invasion of privacy and not allowed in other realms.

But wait, there is even more. What about those ‘third parties’ that were snuck into the electoral integrity bill in the midnight hours in 2020 and the polling booths covered with their signage, drowning out everything else? I could go on. However, under the current flawed system this bill will get passed and the hoodwinking will continue, regardless of what is right and fair or what Queenslanders seek. I will say it again: this bill does not pass the pub test. It just increases the influence of vested interests and the risk of corruption through lifting bans and quadrupling the existing donation caps.

This and the multitude of wrongs being done against Queenslanders, including the gagging of debate in this chamber, re-enforces the need for real reform by an independent review of options to strengthen oversight and scrutiny and, importantly, improve legislation. Whether it is a review of the committee and estimates process—we have only been asking for that for years—the reintroduction of an upper house, the Hare-Clark system of representation or other, we need a review that ends the wolf in sheep’s clothing legislation that is being brought to this chamber.

I thank the committee and secretariat for their work as well as those who made submissions and join with the majority of them, as every Queenslanders should, in saying no. It is time to end big donors from all sectors and to end the manipulation and disrespect shown to everyday Queenslanders.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (8.01 pm): I rise in strong support of the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill. At the outset I remind the House of our election commitments, particularly to restore public confidence in the Queensland electoral process. I also remind the House of our commitment to prioritise victims over criminals. By honouring those commitments the bill intends to rectify changes made by the previous government in early 2020 that allowed many criminals to vote

in our elections. This was unacceptable, and rightly so. This has highlighted how insulting this was to victims across the state. To use the quote that has been used tonight, law-breakers should not be choosing the lawmakers. I support these changes.

At the heart of any health democracy is a simple promise: that every eligible citizen's vote matters; that elections are fair; and that political power is earned, not engineered. This bill reaffirms that promise. Our electoral system must belong to the people—not to entrenched interests, not to excessive money and not to rules that advantage a few while sidelining many. When confidence in electoral fairness erodes, trust in democracy is also weakened. This amendment bill is about restoring that trust.

The reforms before us strengthen transparency, reinforce accountability and ensure that electoral laws serve their true purpose: reflecting the will of the people. By closing loopholes, modernising outdated provisions and promoting equal participation, this bill helps level up the playing field for candidates, parties and voters alike. Importantly, it is not about favouring one political group over another. It is about fairness. It is about integrity. It is about ensuring that elections are decided by voters and not financial influence, technical manipulation or unequal access to the democratic process.

Addressing the issue of political donations will put trade unions, property developers and anyone else who wants to donate on a level playing field. The Premier made it clear prior to the election when he said that we cannot have one rule for one class and another rule for unions. This bill will right that wrong. The Premier was also right when he said that the property developer ban was fundamentally and philosophically an electoral financial gerrymander. It was set up by the former government.

The bill also amends the donation cap, with amounts to be indexed each financial year. It simplifies the electoral donation framework, making it easier to understand. My electorate is happy to see reforms in the bill in relation to the authorisation of election materials under the Electoral Act. The authorisation requirements for election materials and how-to-vote cards apply during the election period. The authorisation requirements will help voters assess the accuracy, balance and fairness of published electoral material and prevent anonymous people from disseminating insidious material. At the last election we saw a huge campaign being prosecuted by those opposite which was false and incredibly misleading.

A government member interjected.

Mr BENNETT: Indeed. Voters told us they wanted more truth and transparency in political material. All will know who is behind future scare campaigns, and now they will be held accountable. More importantly, those candidates who promote it should be reported and ousted for their views. A strong democracy is one where all citizens believe their voice counts. This bill sends the clear message that we value that voice and we protect it. We will always work to strengthen the systems that uphold it. Restoring electoral fairness is not a partisan act; it is a democratic responsibility. Future generations will judge us not by how we benefited politically but by how faithfully we protected the foundations of our democracy.

I commend the bill to the House and I urge all members to support it in the spirit of fairness, transparency and democratic renewal. I commend the AG for all of the work that has gone into this important bill. For a long period of time it was no secret that we had to fight hard against the gerrymander that was imposed upon us. More importantly, political donations should never be part of the process. I know that Queenslanders voted for a fresh start which had nothing to do with political donations.

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (8.05 pm): I rise to speak on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. Queenslanders expect fairness in their democracy. They expect decisions to be made in the public interest, not made under the influence of those with the greatest financial capacity to donate. While the title of this bill speaks to restoring electoral fairness, the changes proposed in this bill reduce transparency, increase private money in our elections and move Queensland away from other jurisdictions in Australia. I understand that no other state in Australia is moving to increase private money in elections; in fact, they are looking to reduce it.

That is why Labor is deeply concerned about the integrity implications of this bill and why we have our reservations, just like many key stakeholders and submitters to the parliamentary inquiry. I want to look at this bill a little more closely. Property developers play an important and legitimate role in our modern society. They build homes, create jobs and contribute to economic growth. This debate is not about demonising an industry. The issue before us is about actual and perceived conflicts of interest faced by decision-makers, particularly local governments and also the Minister for Planning.

The Crime and Corruption Commission has made it abundantly clear that political donations from property developers create corruption risks. Those corruption risks are not theoretical. They are real and they were evidenced, particularly at the local government level. They are risks that Queenslanders

are all too familiar with. It is not enough to say that donations are capped or disclosed. It is understood that the CCC has consistently warned that disclosure alone does not neutralise corruption risk, particularly where donors have direct commercial interests in planning and development decisions.

Many have said that this bill creates a back door. That is precisely the risk profile this bill reintroduces. The government will argue that unions are permitted to donate while property developers were previously prohibited. That comparison does not withstand scrutiny. Unions are membership-based organisations; they are not for profit. They exist to represent the collective interests of their members—working people; that is, they exist not to advance the commercial interests of any one individual. Property developers, in contrast, are commercial entities whose profitability is directly affected by government decisions such as zoning approvals, infrastructure and development applications.

This distinction is critical when assessing corruption risk. Treating these entities as equivalent ignores the very reasons donation bans were introduced in the first place. That is probably why the Crisafulli government worked hard to silence the CCC from providing feedback on this bill either before the bill was introduced or after, because this bill moves against both the spirit and intent of the CCC's previous recommendations. The Queensland Labor opposition called for the CCC to appear. We did so because this bill deals directly with issues the CCC has investigated, reported on and made recommendations about. The absence of the CCC from the inquiry is a central reason for our statement of reservation. Queenslanders do not want a political system where influence is proportional to wealth. They want a system where trust, transparency and integrity come first.

