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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 14 May 2026

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THURSDAY, 14 MAY 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.

PRIVILEGE

Comments by Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Correction and Apology



Hon. AJ CAMM (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.31 am): It has been brought to my attention that on 25 March 2026 during my response to a question without notice I inadvertently misled the House. I stated, 'I am yet to have one question about this portfolio from the former five child safety ministers.' I have been advised that this is incorrect. I unreservedly apologise to the House for the error.

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House



Mr SPEAKER: On 15 April 2026, the Manager of Opposition Business and member for Springwood wrote to me alleging that the Attorney-General deliberately misled the House on 4 March 2026. The statement by the Attorney-General alleged that the former government did nothing to combat metal theft while they were in office. I refer to Speaker Pitt's ruling of 11 September 2024 where he stated—

I also note that the member's statements were non-specific and general and that there was no particular allegation against any individual. The statement appears more like a statement of opinion than an allegation of misconduct against any particular person.

I also consider this matter to be both a non-specific and general opinion, as well as a dispute on a policy. It is entirely within the regular parliamentary realm to have disputes on whether one government's policy is better than another government's policy, or to make wideranging statements that a former government did not act on a certain issue.

In this matter, there was no individual targeted and no matter of privilege that I can identify. It is extremely trivial. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter for the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence relating to an alleged contempt and misleading of the House by the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity and member for Nanango [\[714\]](#).

I have circulated a ruling on this matter. I seek leave to have the ruling incorporated.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED CONTEMPT OF PARLIAMENT

MR SPEAKER Honourable members,

On 15 April 2026, the Manager of Opposition Business and member for Springwood wrote to me alleging that the Attorney-General deliberately misled the House on 4 March 2026.

The matter relates to a statement made by the Attorney-General during the first reading of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026.

Specifically, the Attorney-General stated:

'The fact is that when Labor were in government they did nothing to combat metal theft.'

The Manager of Opposition Business argued that this was false and misleading because the former government had commenced an inquiry into scrap metal theft, and once the inquiry report was tabled, they supported and supported in-principal, six recommendations. He also provided evidence that there had been compliance activities undertaken to target scrap metal dealers during the Opposition's time in government.

I sought further information from the Attorney-General about the allegations that have been made against her, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5).

The Attorney-General argued that the matter was trivial and frivolous. She also submitted that she was referring to legislative change when she said that Labor did nothing to combat metal theft.

Standing Order 269(4) requires that in considering whether such a matter should be referred to the Ethics Committee, that I should take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter.

I refer to Speaker Pitt's ruling of 11 September 2024 where he stated:

I also note that the member's statements were non-specific and general and that there was no particular allegation against any individual.

The statement appears more like a statement of opinion than an allegation of misconduct against any particular person.

I consider this to be both a non-specific and general opinion, as well as a dispute on a policy.


It is entirely within the regular parliamentary realm to have disputes on whether one government's policy is better than another government's policy, or to make wide-ranging statements that a former government did not act on a certain issue. In this matter, there was no individual targeted and no matter of privilege that I can identify.

It is extremely trivial.


Accordingly, I **will not** be referring the matter for the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, May is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month, a time to support the more than 3,700 Australians living with this condition. Cystic fibrosis is the most common life-limiting genetic condition in our country, with one child born with cystic fibrosis every four days. While there is currently no cure, the outlook is changing rapidly. What was once a fatal childhood disease is now becoming a manageable chronic illness, with many living well into their 40s, 50s and beyond. Cystic Fibrosis Queensland is the peak charity providing the support, services and hope these families need. To show our support, Parliament House will be lit up red on 25, 26, 29 and 30 May. We also invite you to mark your calendars for Friday, 29 May, which is 65 Roses Day—our national day of awareness.

Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Sinai College in the electorate of Mansfield, Varsity College (Primary Campus) in the electorate of Burleigh, Algester State School and St Bernardine's Catholic Primary School in the electorate of Algester, and Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School in the electorate of Toohey.

PETITIONS

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

Hervey Bay, Education

Mr Lee, from 357 petitioners, requesting the House to develop an expanded education precinct to meet the growing educational needs of the Hervey Bay community [\[706\]](#) [\[707\]](#).

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

Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Act 2026

588 petitioners, requesting the House to protect songs and books from the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Act 2026 [\[708\]](#).

Horseracing, Ban

663 petitioners, requesting the House to ban horse racing throughout Queensland [\[709\]](#).

Government Appointments

837 petitioners, requesting the House to pass laws to ensure former politicians and political party heavyweights are not appointed to any position in government owned and run facilities or entities [\[710\]](#).

Noise Pollution, Garden Tools

180 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce suburban noise pollution from powered garden and yard tools by establishing periods of no-noise in line with many European countries [\[711\]](#).

Ferrets, Ownership Framework

336 petitioners, requesting the House to review the current prohibition on ferrets and introduce a strictly regulated ownership framework [\[712\]](#).

E-Mobility

1,267 petitioners, requesting the House to put an end to high-power scooters usage [\[713\]](#).

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

NRL Magic Round



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.36 am): What a magic day to be a Queenslander! There is a real sense of optimism—a real buzz—around our state at the moment. Investors and families alike are flocking to Queensland from across the border, choosing our state as their home. Our weather, our lifestyle, our sporting successes—who wouldn't want to be a Queenslander!

We are the undisputed sports capital of Australia but, more than anything else, Queensland is the home of rugby league. Tens of thousands of fans from every corner of the country come to celebrate the greatest game of all as part of Magic Round. Hotels are full, restaurants are packed, small businesses thrive and our city comes alive with colour, energy and excitement—and every year we must focus on making it bigger and better.

Magic Round belongs in Queensland because rugby league is part of our DNA. This week many Queenslanders were concerned to hear that other states had set their sights on stealing Magic Round. We promised we would fight to keep it here in Queensland. I am proud to announce that we have secured the future of the NRL Magic Round right here in Queensland through to 2032!

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr CRISAFULLI: The honourable member for McConnel is angry. She wants a CFMEU clause put into it.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is absolute rubbish. I take offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw, Mr Speaker. There won't be a CFMEU clause in it, I promise. This is a vote of confidence in Queensland. It is a vote of confidence in the way our state delivers world-class events better than anywhere else in the nation. In the upcoming days I will be sharing with Queenslanders how we are going to take this concept to the next level—bigger, better and greater value for money right here in Queensland.

Ms Boyd: More slogans.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CRISAFULLI: Even Magic Round isn't safe from member for Pine Rivers!


Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have the call.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Magic Round is about more than just the footy; it is an economic powerhouse for Queensland. By locking this event in until 2032 we are providing certainty for industry, confidence for investors and another reason for visitors to choose Queensland. It is exactly the kind of legacy we

want to create—a legacy that supports jobs and tourism and showcases Queensland to the world. All of the action of Magic Round 2026 kicks off tonight with the second game in the Women's State of Origin at Suncorp Stadium. I have no doubt the team can bring home the win and set up a decider against the Blues at the Gold Coast.

Once we are through Magic Round we only have to wait a couple of weeks until Queensland Day, when we have set up a mega-round of sport right here in the Sunshine State. There will be blockbuster clashes right across the state: the Gold Coast Suns versus the Brisbane Lions; the Firebirds versus Sunshine Coast Lightning; the Brisbane Broncos versus the Gold Coast Titans; and the mighty North Queensland Cowboys versus the Dolphins. There is no better way to celebrate Queensland Day than by watching your favourite team take on another Queensland team in a local derby. Mark your calendars!

NRL Magic Round

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (9.40 am): Queensland has secured Magic Round, where it belongs. It will be right here in Queensland until 2032! This is a huge win for rugby league fans, a huge win for Brisbane and a huge win for Queensland. It is a win for our businesses, our hotels, our restaurants and our tourism operators because, make no mistake, this is one of the biggest sporting events in the country. Every year Queensland proves there is nowhere better to host it. Caxton Street will buzz. Suncorp Stadium will be electric. The Magic Hub at King George Square will come alive. The excitement will spill across the entire city.


Magic Round was born in Brisbane—one city, every rugby league club. For Brisbane this is one of the biggest weekends of the year. Up to 180,000 fans are expected, around 50,000 of them from interstate. Up to six million TV viewers from across the country and around the world are expected to watch the magic unfold right here in Queensland. The benefits? A \$50 million boost to Queensland. Locking in Magic Round until 2032 gives Queensland certainty. It gives Queensland confidence and it reinforces Queensland's reputation as the events capital of Australia.

Queensland is also the sporting capital of Australia, there is no doubt about that. The Premier just spoke about Queensland Day, but this year Queensland will also host the Rugby League World Cup. There will be matches in Brisbane, Gold Coast and Townsville. We would love to have locked in a few other destinations, like Cairns, but a lack of investment by the former Labor government meant they missed out. That is all going to change. The local member for Cairns can whinge and complain; we are going to deliver. The Crisafulli government is delivering a major upgrade to Barlow Park stadium. After a decade of decline under Labor, the Crisafulli government is ensuring events are shared right across the state.

Even with Magic Round here in Brisbane, the certainty of a deal through to 2032 means that visitors can now come for the footy but stay for everything else Queensland has to offer. When they come for the footy they can book a holiday the week after and take a trip up north or a road trip to the Outback. Explore our great state, because we are not just the events capital; we are also the home of the holiday. The Crisafulli government understands what major events mean for our economy. They create jobs, they back tourism operators and they put Queensland on show to the rest of the country and the world.

What makes Magic Round truly special is the atmosphere—families travelling together, kids meeting their heroes, supporters from rival clubs standing shoulder to shoulder, people coming together to celebrate the game they love in the state that is loved by all. There is nothing else like it in Australian sport. As the eyes of the country turn to Magic Round they will see a state full of confidence, momentum and pride. This weekend will be brilliant, but the future of Magic Round is about to get even better. Watch this space.

NRL Magic Round

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.44 am): The Cauldron is bubbling this morning after the Premier used his wizardry to deliver the Magic Round to Queensland right through to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. There is nothing quite like NRL Magic Round in Brisbane: three massive days, one iconic stadium and the entire rugby league world focused on Queensland. The 2026 Magic Round once again shows that Queensland is the home of Australian sport, with all eight games happening across one unforgettable weekend.

Magic Round begins in the best possible way tonight, as the Premier already mentioned, with the Women's State of Origin kicking off. Tonight Queensland's women will take centre stage showcasing the incredible talent, passion and determination that continues to drive the growth of women's sport. It is a fitting way to open rugby league's biggest celebration, shining a spotlight on elite female athletes inspiring the next generation of girls to get involved. We are one down in that series, but I am confident that tonight Tamika and the mighty Maroons will even the score.


For Queensland fans there is plenty more to cheer about. On Friday night the Dolphins take on South Sydney in a huge prime-time clash, giving the members for Redcliffe and Pumicestone and all Dolphins supporters a chance to see their team shine on one of rugby league's biggest stages. Saturday evening will see the North Queensland Cowboys battle the Sydney Roosters in a crucial test for the Cowboys after recent injuries. I hope the members for Townsville, Mundingburra, Thuringowa and Hinchinbrook are getting their jerseys ready. They are also supported, apparently, by the Premier. Then on Sunday Queensland takes centre stage with a double-header featuring two more of our home teams. The Gold Coast Titans face Newcastle in what promises to be a fast, exciting contest. I am sure the members for Southport and Mermaid Beach will be there watching closely. Then the mighty Brisbane Broncos meet the Warriors in one of the marquee games of the weekend. Suncorp is certain to be electric. Of course the biggest rugby league supporter in this House, the Deputy Premier, will be watching every minute of that game.

While Labor spent years taking major events for granted, the Crisafulli government is focused on securing Queensland's reputation as the home of Australian sport. Labor had a decade to provide certainty around major events and too often relied on Queensland's reputation alone to carry the load. We are taking a proactive approach to ensuring events like Magic Round and Women's State of Origin continue to thrive in Queensland.

The impact of Magic Round goes beyond rugby league in the world of sport. The Brisbane Racing Club expects that Magic Round will bring more than 1,500 extra fans to the iconic Doomben 10,000 race day on Saturday. A special marquee will have a big screen showing the footy, with the BRC encouraging fans to leave the suit at home and don their favourite jerseys. Magic Round is about more than just elite football; it is about growing the game. The NRL and the Crisafulli government will make sure the next generation continues to fall in love with rugby league and inspire more Queenslanders to get involved in sport.

Magic Round shows why Queensland is rugby league's spiritual home, showcasing our teams, our fans and our commitment to giving kids every opportunity to get involved. Whether you support the Broncos, the Dolphins, the Cowboys or the Titans, this weekend is more than just winning; it is about celebrating the future of our game.

NRL Magic Round

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.48 am): The Crisafulli government has kicked another goal for Queensland by securing the Magic Round right through until 2032. That is good news for the many Queensland fans who will be travelling to games this weekend. I take this opportunity to thank everyone who is working to make this weekend's event successful. In particular, I thank the bus and train drivers and all of the support staff, including Queensland Rail staff, who will be working particularly hard to make transport to the event as easy as possible.

That is why it is disappointing that the unions have lodged protected industrial action aimed at disrupting the delivery of train services for Magic Round this weekend. My message to the unions is simple: do not mess with Magic Round. Many Queenslanders have been looking forward to this event and we will have a lot of visitors to the city, both from right across the state and from interstate, who will be relying on public transport to get to and from events safely. Those footy fans, just like thousands of regular rail commuters who have been impacted by service disruptions, have nothing to do with Queensland Rail's current EBA negotiations but they are the ones who are suffering.


I can advise that Queensland Rail and Translink, together with Stadiums Queensland, are working on ways to mitigate the impacts of this protected industrial action. We will have a lot of people trying to get footy fans to and from the event as quickly as possible, and I ask all attendees to be a bit more patient this weekend as we work through what will be considerable crowds. But it is not too late. Queensland Rail has been in the Fair Work Commission this week seeking a direction to withdraw protected industrial action. This will allow Queensland Rail to start dealing with the train maintenance backlog and restore full services. Importantly, it will also allow good faith bargaining to continue.

Regardless of the outcome of this hearing, the unions can call off this protected industrial action at any time, and I ask them to do so. I would also ask those Labor members opposite to consider whose side they are on. Are they on the side of their union masters, or are they on the side of the very people who put them in this place? Are they on the side of the people of Stafford, or are they on the side of the ETU, the RTBU, the CFMEU or the AMWU?

Ms Grace: Which side are you on?

Mr MICKELBERG: I can hear the member for McConnel interjecting over there. We know what side she is on; she sided with the CFMEU long ago at the expense of Queenslanders. That is their record, but they can show they genuinely care about Queenslanders by standing up and calling on the unions to withdraw their protected industrial action. If they are on the side of Queenslanders, I would ask them to call on their union mates and say to them, 'Don't mess with Magic Round.'

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Delivery

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.51 am): The LNP government is delivering the generational infrastructure required for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond, and with Magic Round this weekend it demonstrates more than ever that Queensland is the events capital of the country.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I was pleased to stand with the Premier at Victoria Park just last week to announce that through the master plan being undertaken by Arup around two-thirds of the park will remain as public green space following the construction of the new 63,000-seat Brisbane Stadium. Not only will the 2032 games be an opportunity for the eyes of the world to be on all of Queensland but we are ensuring the lifestyle that Queensland is famous for remains intact after the closing ceremony. The government is delivering the 17 new and upgraded venues that were announced as part of our 2032 Delivery Plan, as well as delivering required upgrades for Suncorp Stadium which will host league fans from across the country this weekend and, thanks to the work of this government, through to at least 2032. That is the magic in the air in Queensland for Magic Round this weekend.

I take the interjection from the honourable Minister for Sport a few minutes ago. I will be watching and cheering; there is no doubt about that. I will cheer them all because they are all good. After more than 1,200 days of Labor games chaos, our plan is ensuring that Queenslanders feel the benefits of the games and the legacy but—

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Yay team! Go team! This could all be at risk. Our ability to deliver a world-class games for Queenslanders could be at risk if there is a return of a Labor government in Queensland. We know that the Leader of the Opposition and his team have been on-again off-again supporters of Brisbane Stadium, they do not support rowing in Rockhampton and now we find out they do not support sailing in the beautiful Whitsundays.

While we are delivering, we know that when push comes to shove Labor will always back their mates in the union movement over Queenslanders, and this includes the CFMEU. I want to address a most serious matter from the CFMEU royal commission yesterday. Helen Burgess ran a protection racket for the CFMEU. It has been two weeks since the last sitting when I tabled in this House a copy of a staffing list from the QCU in the early 2000s—nearly 25 years ago—when the member for McConnel was the secretary of the union and Helen Burgess was listed as an administrative officer, and there has not been a peep from the member for McConnel about this issue.

I refer to testimony yesterday of Paul Smith, the current workplace health and safety regional director for the far north, who has worked in the department since 2006. Giving testimony yesterday, and referring to Ms Burgess, he stated—

I always thought she fervently believed in their ideology—

the CFMEU's ideology—

or she was getting some financial benefit from it. That's the only two outcomes that I could see why anyone would be like that, because it was just amazing. She would just not tolerate any disagreement with what the union wanted. Whatever the union said was right, no matter what my inspectors did or said.


That was the stranglehold the CFMEU had on the former Labor government and the former minister for industrial relations. In his witness statement, Mr Smith also referred to comments from former minister Grace on receiving information about Ms Burgess's referral to the CCC for two matters, with the then minister alleged to have said—

It's just terrible how they treat that poor woman, there is a band of inspectors that really give her a hard time and doing the wrong thing, they just don't want to do their jobs.

Former minister Grace and her office are consistently alleged to have been intervening and involving themselves in the day-to-day matters of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, ensuring the CFMEU got their way every time and wielding a level of influence to intimidate public servants in OIR to do the union's bidding. Mr Smith went on to say—and this is the most concerning part from yesterday's testimony—that Ms Burgess would tell him that minister Grace Grace's office would be unhappy with his decisions around CFMEU complaints, given he was not doing their bidding. He said other public servants would refer directly to 'this pressure coming from the minister's office', as opposed to Ms Burgess saying 'the minister's not happy' or 'the minister's office is not happy'.

These are again more serious, concerning allegations, and Queenslanders are still yet to receive an explanation from the member for McConnel. It is in the public interest for the member for McConnel to front up and explain herself in the face of these ongoing, confronting and most serious allegations, and particularly why she chose to back the CFMEU over her hardworking public servants in the department she was supposed to lead and protect.

Federal Budget


 **Hon. DC JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (9.56 am): As we approach the Queensland budget, Queenslanders are entitled to ask a simple question: where was Queensland in this week's federal budget? At a time of growing global uncertainty, rising cost pressures and increasing pressure on state services, Queensland needed recognition from Canberra. Instead, we were left behind. While billions of dollars flowed to projects in southern states, Queensland was once again expected to do the heavy lifting. The federal government found billions for projects like Victoria's Suburban Rail Loop, while Queensland was overlooked on nation-building infrastructure and left carrying growing pressures across health, housing and essential services.

Queenslanders are right to expect more from a Treasurer who represents a Queensland electorate in Canberra. However, instead of standing up for Queensland, Jim Chalmers handed down a budget that shifts more pressure and more responsibility to the states—more pressure on hospitals, more pressure on housing, more pressure on frontline services, more cost shifting and more pressure on state budgets. That matters because the global economic environment is increasingly uncertain and dangerous. The war in the Middle East is not just a geopolitical crisis; it is an economic shock. Global oil markets have already experienced significant volatility. Energy prices remain unstable; shipping and supply chains are under pressure too. Global uncertainty is placing pressure on inflation while weakening growth prospects. The Reserve Bank has warned inflation will remain persistent for longer than expected, and global institutions continue to warn about weaker global growth and rising recessionary risks.

Queensland will not be immune from those pressures, yet the federal government's response was to leave Queensland hanging at precisely the moment our state needed support and recognition. This also comes on top of the fiscal position we inherited from the former Labor government here in Queensland. After a decade of fiscal mismanagement, Labor left Queensland with record debt, ongoing deficits and billions in unfunded pressures baked into the budget. They failed to exercise fiscal discipline during the good years, and they left Queensland exposed at exactly the wrong time. This is the context for the upcoming Queensland budget: a volatile global economy; persistent inflationary pressures; a federal government that has failed to deliver Queensland its fair share; revenue pressures with a strengthened Australian dollar, commodity price fluctuations and a GST deal that penalises Queensland's resources sector and our state's decentralisation; and a state budget still dealing with the consequences of a decade of Labor decline.

The task before us is clear. Our budget will be responsible. It will focus on strengthening Queensland's economy. It will continue targeted support for households under pressure from global economic uncertainty. It will invest in the essential services Queenslanders rely on. It will continue the hard work of repairing the state's finances after a decade of Labor mismanagement and it will ensure Queensland is prepared to weather an uncertain global environment and emerge stronger on the other side.

Jack's Law; Domestic and Family Violence

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (9.59 am): The Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland. We are delivering safety where you live with strong laws, more police and better resources. Jack's Law is a clear example of that approach. When Labor was prepared to let the laws lapse, we stepped in. The Crisafulli government is giving police the tools they need to stop knife crime before it happens, and the results speak for themselves.

Jack's Law has reached a major milestone. Less than a year after Jack's Law was made permanent and expanded under the Crisafulli government, 1,032 weapons have been taken off Queensland streets. Over 127,000 people have been scanned across the state, leading to 1,947 arrests on 3,773 charges. That is what it looks like to back the front line. After 10 years of Labor making excuses for their watered-down laws while crime surged, the Crisafulli government is taking action and delivering results to restore safety where you live.


May is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month—a time to remember those lives lost, honour the strength of victim-survivors and reaffirm our shared commitment to ending domestic and family violence in Queensland. This year's theme, 'Together Queenslanders can prevent domestic and family violence', is a powerful reminder that the prevention of domestic and family violence is a responsibility we all share.

At the beginning of the month, on the Sunshine Coast that collective commitment was on full display. In my own electorate a new red bench was unveiled at Tickle Park in Coolum. This project has been nearly a year in the making. It was brought to life by the incredible volunteers at the Coolum Men's Shed working alongside local police, council and the Red Rose Foundation and adds to more than 100 red benches right across the state. It is more than a bench; it is a place for reflection, a place for conversation.

Domestic and family violence has an enormous impact across all our communities. Police in Queensland respond to a DFV related incident every three minutes—a confronting reminder of the scale of this issue and the pressure on our front line. That is why the Crisafulli government is delivering a fresh approach. Our landmark reforms give police the ability to issue on-the-spot police protection directions, providing immediate protection and reducing the trauma of repeated court processes. We are rolling out GPS tracking for high-risk perpetrators.

After a decade of decline under Labor, where incidents surged 218 per cent, the Crisafulli government is determined to do things differently—to put victims first, hold perpetrators to account and drive real change, because together Queenslanders can prevent domestic and family violence.

Domestic and Family Violence

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.02 am): I echo those words of the police minister. Together Queenslanders can prevent domestic and family violence. I am working very closely with the police minister, the Attorney-General and the victims minister to do all we can to reform what was a decade of decline left by those opposite, particularly in system failures.

In Australia a woman dies every four days at the hands of a current or a former partner. Behind every statistic is a mother, sister, daughter, friend or colleague. That is why last week I was humbled to sit alongside Shayne Probert as we remembered her mother, Doreen Langham, and Danielle Carroll as we remembered her sister Kelly Wilkinson. We also remembered Carra Luke as I sat with Dr Luis Prado and Carra's two daughters, as well as Allison Baden-Clay. I was honoured to hear from Vanessa Fowler and sit with her parents at the candlelight vigil which I know many of us participated in right across our communities.

We are doing what we said we would do, starting with the delivery of three new hope hubs not just in South-East Queensland but across the state. Later this month I will join Beyond DV at Orion Springfield Central to officially open the hope hub that will deliver healing and recovery in this centrally located hub.

A government member: Hear, hear!

Ms CAMM: Thank you. Victim-survivors will be connected with trauma informed recovery services as well as housing, legal, financial and health supports, and employment and training opportunities so that victim-survivors can achieve economic independence and security. Procurement is underway for the North Queensland 24/7 domestic violence hub in Townsville.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Ms CAMM: This will ensure—and I thank the advocates for North Queensland—North Queensland victims can pick up the phone and have confidence, firstly, that it will be answered but also that a 24/7 place-based response will be delivered for North Queenslanders. Unlike those opposite, our government understands the challenge of regional and remote Queensland. This new hub will not only deliver greater capacity across our state but also support our approach, which is a different approach and one that is welcomed by victim-survivors.


Under the Labor government, DVConnect's response rate dropped to a low of 41.9 per cent. Too many women in crisis were left without support, the phone was not answered and too many police referrals were left unanswered. Following the intervention of the Crisafulli government, the response rates have now improved significantly and are consistently sitting at close to 80 per cent month on month, and there is more work to do. Abandoned calls have also dropped dramatically. Under those opposite, 10,000 calls in a single quarter were left unanswered. We have now increased that performance, with the latest reporting data showing a decrease to 4,000.

While we have a long way to go in undoing the decade of decline by those opposite, we are bringing forward interventions that mean the most to victim-survivors. We have also brought forward the state's first peak domestic violence body. This is years earlier than those opposite had intended. We have also established a sexual violence peak body because we know it is important, particularly on the back of the incredible work the Attorney-General has delivered in the backlog of rape kits. That peak service, along with the domestic violence peak body, will now be working with victim-survivors to ensure justice is served.

We are taking real and meaningful action, and I support all of the reforms that the police minister outlined. I look forward to working with him as we bring forth further reforms and tools for police that have been welcomed and received well by victim-survivors and their advocates right across the state.

Reported DFV incidents across Queensland increased by almost 220 per cent under a decade of the Labor government. We will continue to do everything we can to turn around this trend but also to fix the broken systems left by those opposite. We will continue to deliver safety where you live, safety in your community and, for victims of domestic and family violence, safety in the home.


Corrective Services, Workforce

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.07 am): The Crisafulli government is restoring safety where you live after a decade of decline under the previous Labor government. We are delivering stronger laws. We are delivering more police. We are delivering the largest investment in early intervention and rehabilitation so that we have fewer victims of crime in this state. Today, ahead of National Corrections Day tomorrow, I want to take the opportunity to thank our hardworking correctional officers right across Queensland who suit up, kit up and show up every single day to restore safety where Queenslanders live.

I want to update the House on the work that the Crisafulli government is doing to rebuild the system after a decade of Labor's crime crisis, which left our correctional system overcrowded and without the resources or infrastructure our QCS officers needed to keep Queenslanders safe. Not only have we delivered the first new prison in more than a decade and not only are we investing \$2 billion to uplift capacity in our correctional system in Townsville and at Arthur Gorrie; we have also strengthened Corrective Services' ranks to deliver a strong and supported workforce. In just 18 months more than 1,500 corrections officers have joined the front line, working in our prisons, in our community corrections and working right across the state, and there is more to come. We know that there is a lot more work to be done. When we came into government 18 months ago, prison capacity was at 150 per cent. Longstanding capacity issues have been 10 years in the making. They cannot be fixed overnight, but we are committed to ensuring our correctional officers have both the resources and the infrastructure they need to keep Queenslanders safe.

I have had the privilege of meeting correctional teams right across the state, attended numerous graduation ceremonies and witnessed the exceptional work and professionalism of the QCS team—from our correctional facilities, our training facilities and in-community correctional offices. Our officers operate in high-pressure, high-stakes environments and they make critical decisions every single day to protect Queenslanders. They go above and beyond to serve our Queensland community. To our officers right across the state I say: the Crisafulli government backs you and we believe in the work that you do, and we will continue to give you the laws and resources you need to drive down crime and see a strong and capable workforce so we have fewer victims of crime in this state.

Federal Government, Small and Family Business; Small Business Month

 **Hon. SJ MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (10.10 am): The federal Labor government's failure to plan and secure our fuel supply is hurting Queensland's small and family businesses, whether that is supply chain costs or putting pressure on the economy that is leading to the interest rate rises that are breaking Queenslanders. Queensland's small and family business sector is crying out for federal leadership and certainty, which have been sadly lacking.