Queensland Labor is closely monitoring reforms in other jurisdictions, including South Australia, where efforts are underway to remove the majority of private money from elections altogether. That is the direction of reform and not the direction this bill takes. Labor members of the committee have issued a statement of reservation because this bill fundamentally alters the balance of Queensland's electoral system by increasing the role of private money. Under existing arrangements, donation caps apply across a parliamentary term. This bill resets those caps annually. This, therefore, quadruples the amount of money that can be injected into Queensland elections by private donors. This is not a technical change; that is a structural change that creates larger war chests and increases reliance on private funds.

Restoring fairness does not mean restoring the practices of the past. It does not mean increasing private money in elections or sidelining legitimate concerns held by the CCC. For these reasons, the Queensland Labor opposition has issued a statement of reservation and continues to hold concerns with this bill. If the Crisafulli government is serious about electoral fairness, it must engage with the evidence, respect the role of the CCC and put the integrity of Queensland's democracy ahead of its coffers.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (8.10 pm): It is a great privilege to speak to the Attorney-General's wonderful bill about restoring electoral fairness in Queensland. This bill will give people in Queensland a reasonable opportunity to be treated as normal people and incorruptible. It will basically give everyone the opportunity to have their say politically in terms of which party in Queensland best represents them. I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this bill to the House because she is delivering on a Crisafulli election commitment. That is why we are on this side of the House—because we gave this election commitment—and that is why we are justified in bringing this bill as an urgent bill through the House this week to make sure fairness is restored in Queensland.

On the Gold Coast, the construction industry is our largest industry, and guess what? The construction industry is run by developers. That is our biggest industry on the Gold Coast, and guess who the developers employ? They employ CFMEU members. Guess how you spell corruption in Queensland: C-F-M-E-U. We should be hearing from the Labor Party about their CFMEU members and corruption, because I do not believe I have seen a developer go to the CCC and be charged for nefarious activity. We have no purported risk from the development industry.

The Labor people are saying that developers are dodgy. That is a slur on an industry that has contributed to the development of Queensland. They have not only contributed to the Gold Coast, which is the fastest growing area in Queensland; they have contributed to the wonderful growth in Queensland by providing houses wherever they possibly can. They cannot keep up, unfortunately, because of the previous Labor administration and the red tape they have to comply with.

The development industry is a totally respected industry. I know a lot of them, to be honest, because there are a lot of businesspeople on the Gold Coast. I was on the Economics and Governance Committee—and the member for Logan was chairman in those days—when Mr MacSporran came to

the committee and basically said that he would not have included the state in those electoral laws without proper consultation. It was done for purely political reasons, and the member for Logan knows that well and truly because he was chair of the committee at that time.

Mr MacSporran had a few flaws, I have to admit, but that was a genuine comment from a guy who we knew was very keen on making sure that Queensland was kept free of corruption. That was used politically by the then Palaszczuk government for financial gerrymander in terms of allowing unions to donate millions of dollars towards the Labor Party and their puppets of the unions over there. The Palaszczuk government did not want to give the development industry the opportunity to support a political party that they thought would do a better job for Queensland than the Labor union mob that were run by the CFMEU. That is where we got to in terms of that political direction by the Palaszczuk government to gerrymander the electoral opportunities.

What we are doing here today is restoring fairness and ensuring developers are not treated as corrupt people. They are very honest people. They have delivered Queensland's growth over many years, particularly on the Gold Coast which is our fastest growing region in Queensland. We are taking on board thousands of new people every year through the development industry. The development industry goes right across Queensland, as we know, and they should not be treated like criminals by the Labor government. Unfortunately, that is what has happened over previous years. While I have limited time left—

Mrs Frecklington: You still have four minutes. Keep going.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you, Attorney-General. The other part of the bill relates to another little operational political trick that the former Palaszczuk government put in place which allowed people who were incarcerated to vote. That was a direct attempt, if you like, to garner more Labor votes from behind the locked doors of correctional facilities. I have to say that if you have to rely on votes from behind the locked doors of correctional facilities then you are a dodgy lot. Unfortunately, that is what happened in the Palaszczuk government. They reduced themselves to the stage where they were trying to scrape together every vote they could get—even out of the prisons—to get themselves re-elected. It did not do them any good in Lockyer anyway, because Jimmy bolted in.

The fact of the matter is that people are incarcerated for a reason. They have broken the laws of society and they do not deserve to have their say in the direction of Queensland through voting. This is a great move forward. It recognises proper and sensible actions in Queensland parliament. I again thank the Attorney-General for basically bringing Queenslanders back into the real world.

I totally support the passing of this bill. I will be able to look my developer friends on the Gold Coast in the eye and say, 'You are not criminals, as the Labor Party calls you.' We support developers and the work they do in Queensland. We want developers to give us more houses in Queensland, because we believe they are honest, they do a good job and they should be unrestricted in terms of putting the party in that they want to put in—and hopefully it is us. The bottom line is that this has been a gerrymander that the Labor Party have loved doing. It is a bit like their compulsory preferential voting bill that they passed in 18 minutes. That does not relate to this bill and I hope to talk about that at another time.

This bill rights a wrong. In this parliament we should not be doing things just for a political benefit, but that is what the previous bill of the Palaszczuk government was designed to do. It was like a gerrymander, if you like. They could not get away with gerrymanders before so they tried a financial gerrymander to allow their unions to give millions of dollars right across the board. We see that the real corruption is in the CFMEU and their puppets over there. I do not think the member for Logan is a member of the CFMEU, but other members over there are CFMEU members.

Basically, what we have done here through this legislation, should it be passed by the parliament—and Labor members should vote for this bill as well because it brings fairness back to Queensland—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Mermaid Beach, as engaging as your contribution is, I have to tell you that under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House I need you to resume your seat.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members on my left. Under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House I call the honourable Attorney-General to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (8.20 pm), in reply: It was such a riveting contribution as well. On that note, I would like to thank all honourable members for their contribution to this debate on the Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025. The bill implements reforms which improve and restore fairness and equality to the regulation of elections in Queensland and increases public confidence in our electoral process. Importantly, as many members on this side of the House have said, it begins to level the playing field, ensuring all electoral participants in state elections are treated fairly.