This failure by federal Labor to deliver leadership was made clear to me just a few days ago when I visited small and family businesses across the electorate of Stafford with our great local candidate, Fiona Hammond. One thing was patently evident: small and family businesses across Stafford are crying out for a strong local advocate, and that is what Fiona Hammond will absolutely deliver. Fiona has shown that she can deliver as a local councillor and is willing to stand up and fight for her local small and family business community. In stark contrast to her opponent, she is not a product of a Labor Party machine that has a track record of poor planning and failure to deliver.


It was great to join Fiona last Saturday and see firsthand the people of Stafford supporting their local small businesses ahead of Mother's Day—whether it was buying flowers for mum at 7 Days Florist in Chermside or taking mum out for coffee at Nanna & Da's cafe in Kedron or buying a roast for lunch from Rode Meats butcher shop in Stafford Heights. When speaking to the owners of these hardworking small businesses, the message was the same: supply chain costs and interest rate rises due to federal Labor's mismanagement of the international fuel crisis are hurting and breaking Queensland small and family businesses. It is no surprise that small and family businesses are keen to hear more about the Crisafulli government's plan to control and drill, refine and store our own fuel. We should not be at the mercy of international events, whether that is a war in the Middle East or elsewhere. Small and family businesses should not be at the mercy of being at the end of global supply chains.

The Crisafulli government is doing our part in planning for the future, but we are also delivering right now. Queensland Small Business Month 2026 has started with a bang, with events across the state. From bustling city centres to regional towns, more than 508,000 small and family businesses are integral to the social and economic fabric of Queensland communities and it is vital that we recognise their contribution. That is why Queensland Small Business Month this year is such a significant event, recognising the resilience, passion and determination of small business owners. With a program of hundreds of events and initiatives, including 30 regional events supported by our event delivery grants, this month is all about supporting small business to build resilience, embrace innovation and seize opportunities. If you get the chance, join us for one of our flagship full-day expos in Cairns on 19 May, the Gold Coast on 21 May and here in Brisbane at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre on 26 May. Whether you attend an expo, a local community event or participate in an online workshop, there is something for everyone. To register for our expos or to find out more information, please visit business.qld.gov.au.

On this side of the House we understand that small and family businesses are indeed the backbone of Queensland's economy and the very beating heart of our communities, driving innovation, creating jobs and enriching every corner of our state. Someone else who understands the importance of small and family business is our candidate for Stafford, so when it comes to the other important event in May—the Stafford by-election—Fiona Hammond is someone Queenslanders can get behind as a strong voice for the local community and to send a message to Labor and the Greens to get out of the way and allow this country to take control of our destiny once again.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Reports

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.14 am): I lay upon the table of the House the following report of the Ethics Committee—report No. 244 titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 29 April 2025 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for McConnel*.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 244, 58th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 29 April 2025 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for McConnel [\[715\]](#).

The committee made the following recommendation to the House—


That the House make a finding of contempt against the Leader of the Opposition for deliberately misleading the House in accordance with section 37 of the POQA and Standing Order 266(2) and that the Leader of the Opposition make an unequivocal apology to the House at the earliest opportunity.

The committee's consideration of allegations regarding the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for McConnell are also discussed in the report. The committee also urges all members to stand up and acknowledge when they have made incorrect statements in the House. When genuine, unequivocal and unreserved apologies are made in a prompt manner, matters are often quickly resolved without referral to the Ethics Committee.

Finally, I also lay upon the table of the House report No. 245 titled *Report on a right of reply No. 49*. I commend the reports to the House.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 245, 58th Parliament—Report on a Right of Reply No. 49 [\[716\]](#).

Leader of the Opposition, Finding of Contempt and Apology


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.16 am): With reference to Ethics Committee report No. 244 tabled today, I accept the findings of the report. I offer my unreserved and sincere unequivocal apology to the House.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The chair of the Ethics Committee has all but just tabled the report. The opposition leader has a printed speech in response to the report. How did the opposition leader know what he was required to do in the contents of that report if no-one has access to this report and given it has just literally been tabled? The opposition leader does not have a printer at his desk just there. This is a matter of privilege that I will be writing to you about, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Feel free to do that. We will address that later on, but feel free to write to me.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument


 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (10.17 am): I give notice that I will move—

That Part 2 of the Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026, Subordinate Legislation No. 7 of 2026, tabled in the House on 10 February 2026, be disallowed.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time today will conclude at 11.17 am.

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

 **Mr MILES** (10.17 am): My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. I table ASIC extracts which show that she became a shareholder in three companies on 1 April 2024. Does the minister stand by her statement last night that there were 'no changes in circumstances in respect of the companies since December 2022'?

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Australian Securities and Investments Commission—Change to company details' regarding SA & CD Camm Investments Pty Ltd [\[717\]](#).

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question given—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms CAMM:—yes; I take that interjection from the victim support minister—he has just been found in contempt of the parliament and is questioning integrity. For the benefit of the House and given that not all members were in the House last night when I made a statement pertaining to this, I am a carer for a family member with an intellectual disability and it is my role to look after her day-to-day needs, her health and her wellbeing as a power of attorney. I administer the day-to-day financial supports that she needs, including the oversight of her NDIS plan, supports and package. I have integrity advice and a conflict of interest management plan in place due to my role as disability services minister.

Upon my grandmother's death, I was advised that I had become executor and trustee of my grandmother's estate for the benefit of the family member with the intellectual disability and that I had become the director of several company structures as well as a family trust in what I would say, in consultation with the Clerk, is a very complicated structure that was left by my grandmother.

A client structure was then provided to the Clerk of the Parliament by my grandmother's lawyer. I immediately contacted the Clerk and provided him the information that I had been provided. The Clerk and I met on this matter on 2 December 2022, with my grandmother's lawyer joining by telephone. The Clerk prepared my declaration based upon the information at hand and the conversations between the solicitor and the Clerk. My register of interests has reflected this advice under subclause 7(5)(b)(i)(iii) and has done so since that day, with no changes in circumstances.

I sought further advice from the Clerk yesterday amongst media reports by the *Australian*. The Clerk has now stated that what was not clear to him from the information and the conversation was my status as director, shareholder, trustee, executor and power of attorney. The declaration that was prepared by the Clerk for me was only around the directorships declared. The Clerk has recommended for clarity that I amend my declaration by inserting the words 'and shares' after the word 'directorships' in the declaration, which I did last night. The Clerk also advised that I inform the House, which I did last night. I want to make it very clear on the record that I do not own any shares in the company; I oversee it as an executor of an estate.

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

Mr MILES: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. The minister blamed her department for the Unify failure, blamed the Clerk for not disclosing shares and blamed a break for not properly disclosing a personal relationship. When will the minister take responsibility for her actions?

Government members interjected.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order with respect to inferences in the question from the Leader of the Opposition. I ask you to consider that matter.

Mr SPEAKER: The question was around the minister taking responsibility for her actions. There were a number of aspects to the question. I call the minister.

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. Whether it be members of this House, members of the public or members of the Stafford community, I think everybody knows that this is a deflection because of the double-digit demise of the Leader of the Opposition that we are about to witness on Saturday. I take my ministerial responsibilities very seriously, as I know all ministers on this side of the House do, given the system failures that we have to fix including in child safety, the domestic violence system, the health system, the corrections system and the justice system. What we have seen on display in this House has been nothing short of gutter politics. To have questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition, who today has been found in contempt of the parliament—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you are warned.

Ms CAMM: To hear today from the Leader of the Opposition, who has been found in contempt of the parliament, who would like to politicise (1) the death of my grandmother and (2) the responsibility I hold in caring for someone with a disability—

Mr MILES: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask that the minister withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence.

Ms CAMM: I withdraw. The opposition and the Labor Party want to stoop to gutter politics to politicise the death of a family member and the legal responsibility that I have in caring for a member of my family with an intellectual disability. Everyone in this House knows that we all sign up for the sport, the theatre and the personal attacks, but when it concerns our family members, our children and vulnerable people in our lives, like my family member with a disability, I will let Queenslanders judge the opposition on their record—

Mrs Nightingale interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Inala, you are warned.

Ms CAMM: Queenslanders can judge those opposite. They will be judging them this Saturday. We will stand on our record of what we are doing—delivering on the things that actually matter to Queenslanders.

Fuel Security

Mr G KELLY: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering short-, medium- and long-term solutions to the fuel crisis, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the member for Mirani for the question. It is an historic question, as it is the first question after a leader of the opposition has just been found in contempt of the parliament. It is pretty historic. It is most likely to be his last question as the Leader of the Opposition, so it is pretty historic on that front as well. This weekend, the people of Stafford will have an opportunity to pass judgement on this Leader of the Opposition. If he does not secure a double-digit swing towards him, we know he is gone. We are all waiting.

The member for Mirani asked about a fuel security plan. This is a golden opportunity for us to send a message about returning sovereignty to this state and this nation. It is a golden opportunity to say to the world that this nation does not have to be at the end of a global supply chain—that we can control our own destiny and that we can drill, refine and store.

I look at our plan to unlock oil reserves. The work of refining more fuel in Queensland started before this in Taroom Trough. The Deputy Premier is making more opportunities available for people to build a new refinery in this state. There is the deal we did with Ampol using biorenewable diesel—there is a great opportunity there. We have a historic deal to boost fuel storage. Negotiations to extend the lease started before. The greatest criticism the opposition could make was, ‘Why didn’t they start two months earlier?’ If only someone had had 10 years to protect sovereignty in this nation! I talk about the removal of state taxes to ensure we do not benefit from rising prices, that we do not benefit from people’s misery. I talk about the work of locking in permanent 50-cent fares—not a short-term sugar hit but for the long term. Then I talk about our fight to improve transparency, to make sure there is a national dashboard so we can see in real time what is happening and people can plan.

Those opposite know our fuel plan. What is theirs?

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: What is the Leader of the Opposition’s fuel plan? Does he have one? The people of Stafford will see our plan to invest in the beds and the staff in health or their plan for a scare campaign; our plan for stronger laws or theirs to vote against Adult Crime, Adult Time; our plan for more infrastructure and housing or theirs to continue to try to defend the legacy that did nothing. On the salient issue I ask: does the Leader of the Opposition have a plan for fuel security or fuel usage? Does anybody know? What is the plan?

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will yell interjections. They do not have a plan—or do they?

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Do they have a secret plan? I yearn for a time when this nation returns to having sovereignty—to drill, refine and store our own fuel.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Woodridge, my patience is running out. You have been interjecting nonstop.

Child Safety Commission of Inquiry

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: We will hear the question in silence.

Ms McMILLAN: The Child Safety Commission of Inquiry has been cut by six months under the minister’s watch. Will the minister commit to publicly releasing the Child Safety Commission of Inquiry report when it is provided to her next Friday?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. We are looking forward to receiving the commissioner's report because, after the last decade, we have inherited a broken child safety system. I thank the member for the question. I note she was not one of the five former child safety ministers during the time of the previous Labor government.

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, you are warned.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the member for Aspley. I am No. 6—almost the longest serving. That is certainly longer than one member sitting over there. For the shadow minister's benefit, I watched intently the commission of inquiry, particularly in relation to the residential care system which became the holding ground and what was relied on because those opposite are ideologically opposed to family-based care. I look forward to the recommendations in the report that speak about the failings of former ministers where they prioritised residential care that delivered perverse outcomes for children over investing in family-based care, which is what we are doing on this side of the House, particularly around foster care. That takes leadership.

Under our Premier and under our government we are empowered to make decisions that are in the best interests of Queenslanders and deliver policies that are in the best interests of our most vulnerable. What we have seen this morning is not leadership. What we have seen this morning from the Leader of the Opposition—

Mrs Poole: The current leader!

Ms CAMM: I will take that interjection. The leader until Saturday. There is no other leader who has been held in contempt other than former premier Palaszczuk. Now her successor, the Leader of the Opposition, has been held in contempt of the parliament. It is extraordinary. When we compare and contrast, under those opposite we had a decade of decline, a broken child safety system and all the other broken systems that this side of the House is trying to fix. Nothing has changed over there. It is the same people sitting in the same front seats. I feel sorry for the shadow minister. She was not part of that cabinet. For the backbench, they have all the same frontbenchers, the rotating chairs, led by a leader who has been held in contempt of this parliament—an historic and sad day in Queensland's political history.

Fuel Security

Ms HATCHER: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Given Queenslanders are feeling the pinch at the fuel pump, can the Deputy Premier update the House about the Crisafulli LNP government's plan to unlock fuel security, and is he aware of any other alternative approaches?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the member for Caloundra for her question and for putting fuel security at the heart of the issues in Caloundra and for her wonderful residents on the Sunshine Coast. This side of the House is putting fuel security and sovereign capability at the forefront, just as we are in the Stafford by-election. That is why we have put our plans in place. This morning we have seen extraordinary scenes. When we talk about alternative plans, how can they have one? There is no alternative plan for fuel security from the opposition leader—an opposition leader who has just been found in contempt of parliament. This is extraordinary. The only other one over there who knows a thing or two about contempt of parliament is the one sitting next to him because years ago his deputy leader was also found in contempt of parliament. Former Labor premier Annastacia Palaszczuk was also found in contempt. More enlightening is the committee report, which I have just read, where it says in the conclusion under 104—

With respect to the alleged contempt under Standing Order 266(2),

which is the misleading of parliament—

the committee found that each of the elements was established.

The committee therefore found a contempt against the Leader of the Opposition.

There is no dissenting report in this Ethics Committee report. The Labor Party members on that committee—Mr Peter Russo, member for Toohey; Ms Jennifer Howard, member for Ipswich; and the Hon. Leanne Linard, member for Nudgee, who is in his shadow cabinet—found their leader in contempt. If I were in the Labor Party and I looked at what the opposition leader is doing I would find him in contempt every single day. A measly little apology is not going to cut it in Stafford.

The member asked about our fuel security plan. We have the Taroom Trough—drilling, refining and storing in Queensland. That is the LNP plan. We have put it out there. Renewable diesel: a \$25 million investment under our Sovereign Industry Development Fund. The member asks about the alternative plan. This morning the Premier asked me whether I am aware of it.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: People ask what the Labor plan is for fuel security and I have just found out.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you are warned.

Mr BLEIJIE: When we are looking at fuel supply and security for Queenslanders, the Labor Party are looking for fuel cards for their shadow ministers. I have heard that shadow ministers have requested fuel cards. That is why they have been talking about immediate relief recently—because they want fuel cards. I just had this fall off the back of a truck—a ‘Stevo’s servos’ fuel card. I am going to table this fuel card because it says ‘Expiry date 17 May 2026.’

Mr SPEAKER: It is not a prop. Put that down or table it.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Steven Miles MP, on a fuel card [\[718\]](#).

Mr BLEIJIE: Why would it expire the day after the Stafford by-election? We want real fuel security, not the lining of the pockets of shadow ministers.

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

Ms ENOCH: My question is to the Premier. The Premier said he had been assured by ministers Camm and Mander that they made all the appropriate declarations at the appropriate time. Now that the Minister for Child Safety has revealed she had not declared shareholdings on her register of interests for a second time, how many more chances will the minister be given?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the honourable member for the question and I think I might answer it like this. It is a question that relates to an arrangement about someone in this House assisting a family member with an intellectual disability. I am going to say it again because I would have thought after the first couple of answers they would have had time to scribble down another question. I would have thought so. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I am even happy to answer it without notice as we heard him do with the Ethics Committee report just a moment ago. That is uncharted territory. I am going to say again to the honourable member: you are asking a question about an arrangement with no financial benefit for an intellectually disabled family member.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier is speaking to the question. I would like to hear the response.

Mr CRISAFULLI: This place will always be a place of robust discussion and debate. It should be.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Pine Rivers is warned.

Mr CRISAFULLI: The other thing I will say is, if those opposite want to articulate allegations about relationships and conflicts of interest, absolutely, no dramas, but when you start talking about arrangements outside this place with others, when you start talking about someone caring for a family member, then that is a no-go zone. That is different. We are not talking about an attack between two politicians—that is all fair game. We are talking about an arrangement with a family member.

I am going to flag something. There is a reason the question has come from someone in the same faction as the Leader of the Opposition, and I will tell members what it is: there is a date with destiny and it is coming. It is coming in a few days. History will show that if an opposition cannot attract a big swing towards it midway through a term then the leader of that political movement is in big trouble. The honourable member who is a factional fellow of the Leader of the Opposition knows it and those in the Left know it. There are those swarming around him, waiting to pounce. If the best thing they can do is resort to attacks on individuals in desperation, it shows that the Leader of the Opposition is living on borrowed time.

Workplace Codes of Conduct

Mr KEMPTON: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the Deputy Premier advise how the Crisafulli LNP government is ensuring Queensland workers are protected from inappropriate influence, threats and intimidation in the workplace, and is he aware of any alternative approaches during a decade of decline where workers were not afforded those protections?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the member for Cook for the question. It is a most serious question. We were only just talking about the CFMEU influencing practices of the former Labor government and former Labor ministers. As I have just revealed, I heard along the corridors of Parliament House that the Labor Party's priority is getting taxpayer-funded fuel cards for their shadow ministers. That is why they have been asking for immediate relief; we just did not know they were seeking immediate relief. Everybody knows that Labor's landlord Leader of the Opposition with his three investment properties—four properties in total but three are investment—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Fumer interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove, I ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr FURNER: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: You are on the warned list as well.

A government member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He is whingeing because he was not on the list to get a fuel card. It was only shadow ministers who were trying to get one for their struggles. Labor's landlord Leader of the Opposition with his four properties, three of which are investment properties, seems to have been grandfathered out of the tax chain that his federal comrades raid. He has not made any mention or complained about the federal budget because his three investment properties are grandfathered. He is one of the biggest property moguls in this parliament.

If we are to talk about the Leader of the Opposition's leadership or lack of leadership, let us look at the Stafford by-election. I heard the deputy opposition leader talk about preferences and so forth for a party that is not even running in this election. The Socialists are running. They have their signs everywhere. The Socialists' authorised campaign material is actually from a Teachers' Union representative who recently was a guest speaker at the CFMEU. I table a copy of that.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents including extract from CFMEU social media account dated 23 May 2025 and a photograph depicting a Queensland Socialists sign [\[719\]](#).

How it all goes around. Here is another thing: I have been out in Stafford in the past few weeks but particularly this week and I can advise the House that, because there is not much motivation on that side of the House, they have had to ship in some Tasmanian Labor Party members to help with doorknocking and so forth. The problem is that, as I am reliably informed, someone went past a group of six of them doorknocking on the weekend and they just happened to be doorknocking in the wrong electorate. They were doorknocking in the electorate of Clayfield. They were on the wrong side of the boundary. In case the opposition leader is going to show up in Stafford on the weekend, I table a map of Stafford so that he knows how to get there.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Electoral Commission Queensland 2017 Queensland State Electoral District of Stafford' [\[720\]](#).

We have been doorknocking in Stafford and the feedback we are getting is pretty good about Fiona Hammond.

Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development

Mrs NIGHTINGALE: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development. The *Australian* has reported that the minister owes creditors \$1,650 for a flight provided to him by mining company Vitronite. Has the minister repaid the money to the creditors?

Mr LAST: What a disgrace it is that this member would stand up in this place and attack public servants.

Mrs NIGHTINGALE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and ask that he withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence.

Mr LAST: I withdraw. Queensland is a big state. When I took on this portfolio I made it very clear that I would get out and about and visit the many mines and gas companies right across this state. That is what we do: we support our resources sector in Queensland. When opportunities arise to travel to sites with respective companies, I take those opportunities because it is important that we send the message that we are supporting them and backing them. It is an opportunity to meet with their staff on the ground who are doing such great work.

On this occasion I travelled with the Vitrinite crew to their mine, and that was all aboveboard. There is nothing wrong with doing that. According to my rules and the policy in my office, we pay our way. We do not expect any free rides. When that invoice came in, I authorised its payment and sent it upstairs for payment. I subsequently received advice that it was not paid. I have an email from the Executive Director of Ministerial Services expressing their sincere apologies for the issue that has arisen and accepting full responsibility for the oversight.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister is being directly relevant to the question.

Mr LAST: The email states—

Ministerial Services accepts full responsibility for this oversight and can confirm that this invoice has now been paid to the administrators.

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

That the document that the minister is citing be tabled.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion negatived.

Mr LAST: Of course, this raises a question that should go to the Leader of the Opposition: is he going to pay for the infamous birthday cake? I wonder if he is going to pay for that. On this side, when the bills are due and payable we pay them.

A government member: That's why he wants a fuel card.

Mr LAST: A fuel card to deliver the birthday cake. As I said, that invoice has been paid. Ministerial Services have accepted responsibility. We are not going to attack our hardworking public servants who are doing a fantastic job.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, you are warned.

Mr LAST: It is a disgrace that the member comes in here today and casts aspersions on our public servants who are doing a great job. In this role, I will continue to visit mine sites in Queensland because we are backing our resources companies throughout all of the state and we will continue to do that. This matter is just proof that those opposite will do anything to get into the gutter.

Road Infrastructure

Mr LEE: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. How is the Crisafulli LNP government getting Queenslanders home sooner and safer, and is the minister aware of any plans that would not benefit most Queensland commuters?

Mr MICKELBERG: I want to thank the member for Hervey Bay for his question. He is a tireless advocate for his community, including advocating for the Pialba-Burrum Heads Road, fighting for federal funding on that important road. He is focused on delivery, unlike his predecessor, and more focused on building than bunting. We have seen plenty of projects in his patch where bunting went up but no shovels went in the ground. That is true in Hervey Bay, as it is in Stafford. We saw those opposite had 10 years to fix a dangerous stretch of road on Hamilton Road, Stafford. Tragically, at least one life has been lost on that road. I have a letter here from Yvette D'Ath saying it is not their job. They have no money to do it. They said they would not work with council to fix that road. I table that document.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 20 December 2021, from the former Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Leader of the House, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, to the Lord Mayor, Brisbane City Council, Councillor Adrian Schrinner, regarding the proposed upgrade and signalisation of Hamilton Road [721].

Our speaking list is not on that tabling. We have seen a few instances this week of documents being tabled and circulated when perhaps they should not have been—their question lists from question time yesterday, federal budget talking points which were designed for weasel words as to how Labor MPs could avoid showing that the Prime Minister broke his word and, interestingly, I was surprised to receive an email in my inbox earlier in the week—I am clearly on the opposition's distribution list for their key issues briefs—about the Queensland opposition's key issues briefs on affordability/cost of living.

I thought, 'What is their plan for fuel security? There must be a reference in here.' So, I had a bit of a read. It acknowledges that we inherited an affordability crisis, of their making. It acknowledges that there is government support. In fact, the first support measure in their own briefing note directs people to the Queensland government emergency relief program. Tick—well done for that! There is no mention, however, in here of anything in relation to fuel cards for shadow ministers—not at all. There is nothing in here whatsoever. There is absolutely no mention. That begs the question: what is their plan for fuel security? The House has heard our plan for fuel security. I would suspect Labor's plan for fuel security, based on what we heard today, is that they do not want anyone to ask the question. They do not want to be asked the question because they do not have a plan.

This weekend is a test. It is a test for the Leader of the Opposition. Oppositions typically win big in by-elections. If they do not get a double-digit swing towards them, the opposition leader is cooked. The vultures are circling around the carcass of the opposition leader because he is cooked. Queenslanders know that the Leader of the Opposition has not changed his stripes. He has learnt nothing, and this weekend is an opportunity for the people of Stafford to send a message to the Labor Party that they need to do better.

(Time expired)

Cairns Hospital

Mr JKELLY: My question is to the Minister for Health. 9News reported a woman in her 40s died in Cairns Hospital after waiting more than 30 minutes for an ambulance as they were all ramped. Can the minister advise on what date will the first patient be on a bed in the Cairns Hospital expansion so sick Queenslanders do not have to wait?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question because, yet again, it gives me an opportunity to refer to Labor's hospital failures. It is one of my favourite referrals. Before we go down that path, firstly let me say that there is a family and loved ones behind that lady who passed away. I want to say on behalf of the government—I am sure all of us—that our deepest condolences and sympathy are with you as that loss will always be felt. That is the case with the many questions I get asked about people who tragically pass away and where questions are asked about the health service. I wanted to do that first of all. It is important that that be done. I did that when this matter was brought to my attention by Channel 9 earlier in the week.

I also want to thank the hardworking paramedics and ambulance officers who were very busy that night in Cairns in answering calls. They do their best under very difficult circumstances. It is very important that that be done. It is also important that I acknowledge that the matter has, in fact, already been referred by the QAS to the Coroner because they were concerned to ensure that the appropriate process was followed in those circumstances.

This is a tragic loss around which we extend our sympathies to the family. Thanks to the paramedics and the ambulance officers who do the hard work in difficult circumstances. In fact, the hard work they did saw that patient resuscitated. The patient was transported to the hospital and emergency and was subsequently treated in emergency but passed away some hours later. Obviously, patient confidentiality restricts me from saying any more than that, but those were the circumstances that surrounded that particular issue.

In relation to Cairns, let me say this: the Crisafulli government is investing the largest single investment in North Queensland in its history with our \$1 billion Hospital Rescue Plan for Cairns. We are doing what those over there failed to do. We are delivering a master plan for the Cairns Hospital precinct that will see it resilient against the storm and tidal surge that occurs, and that work has commenced. We are fixing the helipad that is on council owned land on The Esplanade that those opposite failed to rectify. It cannot be used because the helicopters that are now in use come in too hard, hot and heavy. We are fixing that problem.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question asked for a date. My point of order is on relevance.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to the Manager of Opposition Business's point of order. The minister is clearly being relevant to the question as asked which referenced Cairns and other elements in the question. I would submit to you that the minister is being relevant and should be able to continue answering the question as he is entitled to.

Mr SPEAKER: I believe the minister is being relevant to the question. You only have four seconds left.

Mr NICHOLLS: The work is underway, the land has been resumed and the hospital is being built.

Health Services, North Brisbane

Mr CRANDON: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering more health services right across Queensland, including in Brisbane's north, and is the minister aware of any approaches that failed to deliver health services for Queenslanders during a decade of decline?

Mr NICHOLLS: What a terrific question from the member for Coomera. I have had the pleasure of recently visiting—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller, I have cautioned you. You are now warned.

Mr NICHOLLS:—the site of the further works that are being undertaken under the Crisafulli government's Hospital Rescue Plan to save the Coomera Hospital from Labor's failings—failings that indicated it was 200 beds short, was over budget and did not have all the facilities that would be necessary. The member for Coomera, all too sadly, is aware of Labor's failings under their failed capacity expansion program.

The member for Coomera will not be surprised to learn that there are similar failings on the north side of Brisbane—failings that a so-called local is actually complicit in—that so-called local being Luke Richmond, Labor's candidate for Stafford; a so-called local who was so local that he did not even know his doorknockers were doorknocking in the seat of Clayfield. That is Luke Richmond's local knowledge with respect to the seat of Stafford.

A government member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, exactly! The Tasmanian apple crunchers were up here working their way from Stafford through Clayfield back to the airport to evacuate, it was such a bad scene the reception they were getting in Stafford. That is the extent of a true local, Luke Richmond. You have to say that the old Labor Party ain't what they used to be, that is for sure.

The only thing I can say about it is that they were not joined by the member for Miller, who was found doorknocking in Clayfield as well. He got such short shrift that old 'Maximum Pressure' only did it once and then disappeared. Let me tell you: my vote on Hamilton Hill went up. As he cruised up and down Cooksley Street and Queens Road, they said, 'Who is this clown coming by and knocking on the door?' He had some ragtag bloke following him around as well.

Luke Richmond presided over ramping going up to 55 per cent. Ambulance ramping at the Prince Charles Hospital was at 55 per cent, and in the month of March this year it was 30.2 per cent under the Crisafulli government. We are investing in new beds—93 new beds, which is more than what was promised by Labor. We are putting money into a transit lounge. We are investing more. The other thing we are doing is ensuring our ambos have the fuel they need so they can get around. Our plan will see ambulances still servicing the people of the north side. Those opposite have no plan. Their plan is to have a fuel card so they can swan around while the taxpayers go without.

Gas Royalties

Mr BERKMAN: My question this morning is to the Premier. Last financial year in Queensland gas companies paid less than \$1.7 billion in royalties while Queenslanders paid more than \$2 billion in vehicle rego. Is it this government's policy that we should pay more in car rego than multinational gas corporations pay in royalties?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have to give it to the member: he is nothing if not persistent. One thing about the member for Maiwar is that he says out loud what the opposition thinks. That is what he does. At least the member for Maiwar has the intestinal fortitude to attack something that he does not believe in. Those opposite quietly say it amongst their Greens colleagues. They know full well that they are against the gas industry, and at least the member for Maiwar has the ticker to say it publicly.

A government member: They might make him leader.

Mr McDonald: Labor-Greens alliance.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjections. When we think about all of the state-run services that they were promising last time, it is not a far leap. It would not be a big jump to get him over. I am going to say to the honourable member what I have said consistently. What this side of the House will do every single day is a couple of things. The first is that we will fight for those people who work in those industries. I have the view that this state has been built on the back of people who put on high-vis and are prepared to go to work. I want them to know that we have a future. I want them to know that we back them.

I will again draw on the irony that the member is not a supporter of the gas industry. It is very difficult to have a conversation about so-called royalties if he does not believe in the industry. If he does not back it and wants to shut it down, it is very difficult to have a conversation about it.

I believe in the industry. I believe in the people who work for it. I want a regional Queenslander to be able to get out of bed knowing that he or she can work somewhere that maybe their parents worked and knowing that one day their kids can work there. I want them to be able to buy a home in the place they grew up. I do not want them to feel as though they do not have a future in the industry. There is a future for gas—a massive future.

I look at our energy plan, the Energy Roadmap—and I give a shout-out to the Treasurer—and there is a reason this state has just recorded the single largest drop in the draft market price in the history of the scheme: we are investing in coal-fired power stations, we are using gas as a transition fuel and we are putting renewables in the area where they make the most sense financially as well as socially. On the back of stopping crazy pipedreams, like spending \$36.7 billion on the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro, we are driving down electricity prices for people.

Mr BERKMAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question asked about the amount paid in car rego and gas royalties, and the Premier's soliloquy has gone nowhere near answering that.

Mr SPEAKER: The point of order is on relevance. I remind the Premier to be relevant.

Mr CRISAFULLI: On the back of that, small and family businesses are set to get a double-digit price fall for the first time ever. Households, which experienced a 19.9 per cent increase because of the policy of those over there, are going to get a massive reduction. I say to the honourable member that gas plays an important part, including in firming up renewables. That is the other great aspect of gas. We back the gas industry. We back the transition plan that we put in place for coal to make sure it runs longer and for gas and renewables, and we want to see our fair share for the gas that comes from Queensland.

Victims of Crime

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 driving down the number of victims of Labor's youth crime crisis, and is the minister aware of any approaches that saw victims ignored during a decade of decline?

Mrs GERBER: I thank the member for Mulgrave for his question. We were elected with a clear mandate: to see fewer victims of crime in this state. We have delivered stronger laws—our Adult Crime, Adult Time laws—laws that those opposite voted against. We have delivered more early intervention and rehabilitation—the largest investment in early intervention and rehabilitation this state has ever seen. We have delivered more resources for our police.

What have we seen as a result of that? We have seen a 7.2 per cent reduction in the number of victims of crime in this state. We have seen the number of serious repeat offenders drop 17 per cent. Let's contrast that with what we saw when we had a Labor government. When we had a Labor government, victims of crime rose 193 per cent. When we had a Labor government, serious repeat offenders went up 64 per cent over five years. That is the difference.

Do members want to know what their plan is? Do members want to know what the former Labor government's plan is? I will tell you because it is written in black and white in their state platform for 2025, a document—

Mrs Poole: Who wrote that?

Mrs GERBER: I take the interjection. That document, in fact, was authored by Labor's candidate for Stafford, Luke Richmond. Labor's candidate for Stafford, Luke Richmond, was an assistant secretary in the Labor Party when this document was authored. It says that, if the Labor Party are elected—if Luke Richmond is elected—they will go back to the way they used to have it. They will go back and increase the age of criminal responsibility from 12 to 14 years. Do members know what that will mean? That will mean that youth offenders who commit heinous and serious crimes will not face any consequences.

Do members know what their plan also says about crime and victims in this state? It says that they will remove mandatory minimum sentencing. Now we know why they voted against Adult Crime, Adult Time: Adult Crime, Adult Time imposes the same mandatory minimum sentences for youths. This policy platform says that they want to remove that. They want to go back to the bad old days of weakening our Youth Justice Act. They want to go back to weakening our laws. Labor's candidate for Stafford has that same plan—it is written in black and white in this state policy platform.

Not only that, this week we have seen the Labor opposition leader held in contempt. The Labor opposition leader has been held in contempt of this parliament. Do members know what that means? That means that he has been found to knowingly mislead this parliament and Queenslanders. That is their MO: they use scare tactics. They went into Stafford and knowingly misled the people of Stafford, and in this chamber today he has been found in contempt for misleading this House. It is disgraceful.

(Time expired)

Ambulance Service

Mr BAILEY: My question is to the Minister for Health. On 28 April, 88-year-old Pat fell at home in the middle of the night, broke her collarbone and was in agonising pain whilst she waited for an ambulance for six hours. Can the minister advise how long it should take for ambulances to attend an 88-year-old woman lying on the floor in the middle of the night in agonising pain with a broken collarbone?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Miller for his question. I did see the story that was posted on Facebook by the Leader of the Opposition and a couple of his other cohorts in relation to Pat. It was probably incumbent on the member for Murrumba, the Leader of the Opposition, to be truthful in putting that material on there and to disclose all of the facts with regard to it. Although, today we have seen that perhaps the member for Murrumba, the Leader of the Opposition, has some difficulty in being completely and utterly frank in certain circumstances. Having been found guilty of contempt and having had to apologise for the falsehoods he has said in this place—

Mr Bailey interjected.

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

Whereupon the honourable member for Miller withdrew from the chamber at 11.10 am.

Mr NICHOLLS: I have to say fish, shooting and barrel when it comes to the member for Miller! He is right at the top of the list. You do not even have to bait that hook, Mr Speaker. You just have to lob it in the general direction. It was the member for Miller who also had to apologise around the perinatal and mental health beds.

What the Leader of the Opposition did not say is that Pat, who I think genuinely did have an issue, is of course a longstanding member of the Labor Party. In fact, she has been described in a number of posts as a local—

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, stop. Member for Aspley, you are also on a warning. You can leave the chamber for a period of one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Aspley withdrew from the chamber at 11.10 am.

Mr NICHOLLS: One more to go and I will have a hat trick. It is one a minute so far. I think it would have been important in the interests of full disclosure for the Leader of the Opposition to disclose that Pat was a longstanding member—in fact, a former branch president in Murrumba and described as a local Labor legend.

Having said that, I investigated the circumstances. Pat did indeed ring the Ambulance Service. She was categorised as a code 2, I believe, and was then given a call back by the clinical hub. Regrettably, that phone call was not answered. She was phoned back within 20 minutes. The phone

call was not answered and contact was re-established at 4.30 in the morning. At that stage in proceedings an ambulance was dispatched immediately and Pat was transferred to hospital where she was treated within 20 minutes of arrival and subsequently discharged. Also, it was later established that during the period she was at home, Pat was in the company of a carer or support person. Our code 1 services are getting better. I thank Pat for raising this issue.

(Time expired)

Police Service, Personnel

Mr DALTON: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering more police to keep Queenslanders safe, and is the minister aware of any approaches that failed to deliver the resources needed during a decade of decline?

Mr PURDIE: I thank the member for the question. He is a former police officer who has seen firsthand the clear contrast between our plan of more police and tougher laws as opposed to the plan of those opposite of fewer police and weaker laws. I acknowledge him for the work he did on the front line.

I am happy to announce, as I already told parliament last sitting week, that we now have for the first time more than 13,000 police in Queensland. We made a commitment to deliver 1,600 new police in our first term. We delivered that in the first 18 months. The plan of those opposite was to have fewer police. When they promised 1,450 more police, in their last term we now know that they delivered 76. In the last 18 months we have delivered a lot more new police to the North Brisbane District than that. In fact, we have delivered 19 new police to the Stafford police station alone and 203 new police to the North Brisbane District.

What does that mean when you have more police and tougher laws? We know that under those opposite with fewer police and weaker laws we saw the number of victims of crime increase by 193 per cent. Locally in places like the North Brisbane District, and Stafford is in the centre of that district, we saw robberies go up 80 per cent—double-digit growth—and break and enters go up 40 per cent—again, double-digit growth.

Don't get me wrong: we know there is a lot more work to do. There are more police coming and tougher laws, but we are starting to see that our policies are having an effect. In the North Brisbane District robberies last year were down 13.5 per cent and break and enters were down 11.9 per cent. That is off a high base. There is more work to do, but that is double-digit growth across the board in relation to those two crime classes.

Now that those opposite have seen those numbers, we have to ask the question: what have they learnt? Are they going to apologise and admit that their plan did not work? It turns out that that is not the case, because their new 2025 policy document—

Mr SPEAKER: We do not need any props in here.

Mr PURDIE:—which we now know was written by their candidate for Stafford, does not mention youth justice at all apart from that Labor will raise the age of criminal responsibility in Queensland. That is on page 109 at paragraph 8.71. They want to raise the age of criminal responsibility. They have learnt nothing. When they were in government, crime was going up with double-digit growth year on year. They did not believe it. They blamed the media. They said it was a media beat-up. Now that we are seeing double-digit declines in some crime classes they still do not believe it.

Mr Whiting: LNP lies.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, you are going to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr WHITING: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: And you are warned.

Mr PURDIE: They did not believe those numbers when they were going up and they do not believe them now when they are going down. There are some numbers that the Leader of the Opposition will not be able to deny. If he does not get a double-digit swing towards him on Saturday, he is cooked. How is he going to explain that away? He can explain away an explosion of crime on the media—

(Time expired)

Stafford By-Election, Billboards

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Minister for Education. It is understood that the government is spending over \$40,000 for a billboard in Stafford promoting upgrades at Stafford State School—that is, \$20,000 in whiteboards. Can the minister advise how \$40,000 could be used to benefit schools within the Stafford electorate?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute.

Mr LANGBROEK: What a pleasure it is to receive this question so I can explain what was left in Stafford by those opposite that we have to fix, including the infrastructure that was left. Seventy-eight per cent of the buildings inspected had a condition rating of poor or very poor—78 per cent. That means the cost of renewal backlog in the electorate is \$3.2 million. Remember that across the state it is over \$441 million.

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, you asked the question.

Mr LANGBROEK: Stafford State School, \$1.215 million; Wavell State High School, \$1.035 million; Somerset Hill State School, \$0.325 million; Wilston State School, \$0.285 million; Wavell Heights State School, \$0.195 million. We have provided the Back to School Boost in Stafford—\$231,200 is allocated. Those opposite provided zero for the parents and students in Stafford.

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (11.17 am): I seek leave to move general notice of motion No. 2 standing in my name.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 35:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 1—Knuth.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 52:

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

Resolved in the negative.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION



Mr J KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (11.22 am): I seek leave to move general notice of motion No. 1, standing in the shadow minister's name.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 35:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 1—Knuth.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 52:

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


Resolved in the negative.

SUNSHINE COAST WATERWAYS AUTHORITY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 13 May (see p. 1401), on motion of Mr Last—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (11.28 am), continuing: The Sunshine Coast Environment Council warned that in its current form the bill lacks sufficient safeguards to ensure management actions sustainably maintain or improve ecological health, adequately consider cumulative impacts and are informed by robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This authority will have responsibility for planning, infrastructure, navigational access and the monitoring and management of sand and sediment movement. That includes activities like dredging and coastal works—activities that, if not managed properly, can have real and lasting impacts on seagrass, intertidal flats, fish habitat, bird habitat and water quality. Wildlife Preservation Society Queensland also raised the need for science-based sand and sediment management, warning that it must avoid impacts on seagrass, intertidal flats and nesting and roosting habitats.

If the government is going to create a statutory authority responsible for waterways of such ecological significance then the legislation should be clear about the environmental impacts that may be associated with said management practices, but the bill does not even define sustainability. If the government might be looking for further points of wisdom on how to govern properly, sprinkling the word 'sustainability' throughout the bill does not make this legislation actually sustainable. It has to mean something. It has to be measurable. It has to be reported against. It has to guide decision-making when there are competing pressures between development, recreation, tourism, navigation and environmental protection.

The bill also does not explicitly recognise obligations under the Ramsar convention or the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, despite the relevance of the Moreton Bay Ramsar wetlands. How, then, has the government assessed the potential impacts to these crucial wetlands? It speaks to me of a brazen disregard for any consideration of the preservation of nationally significant environmental land.

The government does not need to choose between supporting local industry, improving waterways management and protecting the environment. In fact, if it gets this right, those goals should support each other. Healthy waterways support tourism. Healthy waterways support recreation. Healthy waterways support marine industries. Healthy waterways support local identity, lifestyle and livability. However, that only happens if environmental protection is treated as core business, not as an afterthought.

The opposition will not oppose this bill. We recognise the importance of coordinated waterways management. We recognise that local communities want better outcomes for the waterways they love and rely on, but we will not pretend this bill is anywhere near perfect because it is far from it. The Sunshine Coast community deserved proper consultation before the bill was drafted. The Kabi Kabi people deserved proper respect as traditional owners and native title holders. Local governments deserved clarity about roles, responsibilities and jurisdiction. Environmental stakeholders deserved confidence that sustainability, ecological risk, cumulative impacts and protected wetlands would be taken seriously. Instead, this government has delivered another example of its announce first, consult later, if ever, approach. Queenslanders deserve better.

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (11.31 am): It is such a pleasure to speak to the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026 because this was an election commitment the LNP made during the October 2024 election. I find it interesting that the Labor Party member just spoke about consultation and so forth; there cannot be much more consultation than taking a policy to

an election and then delivering the election commitment within a year and a half. That may be a foreign concept to the Labor Party. It is certainly a foreign concept to the federal Labor Party, where they take a position to the election, change it and then increase big bad taxes for the housing market.

It was a Crisafulli government election commitment to establish the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority. I want to thank all honourable members and colleagues in the Sunshine Coast community for their advocacy, particularly our two newest members, the members for Nicklin and Caloundra. I particularly want to mention the member for Caloundra, who has the Pumicestone Passage in her electorate, and the member for Maroochydore, who shares the Mooloolah River with me in Kawana. This was a fundamental election commitment of the Crisafulli government.

I am not going to buy the Labor Party now asking us about what consultation was done. There cannot be better consultation than people actually voting 1 next to the candidate's name who took the policy to the election. Guess what: right across the Sunshine Coast, the Sunshine Coast community voted 1 for the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, so this is delivering for those people exactly what we promised in the election campaign.

Under the Labor government, there were years of mismanagement of our waterway—people did not know who was responsible for what in the Pumicestone Passage, the Mooloolah River or the Noosa River. This gives clarity to all of those concerns that have been raised in the past, and those concerns were raised. We constantly raised issues about the Mooloolah River, for example, with the sunken ships, the derelict boats, the mooring, the ports, the safety of the bar passage—

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I acknowledge the member for Maroochydore and take her interjection on sewage disposal. These have been huge issues on the Sunshine Coast, and the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will now take ownership and deliver the responses needed over this period of time for the Sunshine Coast waterways. This has been articulated by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and member for Buderim, who is a local to the Sunshine Coast. He has introduced this bill and has passage of it. I think this is great news for the Sunshine Coast.

As we have heard, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will have a board and it will have a chief executive officer. Once it gets established, it will have a review in three years to ensure it is doing exactly what it needs to. We need to protect the lifestyle and the environment, and this is what the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will do.

I want to compare and contrast and look at the Pumicestone Passage. I am 44 years of age and I have lived on the Sunshine Coast for all but five years of my life. I have grown up on the Pumicestone Passage. I have fished on the Pumicestone Passage. I have taken a tinnie on the Pumicestone Passage. I have taken a jet ski on the Pumicestone Passage. We walked over to Bribie Island. It is a big issue and it is a place that the Sunshine Coast community love, but look at what happened when the Labor Party neglected the Pumicestone Passage and Bribie Island and the consequences from each cyclone. It was originally Cyclone Seth that punched through the breakthrough 1. Then we saw Cyclone Alfred punch through breakthroughs 2, 3 and 4, and it would have kept on going unless we put a stop to those breakthroughs. Breakthrough 1 is nearly two kilometres wide. It is a big breakthrough and that is why we did the review for the Pumicestone Passage to rebuild the barrier island, which is Bribie Island.

I want to thank the Pumicestone Passage Catchment Management Body, particularly Jen Kettleton-Butler, who has been a community advocate. I want to thank the people of Caloundra for voting out Jason Hunt. He was there for four years as a member of the Labor government that did nothing for the Pumicestone Passage and nothing to protect Bribie Island. Despite the local councillor, Terry Landsberg, and the local business community pleading with Jason Hunt and the Labor Party when they were in government to do something about it, they did not.

I return to the compare and contrast. The Crisafulli government was elected with Kendall Hatcher being elected as the member for Caloundra, and within a year and a half we have closed breakthroughs 2, 3 and 4. Lots of people said it could not be done, but we did it. This is a one-in-10-year event, and we recognised that we had to do these emergency works to close breakthroughs 2, 3 and 4. We did it to protect not only the residents but also the business community and the environment. The Labor Party said, 'Oh my gosh. How can you do that?' There are countries around the world that are literally made on man-made sand islands. It has been done and it can be done. We did it to protect the residents and

businesses of Golden Beach and the southern Sunshine Coast community. That is why we did the review and they recommended short emergency work and long-term work. We have implemented the emergency work and we have closed breakthroughs 2, 3 and 4. We are now looking at the implementation of the long-term strategy for the Pumicestone Passage.

I know lots of members on the government side love the Sunshine Coast, including the member for Lockyer, who does not have a beachside community. When he goes to the Sunshine Coast he wants to fish the Pumicestone Passage. I know that lots of honourable members come to the Sunshine Coast with their families and want to fish the Pumicestone Passage. We need to ensure we keep protecting not only the lifestyle of the residents but also the tourism that it brings.

The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will assume responsibility for management and maintenance of the Bribie Island Pumicestone Passage after the Office of the Coordinator-General have done what they have done. We are about to start the tree planting on the new Bribie Island, the barrier island. We have put the hessian up and we are about to start the planting to secure the new island that we have rebuilt, despite the fact the Labor Party said it could not be done and they did not do it when Jason Hunt was the member for Caloundra. He could have done it in four years and he refused to do it. This has cost the taxpayers millions more now because we are dealing with it later. It would have been a lot cheaper back then if Jason Hunt and the Labor Party had dealt with it in government.

I look at my own electorate and the issues we have had with the Mooloolah River, with sewage flow, derelict vessels and the harbour entrance, which has been unsafe for years. I have been raising these issues with the member for Maroochydore, Fiona Simpson, for years. Unfortunately, we tragically lost Smithy. Smithy was a commercial fisherman known to everyone on the Sunshine Coast, and unfortunately he lost his life crossing the bar. That is obviously subject to the coronial investigation at the moment. We reached out to Smithy's family and we then talked to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, the Premier and the Treasurer and we got immediate funding to do a review into the harbour entrance. They have made recommendations, which we have accepted. Once those recommendations are implemented by Transport and Main Roads, we will ensure the bar passage is a lot safer for our boating communities. One life lost at the Mooloolaba Harbour is too much, we do not want any more.

That is why, whether it is tackling the issues of the Pumicestone Passage or the Mooloolah River harbour entrance, we are doing that. That is why we have also included elements of the city of Moreton shire and also Noosa. Noosa River will also come under the catchment of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, and that will provide the opportunity for us to collectively look at the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority to make sure we are doing right by that community, those who want safe passage in our waterways and also the environment so that we protect the environment.


In closing, I want to give a shout-out to our wonderful community groups, particularly the Pumicestone Passage Catchment Management Body. Jen, who has been a real champion in the Caloundra community, has led the charge on behalf of the community for the Bribie Island restoration emergency works. We are working with Jen and her community now to look at the long-term solutions for that particular breakthrough No. 1, which is now sitting at about two kilometres wide. It is a big job, but we have shown we can get on with it. If you have a government that has put community first, we can get on with it. This was an election commitment of the Crisafulli government. We are fixing the issues that Jason Hunt and the Labor Party refused to do for four years. Labor Party after Labor Party have talked about consultation, consultation. We took it to an election.

Mr Minnikin: All talk and no action.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. They are all talk and no action. They could have done this. They could have set up a Sunshine Coast waterways authority. People had been requesting the Labor Party to set up a Sunshine Coast waterways authority. Jason Hunt was a Labor member. He had then premier Palaszczuk there all the time. Steven Miles is the same faction as Jason Hunt; they were always there and they never did it, and now they are whingeing about the establishment of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority. I say to the Labor Party: if only you had been in a position to do something about it! Well, they were. For 10 years the Labor Party were in government and neglected the Sunshine Coast; the Labor Party neglected the people of the Sunshine Coast.

Look at what we have delivered in 1½ years. The Mooloolah River Interchange is already starting. The Wave is about to start and contracts are about to be awarded. We are making a safer entrance for the Mooloolah River harbour. We have rebuilt the barrier island at Bribie Island. We are getting on with the job of fixing congestion on Caloundra Road. We are building a stadium in Kawana and we are

building a new Kawana surf club. That is all within a year and a half. Look at the 10 years of neglect from the Labor Party. The Sunshine Coast is going to do well out of the LNP government. I thank my honourable colleagues from the Sunshine Coast for their advocacy for the Sunshine Coast community.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (11.41 am): Spending \$35.6 million of taxpayers' money on a new level of bureaucracy calls for robust questions. With Noosa absorbed under the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026 and our river the beating heart of our community, international brand and ethos, understandably the lack of consultation with our community during its 18 months of development, clarity of benefits and why it is needed led to concerns not only from Noosa but also from all local government areas captured under this authority.

The Noosa biosphere, incorporating our waterways, is unique, with 60 distinct ecosystems that are home to multiple species of migratory birds and our everglades being one of only two such systems on earth. We admit we are passionate about their wellbeing. Our river as well as Castaways and Weyba creeks and lakes Cooribah, Cootharaba, Doonella and Weyba are more than assets for residents and visitors. Economically, environmentally and socially—throwing a line in, rowing, skiing, splashing or paddleboarding—every age immerses in its offerings and benefits. Fortunately, thanks to our volunteers and organisations, Noosa has a relatively healthy waterway, moving between excellent and very good for the last decade according to the Healthy Land and Water Report Card.

Maritime Safety Queensland, Noosa Council, stakeholders and user groups via the Noosa River Stakeholder Advisory Committee, known as NRSAC, have worked together since 2021 to develop and finally implement six stages of the Noosa River management plan after decades of inaction by successive state governments led to rotting hulks, dangerous intersections between water users and a lack of resourcing to enforce existing rules and legislation. Finally, the angst of the community was being addressed, with over 50 fewer noncompliant vessels on the river. However, during hearings and in Noosa submissions, concerns which we believe would have been addressed by a second version of NRSAC were aired. That led to frustration and support for a waterways authority to resolve issues such as flood mitigation or infrastructure needs identified in the MSQ 2022 demand forecasting study.

Even with the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority to become the primary decision-maker for all waterways management within its geographic area, presumably the status quo will remain whereby the current oversubscribed bucket of MSQ funds for staffing and boating infrastructure will be fought over and associated onshore infrastructure would remain the domain of local government. As it stands, I cannot see these needs being addressed by more bureaucracy. Can honourable members?

Concerningly, there is no mention within the bill of the environment or benchmarking, as the Sunshine Coast Environmental Council, the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation and the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association raised. For full integration one would have thought those would be essential, along with a definition for 'sustainable'. A major sticking point between submitters has been the composition of the seven-member board, with all three local governments adamant they have a seat at the table given what Sunshine Coast Council call 'overlapping mandates without clear hierarchy or dispute resolution'. Others see the board comprising experts in the relevant areas to avoid local government overreach. Given the councils work together via Resilient Rivers SEQ, there is a recurring question: will this authority deliver benefits or slow things down through duplication or what communities and organisations see as already choking bureaucracy?


It appears the impetus for the authority's establishment was the urgent needs in Bribie and Pumicestone. I trust that dedicated funding buckets are going to be developed to address other identified needs, including for Noosa, to avoid all funds being consumed by one or two major issues that are prioritised over those determined less urgent.

Since the government first announced this proposed authority in 2024 as an election commitment, I have asked consistently: how will Noosa benefit? At the public hearing, I asked witnesses from Noosa to identify one project or initiative needed, and there were some suggested. On-water storage, jetties, an integrated plan and boat ramp upgrades were mentioned. These all could be addressed right now with increased funding without an authority.

Where did we get to after the inquiry into this bill? There is still a lack of clarity about where the SCWA remit begins and ends; confusion over the delineation between SCWA, MSQ, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority—AMSA—and local government; and no guaranteed voice for communities. The only reference from the department is 'to take reasonable steps to consult'. Ultimately, the government made a decision to implement this authority with a hefty price tag without consulting key stakeholders or articulating the benefits. There was not one recommendation from the committee nor amendments to address submitters' concerns. Going forward, I urge the new authority to allay concerns

and the government to fund at least seven extra MSQ officers for our region and separate buckets of unknown millions for the authority to deliver tangible benefits. With a review due in three years, I urge them to ensure that is made publicly available.

I thank the chair, the secretariat and the committee for their hard work and for giving me permission to attend the public hearing. I thank all who submitted and attended for their forthright manner in responding to concerns around potential large-scale marinas or superyachts for Noosa. I especially thank the many volunteers who over decades have provided their expertise and time to our waterways. They test and audit, pick up endless rubbish, plant trees to reduce erosion and sediment and provide grassroots education on every aspect of river life. May the many issues they are confronted with be addressed in budgets and their concerns about this new authority never be realised. May the government in budget announcements not shelve one-third of that \$35.6 million in set-up costs for Noosa. Our community was never asked about this authority, and \$12 million would go a long way to delivering what is actually needed and requested instead of providing another level of bureaucracy.

 **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) (11.49 am): I am delighted to rise to speak to the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026. This bill is an election commitment. Those opposite talk about consultation. It was well known in all electorates across the Sunshine Coast that this was our commitment. I want to address some of the points that have been made by members on the opposite side and the crossbench as well as reaffirm why this bill is necessary. All of our waterways matter—all the way from the beautiful Noosa River, which is an outstanding environment, to all of the other rivers and waterways. My electorate contains the Maroochy River as well as the Mooloolah River, with which I share a boundary with the member for Kawana and Deputy Premier, and then there is the Pumicestone area, which is also a magnificent area. So all waterways matter.

Unfortunately—and this may not be known to some of the Labor members or crossbenchers—it has been so frustrating to see a lack of coordination and a lack of clarity with the current environmental regulations and other layers with no coordinated focus and coherent approach to waterway management. There are missing parts to the criticisms I have heard from members opposite because they do not understand what has happened in the past. When we said that there were safety issues with the Mooloolah River and the Mooloolaba harbour entrance, we got radio silence and more bureaucracy and no outcomes. Under this government, we have outcomes to get things done because, tragically, there has been a life lost recently, that being Smithy, and others who have come close to losing their lives at the Mooloolah River entrance and Mooloolaba harbour.

The Mooloolah River harbour entrance is a trained entrance to a gazetted port. It not only has a range of environmental concerns that we all are passionate custodians to advocate for; it also has a multitude of users such as recreational boaties, those in the sports marine industry, those in the commercial fishing industry and a range of government services. Our Water Police are based out of this gazetted river area. It is important for those who are from other parts of the state to understand that the pilot boat system that helps big ships in and out of Moreton Bay and these waterways is based at the Mooloolaba harbour. It is critical to the safety and wellbeing of the environment and the lives of those who use that waterway to have pilot ships able to go safely in and out of that entrance.