The bill amends the Electoral Act and makes related amendments to the Local Government Electoral Act, the Referendums Act 1997, the City of Brisbane Act and the Electoral Regulation 2024, which all form part of the significant and important framework of democracy in Queensland. This is an important bill that implements reforms which aim to improve Queensland's electoral and referendum laws and restore fairness to our electoral processes. I will now address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the course of the debate. Given that those opposite were just speaking from the one speaking sheet, I will address the issues in globo.

I want to say that the Crisafulli government backs our property industry. Despite what we have heard from those opposite and despite what attacks they may launch against the property industry, it continues to be a crucial part of supply in our housing market, which is still feeling the effects of Labor's housing crisis. The demonisation of the property sector in recent years by the former Labor government has had a serious and damaging impact on property industry confidence, community acceptance of the property industry and, in turn, the supply of much needed projects in Queensland.

Queensland's current electoral laws have not helped this with the prohibited donor framework reaching so far that it hurts simple mum-and-dad property investors and small businesses who all wish to participate in our state elections and processes. The Property Council has made that point very clear in the parliamentary hearing. There is much more I could say about that. I will return to that if I have time.

Labor's statement of reservation seems to suggest that they have more of an issue with private money in elections. The only alternative to donations is for the taxpayer to pick up the bill for our state elections. It sounds like 'Labornomics' again to me. Let me tell honourable members that those opposite did not look after our state finances well enough to allow for that. If you ask the average taxpayer on the street I do not believe they would be happy with the government charging them more on their car rego to pay for more material from the Labor Party in their letterboxes. Queensland taxpayers have already forked out over \$16 million in public funding alone for the recent 2024 state general election with potentially even more claims yet to be paid.

The Labor opposition seem to be a little conflicted on this matter of publicly funded elections. On one hand they want the utopia of 100 per cent taxpayer funded election campaigns and then on the other hand they want to enjoy the millions upon millions of dollars sent their way from the trade union movement. The state election prohibited donor framework was legislated under the guise of the perception of corruption. Labor demonised the property industry because it suited their political interests. They took the focus off themselves. All those years since the ban came into effect Labor continued to receive donations from trade unions. It was one rule for them and one rule for everyone else.

Those opposite also seem to like quoting the Centre for Public Integrity. I found a case study that the centre published on union donations which analysed all reported data between 1999 and 2019. The report revealed the Queensland branch of the Australian Labor Party alone received from unions \$6.3 million in donations and nearly \$23 million in affiliation payments. That is nearly \$30 million which lined Queensland Labor's coffers. No wonder the union movement did not hear the cries of the shadow minister to front up to the committee. No wonder the union movement did not do that, because the benefit of this legislation is that level playing field. The union movement certainly knows that because the report talks about affiliation fees, saying 'unions undoubtedly use their role within the ALP to influence policy and decisions, because this information is publicly available'.

Of course—and I know the health minister is interested in this—2019 was the year Labor legislated that prohibited donor framework. How in 2019, after receiving nearly \$30 million in union payments, were there no perceived risks of corruption for the Labor government? If honourable members search ECQ's donation disclosure portal for union payments to Queensland Labor in recent years, they will get additional results for over \$6.5 million in disclosure returns. If Labor want to talk about undue or improper influence, they need look no further than their own financial statements. We

on this side of the House, in stark contrast, can hold our heads high. Can those opposite sincerely look at their union paymasters, their union mates, the union heavyweights, and do the same? I think not. We know they took their orders—I am sorry. I have to take this note from the honourable health minister.

We remember when we were given 18 minutes notice of changes to the electoral laws. At 8.23 pm tonight, three minutes after debate closed, the Queensland Labor Party decided to circulate amendments. They did not even give us 18 minutes notice. I was counting down thinking, 'Surely it's going to be 19 minutes. Surely it's going to be 18 minutes again.' We did not even get 18 minutes. When did they do it, because they were so concerned I was going to read the amendments? They did it when I was on my feet summing up the bill. Seriously, there is nothing to read. Honestly, I know opposition is tough, but they have to get up early and work harder. I feel for those poor members in the opposition office because all they are looking for is a bit of direction. It is the best resourced opposition ever.

This is what the shadow attorney-general would like me to do. I cannot; it is too ridiculous. Get up early, work harder, give your poor staff some direction so they are not scrambling around. There was not even 18 minutes notice. Honestly, it is embarrassing. It would be laughable if it was not so serious. We have the Queensland Labor Party, who genuinely could not even get the union movement to talk against the LNP bill. They could not do that. They were completely incapable of doing that. Now at the last minute—it is not even at the last minute; it was after debate had closed—they have circulated the amendments.

Again, I know opposition is tough, but you have to be a bit sharper than that if you want to get your amendments in. However, there is so much to cover because we were talking about undue influence by the CFMEU and the union movement which decided to fund those opposite. There is so much to talk about when it comes to the CFMEU inquiry and the undue influence that ministers of the former Labor government had because of the union movement. As I just said, over \$30 million of funding went to the Queensland Labor Party. Talk about undue influence! We can hold our heads high. Those opposite can do no such thing.

There are so many former ministers on that side who have to be hauled before that CFMEU inquiry. There is so much to say on that, but we do not have time because I really want to ensure we talk to the hypocrisy of those opposite, and I have touched on that. However, I also want to touch on the claims from those opposite—because this is serious—that the CCC was gagged and prevented by the government from appearing at the public hearing for this bill. I note that page 2 of the committee's report says—

The Crime and Corruption Commission ... provided a submission to the inquiry, however advised that they would not be available to attend the public hearing.

I know that there are many members on this side of the House who will be writing to you, Mr Speaker, because those opposite are trying to mislead. They do not know the process and there is deliberate misleading—shameless misleading. They just think that because they can give the *Courier-Mail* a call and get a story up that is completely misleading that they can come in here and repeat mistruth after mistruth after mistruth and still try to pretend and think it is fact. Mr Speaker, I know that the letters from this side will be coming thick and fast in relation to the misleading of the House, so everyone should get writing.

I need to correct the record for the *Hansard*. It appears the CCC had been invited by the committee to attend, speak and answer questions at the public hearing. Despite what falsehoods those opposite might be spreading, the CCC was given an opportunity to appear. It was a shame that it was unable to appear because I would have liked to have heard about the CCC's views on perceived corruption and the undue and improper influence of trade union officials on government decision-making. I also want to make this clear for the House: we are not in this bill stopping the trade union movement from donating.