We have been advocating for these issues as LNP members and have been frustrated with former Labor governments that just did not listen with regard to not only the environmental issues that we had raised with liveaboards and derelict vessels, given the ad hoc nature of how they responded to those genuine concern, but also the safety issues of entrances such as the Mooloolah River and Mooloolaba harbour, given that it is a trained entrance. There are a multitude of very strong economic reasons it needs to be as safe as possible for people to traverse, yet we had frustration with the previous government. It has already been outlined how important it is with Pumicestone to the south, and I know that my colleague the member for Caloundra will also enunciate why those works matter so much.

We also have works that will be undertaken to make the entrance to the Mooloolah River safer as well as to address what has been a historic deficit that has been costly in terms of lives lost, in terms of the environment and in terms of respecting that we are all—everyone—custodians of these beautiful waterways. However, there was no coordinating body that brought together those existing legislative mechanisms and strategic oversight to ensure that those concerns were legitimately taken forward in a coordinated way. I should also declare that I am the patron of QF6 Mooloolaba coastguard and am proud to acknowledge the important work it does to try to keep boaties who go out onto our magnificent oceans safe. It is based out of the Mooloolah River.

Whatever our personal connection is as community members, we are all passionate about these waterways. We want to see an improvement to the way that the coordination of resources is applied. With respect to the previous speaker, she has not seen what has happened with lives being lost and the frustration caused by the previous government not acting in a timely way. We want to ensure, going forward as best as possible, we have the safest systems and the best coordination to keep these areas accessible for tourism, the boating industry, fishing and all of the infrastructure that is related around those industries, and this legislation puts in place a board that will be connected to the community across the Sunshine Coast with a skills base to provide insight and an ongoing understanding of what is required.

In terms of the works that we will be getting underway in the Mooloolaba harbour entrance, I acknowledge my colleague the transport minister and my colleagues in the government. We are determined to ensure that there are safer outcomes that are appropriate and fit for purpose. There will also be the ongoing need to consult with community, and that is what we have been doing. We have been listening and we have been acting, and that is what this legislation reflects. As we all seek to ensure the community is engaged with this process, as it has been in the formation of this policy and the infrastructure that we are now seeing get underway, it is important that the best maintenance and the best infrastructure options to provide that safety with the right environmental overlays are enacted.

This waterways authority will provide once and for all a greater level of oversight and coordination that was not happening under the previous government, and I believe that the community will not only continue to embrace this but also have its say when it comes to those who may be living on canal blocks or on areas further upriver that run off into these rivers or some of our commercial fisheries operators who work out of The Spit. I give a shout-out to the magnificent Mooloolaba prawns, but there are many magnificent seafood products that come ashore on the Mooloolaba Spit through the Mooloolaba harbour entrance such as the crabs and the fish that are caught there. This is such a proud part of our commercial industry as well as the recreational industry that operates from there. I commend this legislation and its ongoing work to the House, because it does not stop here. In fact, this will ensure more will be done to bring about the right outcomes in the future to get the right solutions as we seek to ensure our joint custodianship of this beautiful area is able to maintain not only its economic lifeline but also a respect for the environment across all of the waterways, because they all matter. That is why I commend this legislation to the House.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (11.56 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill. I attended one of the hearings on this bill during the committee process. However, what strikes me after reading the report and listening to the debate today is that there are a number of failures in the process that have been run by the LNP, and I want to talk about some of these failures. After reading the report, it is very clear that there has been a failure of the requirement for consultation with First Nations communities, and that has come through very strongly from reading the submissions and looking at the transcripts. There has been a failure to commit to consultation with the Kabi Kabi. They do not have that rock-solid commitment; they do not have what they need in terms of commitment.

It is very interesting to note that the Kabi Kabi corporation—the traditional owners—were not consulted in the drafting of this bill. Like everyone else, it was presented with the finished product. There was also a request from the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation for consultation which was simply ignored. So there is a failure of consultation and of the requirement to consult with First Nations people. What I find interesting about this is that we have to remember that native title is a property right enjoyed by Queenslanders. Effectively, we have a class of property right holders who have been ignored in the construction of this bill and this waterways authority, and I think that it should raise alarm bells for some LNP members when a group of property right owners have been ignored. The member for Maroochydore said, quite rightly, that people in that area are custodians of the waterways, but this is what I would say: consult with all of the custodians. Consult with the traditional owners as the custodians of those lands and waterways as well. That is a basic thing that needed to be done in the construction of this bill.

Another failure that I have seen in this bill is the failure to consult meaningfully with the public. That came through, once again, when reading those submissions and looking at those transcripts. I point out: the department staff confirmed in the hearing that there was no public consultation prior to drafting. It is very clear that local organisations and locals have been concerned about that lack of community engagement in arriving at this point of creating the bill to create the authority. It is no wonder that they are calling out for greater board representation. My own council is calling out for greater representation on this board. The environment and community groups want to be a part of it. They want

to be on the board. They want to make sure that they are consulted and that they have a voice. It is no wonder that we see the theme running through these submissions that they have little faith in the ability of this government to consult and to make sure their voices are heard. That is another failure of this bill process.


Another interesting failure we have seen here is the failure to consider key federal environmental legislation in the creation of this bill. Once again, that has come through in the report and the submissions. It is an important thing to do, but it has been a glaring oversight in the creation of this authority. As we have all heard, it is a very sensitive area. It is adjacent to the Moreton Bay Ramsar site. I represent an area at the end of Pumicestone Passage, which is a very sensitive area as well. Pumicestone Passage is an area that many of us have grown up with and know well. I grew up on Bribie Island and swam in Pumicestone Passage. It is very sensitive. The federal legislation is there to protect those key values. It is important not to ignore that federal legislation. It is a failure. The LNP have so far ignored, overridden or not taken any notice of this key federal legislation. The failure to define 'sustainability' or 'sustainable use' has come through. The bill does not define those terms; it is a failure of the bill and an oversight that they have not done that.

I make a final point on some of the failures of the LNP in the creation of this bill. There has been a failure to account for the costs that may be incurred by this authority. I am talking about a failure to establish a substantial annual budget for dredging. This, once again, was something that came through from the hearings. They will need a substantial amount of money to manage annual dredging and to manage the infrastructure that they will be overseeing or that will be associated with them. We have heard today that the work done at the tip of Bribie costs well over \$20 million. The work associated with dredging and moving around is actually quite substantial; it is very costly to do this work. One of the reasons I know this is: when I was on the Caboolture council—I spoke about this in the hearings—not only was the annual cost of dredging those canals along Pumicestone Passage absolutely massive but also the upkeep of the infrastructure involved came at a cost. It is a large amount of money.

What was concerning is that the authority said, 'If it is beyond the amount that we have for maintenance dredging, we have to go to Treasury if we want to get a substantial amount of money.' I suggest, from my experience, that there will be a lot of pressure to do more dredging. With the waterways authority overseeing that as well, they will have to keep going back to Treasury to get that money—and it will be a substantial amount of money. This authority will be left standing on their own, going to Treasury having to beg for money all the time for maintenance dredging, annual dredging and all of the associated costs we have seen incurred so far in the work that has been done.

I found it interesting that the department had not gone to the local council for their indicative cost of dredging. So far it is the local councils that have been burdened with the cost of dredging and the maintenance of these waterways. There are some areas that councils have to do so they are the ones with the expertise. I suggest this waterways authority will have to talk to council about the cost of the dredging that councils do, and talk to the Moreton Bay Council about this as well. They have experience in dredging around Pumicestone Passage.

The bill to establish this authority is obviously an election commitment, but what I kept seeing when we looked at this process was a failure to plan properly, a failure to consult, a failure to take on board what the people want in the area and a failure to adequately budget for their operations. It is more than a failure; the LNP have shown a disregard throughout this process—a disregard for the public servants, for the people who live in the area, for the wishes of the council who want to be on the board and for all of those environment groups there.

 **Ms HATCHER** (Caloundra—LNP) (12.05 pm): I rise today in strong support of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026. I do so with real pride, because for Caloundra this bill matters deeply. It matters to the people of Golden Beach, Pelican Waters and wider Caloundra. It matters to the families, the businesses, the boaties, the fishermen, the environmental groups and the community advocates who all love the Pumicestone Passage. It matters because for too long our community was told to wait or were disregarded. Over the past two decades alone there were multiple reports completed—all whilst trying to navigate the 17-plus bodies and organisations that govern this waterway in some capacity. What we know is that the commissioning of yet another report where the community was not listened to resulted in zero action for our beautiful waterway—zero. There has never been a body that has garnered genuine community voices, and it is the locals who are most impacted by the management of our waterways.

In Caloundra we waited and waited for an agency to decide whether this was their responsibility. For two decades individuals and groups met with, wrote to and communicated with anyone who would listen and were met with no action. Tell me: who was responsible? Was it MSQ, the council, DETSI, Ramsar, MRQ, Transport, the police or the coastguard? The people of Caloundra have waited long enough. The Pumicestone Passage is not just another waterway; it is part of who we are. It is where families fish, swim, paddle and gather. It supports tourism, recreation, marine activity and small business. It is environmentally significant, locally loved and central to Caloundra's identity, but for years locals watched that precious waterway change before their eyes. They watched the Bribie Island breakthrough alter the flow of the passage and watched erosion threaten Golden Beach. They watched sand movement, navigation issues and environmental risks become more serious. Too often under the former Labor government they were told that nothing meaningful could be done. That is not leadership; that is surrender.

The truth is: the former Labor member for Caloundra did absolutely nothing to change it. He did not campaign on it in 2017, he did not campaign on it in 2020, he did not campaign on it in 2024 and he never uttered the words 'Bribie Island breakthrough' for the four years he was in this House. Shame! That is not vision—no fight, no serious plan and no strong advocacy for the coordinated waterways management our region so clearly needed.

The community was left to continue to fight alone. I want to acknowledge those community groups and local advocates today: Take Action Pumicestone Passage; the Pumicestone Passage Catchment Management Body; the Caloundra Residents Association; the local coastguard volunteers; all of the boating groups, environmental advocates and residents of Golden Beach and Pelican Waters; plus the many everyday locals who wrote letters, attended meetings, made submissions, gathered evidence and kept showing up, in fact, for two decades. That is what community consultation looks like, but you have to listen to them. They were not being difficult; they were being responsible. They were doing what no government was going to do for them.

It is completely unfair how our waterway has been treated by the former government. This waterway is critical. During the 2024 election campaign it became apparent that local concerns were valid and well researched and that there was a huge risk to our town. I would like to acknowledge the work of Ken Newburn and John Groves, both passionate locals, who first brought to my attention the difference between the management of the Gold Coast waterways and the bureaucratic nightmare of the Sunshine Coast waterways. This began a journey of meeting incredible people, including the late Brian McRae, who was instrumental in setting up the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, and Jen Kettleton-Butler, who advocated nationally in the media for someone to listen to the concerns.

It became abundantly clear that technical advice had been recycled through different processes without the evidence presented by the locals ever being included and the same thinking had appeared across different arms of both state government and council. Too often, no matter where the report came from, the conclusion seemed to be the same: do not intervene; wait and see; monitor the situation; commission another review. Of course expert advice matters—nobody disputes that—but expert advice should inform decisions, not replace leadership. It should never be used as a shield for inaction. The people of Golden Beach were not imagining the problem; they were living with it. They could see the erosion, they could see the change in currents and they could see the pressure on the passage. The risk was growing, and they deserve a government prepared to listen and act—like the Crisafulli government has done and continues to do.

This is why I fought for a different approach. Even before we were in government I advocated directly to the now Premier and Deputy Premier for the need for a dedicated waterways authority for the Sunshine Coast. The question was simple: the Gold Coast has a waterways authority, many other coastal towns have infrastructure management plans, why does the Sunshine Coast not have one? Why do we not deserve the same: a dedicated body instead of the mess of fragmented responsibility and endless buck-passing? Why should the Pumicestone Passage, the Mooloolah, Maroochy and Noosa rivers and our other waterways be deemed less important? If I appear angry, it is because I am, as are the residents of Caloundra.

For the member for Nudgee to stand here and make a contribution dictating the environmental significance of this waterway without understanding the history of what has happened is absurd. Yes, it is an environmentally important waterway for our community, but here is the reality: it was made a Ramsar site. Despite what the member for Bancroft has to say, it is not adjacent to a Ramsar site; it is part of one. It is that green tape that the former government hid behind in order to do nothing. Here is

the reality of this environmentally significant site: the marine life has lessened, the seagrass has died, the mangroves have died and the oysters in that waterway are down 96 per cent. The green tape and environmental significance that they continue to hide behind is nothing more than a load of rubbish.


The member for Kurwongbah told us that the former member for Caloundra took an interest. All of a sudden, apparently, the former member for Caloundra is interested. I can tell members now that that was the first time, if it is even correct. He has never been interested. He has never listened to the community. It is only this government that has been prepared to do that and take action.

Mr Poole: Best member for Caloundra, right there!

Ms HATCHER: I take the interjection. Thank you, member. We are making no apology for pushing hard. Caloundra needed someone to fight and the Sunshine Coast deserves a dedicated body. This is what listening looks like. Do not talk about community consultation when for 20 years the community have been pushing for it and nobody listened. We recognise the risk to navigation, community safety, infrastructure, local communities and environmental values. This government funded and delivered emergency stabilisation works to slow erosion, manage flows, mitigate risks and maintain boating access. That is practical action. That is taking action. For Golden Beach that matters. It matters because for years the locals were told that nothing could be done. It was put in the too-hard basket, the not-my-problem basket, but action can happen when you have a government that is prepared to listen and act, and that is the truth.

Emergency works are important, but they are not enough. The Pumicestone Passage cannot exist on a crisis response. Caloundra cannot rely on action only when erosion becomes so severe it is putting an entire town at risk. We need long-term planning, we need coordinated management and we need monitoring that leads to decisions, not just more monitoring. This is what the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will deliver. This bill establishes a dedicated authority responsible for strategic planning, waterways infrastructure delivery, community engagement and sustainable development. It will cover the area of the entire Sunshine Coast, and for my community the southern focus is vital because Pumicestone Passage must never again be treated as an afterthought.

The bill will develop a waterways management authority. It will consult with the public and work with Maritime Safety Queensland and local governments. It will help coordinate the activity that is required to keep our waterways safe and, most importantly, it will end the not-my-job mentality and the complete ignorance from the former government. Yes, we are angry. On behalf of the people of Caloundra, I support the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (12.16 pm): I rise today to speak on the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026. The opposition recognises the importance of our waterways not only as an environmental asset but also as the backbone of local communities, tourism, marine industries and the lifestyle Queenslanders value so highly. From the Pumicestone Passage to the Noosa River system, these waterways support regional economies and help define the identity of the Sunshine Coast. While the stated intent of this bill is commendable, the opposition holds serious concerns about whether it will truly deliver the outcomes communities have been calling for and whether it does so in a balanced and accountable way.

The bill establishes the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, a statutory body responsible for strategic planning, infrastructure management, navigation oversights and environmental monitoring across the region. There is no doubt the current system has been criticised as fragmented, with responsibilities spread across multiple agencies and levels of government. Stakeholders, such as the Noosa Boating Fishing Alliance, have argued that the management of the Noosa River has too often fallen between the cracks, with longstanding problems left unresolved, so reform is needed. The question before this House is whether this bill delivers the right reform.

The evidence presented to the committee does not reflect opposition to change itself, rather it reflects concern about how this reform is being implemented. Stakeholders raised issues relating to governance, consultation, representation, environmental protection and the risk of creating another layer of bureaucracy. Let me begin with governance. The bill establishes a new authority overseen by a board. Many submitters warned that the effectiveness of the authority will depend entirely on who is appointed to that board. The Noosa Boating Fishing Alliance stressed that, unless the board genuinely reflects recreational users, local businesses and the wider community, there is a real risk decision-making could become dominated by narrow interests. Likewise, the Pumicestone Passage Catchment Management Body emphasised that the authority's success would depend on achieving the right balance of expertise and experience. The legislation provides little certainty in this regard. There

is no guarantee of representation from key regions such as Noosa, no requirement for strong local knowledge and no assurance that those who rely on these waterways every day will have a genuine voice in decision-making.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Members, he is not taking interjections. Let him proceed, please.

Mr RUSSO: Stakeholders have also called for stronger representation from local governments and First Nations communities. These are entirely reasonable expectations. A body exercising significant influence over the future of these waterways should properly reflect the communities most affected by its decisions. Concerns have also been raised about the concentration of appointment powers in the hands of the minister, including the appointment of the chief executive officer. Public confidence in this authority will depend on transparent, merit-based appointments that ensure independence and accountability. These concerns cannot simply be overlooked.

Consultation is another major issue. The committee report acknowledged that public consultation before the introduction of the bill was limited. More concerning are the warnings from stakeholders about how consultation may occur in the future. Communities are not asking for consultation as a token exercise; they are asking for engagement that is genuine, ongoing and meaningful. The Noosa Boating Fishing Alliance cautioned against tick-box consultation and argued that the engagement process must genuinely reflect the views of waterway users. The Sunshine Coast Environment Council argued that, despite claims of increased local participation, the bill fails to properly embed local and First Nations involvement in the authority's structure.

Consultation cannot simply occur after decisions have already been made. It must be built into the governance framework from the beginning. Nowhere is this more evident than in the government's handling of engagement with the Kabi Kabi people, the traditional owners and native title holders of these waterways. Stakeholders raised concerns that the bill does not sufficiently recognise the role of First Nations communities and their stewardship and management. The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation specifically called for stronger requirements to consult native title holders and claimants, yet those concerns are not adequately reflected in the legislation. If this authority is truly intended to manage these waterways for future generations, then First Nations voices cannot be treated as optional; they must be embedded in the decision-making structures from the outset.

We must also consider the environmental implications of this bill. These waterways are not merely economic assets; they are complex ecological systems requiring careful stewardship. Stakeholders made it clear that the bill does not go far enough to safeguard environmental integrity. The Sunshine Coast Environment Council identified shortcomings in ecological risk management, cumulative assessments and monitoring frameworks. They warn that, without stronger protections, activities such as dredging—

Ms Hatcher interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Caloundra, I understand your passion, but give him a go, please.

Mr RUSSO:—and infrastructure development could cause long-term environmental damage. Concerns were also raised about how the bill interacts with broader environmental protections, including obligations relating to the Moreton Bay Ramsar listed wetlands and Commonwealth environmental laws. These waterways are environmentally significant systems, and any management framework must ensure sustainability is not simply an aspiration but is a clearly defined and enforceable objective, yet, remarkably, the bill does not define the term 'sustainability'.

Without clear legislative guidance, there is a real risk that environmental considerations could be overshadowed by short-term operational or development pressures. This concern is not hypothetical. The history of waterways such as Pumicestone Passage demonstrates the consequences of delayed action. Years of inaction regarding erosion and breakthrough events have produced serious environmental and economic impacts that could have been reduced through proactive management. If the government is genuinely committed to sustainability, then the bill must establish enforceable standards and measurable outcomes.

I also want to address the issue of bureaucracy and funding. The Noosa Shire Residents and Ratepayers Association expressed concerns that creating a new authority risks becoming overtly bureaucratic, potentially diverting resources away from practical, on-the-ground work. The question is whether the proposed \$36 million allocation would be sufficient and whether those resources might be

better directed towards existing agencies already performing important work. This is a valid concern because communities are not interested in bureaucratic structures for their own sake; they are interested in outcomes. They want safe navigation, healthy waterways, reliable infrastructure and timely responses to issues such as erosion, sand movement and vessel management. If this authority becomes merely another administrative layer without delivering tangible improvements, then it will have failed the communities it was created to serve.

 **Miss DOOLAN** (Pumicestone—LNP) (12.26 pm): After that contribution from the member for Toohey we know that Pumicestone is a passage but denial is a river. For 10 years the former Labor government did not act on this major problem. I speak today in support of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026. This is an important bill for not just the Sunshine Coast but also every community that depends on healthy, accessible and well-managed waterways for their lifestyle, economy and future prosperity.

For those of us representing coastal electorates, waterways are not simply environmental assets; they are part of the identity of our communities. They shape where people live, how people spend time with their families and how local businesses survive and grow. In my electorate of Pumicestone, the waterways are woven into everyday life. Whether it is local fishing off the jetty at Bribie Island, tourists visiting our region for boating, our wonderful Pink Dragons and Pumicestone Dragons enjoying the passage or community groups like BIEPA and the Pumicestone Passage Pirates who work tirelessly to protect our environment, our waterways are central to who we are. That is why this bill matters.

This legislation recognises that our waterways are under increasing pressure. Population growth, tourism demand, boating activity, environmental challenges and aging infrastructure have all placed enormous strain on the current system. Unfortunately, for too long waterways management in this region has been fragmented and reactive. Responsibilities have been spread across multiple agencies, councils and departments, with no single body responsible for coordinating long-term planning and delivery. What has been the result of this? The result is delayed decisions, confusion over responsibility, dredging priorities left unresolved, infrastructure struggling to keep up with demand and communities feeling frustrated that issues are only dealt with once they become a crisis. This bill seeks to fix that.

The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will provide a dedicated coordinating body focused specifically on waterways management across our region. Importantly, it will cover a significant area stretching from the Pumicestone Passage in the south through to the Noosa lakes in the north, including major waterways such as the Maroochy River, the Mooloolah River and the Noosa River systems. This is about creating a clear and accountable framework for managing waterways infrastructure, planning, dredging, community engagement and environmental sustainability. I want to emphasise this point clearly: this bill is about balance. It is about ensuring people can continue to enjoy our waterways while also protecting the environmental values that make them special in the first place.

The legislation specifically requires the development of a 10-year waterways management strategy, focused on the long-term sustainable use, management and development of the Sunshine Coast waterways. That means considering impacts on local communities, environmental health, marine industries, tourism and the economy together and not in isolation, because in coastal communities like mine the environment and the economy are deeply interconnected.

If waterways are neglected, tourism suffers. When important dredging and coastal management works like the Bribie Island breakthrough are ignored, boating access becomes unsafe and coastal communities like Caloundra are put at risk. That is what we have seen from those opposite. We are delivering a commonsense approach to managing our waterways and we are listening to community groups like the Pumicestone Passage Catchment Management Board. Our waterways are critical to local jobs, tourism, fishing, recreation and protecting our coastline. That is why investment in maintaining them matters. Communities like ours cannot afford to have these issues overlooked.

If infrastructure is allowed to deteriorate, recreational opportunities decline. If environmental health worsens, the entire community feels the impact. This bill recognises that effective waterways management must be proactive, coordinated and sustainable.

One of the strongest examples of why reform is needed can be found in the issues experienced on the Noosa River over recent years. The committee heard concerns about congestion, unmanaged long-term anchoring, derelict vessels, population risks and community frustration over shifting rules and delayed enforcement. Those issues did not emerge overnight. They developed over years of fragmented management and unclear accountability. Unfortunately, communities across South East

Queensland have seen similar frustrations when waterways issues fall between agencies or become trapped in endless layers of bureaucracy. Closer to home, the people of Pumicestone know this all too well and, as mentioned before, there is the Bribie Island breakthrough. Let me explain this a little more.

Following ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth, the breakthrough opposite Golden Beach dramatically altered the coastal dynamics of the passage. The impacts on erosion, tidal movement, navigation and environmental stability created significant concern for local residents, businesses and boating groups. People wanted answers, they wanted action and they wanted coordination. The Crisafulli government recognised the seriousness of the issue and funded emergency stabilisation works to slow erosion, manage flows and mitigate risks while maintaining boating access.

Beyond the immediate response, what communities have consistently asked for is a long-term, coordinated approach to waterways management. This legislation helps deliver that. Under the proposed framework, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will coordinate between councils, state agencies, stakeholders and the community to provide ongoing operational expertise and day-to-day waterways management. That includes navigation safety, signage, dredging coordination, maintenance, boating access and user management.

Importantly, this bill also provides clarity around roles and responsibilities. The authority will not replace Maritime Safety Queensland, it will actually complement it. MSQ will continue to oversee critical statewide functions, including marine safety, licensing, registration, seaworthiness, pollution response and emergency management. Meanwhile, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will focus on local waterways planning, infrastructure, dredging and access management. That separation is important because it reduces duplication, improves accountability and provides greater clarity for the community.


I also welcome the governance structure proposed under this bill. The SCWA board will include representatives with expertise across tourism, boating, fishing, infrastructure and governance. That matters because waterways decisions should not be made in isolation from the people and industries that rely on them every day. Local knowledge matters, practical experience matters and community engagement matters.

The committee process demonstrated just how strongly communities care about these issues. The inquiry received 95 submissions and heard from councils, boating groups, tourism operators, environmental organisations and community associations. There was broad recognition that a coordinated waterways authority could simplify responsibilities, improve dredging decisions, strengthen community engagement and better manage cross-jurisdictional issues that individual councils could not handle alone.

This bill is also about economic opportunity. Healthy and accessible waterways support tourism operators, marine industries, hospitality businesses and recreational activity across the Sunshine Coast region. When waterways become overburdened, congested or unsafe, it affects jobs and investment. When boat ramps and jetties cannot cope with demand, local businesses feel the impact. When navigation access is restricted by shoaling or a lack of dredging, industries suffer. This legislation recognises that good environmental management and strong economic outcomes go hand in hand.

I also want to touch briefly on the Mooloolah River entrance issues which have been a major concern for local industry and vessel operators. The bill outlines the future role of the authority in managing the Mooloolah River entrance and implementing recommendations from the independent review into shoaling and navigational safety. This includes ongoing dredging, improved monitoring and long-term channel management strategies. These are practical measures that respond directly to concerns raised by the community and maritime industries.

Ultimately, this bill is about ensuring Queensland's waterways are managed with the long-term vision they deserve. Communities are tired of reactive decision-making, they are tired of the responsibility being shifted between agencies, and they are tired of seeing critical infrastructure and environmental management lag behind population growth and community demand. This legislation delivers a coordinated, accountable and sustainable approach to waterways management. It supports our local communities, it protects environmental values and it strengthens tourism and marine industries, and it ensures that future generations will continue to enjoy the waterways that define life in regions like Pumicestone. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (12.35 pm): At the outset, can I say what a great privilege it is to be part of a government with representatives like the member for Caloundra and the member for Pumicestone who support community action on the important waterways. All I have heard from the opposite side of the House during this debate is excuses why action cannot be taken. Congratulations! That is why they are sitting here in this place now and the former members are not.

One of the great privileges of living on the Sunshine Coast is that the waterways are part of our everyday life. They are where families spend weekends, where locals fish, where tourists experience our region at its best and where many of us go to unwind and reconnect with what makes this part of Queensland so special. As someone who lives on the Sunshine Coast, I know firsthand just how important these waterways are to our community. I am a keen fisherman, although these days it is hard to find time, but when I do, like many locals and visitors, I enjoy and some of my best memories are from being out on the water casting a line and enjoying the peace of our local waterways, particularly Maroochy River near where I live.

Once a year around National Police Remembrance Day, some police mates and I head out onto the Noosa River. It is a chance to reflect and remember fallen colleagues, and we spend some time together on one of the most beautiful waterways in Queensland. However, over the years something is becoming increasingly obvious to all of us: the Noosa River is becoming more congested. The number of houseboats and long-term anchored vessels seems to grow every single year. Areas that once felt open and accessible are now crowded. Navigation is tighter. Access is harder. The pressure on the river is visible, and the locals know it. People who use these waterways every week can see the changes occurring before their eyes. They see boat ramps struggling to cope with demand. They see sand build-up affecting navigation. They see aging infrastructure. They see confusion around who is actually responsible for fixing problems and too often they see governments pointing fingers between departments instead of delivering solutions and, dare I say, that happened over a decade of decline.

That is why the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026 is so important. This bill recognises something very simple: our waterways are too important to be managed through fragmented responsibility and bureaucratic overlap.