Mr Hunt: Free to do it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They are free to do it. Those opposite had that perceived undue influence from the trade union movement. We are allowing them to continue to take those donations from the trade union movement. We have not changed that. It is fair. We are restoring electoral fairness in Queensland. That is what we are doing. We are standing up for the union movement right now—something that those opposite could not. Not one trade union fronted the committee.

Mr Hunt: They loved the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They loved the bill. They must have. That is the inference I am taking from their silence. The silence is deafening. With regard to the criticisms about not consulting with the CCC on our legislation, I think those opposite are forgetting one very important thing in relation to all of this: the Crisafulli government consulted with the Queensland people. That is whom we consulted on our reforms. They are the people we listen to. They backed us in at the last election and they voted for these reforms.

On the issue of consultation, the shadow attorney-general seems to have somewhat of a short memory. I have gone back to look at the period when Labor introduced its electoral changes. I had a good look at the committee hearing *Hansard* for Labor's 2018 bill introducing stage 1 of Belcarra reforms and I found this interesting exchange with the then CCC chair Alan MacSparran on 28 March 2018. Mr Janetzki said—

... did you communicate that opinion to the government prior to the introduction of the bill?

Mr MacSparran: No. All we had before the bill was introduced was the report itself. Then when the bill was introduced we were invited to make a submission, which we did, and that is the submission you know was made to the lapsed bill. In essence, our current submission is a repeat of that earlier submission.

Mr Janetzki goes on—

You were not consulted between the tabling of your report and the introduction of the bill?

What was the then chair of the CCC's response? No.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Most of the noise is on my right. Member for Greenslopes, you have been warned every session so far today. Be very careful or you will get the clean sweep.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It appears to me that despite those opposite once again being on their high horse they did not even show the CCC their own draft legislation.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The hypocrisy; I take that interjection. Once again Labor opposition members are trying to hold us to a different standard—a very different standard to what the Labor Party holds itself.

I also want to correct the record about claims which have been made around the authorisation of electoral materials using PO boxes. The shadow attorney-general said that this would present issues in being able to identify people without having their physical address. At the committee hearing held on 16 January of this year which the shadow attorney-general was at—she attended it herself—the ECQ appeared in front of that committee, and I thank all of the members of the committee for their hard work. The ECQ appeared at that committee and gave evidence about this exact issue. It said—

... if we identified election material being distributed to electors and we had reason to doubt the legitimacy of that address, we could use our powers to request information from Australia Post, for example, to confirm who is the correct owner of that PO box.

So it appears the shadow minister was not paying attention to the questions from her own colleague the member for Macalister, because it was the member for Macalister asking witnesses but obviously to assist the shadow attorney-general. I am happy to clarify that matter for the House.

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection—too busy texting the journalist, because I hear the shadow attorney-general calling out about journalists. Much has been said by those opposite that just quite frankly does not make sense, so let me sum it up once again.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I suppose I could try to read them whilst I am on my feet and talk to them. In essence, this bill restores electoral fairness back to Queensland. We provide a level playing field for everyone across Queensland, including the trade union movement. I cannot believe how many times I have talked about the trade union movement. They may wish to donate to the Liberal National Party. They may wish to donate to the Katter party, which we know they do. They may wish to donate to the Greens party. Who knows? Under the restoring electoral fairness bill, that is exactly what we are doing.

The Labor opposition wants to use taxpayers; money—the money of mums and dads.

Mr Hunt: Hand in your pocket!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Hand in your pocket once again because they have no clue and no respect for the cost-of-living crisis that they created. Their solution is to hit up all mums and dads in Queensland. They have no clue. They want the trade union movement to fund their electoral campaign and not let anyone else have that level playing field.

A government member: Shameful!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is shameful. I will take that interjection. The Crisafulli government are doing everything we said we were going to do. I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee. I also want to thank those involved in the development of the bill, particularly Joanna Eisemann, Leighton Kraa and Leanne Robertson from the department and those in my office for all your hard work. I urge all members in this House to support the bill to restore fairness to our electoral laws in Queensland.

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

AYES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Chiesa, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, 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, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 35:

ALP, 33—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Gn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Crandon, Dick; Watts, Linard.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1—



Ms SCANLON (8.47 pm): I move amendment No. 1 circulated in my name—

1 Clause 1 (Short title)

Page 6, lines 4 and 5, 'Restoring Electoral Fairness'—

omit, insert—

Increasing Private Money in Queensland Elections

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and the statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, amendments to be moved by Hon. Meaghan Scanlon MP [144].

Tabled paper: Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes to Hon. Meaghan Scanlon's amendments [145].

Tabled paper: Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Meaghan Scanlon's amendments [146].

It was telling that the Attorney-General had the gall to criticise this side for last-minute amendments as she was passed our amendments by the health minister, the guy who came into this parliament to pass last-minute reforms to pill testing that put young people's lives at risk.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, we use correct titles in this House. You are speaking to an amendment; could you speak to the amendment, please.

Ms SCANLON: I moved this amendment because the title of the bill is wrong; it does not restore electoral fairness. It increases the private money in Queensland elections. Queenslanders deserve honesty. This bill lifts the ban on property developer donations—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I need to hear the member for Gaven.

Ms SCANLON: It lifts the ban on property developer donations, increases donation caps and changes the timeframes so more money can flow into politics more often. That is not restoring fairness; it is increasing private money in politics. As the Crime and Corruption Commission has warned, it increases corruption risk so let us call it what it is.

What makes this amendment necessary is not just what is in the bill but how the government has handled it. The CCC has raised concerns that removing the ban on developer donations may increase corruption risk and the Attorney-General dismisses those concerns as unfounded. 'Unfounded' is how she described criticisms of the bill by organisations like the CCC. It is extraordinary. A government committed to integrity does not ignore the state's peak corruption watchdog. What makes this even more remarkable is the hypocrisy, because when those opposite were in opposition they could not talk enough about integrity.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, I will bring you back to why you are moving this amendment. Speak to the increasing private money in Queensland elections. Why? Explain that amendment for me, please. It is not an opportunity to discuss the whole bill.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Speaker. When it comes to the renaming of this bill it is important to understand the context. The then opposition leader used to talk about letting the sun shine in. If he thinks that, he should be honest about what is in this bill. He should let the sun shine in on the fact that they are lifting the ban on developer donations and increasing private money into politics.

An opposition member: Quadrupling it!

Ms SCANLON: They are quadrupling the amount of money that can go into politics. This amendment asks for one simple thing: tell Queenslanders the truth. This bill lets more private money into our elections. It does not clean things up. It does not make things fairer. It makes it easier for big cheques to matter more. If that is what the government wants to do that is fine, but do not dress it up as something that it is not. Call it what it is: increasing private money in Queensland elections.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: Attorney-General.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: I thought the Attorney-General had the call.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I jumped, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I have given the Attorney-General the call.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker. Outrageous.

Mr SPEAKER: I beg your pardon?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: If they don't get their way, that is their behaviour.

Mr SPEAKER: Take your seat, Attorney-General. Member for Algester, did you just reflect on my ruling?

Ms ENOCH: I am saying I am outraged by not being able to speak.

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

That the honourable member for Algester be now heard.

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

AYES, 36:

ALP, 33—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 2—Bolton, Sullivan.

NOES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Chiesa, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, 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, Vorster, Young.

Pairs: Crandon, Dick; Watts, Linard.

Resolved in the negative.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Before the Manager of Opposition Business moved that the member for Algester be heard, I understand that there was a possible reflection on the chair. I want to seek your guidance with respect to a ruling that was made by you in relation to that matter.

Mr SPEAKER: I am concerned that that was indeed a reflection. I am going to ask the member to stand up, apologise and withdraw.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, I withdraw those comments and I apologise to you.

Mr SPEAKER: I put you on a warning as well. That is very close to being a naming offence.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Talk about university politics! Three minutes after the bill was summed up, we get these amendments from the shadow attorney-general. When you look at the explanatory notes, it says—and I am quoting the shadow attorney-general—in short, the bill does not do what it says on the tin. You can change the label but you also have to change the contents. You have to get up early and you have to do the work. You cannot just say that you are going to change the label and then leave the bill exactly as it is. Talk about ‘Oops’! Talk about university politics!

A government member: Did she do it?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: No, she did not. The shadow attorney-general talked about the trade union movement and she talked about private money. Who does the shadow attorney-general think fills the coffers of the trade union movement, which goes to the Queensland Labor Party—the \$30 million that I just talked about from all of those trade unions? Who does that? It is the hardworking teachers, nurses, mums and dads, police, tradies who want to be a part of the ETU and builders who want to be part of the CFMEU. It goes into their coffers. It is the mums and dads. It is not the Labor opposition’s money. It is private money. It is mums and dads—

Mr Purdie: It’s workers’ money.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is workers’ money. That is exactly right. The title of the bill should refer to restoring fairness to the electoral process for one reason, and that is to level the playing field. It will do what we said we were going to do. I spoke at length about the undue influence of the trade union movement, with all of their money—their millions and millions of dollars—going into the Labor Party coffers. We know with the CFMEU inquiry happening as we speak, right through this week, we have—

Mr SPEAKER: Attorney-General, it being nine o’clock, I will put the question.

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

AYES, 35:

ALP, 33—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O’Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Sullivan.

NOES, 50:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Chiesa, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, 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, Vorster, Young.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Crandon, Dick, Watts, Linard.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Ms Scanlon) negatived.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 49, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

AYES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Chiesa, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, 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, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 36:

ALP, 33—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 2—Bolton, Sullivan.

Pairs: Crandon, Dick; Watts, Linard.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

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

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.08 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Bondi, Deaths

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (9.08 pm): On the afternoon of 14 December I walked from parliament to Queens Park in the city to join the first day of Hanukkah celebrations with our Jewish community. I remember thinking how mild and lovely the weather was that afternoon after what had felt like the most oppressive heat of our Queensland summer. I also remember thinking that I was happy for our Jewish community that the weather was perfect for their celebrations. To be honest, in the back of my mind I also had another niggling thought. Queens Park is a very central and open location and I was concerned that, despite their best intentions, the Hanukkah celebrations could be interrupted by protesters.

Why did I have this thought? Maybe it is because I had become so conditioned to seeing our Jewish community hold their events in private spaces, behind gates and surrounded by the CSG, their own Community Security Group.

The celebrations for Hanukkah were in full swing—singing, food stalls, children reciting verses of the Torah—but, as we sat in preparation for the lighting of the large menorah, news began to trickle in that there had been an incident at Bondi Beach involving the Jewish community. What should have been a joyous celebration of the victory of light over darkness was instead forever tarnished by a targeted act of pure anti-Semitic evil.

What occurred that day is a terrible tragedy—the murder of 15 innocent Australians: Edith Brutman; Dan Elkayam; Rabbi Yaakov Levitan; Peter Meagher; Eli Schlanger; Adam Smyth; Boris Tetleroyd; Tania Tretiak; Tibor Weitzen; Marika Pogany; Alex Kleytman, who was a Holocaust survivor; Boris Gurman and Sofia Gurman, two everyday Australians who amazingly tried to disarm the terrorists as they arrived and before they went on their massacre; Reuven Morrison, a businessman who threw rocks or bricks at the gunmen, knowing that he most likely would not survive; and, as we all know, 10-year-old Matilda, the youngest of the victims. We also know there was nothing random about this act of violence. This was an act of terror by individuals with hate in their hearts and guns in their hands.

There are moments in our nation's history that confront us with unimaginable horror and grief, but they also test the quiet assumptions of decency, mutual care and safety that represent the best of Australia's values. The growing hate, racism and awful vitriol we are seeing in our country is also not

random. It is being inflamed by those who seek political advantage and not national unity. As a nation and a state we must respond with strength, not partisanship. We must address both the motive and the means by which Bondi was allowed to occur. This is what Jewish Australians deserve and it is an outcome that we on this side of the House are focused on, because an attack on Jewish Australians is an attack on all Australians.

Taylor, Mrs V; Natural Disasters, Recovery

 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (9.11 pm): At the outset of my contribution tonight I would like to place on record the tremendous achievements of a now retired member of Queensland Health who served her last day in the domestic stream and has worked for 55 years as a cook. Mrs Vera Taylor is a tremendous stalwart in her community in the Central West but, more importantly, a servant of those who are in need and caring. The special treats that Vera has prepared over 55 years, some of which perhaps the matrons did not always approve of, will be sorely missed by the residents of the Alpha community and those who have unfortunately had to reside there for a short period of time or in the aged-care section for a protracted period.

I would like to use my remaining two minutes to update the House with respect to the severe flooding that affected Central West and North-West Queensland. At the outset, I thank the Premier, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Disaster Recovery for their tireless efforts, which commenced on or around 28 or 29 December variously and stretched through until this point in time, when communities were severely isolated, houses were inundated in some areas, rural properties were severely isolated and massive numbers of infrastructure and livestock were affected. I am sure the Minister for Primary Industries will continue a watching brief for both the north-west and the central west as it is an evolving situation in what is still the mid part of our wet season.