For too long, management of Sunshine Coast waterways has been spread across multiple agencies and levels of government. When everyone is partly responsible, too often nobody is truly accountable. Decisions are delayed, maintenance falls behind and the community grows frustrated, as we saw with the Caloundra community. We have seen the consequences of that inaction: we have seen waterways become overburdened, we have seen navigation issues worsen, we have seen infrastructure fail to keep pace with population growth and tourism demand, and we have seen local issues, particularly fishing, boating and tourism, impacted by uncertainty and neglect.

As I mentioned earlier, Noosa became one of the clearest examples. Community concern grew over long-term vessel anchoring and congestion on the river. Reports of derelict and unseaworthy vessels became increasingly common. Residents, business owners and recreational users became frustrated as issues dragged on year after year, without clear coordination or consistent action.

At Mooloolaba, there were long-running concerns around shoaling at the river entrance. It became a serious safety issue and, tragically, as mentioned by other members, local skipper Robert 'Smithy' Smith lost his life in 2025 while exiting the river bar. That tragedy deeply affected the local community and reinforced how critical proper waterways management is not just for convenience but also for safety.

The same pattern existed with the Bribie Island breakthrough and the impacts on the Pumicestone Passage. Locals raised concerns for years about erosion, navigation risks and the impacts on homes, but the former member did nothing. That is why he is sitting at home whingeing on Facebook while the current member for Caloundra is sitting in this place and taking action. The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will be a dedicated body focused specifically on the management, planning and coordination of our waterways.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member for Nicklin, take your seat, please. Under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.40 pm), in reply: I would like to thank all of the members who have contributed to the debate on the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026. This bill represents a significant step forward in recognising the importance of protecting and enhancing the unique environmental, economic and recreational value of the Sunshine Coast's waterways. The establishment of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will ensure these vital natural assets are managed sustainably, with a focus on preserving their ecological health, supporting local industries and enhancing the lifestyle of the communities that rely on them.

I am heartened by the recognition from members across this House of the need for this legislation and the commitment to safeguarding these iconic waterways for future generations. I note the comments of the member for Cooper, expressing support for the need for the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority and advising that the Labor opposition will support the legislation, recognising

their decade of decline and neglect of the Sunshine Coast. That affirmation, whilst welcome, comes despite the complaints we have heard about the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, yet Labor will not move any amendments to the legislation. That leaves their complaints looking either insincere or like those of a do-nothing opposition with no solutions. Perhaps it is a bit of both.

The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will provide holistic waterways management, will deliver certainty where it is needed and is part of the Crisafulli government's commitment to protecting the region's lifestyle and environment both now and into the future. The establishment of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority also furthers the Crisafulli government's swift action and emergency works to protect and restore Bribie Island and the Pumicestone Passage. The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority delivers on the Crisafulli government's commitment to futureproof the waterways in and around the Sunshine Coast for the local community and visitors to enjoy now and for generations to come.

Our government is taking action and has solutions for a decade of Labor decline on the Sunshine Coast. As the members for Cook, Mulgrave, Caloundra, Pumicestone and Maroochydore, the Deputy Premier and even the member for Noosa have pointed out, there has been a litany of failures in managing Sunshine Coast waterways, from derelict boats polluting the Noosa River to the Bribie Island breakthrough. The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will provide an effective mechanism to deal with these issues and, as the member for Mulgrave pointed out, will represent the diverse interests associated with Sunshine Coast waterways.

As several members reminded this House, establishing the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority was an election commitment. The members who campaigned on this commitment and won include the members for Caloundra, Maroochydore and Kawana. There is no better form of community consultation than that. We are following through on our commitments.

I have heard opposition members claim that there has been no community consultation in creating the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority. Local MPs in our government actually listen to and represent their communities. That is the best form of community representation, and Sunshine Coast MPs know the community support that exists for the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority. The member for Caloundra spoke passionately about that.

The bill establishes a statutory body and puts in place a framework for its governance and functions at a high level. Once the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority is established, the Sunshine Coast community will have ongoing opportunities to influence waterways management. The bill does not dictate the objectives and priorities for waterways management because it will be the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority's job to engage with the local community and local government to identify those objectives and priorities in its waterways management strategy and program.

Several members opposite and the member for Noosa raised their concerns about the consultation on this bill, especially in relation to traditional owners. This bill establishes the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, and consultation will be a core part of its ongoing functions. In carrying out its role, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will operate within existing Commonwealth and state legislative frameworks, including the Native Title Act 1993 and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003. Consistent with these obligations, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will engage with the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation on any decisions or works that may affect native title holders' access to and use of the waterways.

As I referenced in my second reading speech, once established, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority must consult when developing its waterways management strategy and program. This mandatory consultation ensures the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority listens to and considers the views of the community and key stakeholders. This inclusive approach will help shape a strategy that reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of the community, while promoting the sustainable use and management of the Sunshine Coast's waterways.

Many of the issues raised by participants in the committee's inquiry into this bill, and in the House this week, can be fully explored, examined and resolved once the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority is established and operational. Queenslanders had an opportunity to share their views and experiences during the committee's inquiry. As this House would be aware, the committee received 95 written submissions and heard from 17 organisations and individuals at the public hearing held on the Sunshine Coast. Strong support has been provided for the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority across the community, particularly from the Noosa North Shore Association, the Noosa chamber of commerce, the Noosa Boating Fishing Alliance and many tourism operators and businesses.

The waterways management strategy and program will provide a means for the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority to work with the local community to identify objectives and priorities for the Sunshine Coast waterways. There is nothing in this bill that says that every waterway has to have the same objectives or that any waterway need be prioritised above the others. The waterways management strategy and program are dynamic, flexible and responsive to local needs and concerns.

The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority's waterways management strategy and program is modelled on similar provisions in the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012. I would encourage anyone who is concerned about a one-size-fits-all approach to look at the great range of projects the Gold Coast Waterways Authority is doing in different waterways on the Gold Coast and its focus on place-based planning. The Gold Coast Waterways Authority has recently consulted on its Our Waterways Future strategy, which very clearly defines different objectives for different waterways. Tallebudgera Creek is not the same as the Broadwater, the Upper Coomera River or Jacobs Well. There is no reason the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority cannot similarly define different objectives for each unique river catchment in the Sunshine Coast.

Some members are concerned about the composition of the board that will lead the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority. There has been a range of views on who should be on the board, including some conflicting views about whether or not local government should be represented. A number of members across both sides of this House talked about board appointments. The member for Lockyer reminded this House that this will be a skills-based board—a responsible and independent board. The bill sets out the knowledge and expertise required for the board and contains protections against unsuitable candidates and conflicts of interest. Like the member for Lockyer, I want to make sure that we get the best people for the board. I understand the concerns from local government about representation, and I take the comments of the member for Lockyer about parochialism and having three local government representatives on the board, which could lead it to being unworkable. An independent board of representatives from the Sunshine Coast with the requisite skills will serve the region better.

As I alluded to in my second reading speech, if the bill is passed, board appointments will be made, on my recommendation, by the Governor in Council via cabinet. I have listened carefully to the views expressed in this debate by members and to the views put forward through the committee's inquiry, and I will consider those views when selecting candidates for the consideration of the Governor in Council.

The chief executive officer is a significant appointment that will be made by the Governor in Council on my recommendation as Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Clause 44 of the bill requires that I consult with the board about the recommended candidate. The requirement to consult with the board on the initial chief executive officer is relaxed under clause 71 if the board is not already established, allowing the government to manage the timing of the initial establishment of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority. This initial CEO appointment will still be made as a significant appointment by the Governor in Council.

As the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, I may, under clause 53 of the bill, appoint an acting chief executive officer of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority if the CEO position is vacant or if the current CEO is unable to perform their duties due to absence or other reasons. This authority allows me to address short-term and unexpected vacancies such as when the appointed CEO is on leave or unwell or has resigned; however, I can only appoint an acting CEO after consulting with the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Board. An acting CEO can only be officially appointed to the position of CEO by the Governor in Council, based on my recommendation, following consultation with the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Board.

The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will assume responsibility for managing navigational access, and monitoring sand and sediment movement. This includes maintaining depths in designated waterways and ensuring access to public marine facilities, including the Mooloolaba state managed boat harbour. These responsibilities are designed to complement, rather than replace, the important work already undertaken by local governments such as dredging canals and sand renourishment projects. The state government acknowledges and values the essential role of local governments in managing their waterways, and the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority's efforts will align and support these activities. This collaborative approach is key to ensuring the effective and sustainable management of the Sunshine Coast waterways.

The intention is that the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, once established, will play a key role in managing coastal erosion of the long-ignored Bribie Island breakthrough and its impacts on Pumicestone Passage. As mentioned by the Deputy Premier, the Office of the Coordinator-General is

currently scoping options for long-term works to protect Pumicestone Passage and is expected to deliver the preferred option once identified. The timing of handover from the Office of the Coordinator-General to the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority for monitoring and maintenance of those longer term works will be determined by the government.

As I outlined in my second reading speech, the Crisafulli government commissioned an independent long-term Mooloolaba boat harbour entrance review that provided recommendations for managing shoaling at the Mooloolah River bar. The Crisafulli government has committed to implementing short- and long-term strategies to manage safety risks and shoaling. The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will take over from Maritime Safety Queensland the long-term responsibility for managing the Mooloolah River entrance and for implementing recommendations from the independent report to manage shoaling. Creating the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority and implementing recommendations from the independent review shows that our government is listening to locals.

I advise members that the establishment of the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority ensures a locally focused and tailored approach to managing the region's waterways, spanning from Pumicestone Passage in the south to the Noosa lakes in the north, including the Noosa, Maroochy and Mooloolah rivers. There is no intention to encroach upon local governments' management of stormwater networks or on Maritime Safety Queensland's management of shipping lanes. This approach strengthens community engagement, ensures accountability and delivers practical, region-specific solutions for the Sunshine Coast.

The Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority is broadly modelled on the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. However, unlike the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will not be responsible for conducting on-water compliance and enforcement activities or for managing first-strike oil spill responses. On the Sunshine Coast a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority and MSQ will resolve any complexity or confusion regarding on-water compliance, enforcement and first-strike responses to ship sourced marine pollution.

Like the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will support improved coordination and engagement around waterways management, delivering a more holistic approach for marine industries, commercial and recreational fisheries, and tourism across the Sunshine Coast. Like the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will have a strong focus on community consultation. If the members opposite had done any rudimentary research, they would know that the Gold Coast Waterways Authority is required to create a 10-year waterways management plan. These plans are developed with strong community input and the most recent plan involved the input of 1,800 Gold Coasters.

The Noosa River is included because it, along with the Maroochy River, the Mooloolah River and Pumicestone Passage, is integral to the natural environment, lifestyle and economy of the Sunshine Coast region. The existing Transport Infrastructure (Waterways Management) Regulation 2012 includes all of these waterways including the Noosa River. It makes sense for the bill to align as much as possible with that regulation as it will be a key mechanism by which the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority works with MSQ to realise its waterways management strategy.

The member for Noosa has highlighted the great work done by MSQ in working with the local community to develop and implement the Noosa River Management Plan. The Noosa River Management Plan has now been fully implemented by Maritime Safety Queensland—a process that has involved extensive community and stakeholder consultation over many years. The last stage of the Noosa River plan was activated by MSQ on 1 January 2026 and is in delivery.

At the outset, this bill does not change any part of the Noosa River Management Plan, including the 28-day anchoring rules on the Noosa River. The Noosa River Management Plan was developed by the Noosa River Stakeholder Advisory Committee, a diverse group of 14 people representing commercial fishing, recreational boating, tourism and environmental groups, established to advise MSQ and council on priorities.

Once the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority is established, it will be responsible for waterways management in the Noosa River. However, any changes to the Noosa River Management Plan, including to the 28-day anchoring restrictions or to the operation and management of any other Sunshine Coast waterway, can only occur after careful evaluation backed by strong community engagement and support, and after mandatory consultation with MSQ and local governments through

the process of developing the waterways management strategy. Operationalising any changes would then be carried out by MSQ, which will remain responsible for any necessary legislative amendments and for on-water safety, compliance and enforcement.

As I mentioned previously, the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority will work collaboratively with key agencies—including MSQ; the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning; the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; and local governments—to implement a coordinated waterways management strategy. This approach ensures strong cooperation between the state and local governments, promoting the sustainable use of waterways.

Several members opposite talked about environmental protection and the Commonwealth act. I advise that existing environmental protections under Queensland and Commonwealth legislation, including the Commonwealth's EPBC Act 1999, will continue to apply. These laws serve to provide a robust framework to safeguard the ecological values of the waterways and ensure alignment with national and international obligations.

This bill represents a significant step forward in ensuring the sustainable management of some of Queensland's most cherished natural assets. It reflects the government's commitment to protecting the Sunshine Coast region's unique natural values while supporting its economic and social prosperity. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106(10).

Bill read a second time.

Mr SPEAKER: Under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I will now put all remaining questions necessary to complete consideration of the bill including clauses en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill without further amendment or debate.

Question put—That clauses 1 to 98 and schedules 1 and 2, as read, stand part of the bill.

Motion agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 98 and schedules 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106(10).

Bill read a third time.

Long Title


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

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 1.06 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Labor Party

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (2.00 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I have the list of speakers. The deputy opposition leader was meant to be first on the speaking list. He has not come to do his speech, so let me take the opportunity—

Mr Nicholls: He yielded to the better performer.

Mr BLEIJIE: He yielded to me; I take the interjection from the Minister for Health. You have one job as deputy leader of the opposition—he comes in here and does his gags and his jokes—but he cannot even do that.

I have to say that it ain't been a very good week for the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party. They started the week by tabling in parliament their strategy as the opposition but they tabled the wrong document. They sent an email to the honourable transport minister with their talking points and attack points on the government. To top it all off, case in point—enter as we speak—the Leader of the Opposition is found in contempt of parliament. His mentor, Annastacia Palaszczuk, was also found in contempt of parliament.

It has also not been a good week for the member for McConnel, who, incidentally, is still the shadow minister for industrial relations. I have to update the House, because since I updated the House at question time this morning more testimony has been given in the commission of inquiry. I want to put on record testimony that has been given since question time this morning. Mr Smith, who is the workplace health and safety regional director, said in testimony this morning that he met with former minister Grace in January 2023 and raised the issue of the CFMEU mistreating workplace health and safety inspectors. Well, there it is. I take her gesticulation as an interjection. 'Yeah, mate. Yeah, he met me, mate. What?' I take the interjection. 'Yeah, yeah, yeah. Nah, nah, nah.'

Ms GRACE: That is insulting. I take offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for McConnel, were you personally referred to in those comments?

Ms GRACE: Deputy Speaker, with all due respect, I think that was definitely indicated by the gestures of the Deputy Premier.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, it would assist the House if you withdrew.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. This morning the shadow industrial relations minister was shaking her head when I was reading testimony from workplace health and safety officers as if 'nothing to see here'. We now have proof from a workplace health and safety officer who said it went all the way to the top, right to former minister Grace Grace's office. The question is: what did she do about it?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: The abuse continued towards workplace health and safety inspectors. She did nothing. She had the evidence from workplace health and safety officers and she did absolutely nothing about it. She is a disgrace as shadow—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: What is the member standing in front of me for? Is he trying to bully me? The union enforcers are getting together—

(Time expired)

Mr Bailey: You're a disgrace to humanity.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at what the member for Miller said and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, would you withdraw, please.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Bleijie: Big tough guy.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier! We will have order before we continue.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at what the Deputy Premier just said and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I said 'tough guy', not 'weak guy'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, could you please withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Contempt of Parliament

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (2.04 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. During my contribution the Manager of Opposition Business stood in my direct sight—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Members to my left, I cannot hear what the Deputy Premier is saying because you are trying to give me advice before I have heard anything. Please! Deputy Premier, are you raising a matter of privilege?

Mr BLEIJIE: It is a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The member deliberately stood in front of me to threaten and bully me so as to make me sit down, and I will be writing to the Speaker about it.


Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, that is the appropriate process. Member for Pine Rivers, you are warned under the standing orders.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Resumed.


Health System

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.05 pm): Confidence in the LNP's ability to run the healthcare system has plummeted in Queensland. Recently I spoke to an old friend, a well-known and much venerated local volunteer. She told me that at a recent stay at the Redcliffe Hospital they had no beds for her so they put her in a bed in the mental health ward overnight. That is all they had for her. At this hospital the LNP halted the construction of a clinical services building. They do not have enough beds. This is how a much loved and respected community member in my area gets treated by the LNP in a hospital. Her story will not be the last. Things will keep getting worse for healthcare clients in North Lakes or Stafford under the LNP.

The LNP scrapped Labor's capacity expansion program. They scrapped construction at the Prince Charles Hospital, where Labor's 93-bed expansion was due to start this year. Right now it is just a vacant construction site. They scrapped construction of the multistorey clinical services building at Redcliffe. Right now it is a vacant construction site, and it has been for over a year. At Redcliffe they pulled the piling foundations out of the ground. They pulled the contractors off the site. We are going to hear more stories like my friend's because cutting is in the LNP's DNA. Even when they promise they will not cut a thing, they cut and they cut and they cut again. They have sabotaged the Labor government's capacity expansion program, which would have seen more beds delivered for Queenslanders faster, whether in Moreton Bay or Stafford.

Meanwhile, the worst ever ramping on record was in September 2025, under this LNP government. It was 47.8 per cent. Nearly half of all patients were ramped, but under Labor 93 beds were due to be delivered at the Prince Charles Hospital by 2027. Under Premier Crisafulli and the LNP, that 93-bed expansion is nowhere to be seen. Those extra 93 beds promised to northsiders should have been delivered by the end of the term. We do not know how long it will be before these 93 beds are delivered. At Redcliffe and at the Prince Charles there are no shovels in the ground. We have not even seen a final plan. It is the number 93 that locals in Stafford on Brisbane's north side will remember. They are disappointed, they are angry and they are frustrated that those 93 beds, which they desperately need, have been cut. The residents of Bancroft and Stafford are finding out that the LNP have done the opposite of what they promised. They promised to improve Queensland's healthcare system. It is going backwards.

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. DC JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (2.08 pm): As we prepare our second budget, the contrast between the approach of the former Labor government—those opposite—and ourselves could not be clearer. Those opposite


collected \$70 billion in additional revenue between the first budget of the former treasurer, the member for Woodridge, and when they left office. They collected \$70 billion extra, yet across Queensland we saw services declining. Our first budget treated taxpayers' money with respect. Those opposite funded projects that could not be built or had irresponsibly blown out: Pioneer-Burdekin, \$36.8 billion; Cross River Rail, from \$5.4 billion to \$19 billion; the Coomera Connector, \$2.1 billion to \$3.4 billion; and of course CopperString, \$1.8 billion to \$13.9 billion.

In contrast, our first budget delivered \$116.8 billion in capital expenditure and delivered projects on time and on budget. Their budget funded the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, which contained more pretty pictures than modelling and could only deliver higher energy bills. Our budget supports the Energy Roadmap that will deliver \$1,035 in avoided costs for Queensland households every year to 2035. Our focus is on Queensland households and businesses; theirs is on fuel cards for themselves.

In addition to that, this year power bills are set to drop by 10 per cent right across Queensland through the AER, the DMO and the Queensland Competition Authority findings. Those opposite advertised cost-of-living relief on their budget papers, but inside they failed to properly fund anything. Our first budget permanently funded 50-cent fares, which they would have cut, Play On! vouchers, free kindy healthcare checks and the Back to School Boost. Their budgets promised to fund services but inside delivered nothing. Our health minister has now funded \$638 million for the Springfield Mater Hospital. Child Safety was off a cliff, with a \$461 million funding black hole that we had to fund.

Their budgets ran expense growth at 6.6 per cent over nine years, while our first budget delivered lower expense growth and more services. Their budgets delivered a record debt spend of \$252 billion, while our first budget reduced it to \$205 billion. Their fiscal vandalism, wasteful spending and expense growth trajectory has left a rating downgrade likely—even inevitable—but we will continue to be disciplined and treat every single taxpayer dollar with respect to deliver the highest and best use for every single Queenslanders.

Stafford By-Election

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.11 pm): After dragging the parliament through the gutter earlier this week, the member for Kawana finally made a special guest appearance at the Stafford by-election yesterday. After almost four weeks of campaigning, the people of Stafford had only been subjected to the truculence and sullenness of the Premier. We all saw him at the early voting centre at the Wilston Grange AFL club last Wednesday, skulking for 40 minutes, barely able to talk to voters and LNP volunteers. It is little wonder he was so sour and sulking because that was the afternoon of the two disastrous press conferences by the member for Whitsunday and the member for Everton. They were titanic efforts but not in a good way.


Those disastrous media conferences were only topped by the disastrous media conference the next day when the member for Kawana famously pushed the member for Broadwater aside, yelling, 'I'll take it from here, Premier,' before he proceeded to slur and defame all and sundry. The member for Broadwater was at the Gorillas AFL club walking around with a dark cloud over his head—talk about lacklustre. The only person who has been more lacklustre in this Stafford by-election has been the LNP candidate herself, Fiona Hammond—the LNP candidate that Stafford just had to have. Why? Because they already had the corflutes printed. Arriving late to pre-poll and departing early: I can assure all honourable members that Fiona Hammond is not much into talking to voters either.

I pity the poor voters of Stafford. After enduring these indignities, they had to put up with the member for Kawana. Thankfully for the voters he was only there for 30 minutes. The member for Kawana turned up, I kid you not, for a photo-op for 30 minutes—that's right—and then in the blink of an eye he was back in the black Lexus, speeding to the sewage treatment plant to pick up some more dirt before he returned to the Queensland parliament. I am not surprised that the LNP leaders did not hang around for long in Stafford, because neither of them wanted to explain about the dodgy deal the LNP has done with One Nation. Here it is for the entire world to see—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): No props please, member for Woodridge.

Mr DICK: The One Nation supporters group is advocating a direct vote for the LNP. For a generation, Labor has been saying that a vote for the LNP is a vote for One Nation, and didn't the Farrer by-election prove that. We now know that a vote for One Nation is a vote for the LNP. Queenslanders want to know what dirty deal the Premier did to secure One Nation support and what price Queenslanders are going to have to pay for this dirty, dodgy LNP deal.

Health System

 **Ms ASIF** (Sandgate—ALP) (2.14 pm): I rise to speak about the growing concerns with Queensland's health system. This LNP government continue to demonstrate that they do not care about Queensland's public health system. They do not care about our health workers and they do not care about delivering. In September last year we saw ambulance ramping hit 47.8 per cent. That is nearly half of all patients ramped. Under this health minister and this LNP government, we have the worst ambulance ramping on record.

It gets worse. Labor had a plan to deliver 93 hospital beds at the Prince Charles Hospital—beds for a growing community that would have been available from next year, beds that would have helped our northside community. Any doctor, nurse or health worker in Queensland will tell you that hospitals are overflowing and that they feel overwhelmed. They have been calling for the government to do more but this government continues to ignore them; instead they are scrapping the capacity expansion program, leaving frontline workers in the lurch.

I have spent time talking to northsiders, including in Stafford recently. So many of the amazing nurses who work at the Prince Charles Hospital live in Stafford. They speak firsthand of the growing waitlists and worsening ramping. The Prince Charles Hospital services communities right across the north side, including in my Sandgate electorate. What they are experiencing is a health system that they cannot rely on. Northsiders deserve quality health care when they need it. Under Labor they would have received 93 new beds. Rather than those beds being built, the health minister has struck a deal to rent private beds on the south side for \$1 million per bed per year.


This Saturday, Stafford voters will be given a choice. They will choose between the LNP, which have no interest in fixing the Prince Charles Hospital, and the Greens, which are complicit in preferencing the LNP and right-wing fringe candidates over progressive candidates like Luke Richmond. At a time when far-right sentiments are growing, it is more important than ever to ensure that the Greens preferences continue to go to a progressive candidate. But, no, they preferenced right-wing candidates over the Labor candidate. That is where we are at.

Across the country we are seeing a shift towards far-right populist groups, and that is what One Nation is pushing. What they are also pushing is a vote to the LNP. One Nation supporter pages are saying, 'Here is a how-to-vote card for the LNP candidate.' I want to quote from their post—

With no One Nation candidate in this race, we are recommending our supporters put their first preference to the LNP candidate Fiona Hammond.

I wonder what deal has been struck between One Nation and the Premier and this LNP government, and who will go next to One Nation. We will see. There is only one party and one candidate that is listening to northsiders and health workers and standing up for the north side and the Prince Charles Hospital, and that is Labor and Luke Richmond.

Duigan, Mr REV


 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.17 pm): It is an absolute honour for me to be able to stand up and pay tribute to a great friend and local community champion, Russell Edward Vaughan Duigan. Russell was 87. He was married to Suzanne Jackson, a local, and he had a lovely daughter, Sam, and son, Dennis. Sam and Adam continue the legacy of the veterinary surgery in Laidley that Russell started many years ago in 1964 when he arrived as a young veterinarian.

Russell was a great community champion. He was a vice captain of Churchie before he took up veterinary studies and moved to the Lockyer Valley after completing his studies. He continued his love of athletics and rugby league. He was a champion pole vaulter and runner and was very much a lover of life. He played the drums in the band Brown Sugar. I can just see Russell up there, causing the men and women in the audience to swoon with the tunes the band played, and I say men and women because Russell was loved by everyone. If there was a record for the number of people you were the best man for, Russell Duigan would win that title because he was a true gentleman. I love to describe Russell as one of nature's true gentlemen.

He was a great friend to us, and I must say he did help us out on election booths on many occasions. He and Peter Hooper were stalwarts at Rosewood and in later times at Thornton with Gary Young, where they ended up with 92 per cent of the primary vote for me. They were great champions for our cause. Russell will be fondly remembered as the veterinarian who helped so many people in our Lockyer community. He was as much a great veterinarian as a good friend to our community. There was not a community event at which Russell was not on the sidelines or helping out.

To Sam, Dennis and family, I say he was a much loved person who contributed throughout his life. He even rang last year to help out at the show so he could come along and be part of it all. My wife, Deb, and I had a lovely friendship with Russell and went to many different events. When he could no longer drive he would accompany us. Russell was one of those people who was a mate for life. He was somebody who was standing beside you; you knew he had your back. He was a really great friend and is absolutely going to be missed by our community. Vale, Russell Duigan.

Heath System


 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (2.20 pm): I rise today to talk about the health of our health system under the Crisafulli LNP government. If the LNP was to be believed at the last election, by now we would have seen evidence of no more patients left waiting on the ramps, enough doctors and nurses in our hospitals, more birthing services in our regional hospitals, shorter waitlists across Queensland health services, two new step-up step-down mental health facilities, more beds across hospitals like Redcliffe and the Prince Charles—and the list goes on.

Over 560 days into this LNP government—that is over 1½ years—what have we actually seen? I do not know about you, Mr Deputy Speaker Krause, but I saw reports of the highest rate of ambulance ramping ever last year—and that was almost a year into the LNP's term—a pause on hospital expansion projects right across the state and birthing services still on bypass in the regions, with reports of the maternity crisis extending into South-East Queensland as well. We have also seen a shuffling of Queensland Health waiting lists so surgery times look better while consultation waits completely blow out. One way to make your surgery list shorter is to not recommend anyone else for surgery. We have not seen any step-up step-down mental health facilities delivered for young people, but we did see an absolute debacle when the LNP overturned the appointment of the new Chief Health Officer.

Now the voters of Stafford have a chance to send a message to the LNP—to an LNP that appears to prioritise colour-coding departments over birthing services for Cooktown, to an LNP that prefers to wage war on workers than to fix the train crisis it is presiding over, to an LNP that buys a billboard with taxpayers' money to advertise \$20,000 worth of school upgrades—in Stafford, funnily enough. This billboard is reportedly worth \$40,000—and I reckon honourable members could poll any school in any of our electorates and be told they would rather spend that billboard cash on improving facilities for kids. That is not to mention the complete disregard shown to Queensland teachers in the LNP's failed wage negotiations.