There were people in places like Winton, Cloncurry, Julia Creek and Clermont who were isolated, who had water in their houses—people like Vance—and who had to wait a number of days for the water to go down to commence the clean-up. Crisafulli government members and the member for Burdekin and Minister for Natural Resources were there on the ground within hours of the floodwater receding to ensure there was no daylight between disaster and recovery.

The communities of North-West Queensland and the Central West are starting to recover, but they still stink of rotting vegetation and are surrounded by devastation, with fences horizontal, internal and external roads to their properties completely destroyed and vast numbers of livestock either dead, dying or washed away.

This place seems so removed it is almost surreal—I am sure the Minister for Primary Industries shares that with me. When you come back to a place as pristine and as perfect as this, it is hard to imagine standing in the paddocks as we did at the start of January—as well as the Minister for Local Government—and seeing the utter devastation that these property owners are experiencing. There will be more to see in this place, but certainly my thoughts and I hope those of this entire chamber are with those people as they commence their recovery.

Coorparoo Bowls Club

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.14 pm): Next week, I will be heading to the Coorparoo Bowls Club to celebrate my daughter's 21st birthday with family and friends. This venue was not chosen by accident. This is a club where my family feels at home. It is a club that aligns with the values of our Coorparoo community. It has been at the centre of our community for nearly 100 years. It is a place where people play bowls, listen to music, debate social issues, raise money for charity, make friends, celebrate events and build community. The annual Coopers Cup barefoot bowls extravaganza draws hundreds of participants. One of my greatest achievements in life was winning the B-grade trophy with Tony, Aido and Geoff.

This is a club that supports our community. Stepping Stone Clubhouse, MND and Me Foundation and Parkinson's Queensland are just a few of the local charities it supports. This is a club that supports live music every single week. This is a club that has brought hundreds and thousands of people to the great game of bowls. This is a club that has so many competitive bowlers it has to select teams each week for interclub matches. This is a club that returns a profit every year. On every conceivable measure this club is a success and should be the pin-up club for Bowls Queensland.

Why, then, would I see reports in our community that Bowls Queensland, once again, wants to sell this property off to developers? Before anyone accuses me or our community of being NIMBYs, we support more housing and retirement living, but we should not achieve this by destroying this club. There are about 100 sites within a kilometre of this location where we could build units and retirement villages, and some are right next door to the club. This bowls club has already seen massive development happen around it. In fact, many of the bowlers and club patrons live in those new complexes and they want to see more of them in this area, just not on top of their bowling green. Bowls Queensland's mission statement states—

Doing bowls differently to connect more people with bowls in more ways—more often!

That is something that the Coorparoo Bowls Club does every single day. If it is true that the board of Bowls Queensland are even contemplating destroying this club for a bit of cheap financial gain, it would be truly appalling and they would be guilty of completely failing in their duties and their mission statement. The Coorparoo Bowls Club and the people of Coorparoo would rather work with Bowls Queensland to ensure the club remains viable into the future. If Bowls Queensland decide to put profits ahead of their sport, they will find a community ready to mobilise to stop them. We have done it before and we will do it again.

I say to any developer who is considering buying this property, 'Look elsewhere. Don't even consider it. There are better sites and you'll get my support.' I call on the minister to intervene to stop a peak sporting body from failing in their duties to grow and promote their sport. I say this to the board of Bowls Queensland: the community will not sit back and let you destroy our community. I also say: we will work with you. That is our preferred course of action. Let's work together. Let's get people bowling. Let's build community together. Let's keep bowling in Coorparoo.

Keppel Electorate, SES Volunteers

 **Mr HUTTON** (Keppel—LNP) (9.17 pm): Last month the communities of Central Queensland heard the vast roar of the mighty Fitzroy and faced flooding. This was an occasion that brought our communities together and, just as importantly, those angels in orange—those people who come together each and every week to train to serve their communities in emergencies—our amazing State Emergency Service personnel, came to the fore. They served our communities in the lead-up to the flood. They served our communities during the flood. They have been an intrinsic part of the recovery post flood.

Our local crews were on the ground working each and every day, and our crews were bolstered by Queenslanders who volunteered their time in Central Queensland's time of need. There were volunteers from across the state from Theodore, Townsville, Maryborough and the Redlands. What was most impressive was that those volunteers had experienced disaster or the threat of disaster in their own communities in the weeks leading up to this time. We were very lucky in Central Queensland that the flooding was not as high as first predicted by BoM, yet in our time of need not only did we have our local volunteers from the SES; we also had our friends from across the state come and help. That is incredibly important.

It was wonderful to have the Premier come and talk to people on the ground. When he spoke to them he conveyed the thanks of our state but just as importantly gave the message that the Crisafulli government has their back. That was followed up with a visit from the Minister for Disaster Recovery, who spoke to our communities about disaster management—how we know they have been under-resourced and there is confusion about whether they belong with local government or state government and that the Crisafulli government was stepping up. I thank the Minister for Disaster Recovery for stepping up in that way.

Each and every year, thousands of Queenslanders give their time in the SES. They tarp roofs, they support small businesses and they serve our communities. Whether you are a serving member of the SES or one of the thousands of Queenslanders who at some stage during their life has given their time to the SES, I offer my thanks for the service you give, knowing that it makes such a difference in our communities.

On Australia Day I had the marvellous opportunity to acknowledge Chrissy. Chrissy has given a lifetime of service to Yeppoon SES. On that day she did not ask for our thanks. She said, 'I do it because I love it and because of the amazing people I volunteer with.' That is true Queensland spirit.

Destination 2045

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (9.20 pm): The Crisafulli government's Destination 2045 tourism plan is rich in aspiration, glossy language and long-range targets—it promises that Queensland will be a global leader in ecotourism—yet behind the slogans and media statements sits a profound contradiction. The same government claiming to champion ecotourism and the Great Barrier Reef is actively pursuing environment and energy policies that undermine the very assets its tourism future depends on. In doing so, it risks turning their plan into a hollow exercise in branding—a plan disconnected from reality and credibility. At the centre of this failure is the government's decision to scrap Queensland's renewable energy targets and extend the life of aging coal-fired power stations under its new Energy Roadmap. Environmental groups, industry and climate experts have warned that this move sends Queensland backwards, locks in higher emissions and delays the clean energy transition that regional communities and tourism operators are counting on. For a government that claims ecotourism is a key focus, this policy reversal is indefensible.