It is enough to make you sick and need the health system. If you do feel sick, you want to hope you do not live in the Prince Charles Hospital catchment because, while we have seen double standards from those opposite and repeated failures to pass the pub test, Stafford voters are still waiting for the 93 beds promised for their local hospital.

Moggill Electorate; Anzac Day; Brookfield Show

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.22 pm): Across the electorate of Moggill, the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government continues to deliver for local residents, with substantial funding provided to local community, sporting and environmental organisations. The LNP state government is also progressing key infrastructure priorities for the western suburbs of Brisbane. Just recently I was delighted to announce that community consultation has opened on an integrated road and public transport plan for the western suburbs of Brisbane. This was a key election commitment I made to local residents at the last state election. This long-term plan will investigate future road, public transport and active transport solutions for our region whilst ensuring residents have a genuine opportunity to help shape the future of our transport network for the western suburbs of Brisbane.

There has already been strong community engagement and valuable feedback received in relation to our local road network, public transport connectivity and active transport priorities. As feedback received has already demonstrated, delivering long-term infrastructure and transport solutions for the western suburbs of Brisbane will require dedicated funding from all levels of government including the Brisbane City Council, Ipswich City Council as well as the Queensland government and the Australian federal government. Alongside the delivery of these commitments, it is important to state that the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government has also passed important legislation benefitting local residents in the electorate of Moggill and communities right across Queensland.


Last month Anzac Day was commemorated. It was terrific to see again our local veterans and serving ADF personnel join together with local residents, our schools and our representatives from various emergency services and community organisations at services held across the electorate of

Moggill. This included the dawn service in Bellbowrie and the annual Brookfield morning service along with commemorations held in Upper Brookfield, Pinjarra Hills and Mount Crosby. On the eve of Anzac Day I was also honoured to attend the 2026 nurses memorial candlelit vigil along with the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency the Hon. Dr Jeannette Young AC, PSM, and the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, the Hon. Tim Nicholls MP. I wish to acknowledge Colonel (Retired) Julie Finucane OAM, RFD, President, Centaur Memorial Fund for Nurses, for her tremendous efforts each and every year.

As assistant minister to the Premier and Leader of the House, I was also pleased to represent Premier David Crisafulli MP at the 2026 University of Queensland Medicine Anzac Memorial Service. This year's ceremony featured keynote speaker Dr Kim Morgan-Short and was attended by a number of dignitaries and special guests including the Surgeon General of the ADF, Rear Admiral Sonya Bennett AM, RAN; Brigadier Michael Reade AM; Lieutenant Colonel Zac von Bertouch; and Regimental Sergeant Major Warrant Officer Class One Ashley McDonald.

Finally, next week I very much look forward to joining local residents to officially open the annual Brookfield Show, Brisbane's biggest little country show, which I am proud to again sponsor as the state member for Moggill. It is always a terrific show, each and every show, and I look forward to seeing everyone there.

International Nurses Day; Stafford By-Election

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (2.25 pm): As we all know, it was International Nurses Day on Tuesday, and what an important day to celebrate our incredible, selfless, hardworking nurses. We have all benefited from their care and healing hands—every single one of us—and I want to take this opportunity to place my thanks on record.


Tuesday was also important because it was the 10th anniversary of Labor's passing of the laws to institute nurse-patient ratios. As we know, the LNP voted against it, including the member for Mudgeeraba, who is a nurse. Nurses were calling for those ratios. They wanted them. They wanted to ensure safety for patients and staff. We listened and we passed those laws. In the intervening 10 years nurses have known that when they turn up for a shift they can provide the best care possible because there are rules to ensure they are not overloaded with patients.

I will tell honourable members something about nurses. We say all those lovely things about compassion, care and selflessness. I have plenty of nurses in my family, so I know what they are like. However, do not get a nurse started if you do the wrong thing by their beloved patients. Do not get them started if you do not do the best for the healthcare system or if, as a government, you do not do what you say you are going to do. Do not get them started because they are scary.

Go and talk to a nurse—and particularly right now a nurse who lives in the Stafford electorate—about this government and their election commitment to reduce ambulance ramping and then see what happens when that nurse finds out that ambulance ramping under this minister is at record levels—the worst ever. Go and talk to a nurse, particularly one who lives in the Stafford electorate, about the fact that this government was going to deliver planned hospital upgrades earlier, accountability for wait times and how many hospital beds are available and then see what happens when that nurse finds out that wait times have blown out to the never-never under this government, they have cut our planned 93-bed expansion at Prince Charles Hospital and the health minister is trying to cover up those cuts while his bureaucrats are confirming them. After hearing all of those things, that is when nurses know that this Premier is all about photo-op, not follow-up, and that what he says is not what he does and they are not happy.

It is not just the nurses who are not happy right now; it is the people in the Stafford electorate who are not happy because those 93 beds at the Prince Charles Hospital really matter to people in Stafford. That is their hospital. They were their beds; they were supposed to be for them and their families. On Saturday, this government will be held to account for what it has done. It does not matter what dirty deal this government has done with One Nation; it is not going to save them. They are putting up a candidate no-one recognises when they walk past their signs. I would not want to be them on Saturday night.

Maroochy Barambah

 **Hon. FS SIMPSON** (Maroochydhore—LNP) (Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism) (2.28 pm): There are two significant Aboriginal elders who passed away earlier this

year who had both contributed powerfully with voices of advocacy and love and care for local community. There has already been a very poignant and meaningful contribution to acknowledge particularly Albert Holt. To his family I also pass on my condolences. I know there were words spoken by the shadow minister with respect to Albert Holt about the legacy he has left to Queensland.


I want to add some additional words with respect to songwoman Maroochy Barambah, who many of us had the privilege of knowing. She passed away on 28 January 2026. With the permission of her family, I want to table her memorial booklet, which was so beautifully put together, and share a few words to also acknowledge this well-respected Turrbal elder who was a mezzo-soprano singer and performer who worked hard to carry her culture throughout Queensland and the world.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'In loving memory Maroochy Barambah, 12th February 1955—28th January 2026' [722].

Maroochy was well known as a traditional songwoman and law woman who carried herself with purpose and integrity. She was born on 12 February 1955 in Cherbourg as Yvette Isaacs and later took on the name Maroochy, which means black swan or red-beaked bird, which is also the name of Maroochydhore—my town on the Sunshine Coast. Barambah means source of the western wind, and Maroochy had Turrbal and Kabi Kabi ancestral ties. Her musicality was nurtured young and gave her the power through her public work to support Aboriginal rights and cultural recognition. She studied in Melbourne at the Melba Conservatorium of Music and the Victorian College of the Arts where she graduated as the first Aboriginal dramatic arts graduate in 1979.

She was clearly a trailblazer and a driven, beautiful person who pursued a career in music that crossed the genres of jazz, rock, musical theatre and classical opera. She was recognised for her emerging talent and potential after being awarded the inaugural Aboriginal performing arts fellowship by the Aboriginal Arts Committee in 1991. There are so many accolades to her name that there is not enough time in this contribution to do full justice to them, but she performed on the Australian operatic stage in 1989 as the first Aboriginal person to do so and by 1993 she was performing at the United Nations in New York in honour of International Year of the World's Indigenous People. Profoundly, she performed *Waltzing Matilda* and the national anthem at the 1993 AFL grand final and a decade later Maroochy translated *Advance Australia Fair*, our national anthem, into Turrbal.

International Nurses Day; Stafford By-Election

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (2.31 pm): One thing that Queenslanders know and that the people in Stafford know is that the Queensland Labor opposition backs our nurses. This year the theme for International Nurses Day is 'Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives', and they certainly do. In saying that, we know that they need more infrastructure and more workforce growth to keep doing their jobs.

In the 10th year of celebrating the former Labor government's passing of laws to enforce safe nurse-to-patient ratios in our state hospitals, it was great to celebrate Labour Day with the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union. Ten years ago the former Labor government listened to our state's nurses—the workers on the front line delivering life-saving care to Queenslanders. Those ratios have improved job satisfaction and improved the quality of care nurses in our public hospitals are able to provide, because when they show up for their shifts they know that the rules ensure that they are not overloaded with patients.

As a north Brisbane lad growing up in the seat of Chermside and the now Stafford electorate, I have fond memories of what was then known as the Chermside Hospital and today the Prince Charles Hospital. My mother worked as a matron of nursing at the hospital and, having been a patient on several occasions, I value the profession of nursing and the commitment and the care they provide. Haven't things changed since this LNP government came to power in 2024?


All Labor MPs have been out knocking on doors in Stafford and talking with locals about their concerns about the Prince Charles Hospital and how much this government's inaction is costing them. In fact, some of the people I met had spent several hours at the Prince Charles Hospital emergency department. In the end, due to the lengthy waiting times, they decided to go home, take over-the-counter painkillers and treat their injuries themselves. They told me how offended they are that this Premier and this health minister will continue to tout dodgy figures and data on ambulance ramping and emergency department wait times while our hospital system continues to suffer. Queensland's health system is on life support.

We know that the voters of Stafford are not mugs and they will not be treated like mugs despite the scurrilous dirty deal the LNP has done with One Nation. I want to table a document from the One Nation Supporters Network that demonstrates that a dirty deal has been done dirt cheap by this mob opposite and One Nation.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Facebook page of the One Nation Supporters Network, in relation to an LNP how to vote card for the Stafford by-election [723].

We know what is ahead of us in the future with regard to these dirty deals that this LNP government is doing with One Nation. Who knows what is going to happen on Saturday? We know that one thing we have to do is back in Luke Richmond, the Labor candidate for Stafford, and bring it home. The people of Stafford will be doing that.

South-West Queensland, Inland Rail


 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.35 pm): In Toowoomba and South-West Queensland people understand what it means to build and deliver things that matter. We grow the food, we move the freight, we produce the energy and we power industries not just in Queensland but across this nation. Families across the Darling Downs, Western Downs, Maranoa and the Surat Basin have spent decades helping build Australia's prosperity and for years those communities were told one thing by Canberra and the federal Labor Party—that Inland Rail would transform regional Queensland and that they would not cut it. We were also told that Queensland gas would help secure Australia's future, but today in regional Queensland we are asking a simple question: where is the fair return for our contribution to the nation?

Today I want to make a couple of points. First, South-West Queensland powers the national economy with not just electricity but also gas. When they talk about the east coast gas market, they are talking about Queensland gas, and that comes from South-West Queensland. Second, the federal government is intervening with that resource whilst walking away from transformational Queensland infrastructure—the Inland Rail. Third, Toowoomba and the south-west deserve better nation-building investment, not nation-building excuses. If you are going to take away the Inland Rail, then use your fuel cards to come and have a look at the Gore Highway, because the Gore Highway will desperately need upgrading if it is going to carry the wealth of this nation.

This week the federal government announced a gas reservation scheme requiring east coast LNG exporters to set aside 20 per cent of their production for Australian domestic users, a policy energy minister Chris Bowen described as the most significant reform to the nation's—he means Queensland's—gas market in a generation to take effect from July 2027. At the same time that same federal government placed an indefinite hold on Inland Rail north of Parkes. So we have a rail line that goes from Victoria to New South Wales and, meanwhile, we are told what we can and cannot do with the resources of Queensland.

This is a despicable act by the Labor government in Canberra. It has really let down the people of not just my electorate but of Queensland as a whole. This was about delivering prosperity and ensuring that productivity in the movement of freight increased. We have a road network that is well and truly in need of upgrade in our part of the world. It is dangerous for local people to drive those roads with their families on the weekends trying to get to sport. By not building Inland Rail, the federal Labor government will force more trucks on to those roads that are already inadequate. It is time for the Labor Party in this chamber to call on Canberra to give Queensland its fair share of infrastructure funding and ensure Inland Rail is built.

International Nurses Day; Stafford By-Election


 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (2.38 pm): This week we celebrated International Nurses Day and we recognise the nurses who form the backbone of Queensland's health system. They are there every day and every night in emergency departments, on busy wards, in aged care, in mental health, in maternity services and in communities across the state. They are there in moments of fear, pain, uncertainty and heartbreak, and day after day, shift after shift, they keep showing up for Queenslanders. This year's theme of 'Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives' is a powerful reminder that supporting nurses cannot just be about kind words once a year; it has to be about the structures, staffing and resources that allow them to provide safe care. My husband, Ian, was a registered nurse for over 20 years. Like many families of nurses, I know that the impact of a difficult shift does not simply disappear when a nurse walks out of the hospital doors. They carry the pressure of the patients they

could not spend enough time with. They carry the frustration of stretched wards and rising demand. They carry the emotional toll of knowing the care they want to give and the care patients deserve depend on whether the system gives them the support they need to provide it.

That is why 10 years ago I was so proud to chair the parliamentary inquiry that helped pave the way for safe nurse-to-patient ratios in Queensland. We heard directly from nurses and midwives and Labor acted. Those ratios gave nurses greater certainty that when they arrived for a shift there would be a minimum staffing floor in place. It helped improve care, reduced pressure on wards and gave nurses more support to do the job they entered the profession to do. Any nurse working in a public hospital today will tell you the work is not finished. They will tell you wards are under strain, they will tell you demand is growing, they will tell you that patients are waiting too long and they will tell you that this government's decision to delay the critical services and expansions promised by our former Labor government is having an impact. We see that clearly at the Prince Charles Hospital. Under Labor, 93 additional beds were to be delivered by 2027; under the LNP that plan has been cast into uncertainty. There is no clear answer for north Brisbane families about when those beds will arrive, if ever. Brisbane northsiders deserve better than another slogan and a stalled construction site. Nurses at the Prince Charles deserve better.

This LNP government is not listening, but I will tell you who is listening. We all know it is the Labor candidate for Stafford, Luke Richmond. It is Luke Richmond who is listening. It is Luke Richmond, the local—unlike the LNP candidate, who does not even live locally—who is on the doors listening to the issues of Stafford voters. It is only Luke Richmond who will stand up in this House every day for those locals and make sure this LNP government actually listens.

Pumicestone Electorate

 **Miss DOOLAN** (Pumicestone—LNP) (2.41 pm): Today I rise to acknowledge the incredible work of Stride Safe Space Caboolture, a life-saving mental health service for our community. I recently met with Stephanie from Ningi, a young woman who told me very clearly that Safe Space Caboolture saved her life. Since then, she has been advocating passionately to me and to the minister to ensure this service has the funding it needs to help support people in crisis. A couple of weeks ago I met with the team at Safe Space Caboolture. I saw firsthand the extraordinary work that they do—meeting people where they are, providing calm in moments of crisis and giving hope when people need it most. When I rang them to let them know the Crisafulli government has extended their funding they were absolutely thrilled.

I do need to clear something up. Last night the member for Morayfield stated in his adjournment speech in relation to Safe Space Caboolture funding that 'despite numerous representations' including letters 'we are yet to receive any confirmation from the Queensland government'. I can confirm that on 30 April our Minister for Health sent a letter to the federal health minister confirming our support for the continuation of the service. My question to the member for Morayfield is: did his federal Labor colleagues forget to inform him, despite his so-called strong advocacy, or was he happy to leave this organisation in uncertainty for the sake of political pointscore?

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at what the member for Pumicestone is saying, and I ask for it to be withdrawn.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): One moment. I will take some advice. Member for Pumicestone, I ask you to withdraw.

Miss DOOLAN: I withdraw. What is particularly extraordinary is that the former Labor government had actually allocated zero dollars beyond June 2025 for this Commonwealth initiative. By contrast, our Crisafulli government stepped up because we believe our communities deserve seamless access to mental health care. For me, this is about service. It is about community. It is about delivering real outcomes for the people we represent. I am proud that across our electorate that spirit of service is alive and well. Recently more than \$157,000 was delivered to local organisations through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to support the clubs, schools, volunteers and frontline services that make our communities stronger. To every recipient I say: thank you for the work you do to support others and to strengthen our region.

We also have the Pumicestone Business Excellence Awards coming up. We had an overwhelming number of votes come in—over 6,000 in total. I want to not only congratulate all finalists but also acknowledge every business across our electorate because—whether you are a finalist or not—you are a vital part of our community. I do want to give a shout-out to Bribie Island Tiling for delivering excellent service for their clients. Ryan and Bruce are a whole lot of fun and were very cooperative in putting together some super random Instagram reels with me.

Finally, I want to congratulate the team at Sound Abilities Speech Pathology in Bellara for hosting their Pancakes for Parkinson's fundraiser. This was a fantastic initiative bringing the community together for a cause that touches so many families, with funds supporting Parkinson's research through the Shake It Up Australia Foundation. To the team at Sound Abilities: thank you for the incredible work you do not just in your clinic but also in our community. When we back our community organisations, our volunteers and our young people, we back the future of Queensland.


Health System; Stafford By-Election

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.45 pm): Queensland's public health system is under savage attack from the Crisafulli LNP government, with cuts and delays to our public health system. Just look at the one-year delay to the stage 2 expansion of the Ipswich Hospital. Labor in government delivered the stage 1 expansion. Labor started and committed to the stage 2 expansion—200 beds and a bigger ED. Under our plan it was going to be delivered by 2027. Under the LNP hospital plan it has been pushed out to 2028 at the earliest. That is an extra year that our community will be without an extra 200 beds and an extra year without an expanded ED.

We have heard other speakers talk about cuts and delays to health projects in Redcliffe and Coomera. Of course, there is the fact the LNP have scrapped Labor's new plan to deliver 93 new beds at the Prince Charles Hospital by 2027. It is no wonder that the health minister and member for Clayfield, just next door, has not been seen in Stafford—I have not seen him; I do not think anybody has seen him out there in Stafford. You do not want the bloke who has cut Labor's plan for 93 extra beds out there! They do not want him out there campaigning because they know that the only question Stafford locals will have is, 'Where are our 93 beds, health minister?' He is probably about as popular as the member for Everton, on the other side of the Stafford electorate. I have not seen him out there campaigning in Stafford, even though he represents a neighbouring electorate. Coincidentally, I understand that he actually lives in the Clayfield electorate now anyway, so that is good. I am glad that he has a new home because he seemed to previously have been of no fixed address, but the AEC is looking into that. We look forward to the outcome. I have run into members from the LNP—everywhere from Mirani and Maryborough to Caloundra—at polls in Stafford, but I have not seen the member for Clayfield or the member for Everton.

The fact is: with the LNP we have a government that are more focused on themselves than on Queenslanders. We have seen the auditions from the backbench this week—from the member for Oodgeroo and the member for Redlands, who would probably make a good sports minister. There is only one member who could be the new minister for health and that is the member for Moggill. He is dying to be the minister for health. Just ask him; he will tell anyone! This Saturday the people of Stafford have an opportunity to send this government a message and elect Labor's Luke Richmond.

Manufacturing

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (2.48 pm): Queensland is a sleeping giant of manufacturing and the Crisafulli government is waking it up. Manufacturing in this state is not just surviving; it is growing, innovating and creating opportunities right across Queensland. This week is a defining week for Australian manufacturing. Just across the road at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, 232 exhibitors are showcasing the very best of our capability, innovation, technology and world-class expertise. This is the first time that Queensland has hosted Australian Manufacturing Week.

Mr Butcher interjected.


Mr LAST: Even the member for Gladstone likes it! More than 8,000 visitors are expected through the doors having travelled from around Australia and the globe. Under the Crisafulli government's leadership, Queensland manufacturing is now one of the state's largest industries and contributes more than \$29 billion to our economy. We are investing \$79.1 million through the Transforming Queensland Manufacturing Grants Program. The first round, worth \$12.5 million, has already attracted 119 applications from manufacturers ready to grow, scale and compete.

What a week Australian Manufacturing Week has been. On Monday I started my day out at Pinkenba visiting the site of what could be something very exciting when it comes to securing our sovereign capabilities. Alter Steel is proposing to invest more than \$800 million to build a reinforcing steel mill at the Port of Brisbane and that is important. It matters because Alter Steel is making private investment into advanced manufacturing and into Queensland's steel industry. It matters because this

proposed project will generate 500,000 tonnes per year of reinforcing steel into the Queensland market, reducing our reliance on imports. It matters because this project could see the creation of more than 1,000 construction jobs, more than 216 permanent roles and more than 600 indirect roles across logistics, processing and supply chains.

In defence, manufacturing companies like Rheinmetall are helping position Queensland as a national leader in advanced manufacturing and sovereign defence capability. I visited Rheinmetall's operation in Redbank last week. It is not only delivering world-class military vehicles but also creating highly skilled jobs, strengthening local supply chains and helping develop the next generation of advanced manufacturing capability right here in Queensland. This is sovereign capability in action. It is initiatives like these that prove this government is delivering a better lifestyle through a stronger economy and backing local innovation. Our goal is simple: to make this state a powerhouse in manufacturing. This is what backing local industry looks like and this is what being open for business looks like. Queensland manufacturers do not just compete, they lead. The giant is waking up and this government is the alarm clock.

Health System

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.51 pm): And the loser is Ipswich! Ipswich Hospital took out the unenviable honour of having patients ramped the longest in a Queensland hospital: 478 minutes. That is how long patients have been ramped at Ipswich Hospital. That is eight hours. The recent data released in April paints a dire picture of those attempting to access health care in our state. We were closely followed by the PA and Gold Coast University hospitals at seven hours. Other major blowouts included Toowoomba Hospital at 6.6 hours, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital at 6.4 hours, Mater Brisbane at six hours, Redland Hospital at 5.8 hours and QEII at 5.2 hours.

The Crisafulli government made some big promises to the people of Queensland on health. This included bringing down ramping wait times and, of course, promising no cuts to health services. We know these were just empty promises because the LNP could not wait to get their grubby hands on Labor's capacity expansion program so they could scrap it. We know that under Labor 93 new beds were due to be delivered in 2027 at the Prince Charles Hospital. We also know that that is now not happening under the LNP. This was a major hospital expansion, but now these beds have gone into the never-never. Our fantastic Labor candidate in Stafford, Luke Richmond, has not wasted a minute letting every person in his community know just what the Crisafulli government has done to Prince Charles Hospital.

Ipswich was also a winner—sort of—because, bless the gods, the stage 2 expansion was just so far advanced that it could not be cut by the LNP government, though it has been delayed. This expansion will complement the significant health investment that our government made in the region: stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion, Ripley Satellite Hospital, the Ripley subacute facility, the acute mental health facility, the alcohol and other drugs withdrawal management and rehab facility and the new public hospital in Springfield. Whilst the LNP government likes to say that Labor did not fund the hospital in Springfield, the problem is no-one believes them. In fact, the Minister for Health posted a video on Facebook on 8 April repeating the same drivel that Labor failed to fund the project. It is great! The video got 13 likes—well done—and seven comments, five of which were hidden. There were two that he actually left there. Thanks to Scott who commented, 'Well done by the last government', and Nikki who commented, 'Failed to fund it? They were building it before you got here you lying flog ...' Whatever they say, from Stafford to Springfield, the people of Queensland know the LNP cannot be trusted.

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Jordan is an experienced member and knows that she has used unparliamentary language and I ask you to get her to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Jordan?

Ms MULLEN: I withdraw and table the post.


Tabled paper: Extract, dated 8 April, from the Facebook page of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, Hon. Tim Nicholls, in relation to delivery of public health services at Mater Hospital Springfield [\[724\]](#).

Whatever they say, from Stafford to Springfield, the people of Queensland know the LNP cannot be trusted when it comes to health.

Mr Bailey interjected.

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

Renewable Energy


 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (2.54 pm): When it comes to renewable energy projects and Queensland's regional communities, the Crisafulli government has listened and acted. The former Labor government's reckless rush to renewables pushed panic upon regional Queenslanders who were effectively gagged and communities like mine are paying the price. They were shut out from the approvals process. They were ridden roughshod over in the name of political pointsoring to the extent they had little to say on developments in our own backyard. The Crisafulli government is fixing Labor's mess. While Labor ignored our regional communities, we have delivered on our election commitment to empower them.

Our changes under the landmark Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025 have strengthened the planning rules and social licence requirements for renewable energy projects. Now at last local voices are being heard. Any new wind power projects, large solar power projects and major battery facilities must complete a social impact assessment and enter into community benefit arrangements before lodging their development application. This ensures communities receive real long-term benefits. It is common sense. Effectively, the approvals processes have fallen in line with other land uses such as mining and intensive agriculture. All wind power and solar power project proposals in Queensland must undergo full impact assessment, including public notification. On wind projects, developers must now show they will manage noise, shadow flicker, visual impacts and community concerns.

Significant changes have also been made around decommissioning and setbacks. We do not believe that underlying landholders should bear responsibility for decommissioning wind power or solar power projects. That onus now rests, and rightfully so, on the proponent operator. Under our practical approach there is no single fixed setback distance between renewable energy infrastructure and residential and other community facilities. Instead, setbacks are determined on a site-by-site basis based on technical assessments of noise, shadow flicker and other impacts because across the state a minimum setback appropriate for one site may be completely inappropriate and not far enough on another.

Labor's haste to approve projects came with a lack of community consultation, inconsistent planning laws and unclear benefits for our communities. In stark contrast, these reforms deliver on the Crisafulli government's commitment to ensure applications for these projects are up to the mark. It is about being consultative, transparent and addressing social impacts. Our local communities should always be listened to.

Banking Industry

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (2.57 pm): I need to very quickly correct the record around a speech I made a few weeks ago regarding the absolute capture of both major parties by the banking lobby. I said that former Labor premier Anna Bligh was the head of the Australian Banking Association, the peak lobby for banks in Australia. She had apparently already retired from the role by then so I correct the record in that respect. Never fear, she has been replaced by none other than—drum roll!—former Liberal minister Simon Birmingham. That is the way it works. The revolving door is spinning as freely as it ever has. If you want to catch up with former premier Bligh, she is going to be speaking at the Property Council's annual Property Congress later this year. The developer lobby is still stitched up well.

Both of the major parties are working for the banks. It is exactly why they are not working for regular people. We are all feeling the pinch, but what does that actually look like? Here is a question: who loves inflation and who loves rate rises? It is not regular people, it is the big banks. Has everyone received an email from their banks recently about how they just have to raise interest rates on your mortgage thanks to the latest decision of the RBA? The truth of it is they are simply ripping you off. These banks made \$43 billion in profit last year, which has only been helped by padding out interest rate rises. The big four banks make almost \$229,000 profit off the average mortgage holder's home. In the first year of a mortgage that is an average of \$214 every week.


Who loves the housing crisis? It is not regular people; it is the big banks. In Brisbane, house prices have jumped 20 per cent in just the last year. Higher mortgages mean higher profits for banks. Federal Labor's 5% Deposit Scheme has led directly to inflated prices and bigger loans for houses at the lower end of the market. It is projected to funnel an extra \$24 billion to the banks in interest over the first five years, so they win and regular people lose.

As a punter in Queensland, everything that makes your life harder means bigger profits for the banks: the housing crisis, interest rates, rising debt. Remember the GFC? There was a \$120 billion taxpayer bailout. What an incredible reward for basically cooking the economy and driving it to collapse. The banks thrive on your misery and the politicians let them do it because they work for them—given the donations and jobs after politics that are on offer.

If either of the major parties wants to prove they are not on the big banks' payroll then here is a simple suggestion: tax the big banks properly. Take some of the profits they are currently paying out to their CEOs—\$24 million to the Macquarie CEO last year—and use it to help ordinary people, to fund housing, to fund health care. If you are really working for the people and not the banks then show it in your decisions.

(Time expired)

Southport Electorate

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (3.00 pm): Today I rise to speak about some of the incredible people, events and initiatives across the Southport electorate that reflect the strength, compassion and bright future of our community. Earlier this month, as part of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month I attended the annual candlelight vigil to honour and remember those whose lives have been lost as a result of domestic and family violence. These vigils continue to remind us that behind every statistic is a person, a family and a community changed forever.