Ecotourism does not exist in isolation from climate outcomes. It relies on healthy reefs, stable weather patterns, resilient ecosystems and international confidence that Queensland is a responsible steward of World Heritage environments. By delaying coal closures and increasing greenhouse emissions, the Crisafulli government is directly contributing to the very climate pressures—rising sea temperatures, coral bleaching and extreme weather—that threaten the Great Barrier Reef.

The reef is not a marketing prop. It is a \$9 billion economic engine supporting around 77,000 regional jobs and a globally recognised natural wonder that underpins Queensland's tourism brand. UNESCO has repeatedly warned that the reef's long-term outlook remains very poor and continues to consider listing it as 'World Heritage in Danger'. Such a listing would be devastating for tourism confidence, international reputation and regional employment. While the federal government is working to demonstrate credible action to UNESCO, the Crisafulli government is moving in the opposite direction. That disconnect makes a mockery of the state's claim to be rejuvenating reef islands, expanding nature-based experiences and positioning Queensland as the global ecotourism capital. You cannot market Queensland as the home of the holiday while increasing the risk of mass coral bleaching, floods, fires and heatwaves that disrupt travel and damage regional economies. Destination 2045 is not a bold vision but a case study in how to promise the world while quietly undermining the very thing that makes Queensland worth visiting.

Mirani Electorate, Weather Event

 **Mr G KELLY** (Mirani—LNP) (9.23 pm): When you live in the electorate of Mirani, you learn to respect the wet season. You learn to watch the skies, listen to the BoM warnings—and hope they are right—and prepare for what may come. The start of 2026 tested our communities. Ex-Tropical Cyclone Koji brought severe weather and flooding across the Mirani electorate. In a short time, heavy rain led to flooded homes, closed roads, power outages and communities being cut off. It was stressful, it was disruptive, and for many families and businesses it was confronting, but it also showed the true strength of our region. In the Pioneer Valley, flooding caused significant damage to homes, businesses and livelihoods. My office worked closely with many constituents who needed urgent support. I sincerely acknowledge Brenton Niemz, a recovery coordinator from Mackay Regional Council. Brenton worked closely with my office and Community Recovery to ensure people could access financial assistance. That cooperation made a real difference during a very difficult time.

The Eungella Range was another pressure point. Landslips caused serious disruptions to access and transport. I thank Transport and Main Roads and the local RoadTek crews for their swift and professional response. Restoring single-lane access in challenging and unsafe conditions was critical to reconnecting the Eungella community. Eungella was not the only community affected. Mirani has a large rural electorate. Many bridges and crossings were cut off, including Funnel Creek crossing and Wadallah Creek crossing. These closures isolated communities and highlighted how dependent regional areas are on reliable access.

Recovery does not happen without those who restore the basics: power, safety, shelter and so on. Ergon Energy workers deserve a special shout-out here. These crews worked in terrible weather around the clock to restore power to homes, farms and businesses. During events like this the loss of power combined with sweltering heat adds enormous stress for families. Ergon workers stepped up for the people who needed it most. Our communities are deeply grateful.

One story that truly captures the heart of this event is that of Mick and Marlene from Valley Rural Services in Finch Hatton. Their businesses were completely inundated and the clean-up was overwhelming. The community rallied behind them without hesitation. Even while dealing with their own

recovery, Mick and Marlene turned their business into an informal information hub for my office. I give a big shout-out to the people of Mirani for what they went through during this terrible event. There is one thing about Mirani that always stands out, and that is the people who live in it and how resilient they are.

Mount Ommaney Electorate, Iranian and Eritrean Communities

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (9.26 pm): I rise tonight to give a voice to my Iranian community, which has raised grave concerns with me about the thousands of Iranians who have been killed in the last few months in Iran under the cover of an internet blackout. I understand that the number of deaths is not yet clear because of the media blackout that has been imposed on citizens, which means that the world's media have scarce information about what is unfolding. What I share tonight has come directly from the residents of my community as they grapple with uncertainty, the loss of their loved ones and the fear of speaking out, all compounded by the difficulty of getting accurate information about what is happening in their homeland. They wait for contact from their loved ones so they can once again be assured that they are safe—for now.

I have spoken before in this House after the death of Mahsa Amini, a young woman who lost her life in Iran. When I talk with my Iranian community they are scared. They are afraid of retribution and scared to speak up in case it results in retaliation against family or friends back home. When I speak to them I hear over and over again that they have lost family members—many of them—in recent protests and they are terribly afraid that there is more to come. I want to share the words of Penny Wong, who said, 'We condemn the repression against the brave people of Iran, who continue to courageously demand the respect of their fundamental rights and to express their aspiration for democratic change.' I stand with our Iranian community as I always have, and I always will.

I was also honoured to attend an Australia Day celebration for the Eritrean community. Our Eritrean community has made such a significant contribution to our Queensland community, so we came together to celebrate that contribution and celebrate Australia Day together. I understand that Eritrea has one of the worst freedom of the press rankings in the world as ranked by the organisation Reporters Without Borders. They are literally one of the worst in the world. Despite this ongoing oppression of the people of Eritrea, the event was one of hope and resilience, with young law graduate Mohammed speaking about the opportunity afforded to him by Australia. Of course, no event for the Eritrean community would be complete without a few words of hope and inspiration from the wonderful Mama Saba.

Despite the severe challenges faced by both of these communities, their message is one of hope—hope that circumstances in their homelands will improve and hope that their chosen home of Australia will wrap their arms around them in their time of need.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure; Sports Darling Downs Awards; Banks, Branch Closures

 **Hon. DC JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (9.30 pm): For 1,200 days, the former Labor government wasted time in getting ready for the games in 2032. That is the simple truth of what happened for all of that time. When we formed government and we decided how we would approach the games in 2032, one thing was clear: we would be taking the games regional. We would be taking the benefits of the games regionally so that local communities could enjoy the possibilities and the promise of an Olympic Games in 2032, together with all of that supporting infrastructure that would come with it—whether it be road, rail or community services infrastructure.

Last week we heard about Rockhampton. I see the member for Rockhampton, and she made it clear today that there will be rowing on the Fitzroy in Rockhampton. Tonight I want to make it clear that in 2032 the equestrian will be in Toowoomba. We are not going to take any notice of what Sweden might have to say about where the equestrian should be. We will be getting it built in time and we will be making sure the equestrian is where it belongs in 2032, which is Toowoomba.