I also recently attended the Gold Coast Robot Sumo Competition, an inspiring event showcasing the innovation and talent of young people from across our region. Over the past decade this event has grown into a major regional STEM event, bringing together schools from across the northern Gold Coast. The competition is about far more than robotics; it is about encouraging curiosity, creativity and problem-solving in the next generation. I acknowledge the educators and advocates who have helped grow this initiative, especially Daniel Ricardo, Chris Tobin and the many schools and organisations that support STEM education on the Gold Coast. It is also fantastic to see schools participating in initiatives like the STEM Girl Power Initiative, the Premier's Coding Challenge and the new Queensland Quantum Challenge, helping inspire more young women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

I also had the opportunity to attend the IMPACT Gold Coast Youth Summit, which is a fantastic event that brings together young leaders from across our community. The event features speakers, workshops and immersion programs for young people aged 15 to 24, giving them the opportunity to learn and leave inspired. The energy in the room was truly infectious and left me feeling incredibly optimistic about the future of our young people.

I want to put on the record how much I am looking forward to the investiture ceremony at Government House this month, to support several outstanding Southport constituents. This year, quite a number of them were recognised for service to the community, including Glenn Norris OAM, Karen Phillips OAM, Robert Patterson OAM, Rock O'Keefe OAM, Joan O'Keefe OAM and the late Joy Enid Ransley-Smith OAM.


Finally, I give a special shout-out to our newest Southport youth member, Ngarimu Ormsby, who is enthusiastic, community minded and passionate about giving back. I am excited that Ngarimu and others will be a part of my annual youth leaders program, which will be launched next week. I have been running youth leaders programs since 2012, when I was first elected. It is all about encouraging young people to pursue their passions and developing the next generation of young leaders.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SMALL BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 23 April (see p. 1170), on motion of Mr Lister—

That the House take note of the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee Report No. 4, 58th Parliament—*Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland*, tabled on 18 September 2025.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (3.03 pm): I rise to speak to this committee report. I almost sigh as I start my speech because the government's volunteer strategy should really be about how we support some of the most beautiful people in the whole world, that is, our volunteers. They are the most selfless, the most astonishing and the most humble human beings most of us will ever know. They give

their time, their energy and their emotions for the good of other people. The government should have made a giant effort for those people. They should have made a respectful effort for those people. However, they did not.

All the government did was ditch the volunteering strategy that Labor had put in place. It was released only eight weeks before the election campaign following the most incredibly thorough process involving consultation with over 110 sector representatives and over 20 co-design meetings. It was based on evidence. There was an action plan with real actions and commitments—but, no. Because it was Labor's, they are going to forget all of that and pretend it did not happen. They made the poor volunteers jump through the hoops again to give feedback on a new strategy that they wanted to develop. When they did get the recommendations, they barely even committed to anything. In fact, their response uses words like 'consider', 'commit its determination', 'investigate', 'explored', 'be reviewed'. Not only have they come up with no commitments whatsoever for people who spend all of the time that they do not have doing the right thing by speaking to the government and engaging because they were asked to do that and they are good people; they are leaving them with nowhere to go with some of the real challenges that people face.

I will never forget during the last sitting week when the lovely Scouts came to Queensland parliament. We were all out on the green. We all had our little scarves on. We all took great pleasure in talking with them. We all love our local Scouts. Then the minister got up to give a speech. There were all the little kids, some of them only five years old, and she read her speech, which is always guaranteed to engage children. In front of those kids, she says, 'You know what you're going to get? A ministerial advisory council!' Strap me in for that one if I am five years old! That is what all of those people, including Scout leaders who give up so much of their time, were told by the minister they can really look forward to to help them address some of the real issues they face as volunteers.


What can you expect from a minister who, when just a member, was admonished in this parliament? We talk about contempt of parliament but she was admonished, which is the worst thing that can happen to you before you actually get kicked out of parliament. That was that member of parliament who is now a minister. The Premier made her a minister. What did she do with this volunteering strategy, as she has done with everything else? The responses about the dam the other day were cringe-worthy. She has mucked up this volunteering strategy.

Government members interjected.

Ms FARMER: I hope members opposite realise I am not taking their interjections. We have all seen the figures about the value of volunteering. There is a \$4.70 return for every dollar invested. The value of volunteering to the Queensland economy is \$117.8 billion. While that is so important, we are actually talking about real people and we cannot thank them enough.

I give a particular shout-out to the people we met with yesterday at the palliative care meeting. We heard from volunteers from Ambulance Wish who give their time to help dying people and their families. With the Stafford by-election this Saturday in mind, it is poignant that they do all of that while facing a government that has let them down so badly. They give extra and this government takes away. They give more and this government cuts. They give more and this government completely emasculates the health system in Queensland. We are here for volunteers. We are here for the people of Stafford and Luke Richmond is going to deliver on Saturday.

(Time expired)

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.09 pm): I rise to address the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee's report on the inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. Every member in this place no doubt knows the importance of local volunteer groups and the armies of selfless volunteers who help to make our communities such a wonderful place to live. I want to take this opportunity to offer my thanks to all of the hardworking volunteers across so many different groups in my electorate.

This inquiry was one of the earliest actions of the Crisafulli government after being elected and rightfully acknowledged the challenges that volunteer organisations face. The inquiry was driven by the real experience of Queenslanders on the ground, holding hearings across the state to engage with stakeholders to listen to what they want to see in the future for volunteers. The committee made eight recommendations to address the state of volunteering in Queensland and assist organisations with continuing to grow and operate within our communities. These recommendations include changes to Rural Fire Service Queensland to address cultural and organisational issues and removing barriers and improving onboarding processes for volunteers. Further recommendations proposed improvements to the volunteer experience within the State Emergency Service, including the support and recognition of


the efforts of volunteers who are regularly on the front line of disaster response efforts in this state. It also recommended that relevant prior experience should be better recognised and that the accreditations SES volunteers can obtain are able to be transferred to other education outcomes.

Recommendation 6 called for the investigation of a dedicated volunteer passport to account for those superstar volunteers who are involved with a number of different groups and make portability between the organisations more accessible. This passport would also make recognition of this valuable volunteer experience in a professional or career setting easier.

The Crisafulli government's tabled response to the report supported all recommendations in principle, which will be assisted with the establishment of a ministerial advisory panel. These recommendations and the changes that will be implemented are going to be fantastic for Capalaba ahead of the 2032 games as we display the best of our region to the rest of the world.

In my own electorate, I have been proud to spruik the hard work and achievements of local volunteer organisations, going along to celebrations of significant milestones like 50 years of Meals on Wheels Capalaba, but I also understand they are not operating without some serious challenges, including many that this report makes reference to. Local groups have consistently told me that volunteer recruitment and retention since the pandemic has been an uphill battle. They often have fear that at an upcoming AGM they will not be able to fill the executive positions and keep running their groups for the next year. These challenges often revolve around the requirements that take volunteers away from their actual work or act as a barrier to entry altogether, such as excessive regulatory burdens as well as insurance and licensing costs. That is why it was especially great to see the committee's recommendation to remove any excessive legislative or regulatory burdens and cooperate with the Local Government Association of Queensland to cut red tape on a council level too.

We know that volunteers are the heartbeat and backbone of a thriving community. I interact with countless groups across the Capalaba electorate and I am well acquainted with the challenges they face every single day. This report goes a long way to improve the conditions for volunteers, helping with recruitment, retention and aiding them to keep providing our state with the fantastic services that they do. I am pleased that the Crisafulli government is supporting the recommendations, leading from the front with a government-wide approach that will allow our volunteers to get on with the work they do best. I look forward to continuing to work closely with volunteer groups across the Capalaba electorate over the coming years and commend the report to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.13 pm): We do not always agree on everything in this place, but I do think we are on a bit of a unity ticket when it comes to recognising that Queensland simply could not function without our volunteers. I look across my whole community and a number of volunteer organisations and volunteers are involved in other organisations, and it is often the same people across multiple organisations doing fantastic work. If community groups, sporting groups, small businesses and our creatives are the fabric of our society, then I reckon that volunteers are the thread that stitches all of that really hard work and efforts together. We do know that volunteering, unfortunately, is in decline, and so, whilst a bit repetitive, I do welcome the inquiry. We have had some good submissions, including some from my electorate on that.

I want to focus on a couple of areas in terms of my submission. The inquiry was pretty broad ranging and the recommendations are broad ranging, but I will focus on a couple of areas. The first area which interests me is sports. Of course, every weekend across Queensland before the first whistle blows or before players run onto a field, volunteers have already been hard at work for many hours ensuring the players can come out and do what they love. We have about 15,000 community sporting groups across Queensland, representing hundreds of thousands of participants, and a lot of clubs made submissions to this inquiry.


I want to call out the Australian Sports Commission's submission in particular which demonstrated that there is a decline in sporting volunteering, with more volunteers doing three or more roles at the moment. In 2023, they found that 63 per cent of community sporting clubs reported that their main challenge was not having enough volunteers, which should concern us all. That is a sentiment that is certainly reflected in my electorate and in every electorate I attend when I move throughout the state. I was recently invited to speak to a number of sporting groups in the electorate of Everton. They reported to me a number of issues, but that was one of the strong issues they were struggling with. They reported to me the same issues: an overreliance on the same people, the same volunteers; a hesitancy to take on match official or coaching roles because of increasing expectations from players, parents and clubs themselves; and the changing landscape of sports increasingly becoming more competitive and more professional. They wanted me to come in here and again put to the sports minister: when will Queenslanders see the long overdue sports strategy?

This was a strategy that was promised in estimates last year, to be delivered by September. The minister then corrected himself and outlined he would have it delivered by November last year. We are now towards the middle of May and there has been no suggestion this will become public. There have been a lot of concerns raised with me around the shifting appetite to move the word 'recreation' out of 'sport and recreation' and to tell us where that leaves us, where volunteering features in all of this. We are hearing a lot of announcements about stadiums, mega-events and Brisbane 2032, which we all welcome, of course, but if we want the athletes, the officials, the volunteers, then we need a sports strategy to get us there. We are still waiting on that from this minister, so I ask him: when will we see Queensland's sports strategy released?

I want to talk about the absence of a focus on women in the committee report. Women are not only more likely to formally volunteer but they also carry the overwhelming burden of Australia's unpaid caring and community work. The ABS Time Use Survey consistently shows that women do substantially more unpaid labour than men, in particular caring for children, caring for elderly parents, household duties and community organising. Economists frequently argue that the Australian economy is effectively subsidised by women's unpaid labour because the care system would simply collapse without it. There are a number of reports out there that anyone can have a look at. The PMC Draft National Care and Support Economy Strategy shows that 80 per cent of older Australians rely on unpaid carers who are predominantly women. The Human Rights Commission produced a recent report showing that unpaid care directly affects women's equality and that women are burning out.

There are a number of reports here. I will not list them all because I do not have the time to, but the evidence is certainly there. The inquiry treats volunteering as a sector management problem which asks how do we recruit and retain volunteers, but it stops short of recognising that unpaid women's labour is a structural economic issue. It instead needs to ask: why is unpaid labour disproportionately falling to women? Why is unpaid labour not included as part of GDP calculations? Why is it expected that women will absorb the majority of community pressures? What happens when women finally burn out or just stop doing all of the work? There is a lot for this government to have a look at. I started volunteering with Meals on Wheels at about the age of five when I joined my pop. I still volunteer with them today. Across this whole room, a lot of us get value out of public service and we have all benefited from it. I hope to see it succeed in Queensland.

(Time expired)

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (3.18 pm): I rise to speak to the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee's report on the inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. In Queensland, volunteering is in our blood. Indeed, it is something that generationally we pass on to our children and to our children's children. The inquiry, however, was necessary as we have seen significant drops in our volunteerism. I thank the members of the committee for their hard work. I would also like to thank the committee for taking a journey into the regions and visiting us in Rockhampton, where we have a number of incredible volunteer organisations. To that, I would also like to thank all of those who made submissions right throughout the inquiry, right across Queensland, from metropolitan, regional, rural and remote Queensland.

Volunteering gives us community ownership, and it is also very good for our mental health. As the Assistant Minister for Mental Health, I continually hear from stakeholder groups that engaging in volunteerism is one of the ways we can overcome some of our mental health issues. It is something that is dear to my own heart, having been part of a number of volunteering programs in my community from a very young age, as have a number of members in this House.


I would also like to suggest that volunteering covers a number of different sectors of our communities. We see volunteerism in our community events. We see it across our sporting organisations as well as in our charities. This is something that was very well explored throughout the inquiry. I would like to name a number of those amazing groups that are represented in the community of Rockhampton. I would like to thank Mal and Lisa, who run our community Foodbank. We know how important their organisation is and the contributions from across our community help them do what they do well. Not only do Mal and Lisa show up every single Thursday; they are out there every single day of the week collecting what they need to pass on to our community members who are doing it hard. Those who are suffering hardship turn up and see the other volunteers who are there to help put all of those amazing packages together. I would like to say a big thank you to them and those wonderful organisations.

One group that does not get mentioned a lot is our JPs—the justices of the peace. I give a big shout-out to all of them. I hear from our JPs that they do not get a lot of love. They get a pen and a shirt, if they are lucky. They turn up at all hours of the night. They head off to hospitals to do their chore. I thank them because they are significantly important and their volunteerism should never go unnoticed or unrecognised.

I also want to thank a lot of our faith groups and churches. They are out there on the streets. They are helping the underprivileged. They are making up food parcels for people who are living on the streets. They are making sure they are helping the community where they see gaps.

I also give a shout-out to the Australian Red Cross. In fact, in Rockhampton the Red Cross group is providing an incredible service across from our hospital with their clothing. As well, they have a wonderful accommodation facility for people who travel to Rockhampton. They look after them. They have them sleeping over there. I want to thank the Red Cross group for the great work they have been doing for over 100 years in our region. I also want to thank the amazing volunteers who are working in the blood bank. Some people call them vampires. Thank you for the great work that you do.

As members can see, the list is long. There are so many volunteers across our country. There are the people who organise the parkrun in Rockhampton. That is a wonderful organisation of people making sure we are all keeping fit. There are our Rotary clubs and all of the other ancillary clubs. I thank the Fitzroy River Lions Club for the great work that they do. I certainly cannot end this speech this afternoon without thanking our emergency responders. What a wonderful job they do. To the SES and the rural firefighters in the area of Rockhampton and Gracemere, thank you.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (3.23 pm): It is great to talk about the important work that volunteers do in this state. These are the people who show up on Saturday mornings to coach our kids. They are the people who staff our tuckshops, the SES crews who do not sleep during flood season, the surf lifesavers, the people who are fighting fires, the people who are volunteering in our neighbourhood centres and homelessness organisations, and the list goes on. These people give up their time to help other individuals in our community.

What did this government give them? They gave them a committee, some talking points and a promise to investigate whether at some point in the future they might consider doing something. Let me tell the House what the inquiry actually produced. It produced: a volunteering passport—that is to be explored; volunteering hubs—that is an option to be investigated; training reform—that is to be investigated; blue card reform—that is to be reviewed; and insurance issues—that is subject to further review and consideration. Every single recommendation has been qualified as kicking the can down the road.

For the volunteers who are burning out, dropping off and doing more and more on less and less, another round of investigation is not an answer; it is an insult. It is an insult to the people who rocked up to this inquiry hoping to see action. This is the thing that annoys people about governments: the talkfests that ask people what they want to see from government, and then the reports from government say, 'We're just going to think about it. We're actually not going to do anything.'

Ms Leahy: What did you do?

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the minister about what we did. In fact, the former Labor government did a whole-of-government volunteering strategy that the minister seems to have completely ignored. In fact, we had over 110 sector representatives, more than 20 co-design meetings and an action plan ready to go, but eight weeks later the government announced an inquiry and did not even take on board some of those recommendations. Instead, they decided to delay and do another inquiry.


Seven of the committee's eight recommendations replicate work that had already been done. Volunteers, who are time-poor and already stretched, got called back in and asked the same questions by a government that had not read the answers from the first time, which is pretty disappointing. That is not governing; that is wasting people's time.

Let's be clear about this government's priorities, because so many of these measures have not been funded. They have not been committed to. Many of these individuals are doing it pretty tough themselves. So many volunteers I meet are struggling themselves, but they rock up and go and help other people anyway. The government's response so far has not been to implement the recommendations; they have cut rego relief, axed energy bill relief and scrapped affordable housing targets and projects left, right and centre. When volunteers ask for real support they get a working

group, but coal companies get a tax-free holiday. The priority of this government is to say no to ordinary Queenslanders but give coal companies a tax-free holiday. Financial support for volunteers has been kicked down the road. That is what this government is focused on.

I will finish on the fact that the economics are really clear. Volunteering in Queensland last year contributed \$117 billion. For every dollar invested, there was \$4.70 returned. Participation has fallen by 20 per cent since COVID-19. Clearly, there does need to be action. It is a crisis in slow motion, and the response from this government has been to continue in slow motion, to not actually do anything meaningful. They have just committed, effectively, to a working group. Queensland volunteers deserve a lot more than that.

As others have mentioned, this was an opportunity to also address some of the barriers that are in place for First Nations people, for CALD communities and for young people. A number of organisations talk about the fact that the number of young people in their organisations is dwindling. None of these recommendations acknowledges how they are going to get young people involved in organisations. That is a missed opportunity. Once again, there is talk but no action from a government that preferences coal companies over ordinary Queenslanders.

 **Hon. AJ STOKER** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (3.28 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak on report No. 4 and the inquiry into volunteering. I thank everybody on the committee who contributed to that work. Volunteers are the beating heart of our community and they represent in many ways the true spirit of what it means to be a Queenslander—supporting one another, lifting each other up, helping those who need it and sharing skills and resources through all of the different pockets of our community. I am pleased to be part of a government that is backing the incredible contribution of the many people across the Redlands and, indeed, across Queensland who give of their time, their expertise, often their money and their heart and soul for the causes for which they volunteer.

This is an opportunity to highlight some of the great examples I see in the Redlands of people rising to the challenge—of seeing a need in our community, not waiting for somebody else to pick up the cudgel but just getting on with it and making a difference by their own efforts. In particular, I want to give a shout-out to the under-14 girls' team from RedCity Roar. They are a basketball team. The players come from suburbs all across Oodgeroo and some come from Capalaba as well. With their manager, Nicola, they approached me recently because they had noticed, after a basketball game, that the Wellington Point recreation area was looking a little tired and a bit messy. On their own initiative they decided to spend a Sunday morning, with garbage bags and gloves, picking up litter, tidying up the place, making it nice and then beautifying the area by making their own handpainted rocks with encouraging messages for the community.


I could not help but think how inspiring it was that these girls, who were aged 12 to 14, did not wait for somebody to come riding over the hill to make their community nicer. They did not demand that somebody else make their community cleaner. Instead, they took it upon themselves to make a difference. It might seem small, but to me that is an act of great leadership. I want to commend their co-captains Isla and Ava, who rallied the team to make a difference in our little part of the world.

This is also a good opportunity to highlight the work that is done through so many organisations, whether it is the volunteers for STAR, who spend so much time helping elderly people and people with disabilities in our community to get out and about to run their errands, or the Night Ninjas, who several times a week feed people who are homeless, or the volunteers of the Mater auxiliary and the Redland Hospital volunteers crew, who go to such effort to help people feel warm and welcomed during times of health challenges of individuals or their families. In the case of the Mater auxiliary, they do an incredible amount of work in fundraising to provide supplies to improve patient care. They raised a huge amount of money to provide a cooling cap for women who were undergoing treatment for cancer. That helps with the retention of their hair during those treatments. Now they are investing in the palliative care unit, providing everything that is required there to take a difficult time of life and make it a lot more comfortable for the people who are going through some of those challenges.

This is a chance to say thanks to the Redlands U3A, who over almost a decade of tireless work managed to plough on to build their very own clubhouse in the cottage where together they volunteer to share skills with one another—everything from singing and dancing on the stage and theatre through to cooking, quilting, languages, IT, sport and gardening. Together they are ensuring, as people age, their minds and bodies are active and they are maintaining great community connection and health as a consequence.

This is a chance to give a shout-out to groups like Traction and The Cage who do so much work to keep young people engaged in pathways that are going to make their community strong. The Cage did some great work during Youth Week, offering archery and hover ball events to keep youth engaged in the right things so that they do not spend their time getting involved in the wrong things.

It is also important to give some acknowledgement to the gentlemen from the Circle of Men, who ever so quietly, under the radar, get together and travel around to the many aged-care facilities in our region and provide companionship and care to the often lonely older men in those places so that they can feel connected to the people around them in a way that uplifts them, and that is important. I give a shout-out to everybody who contributes in our community. Thank you to the committee.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.33 pm): I recall our last sitting week and that, when we finished, we had time to go back to our communities for the Friday before Anzac Day. I am reminded, as the member for Burnett is here, that we both need to give a shout-out to Luke Harding. We were there at the ceremony with him and we both said that we would do that. Luke, to you, mate: thank you so much for the community work that you do. Luke has an OAM. He received his OAM in the 2026 Australia Day awards. He is the president of our local RSL. He does a fantastic job. He is also a very valued senior leader in our Bundaberg Regional State Emergency Service Unit.

With that mention of the SES, I want to take the opportunity in this debate on this committee report to thank all of the volunteers who gave their time to our community most recently during the Bundaberg flood event. We know that Bundaberg sadly is no stranger to flooding events in recent years. Our community has learnt the lessons of the past and is able to come together in a way where, as the water hits its peak, volunteers are raring to go: they are ready to go and help out those in so much need. We saw that with our SES crews and with our rural firefighters as they did the hose-outs for community clubs and people's houses as well. The way that the SES and the rural firefighters worked so well together, with the red trucks as well, really showed the Bundaberg community that it is a volunteer service but it is done to a professional standard. I think it is so important for us to remember that about a lot of our volunteer emergency responders. The effort they put in and the training they put in is more than just that one event in time. It is week on week, month on month, year on year, and they provide a tremendous service.

I also want to acknowledge the rapid response team. Again, they are a group of volunteers who came together to feed our emergency responders. They did a fantastic job. We may or may not have made sure that they got a couple of cases of 'water' to say thank you for the work that they did. We really do appreciate everything they do.

We also need to acknowledge the rank-and-file volunteers who were the mud army. As I said, as the river was peaking we already had community members right across the Bundaberg region volunteering their time to join the mud army. They were ready to roll out once the water had receded and people were returning home.

I especially want to thank Adam and Joey from Alive Church for the tremendous work they did. Again, they teamed up with the SES. Also, Triple M and Hitz, our radio broadcasters, went well beyond their normal working times to get out there and volunteer and spread the good word. We thank Hitz and Triple M for their volunteer efforts and going beyond their normal working times.

I should mention that there were some other MPs who decided to volunteer their time. I thank the member for Woodridge, the member for Pine Rivers, the member for Bancroft, the member for Murrumba. They all came up to Bundaberg, rolled up their sleeves and got mud on their shirts. The poor old member for Bancroft nearly did his back in carrying a couch down the stairs with me.

Mr Whiting: Never again.

Mr SMITH: He says 'never again', but I am sure he will because he is that kind of guy. It should be noted that some other members volunteered their time to come up to Bundaberg. They rolled up their sleeves and they watched volunteers. I would like to table a photo of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and this is from his account.

Tabled paper: Photographs depicting the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Hon. Daniel Purdie, and volunteers [\[725\]](#).

He is just standing there watching volunteers as they do the work. He stood by. He did a great job of watching. He was so impressed by their work that he then continued to watch again. He was there in his wonderful business shirt, with not a speck of mud on it at all. He did a great job watching them.


In fact, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads did a wonderful job. He did not quite roll up his sleeves. At least he did not wear a business shirt. He did a great job of standing around. I table that photo as well.

Tabled paper: Photographs depicting the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Brent Mickelberg, and volunteers [726].

Even the federal member returned all the way from Canberra. He did some great pointing—wonderful pointing—in a business shirt. He really did a fantastic job of pointing out where volunteers were doing the work.

I thank the opposition members who came up to Bundaberg and made sure they got out there to help everyone. That really does shine a light on how the executive government think about our volunteers. They did not want to continue with an action plan. They did not want to continue with a strategy that would actually see real changes. All they did was have an inquiry that did not actually commit to anything. The only thing they committed to was thinking about maybe committing or recognising it, thinking about it—‘Maybe we will’—but not actually volunteering any effort and not actually rolling up their sleeves and getting on with the job.

(Time expired)

 **Mr DALTON** (Mackay—LNP) (3.38 pm): I rise to speak to the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee’s report No. 4 of the 58th Parliament, *Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland*, and to recognise something that I believe sits at the very heart of communities like Mackay: our volunteers. In regional communities volunteers are not just nice to have; they are essential. They are the people who step up when others step back. They are the quiet achievers who do not ask for recognition, but without them so much of what we rely on simply would not exist.

In Mackay we are fortunate to have an incredible network of volunteers across a wide range of organisations. I am going to name a few. One group is very close to my heart because I supervised them in my previous role as the police officer in charge of the Crime Prevention Unit, and that is Volunteers in Policing—Gerri Kissner, Michael Pearce and two who are just about to celebrate 20 years of volunteering in police, John Blackwell and Jim Paton. They are not only great friends but also a great support for a lot of people in the community. They do all sorts of various jobs for the police to keep them on the front line.


Neighbourhood Watch groups keep an eye on our streets and help build safer communities. U3A Mackay volunteers give their time to support lifelong learning and connections for seniors. Crime Stoppers volunteers play a critical role in supporting law enforcement and keeping our community safe. Mackay senior citizens’ hall volunteers run a hall that is used by many thousands every year. Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre volunteers simply help people to their seats during a performance. Mackay Street Chaplaincy volunteers pick up people on the streets late at night who have maybe just had too much fun, and charity shop volunteers are constantly raising funds for their various charities. We see volunteers at the Mackay mental health and community programs provide support, care and connection to those doing it tough. Right across our region in local sporting clubs we have volunteers who coach, manage, fundraise and keep grassroots sport alive. In the arts, Kucom and the Mackay Choral Society are examples of volunteers working within our community. These volunteers do not do it for recognition; they do it because they care. They care about their community and their neighbours. They care about living in a Mackay which will be all the better for their volunteering.

We also recognise that volunteering today is becoming harder. We are living through a cost-of-living crisis, and one of the most significant pressures facing volunteers right now is the cost of fuel. In a region like Mackay, you cannot volunteer without a car. Whether it is driving to a Neighbourhood Watch meeting, heading to the sports field, checking on vulnerable residents or supporting community programs, fuel is not an option; it is essential. When fuel prices climb, volunteering becomes more expensive. For the past couple of months we have been advocating for Queenslanders and have successfully been able to get fuel supply reprioritised by petroleum companies and the Commonwealth, particularly in regional Queensland.

There is a very real risk that good people who want to give back simply cannot afford to. There is a risk that organisations will begin to lose volunteers not because their passion is not there but because of the cost. Recently, information came to me about the Neighbourhood Hub in George Street, Mackay, where volunteer numbers are declining. Their cost of fuel was just too much. This creates an added layer of complexity and we cannot ignore it. If we are serious about supporting volunteering in Queensland, we must recognise the practical barriers people face—not just their intent to volunteer but

also their ability to do so—because when volunteering declines, communities feel it. Services are stretched thinner, clubs struggle to operate and the social fabric that holds regional communities together begins to fray.

The people of Mackay are generous. They give their time, they give their energy and they give their heart to the community. Our job in this place is to make sure we are not putting any barriers in place to stop them from doing that. We should be supporting them, not making it harder to contribute. Today I say to every volunteer in Mackay: we see you, we value you and we thank you, because without you our community simply would not be the same. Thank you.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (3.44 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the committee report into volunteering in Queensland, and I begin by acknowledging the millions of Queenslanders who give their time, energy and skills to support others. We need policy settings that support volunteers and remove barriers to volunteering. Sadly, this report did not do that.

I will firstly take this opportunity to recognise some of our local volunteering groups in Stretton who give so freely of their time and ask for nothing in return. I give a special shout-out to Mike Butler from Volunteer Connect and every single volunteer who gives their time to that incredible organisation. Whether it is turning out in force to run and support Anzac Day, handing out free coffees at our community events or showing up to a local resident's home to help with their backyard, Volunteer Connect is there. They have repainted structures in our local parks, helped individuals with housework and remained on call whenever someone in our community needs a hand. Well done, Mike Butler and Volunteer Connect—a great example of volunteers who get on with it and take direct action, often where organisations like Brisbane City Council have failed.