On Saturday night I had the pleasure of being at the Sports Darling Downs awards. I want to congratulate Brayden and Sienna in the seniors and Bryce and Xanthee in the juniors as the key winners at the Sports Darling Downs awards. We got to hear from Chris Burton, an old family friend of mine who grew up just down the road on the family farm and went on to win a silver medal in Paris in equestrian. He is the ambassador for the Toowoomba Equestrian Centre and he does an outstanding

job in flying the flag for us. I want to comment on his humble presentation on the night. He has walked across the global stage in a high-stakes sport, yet his humility was on display. We are very fortunate to have him supporting us and the effort at the showgrounds to get it built ready for the equestrian.

Speaking of the equestrian at the Toowoomba Showgrounds, I want to comment on the People First Bank because they sponsor the Toowoomba Showgrounds. Tonight I want to call on the People First Bank, which have now abandoned their heartland and have closed branches at Millmerran, Pittsworth and Oakey. Oakey and Pittsworth no longer have any banking services. There are many other branches being closed, including Goondiwindi, Laidley, Maryborough and Hervey Bay. We have petitions running because our community members are outraged by these branch and mini-branch closures. Regional and rural communities deserve banking services. They deserve better than what People First Bank and the big banks are offering up. We will not take it anymore.

Hill Electorate, Community Infrastructure

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (9.33 pm): I rise to express my disappointment and frustration at the attitude by local councils in my electorate when it comes to the closure and abandonment of vital community infrastructure. In recent months I have seen two community swimming pools in my electorate at Mount Garnet and Babinda either abandoned or actively targeted for closure. I also understand that the Dimbulah pool may be in the firing line. These are not luxury assets; they are essential pieces of infrastructure in small regional towns in Far North Queensland. Children can no longer swim safely in local creeks and waterways because of exploding crocodile numbers due to a lack of action by consecutive state governments. What were once safe natural swimming spots have now become dangerous. In that context, the removal of small town swimming pools is cruel and short-sighted. These pools provide safe recreation, relief from extreme heat, swimming lessons for kids and social connection for small communities.

Closing them without exhausting every possible option to save them is a disaster for regional towns that are already struggling to retain services. The state government does have funding available to assist regional communities to save and upgrade community swimming pools. However, that funding requires cooperation and commitment from local councils. Unfortunately, up to this point I have seen no genuine interest by certain councils to work with me to secure funding and keep these pools open. Instead, I see what I can only describe as a slash-and-burn approach to community assets.

Last week there were reports the Tablelands council had identified 44 community buildings and assets for potential divestment including Scouts and Girl Guide halls, amenity blocks, fire brigade and sporting club sheds and a range of other community facilities. The community are told these assets are underutilised, not fit for purpose or at end of life, but what they really mean is fewer places for kids to play sports, fewer halls for volunteers, and fewer safe spaces for families and community groups to gather.

All of this is happening while our rates in the region are already high and community infrastructure has been stripped back to a level I have never seen during the 22 years I have been a member of parliament. I have always had good working relationships with previous councils. Their attitude used to be, 'How do we save this facility? How do we improve it?' That attitude has been replaced with one that says, 'What can we get rid of today?' I find this deeply disappointing for ratepayers, who expect their councils to fight for their communities, not retreat from them.

Anti-Semitism

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education and the Arts) (9.36 pm): I want to examine one of the catalysts that necessitated today's introduction of hate speech legislation to strengthen the response to anti-Semitism in Queensland. I am not going to refer to that bill and pre-empt debate. I table an article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* dated 17 September 2020 referring to my address the previous day at a citizenship ceremony to new citizens in which I spoke of my experience of becoming a citizen in 1996.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* online, dated 17 September 2020, titled 'Gold Coast MP John-Paul Langbroek hits a nerve during citizenship ceremony with warning' [[147](#)].

The article states—

It's a day of mixed emotions about what you have left behind and we don't expect you to leave it completely behind, ...

But what we do ask is, and the mayor often says this, is that we treat each other with harmony, respect and courtesy.

If you do come from some of those countries where they've had difficulties or battles, please don't bring those problems here.

Because in Australia we pride ourselves on our assimilation, the fact that you can maintain your own culture but that we value our own Gold Coast and Queensland community.

The then multicultural minister, Stirling Hinchliffe, said I should join One Nation, yet the broader community response, including from readers of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* was overwhelmingly supportive.

Our Brisbane lord mayors past and present have expressed the same sentiments clearly at citizenship ceremonies for years. I refer to an article in the *Australian* dated 7 February 2026, which I table.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 7 February 2026, titled 'Anthony Albanese defends Israeli President Isaac Herzog visit' [148].

It is titled 'Anthony Albanese defends Israeli President Isaac Herzog visit' and states—

"So, people will have their views about the Middle East. As I've said, people want, in Australia, I think people want innocent lives to be protected, whether it be Israeli or Palestinian, but they want something else as well—they don't want conflict brought here," he said.

If only those opposite had expressed any of those views in the 2½ years since 7 October 2023. None of those opposite from the Labor Party, including the Prime Minister, were at Never Again is Now rallies or Kristallnacht and Yom HaShoah commemorations over the past 2½ years until December 2025. I was there with the MPs for Chatsworth, Kawana, Maroochydore, Clayfield and the now member for Burleigh.

I refer to an article from the *Australian* dated 22 January 2026—and I table that as well—titled 'This is the message every politician should shout from the rooftops'.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Australian* online, dated 22 January 2026, titled 'This is the message every politician should shout from the rooftops' [149].

Jack the Insider states—

It does not mean new Australians must reject cultural attachments or religious beliefs but it should inform those who seek to call Australia home that the opportunities of a better life come at the price of rejecting religiously or ideologically motivated violence that litters their countries and regions of birth.

I hold those opposite—and I have already said it in this parliament. In the 57th Parliament none of them stood with us opposing the issues that were so clearly evident after 7 October 2023. They should be held culpable for the actions we have had to take today. They should hang their heads in shame that now they are trying to seek some sort of moral redress on the issues they failed to act on.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.39 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Asif, Bailey, Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, de Brenni, Dick, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Field, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Grace, Healy, Howard, Hunt, Hutton, James B, James T, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly G, Kelly J, Kempton, King, Kirkland, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Shea, Pease, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stoker, Sullivan, Vorster, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Young