My next shout-out is to the Calamvale and Pinelands Lions clubs. Locals will know the lovely Calamvale Lions members who offer free gift-wrapping services at local shopping centres and raise vital donations for local charities. Likewise, Pinelands Lions members recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Pinelands Lions hall in Runcorn, an historic building in our local community. There was a fantastic turnout of the local community on the day, raising money for various charities and worthy causes.


I give another shout-out to members of the Sunnybank Hills Rotary club, who give their time to support domestic violence shelters and disability organisations. They also have a lot of involvement with youth development programs and international humanitarian projects. They are great people down at the Sunnybank Hills Rotary club.

I want to give another shout-out to the Taiwanese community. I would not be able to go through every single Taiwanese organisation, but I will give a shout-out to the Australian Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce, an umbrella organisation, and the Queensland Federation of Taiwanese Associations, which coordinates the hundreds of Taiwanese organisations in my community. Over the years they have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars and volunteered countless hours of time and labour, often for the Mater Hospital, Mater Little Miracles and Care Kits for Kids Qld. They do a fantastic job in our community. Stretton is so much better for the influence of Taiwanese volunteers.

These groups do not ask for recognition or reward, yet they deserve respect and they deserve a government that supports them with meaningful action. This volunteering inquiry should have delivered exactly that—not further discussion or another round of consultation, not more delays. It should have delivered outcomes. What has been produced is a report that largely encourages the government to keep considering its next steps. Most recommendations seem to be framed in cautious, noncommittal language with words such as 'investigate', 'consider', 'review' or 'explore'—not outcomes and not reforms.

The evidence was already well established before this inquiry commenced. The former Labor government had already laid the groundwork through the Queensland Volunteering Strategy 2024-2032. It was developed through extensive consultation with more than 110 sector representatives and over 20 co-design sessions. It provided a clear and practical road map which this inquiry does not build on. Throughout the inquiry one message was consistent: administrative burdens are overwhelming the sector, with volunteers spending more and more time on paperwork. I also note that participation amongst young people and people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds continues to decline, yet there was no targeted recommendation to address youth engagement or multicultural engagement. Further barriers faced by CALD communities were acknowledged but not meaningfully addressed.

Volunteering contributes over \$100 billion in value to Queensland's economy and delivers enormous social and civic benefits. The return on investment is clear. This inquiry represented an opportunity to build on existing work and deliver real reform. Instead, it has largely revisited issues that were already well understood. That does not mean the work is without value, but it does mean the responsibility now rests with the LNP government to act.

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (3.48 pm): This inquiry has shone a spotlight on the incredible value and impact of volunteering in our communities. We on this side of the House recognise and appreciate the importance of volunteering. It is why the Crisafulli LNP government has elevated the volunteer sector to full departmental and cabinet status and initiated the inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. It is why the Crisafulli LNP government has supported each of the inquiry's recommendations in principle and is developing a 10-year volunteering plan to support Queensland's volunteer sector long into the future.

I am always in awe of the incredible locals who volunteer across my electorate—whether it is at the local sporting clubs, service organisations, school P&Cs, emergency services, historical associations or many more. I had the opportunity in this House last year to express my thanks and the thanks of my electorate of Mudgeeraba to our local emergency services workers, including our hardworking SES and our rural fire brigades, following Tropical Cyclone Alfred. I know my electorate of Mudgeeraba are extremely grateful for their efforts and I wish to once again recognise the first officers of our local rural fire brigades, including: Dan McGuire from the Springbrook Rural Fire Brigade; Phil Foster from the Bonogin Rural Fire Brigade; David Lyons from the Gilston-Advancetown Rural Fire Brigade; Mark Ayers from the Beechmont Rural Fire Brigade; Dave McCormack from the Lower Beechmont Rural Fire Brigade; Brad Hauck from the Mudgeeraba Rural Fire Brigade; Ben Naday from the Tallebudgera Valley Rural Fire Brigade; Philip Thompson from the Numinbah Rural Fire Brigade; and Brendan Gold from the Clagiraba Rural Fire Brigade. These incredible volunteers do not just turn up during times of crisis; they are there week in, week out serving our community, and we are extremely grateful.


Speaking of local rural fire brigades and tireless volunteers, it would be remiss of me not to again mention local legend Suzie Koenig. I have had the pleasure of knowing Suzie since 2006 and have seen firsthand her selfless dedication to our community. Suzie was one of our first female members of the Clagiraba Rural Fire Brigade when she joined in 2004, and she has paved the way for many more to follow in her footsteps. After more than 20 years of tireless service, she has announced her retirement from the brigade. I wish to place on the record of this House my thanks and the thanks of our community to Suzie for her incredible service. I wish her very well into the future.

There are countless volunteers and volunteer groups doing incredible work right across our community across all sorts of causes. I am reminded of groups like the Gold Coast Woodturners, one of the oldest and largest specialist wood-turning clubs in Australia. Established in 1983 and run entirely by volunteers, they do incredible work making the wood-turning craft accessible to all. They are also responsible for the beautiful handcrafted pens which I gift to officials on my trade missions—a little piece of Mudgeeraba writing the future of our state right across the world. I am also reminded of youth organisations like the Mudgeeraba Scouts and the Mudgeeraba Girl Guides who empower our young people to discover their full potential—all thanks to the efforts of the volunteers who power these organisations.

I also mention our sporting groups, like the Carrara Saints, the Gold Coast Dolphins, the Hinterland District Netball Association, Magic United, the Mudgeeraba Hockey Club, the Mudgeeraba Little Athletics, Mudgeeraba Bowls, the Mudgeeraba Pony and Hack Club, the Mudgeeraba Redbacks, the Mudgeeraba Redsox, the Mudgeeraba Soccer Club, the Robina Roos, the Mudgeeraba Tennis Club, the Robina Braves, the Robina Raptors, the Mudgeeraba Nerang District Cricket Club, the Bonogin Valley Bulls, the Merrimac Football Club, the Robina Spartans and Robina City Soccer—all of whom I am patron of. Volunteers are the beating heart of these sporting groups—coaching players, setting up practice, organising schedules and keeping the clubs running.

I also wish to recognise our incredible local service organisations—groups like the Mudgeeraba Lions Club led by locals like Sharon and Michael, the Robina Rotary Club and the Springbrook/Mudgeeraba CWA. Service clubs are the lifeblood of our community—fundraising for local projects, volunteering countless hours to help at any number of events and local causes and always showing up when our community is in need.

We are rich in culture and heritage in the electorate of Mudgeeraba. Groups like the Gold Coast Hinterland Heritage Museum, the Hinterland Community Band, the Mudgeeraba Show Society and the Gold Coast Light Horse Education Museum are all run by volunteers. Our community would be poorer without their incredible efforts. I thank each and every volunteer who gives so very generously of their time and efforts. Our community in Mudgeeraba has an incredibly generous heart, and I thank each and every local who volunteers with these amazing, incredible organisations.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (3.53 pm): There is a phrase that we have heard used regularly on both sides of this House, and that is that volunteers are the quiet backbone of our communities. Where would we be without our volunteers? I remember being asked to speak years ago at a Volunteering Queensland event, and in my research for what I was going to talk about, I came across a fantastic quote that went something along these lines—volunteerism is the greatest act of democracy; we vote every few years in elections, but, when we volunteer, each day we are making a statement about the type of community we want to live in. When I think about the volunteers in my community, that really sums them up. They are so engaged. It is the same volunteers who pop up at lots of different organisations. We have heard a lot about the 20 per cent decrease in volunteerism since COVID, and our community is feeling that. Volunteering is a great strength in our community.


I want to give a shout-out to some of the fantastic groups, and I will start with Meals on Wheels, which a lot of people in this House have spoken of. Meals on Wheels in Ipswich is about to celebrate 70 years of service to the Ipswich community, and my Ipswich colleagues and I will be going along to those celebrations next week. I also mention STAR Community Services and Ipswich Hospice Care. Hundreds of volunteers work for these organisations and give so much back to our community. There are also the countless volunteers who work in our sporting groups, art groups and social and recreational groups for seniors, like U3A, men's sheds and Probus. The member for Bundaberg spoke about the floods in his community. Ipswich has had our fair share of floods as well, so I want to give a shout-out to all of the volunteers who work for our emergency services and keep everybody confident and safe and lend a helping hand in times of natural disasters.

As we have heard, participation in volunteering is in decline. As a member of the Labor opposition, I want to see meaningful support for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations. However, the recommendations delivered by this inquiry and the response by the LNP government have been strangely couched in language that calls for more investigation, more exploration, more review, further consultation and more planning. The inquiry duplicated much of the work already undertaken by the former Labor government's Queensland Volunteering Strategy 2024-2032, which was released eight weeks before the LNP government announced that they were going to proceed with their own volunteering inquiry. You would think the LNP's inquiry into volunteering would be an opportunity to build on the foundation that we had in our Volunteering Strategy. Instead, they did not consider any of it. Our Volunteering Strategy and accompanying action plan engaged 110 sector representatives and more than 20 co-design meetings. The strategy had already identified nearly every matter within the committee's scope for consideration, with the first action plan providing the initial implementation plan.

Stakeholders involved in the Volunteering Strategy were reportedly caught off guard when the Crisafulli government announced their own inquiry into volunteering. Instead of seeing the delivery of supports for volunteers that had been planned and scoped already in our strategy and action plan, stakeholders will now have to sit through more strategy designs for the development of a brand new 10-year volunteering plan. What a needless waste of taxpayer money and time for volunteers and volunteer involved organisations. What volunteers want is more action, not more investigation and duplication of work that was already done in Labor's strategy and action plan.

The volunteering sector faces a number of challenges, and an aging workforce is one of them. The Queensland Youth Policy Collective's submission to the inquiry said that nearly half of the organisations in Queensland with volunteer programs do not record having any young people under 25 volunteering with them, yet the inquiry's report does not make one single recommendation that explicitly targets engagement with young people. The Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management said in their briefing to the committee that investing in empowering young people today is the key to fostering innovative ideas. Having a more diverse workforce is incredibly important for the future of volunteering. We want our volunteers to represent the broader community. When volunteers do reflect the full mix of Queenslanders, we get better outcomes in our community.

Queensland's volunteers are doing the heavy lifting but they are being taken for granted, as we heard earlier. The question I have for the Crisafulli LNP government is simple: if volunteers give so much—and we all agree on that—why isn't the Crisafulli government supporting them right now?


 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.59 pm): I have one minute to make a contribution on this important committee report. As others have said, volunteers are the backbone of our local communities and across the state, particularly in my portfolio of emergency services, with groups like the SES and Marine Rescue Queensland.

In the 45 seconds I have remaining, I want to remind everyone about the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving Queensland event tonight which commences at five o'clock in the Premier's Hall. They have 36,000 volunteers across 58 clubs around Queensland and they conducted over 2,700 rescues in the summer just passed. As the summer surf lifesaving season comes to a close, I encourage all members to attend. Some of our local club volunteers from across the state will be present, so come and pay your respects and acknowledge the great work that they do.

Debate, on motion of Mr Purdie, adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determination made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The meeting has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee report on the Legal Profession (Strengthening Disciplinary Matters) Amendment Bill by 3 July 2026.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 2 June 2026.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Leader of the Opposition, Finding of Contempt

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That this House—

1. notes Ethics Committee report No. 244, tabled in the House on 14 May 2026;
2. finds the Leader of the Opposition and member for Murrumba in contempt, under standing order 266(2), for deliberately misleading the House;
3. determines that an unequivocal apology to the House is an appropriate penalty;
4. notes the apology on the floor of the House from the Leader of the Opposition on 14 May 2026; and
5. resolves to take no further action.

The motion before the House to give effect to the recommendations of the Ethics Committee report No. 244, specifically that the House makes a finding of contempt against the Leader of the Opposition for deliberately misleading the House, is a serious matter. For this House to make a finding of contempt against any member is an exceptionally serious matter. For such a finding to be made against the Leader of the Opposition elevates the seriousness of that conduct even further.

This motion goes directly to the integrity of this institution, the standards expected of members of parliament and the trust placed in all of us by the people of Queensland. The standing orders, practices and procedures of this parliament are not optional guidelines; they are fundamental protections that underpin the integrity, dignity and proper functioning of the Queensland parliament, an institution that has stood for almost 166 years.

The Ethics Committee has now carefully examined this matter, considered the evidence before it and reached a clear and unequivocal conclusion. The committee found that the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misled the House. The findings contained within the Ethics Committee's report are detailed, considered and significant. Importantly, the Ethics Committee found that the central claim repeatedly advanced by the Leader of the Opposition—namely, that the impact on the Deputy Premier's

property was never disclosed at any point in time—was incorrect. The Ethics Committee carefully examined the evidence put before it and found that disclosures regarding the Deputy Premier's property interests had, in fact, been made through multiple mechanisms and on multiple occasions.

Firstly, the Ethics Committee noted that the Deputy Premier had made declarations through the Register of Members' Interests in accordance with the requirements imposed upon members of parliament. Secondly, the Ethics Committee identified that the Deputy Premier had also made disclosures publicly within parliamentary proceedings. Thirdly, the Ethics Committee examined the chronology of events and the material available to the Leader of the Opposition at the time the statements were made. The report by the Ethics Committee makes clear that the relevant information was available, that it had been disclosed and that it was capable of being identified by the Leader of the Opposition prior to his statements being made in the Queensland parliament, and that is critically important.

This was not a situation where information had somehow been concealed from the parliament or had been withheld from public scrutiny. The Ethics Committee found precisely the opposite. The committee found that the Deputy Premier had complied with the relevant disclosure requirements and had appropriately declared the interests in question including through the Register of Members' Interests, the very mechanism established by this parliament to ensure transparency and accountability.

The committee carefully considered the Leader of the Opposition's submissions and explanations and came to the unequivocal conclusion that the requirements for a finding of contempt had been established. The Ethics Committee found that the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition were misleading. The Ethics Committee found further that the Leader of the Opposition knew, or ought reasonably to have known, that his statements were incorrect having regard to the publicly available disclosures and declarations that had already been made. Finally, the committee concluded that the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition satisfied the necessary threshold for a deliberate misleading of the House.

These are grave findings. These are serious findings. Every member of this House carries a profound responsibility to ensure statements made in this parliament are accurate and truthful. The integrity of the Queensland parliament depends upon members conducting themselves with honesty, accountability and respect for the standards and processes of this institution. That is why findings of contempt are rare, and they should be rare. The threshold for such a finding is deliberately high because the consequences for both the member involved and the integrity of the parliament itself are serious and significant.

What is deeply concerning is that this matter does not exist in isolation. This is now the latest, the most serious and the most egregious example of a continuing pattern of conduct from the Labor opposition, which has repeatedly failed to respect the standing orders, processes and conventions of this parliament. In fact, less than six months ago the member for Cooper was herself found in contempt of the Queensland parliament following a recommendation of the Ethics Committee. The committee report made deeply concerning observations regarding the conduct of the member for Cooper and her engagement with the committee process itself. The committee noted that the member for Cooper missed multiple deadlines to provide a submission to the committee.

The findings and comments made by the Ethics Committee then with respect to the member for Cooper reflect broader concerns regarding a failure of Labor members to properly respect the institutions, standards and processes of this parliament. Today we see the Leader of the Opposition become only the second Labor leader to have a finding of contempt recommended by the Ethics Committee of the Queensland parliament. Of course, members will recall that the former Labor premier of Queensland was also found in contempt following findings concerning improper attempts to influence Katter's Australian Party members of the parliament. That history matters because this motion goes to leadership and a pattern of contempt exhibited by the Labor Party.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Only one person has the call.

Dr ROWAN: Ultimately, it goes to integrity. It goes to whether those who seek to hold the highest offices in this state are prepared to uphold and respect the standing orders, traditions and parliamentary processes that safeguard this institution.


As I conclude my contribution, I want to again stress how, importantly, the Ethics Committee did not arrive at this recommendation lightly. Parliamentary committees are entrusted with significant responsibilities. Ethics Committee proceedings are not political exercises. They are a serious

parliamentary body charged with protecting the integrity of this institution. The Ethics Committee considered documentary evidence, parliamentary records, submissions and the relevant factual chronology before arriving at its findings. The House should recognise that the recommendation now before us follows that careful examination.

The Leader of the Opposition should reflect very carefully upon the gravity of this finding and upon the office he currently holds. This House could not simply dismiss or minimise a finding of contempt against the Leader of the Opposition. To do so would diminish the authority of the parliament itself.

The Queensland parliament is bigger than any individual member. It is bigger than any political party. It is an institution built upon trust, accountability and adherence to long-established parliamentary standards. Where those standards are deliberately breached, this House must act accordingly.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I go to the Manager of Opposition Business, I wish to advise members that television pool cameras will film part of this debate.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (4.08 pm): I rise to address the motion moved by the Leader of the House. At the outset I want to observe that this is a motion based on a disproportionate, inconsistent and unbalanced decision of this committee, one that is designed to continue this government's misuse of parliamentary process. That is what we are debating this afternoon: this government's continued misuse of parliamentary process. It has done it to prosecute personal attacks. We have seen that since day one from this government.

Let us be clear: the decision of the committee does nothing—adds nothing—to correct the record, something that happens in this parliament regularly, that is, the record is corrected regularly; nothing to uphold standards in the parliament; and in fact undermines the confidence in parliamentary standards. It is in fact a politically motivated decision, and Queenslanders know that and they know the Leader of the Opposition to be a decent man—a member of this House with integrity, an honourable member of this House. That is why it was not remarkable at all that when concerns were raised first about the remarks that he made in debate in this House the Leader of the Opposition acted at the time. He came into this place and he corrected the record. He apologised, just as members do on almost a daily basis, and he did so at the first available opportunity, and he did that again today. He has dealt with this multiple times. They are not the actions of someone seeking to evade responsibility; they are the actions of someone taking responsibility for their inadvertent error. That is in stark contrast to the conduct that we have seen from the leader of the government, the Premier. He failed to ensure the integrity of his cabinet from day one and we have seen over recent weeks his failure to take any responsibility. The Leader of the Opposition said clearly—

... I retract the statement and apologise for my inadvertent error.

They are clear words, direct words, unequivocal words. In this place we should encourage that sort of conduct. I know, Mr Speaker, you encourage that sort of conduct from all of us. We should not take actions that discourage it, because every member of this chamber is human; every member can make an error. When we do, what matters is what we do about it. Do we double-down or do we come into this place, stand up, take responsibility, correct the record and apologise, which is what the Leader of the Opposition did? The Leader of the Opposition did exactly what this House expects and what this House asked of him, and he did it again this morning—apologised unequivocally in order to move on and do that at the earliest opportunity. That is what we should all do; that is what he did, and that matters.

What is remarkable though—and I noted this in reading the report—is not the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition; what is remarkable is that after a correction and apology was made the committee still determined that another apology was somehow required. We heard just a moment ago that thresholds for these sorts of matters are meant to be high, and they are meant to be high for good reason. Therefore, it is curious that the committee in its own report was unsure about the circumstances of this matter. It says—

This suggests that the apology and retraction may not have been unreserved and unequivocal.

Yet the committee made an unequivocal decision and finding. Queenslanders listening to this debate would rightly wonder how an apology that expressly says, 'I retract the statement and apologise for my inadvertent error' could somehow be considered insufficient. I think most reasonable people would consider that an apology. Most reasonable people would consider that a withdrawal. Most reasonable people would consider that the matter has been dealt with, yet here we are.

I also want to observe this inconsistency: the Attorney-General, the minister responsible for integrity, has herself corrected the record during this term regarding claims made about members on this side of the House, but during one such clarification the word 'sorry', the word 'apologise' and the word 'withdraw' were never uttered. There was no apology or withdrawal yet that was accepted, but the same—and I am not reflecting on that matter; what I am reflecting on—

Government members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I am not taking interjections. What I am pointing out is that the committee expects a different standard.

Queenslanders are entitled to ask questions about that inconsistency, and that explicitly arises because of the conduct and the decisions of this committee. The Leader of the Opposition has accepted the report and he complied with its recommendation at the earliest opportunity and he has apologised again today and that should be the end of the matter, but I want to address another deeply troubling aspect of this report. The report itself states that the findings were determined, based on the minutes that are attached, on the casting vote of the chair—the casting vote. That should concern every member of this House. For generations the Ethics Committee has operated on consensus, and it has done so carefully, cautiously and collectively, because oftentimes the matters are serious. The committee is not meant to operate like a partisan, numbers-based game. It is not meant to descend into some sort of factional warfare; it is meant to rise above the politics that we too often see dominating this place because, once Queenslanders begin to believe that the ethics processes of this place are being determined by political arithmetic rather than shared principle, confidence in the institution itself erodes. Once that confidence is lost, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to restore.

In a week when this parliament has been consumed by genuine integrity questions surrounding the Crisafulli LNP government, this debate is frankly a distraction from the real issues facing Queenslanders, because at the centre of this report is a member who corrected the record and apologised, and has done so twice. That is the reality. No longer will journalists, if that confidence is eroded in the Ethics Committee, be referring to it as the 'powerful Ethics Committee'. It will lose that power. It risks losing that eminence, and that is troubling. When ethical standards setting and its enforcement loses its eminence, it is concerning because perhaps the parliament does too.

The Leader of the Opposition has acted with integrity. He has acted responsibly. He has acted in accordance with the expectations of this House. I respect and I am sure all members, I hope, respect the idea of the institution of the Ethics Committee, but this report, the manner in which parts of it appear to have been conducted and the way in which the decisions were arrived at I think leaves many members of this House on both sides of the House deeply uneasy about the direction of accountability and the eminency of this parliament. That is a shame.

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (4.17 pm): That was an interesting contribution in defence of the opposition leader by the Manager of Opposition Business. On the one hand he said that the Leader of the Opposition has accepted the Ethics Committee report, but he then spent 10 minutes trashing the institution of the Ethics Committee and the report, so what is it? Do you accept the report and the recommendations of the Ethics Committee or not? I also say this in response to the Manager of Opposition Business: the apology given by the Leader of the Opposition when he was first asked to apologise, in the Speaker's view and determination, was not appropriate. To now reflect on that decision of the Speaker sending it to the Ethics Committee, as the Speaker did, is in itself a reflection on the Speaker by the Manager of Opposition Business.

This is what happened. The accusation was made. I wrote to the Speaker to refer it. The Leader of the Opposition was asked to do an unequivocal apology by the Speaker. He did an apology of a description. The Speaker independently of any complaint ascertained that that was not an appropriate apology and decided to refer it to the Ethics Committee. I know a bit about this, because the allegations raised by the opposition and its grubby tactics were about me and my family and it was me who referred this matter in March—do you want to say something, member for Pine Rivers?

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I will get on with it because I am about to talk about my wife, who was berated at a shopping centre because of what happened in March 2025.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Here we go: Cameron Dick laughs about it. The glass jaw kicks in!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Do not quarrel across the chamber; otherwise, people will be warned.

Mr BLEIJIE: Allegations were raised by members of the opposition with respect to a property that I own with my wife in Aroona. As is detailed in the committee report, those allegations were along the lines that this was not appropriately disclosed or I was trying to hide something at the election. This is despite the fact that when my wife and I were first notified of a potential or partial resumption of our property because of the rail it was when Labor was in government. We were notified by the Labor government of a partial resumption. The minute we were notified, I put it on my pecuniary interests register. I spoke about it time and time again in the parliament. I spoke about the Wave, the Sunshine Coast heavy passenger rail—I did it, I talked about it, I disclosed it in the parliament. Every time it changed or correspondence was issued, I updated the pecuniary register. I got advice from the Integrity Commissioner. I did everything required of a member of parliament, but those opposite, with their grubby tactics, still chose to use it in a grubby political attack.

We have now seen the evidence in the Ethics Committee of what took place. The Leader of the Opposition was required to come and apologise. He did not do it sufficiently, in the Speaker's view. The Speaker then referred the matter to the Ethics Committee. We are now dealing with the finding of contempt in the Ethics Committee report.

What I find interesting is that the Manager of Opposition Business said that the Leader of the Opposition accepted the report but then he trashed the report for 10 minutes. An interesting factor is that there is no dissenting report. There is no statement of reservation; there is no dissenting report.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Waterford, this is the last time I will caution you.

Mr BLEIJIE: Members are entitled to put in a statement of reservation, a dissenting report. There is no dissenting report in this Ethics Committee investigation of the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

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

Mr BLEIJIE: Page 20 states—

Recommendation

That the House make a finding of contempt against the Leader of the Opposition for deliberately misleading the House in accordance with section 37 of the POQA and Standing Order 266(2) and that the Leader of the Opposition make an unequivocal apology to the House at the earliest opportunity.

That is the finding of the Ethics Committee report. One can only assume without a dissenting report that it was a unanimous finding or a unanimous endorsement of the report. If it was not, then what were they trying to hide? Why were they trying to protect the Leader of the Opposition? Were they trying to protect a leader of the opposition who we know is under an incredible amount of pressure? He is both desperate and dangerous. We have seen his tenure as Leader of the Opposition going from when he lost the election and not even conceding the election defeat—he still has not conceded the election defeat—to trying to incite violence. When Indonesia was in turmoil and people were losing their lives, he tried to incite violence on the streets of Queensland. We see his constant protection of the shadow industrial relations minister, the minister for McConnel. He will not do anything about her but he keeps protecting her. Then we see, time and time again, the abuse that they unfurl.

What happened at this time, when those grubby tactics by the opposition were made public? I remember exactly what happened. Incidentally, the story in the media was: 'Deputy Premier declares conflict'. It was a positive story that I proactively declared a conflict that I had talked about—that I did it, pursuant to the rules. Jason Hunt, the former member for Caloundra, then used that and went onto community boards across Caloundra saying there was essentially an allegation of corruption. I remember my wife going to the shopping centre that afternoon and being berated by a member of the public because of the dirty tactics used by the Labor Party and Jason Hunt at the time.

We have waited since March 2025 until now to finally see that there was a contempt by the Leader of the Opposition. He knew what he was doing, and he did it deliberately. When he came back in here and offered his first apology, he knew it was not a full apology. He knew exactly what he was doing. Elements on that side of the House have tried to delve even further into this issue, to try to make an issue of it. Members have rightfully risen to their feet over the last six months. It was a disgrace. We should be using examples of members declaring conflicts of interest and pecuniary interests when they have done everything by the book. That is what I did, but the Leader of the Opposition is so desperate. They have no qualms about trashing any institution, like they are trashing the Ethics Committee today.

Yes, the Manager of Opposition Business is right. Usually the Ethics Committee go through these processes, like they did with Annastacia Palaszczuk, but the Leader of the Opposition would not allow them to do it. They would now allow the Labor members on the committee to think for themselves. I have seen the minutes of the Ethics Committee.

Mr Dick: What an offensive thing to say.

Mr BLEIJIE: I hear the interjection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who, incidentally, has also had a contempt finding by the parliament—

Mr Dick: So has the member for Warrego.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am talking about you. I am talking about the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I could talk about—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair.


Mr O'Connor: It's the only thing that makes him eligible to be leader.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the housing minister; the only thing that makes the Deputy Leader of the Opposition eligible to lead the Labor Party is a contempt finding of the parliament. Annastacia Palaszczuk had it, the member for Woodridge had it and now the member for Murrumba has it. The member can stare at me all the member wants. The fact is: the member for Woodridge got investigated for SPER, for trying to hide and dodgy up the numbers and only release some to the public, and he was found, as attorney-general, in contempt of parliament. This is a salient lesson for the opposition. No more will the Ethics Committee allow this nonsense to continue by Labor members of the parliament using these sorts of issues for political, grubby tactics as they have for the last year and a half.

This is an opposition leader who is under an enormous amount of pressure—a guy who got only eight per cent of the vote in the Hinchinbrook by-election. We will see what happens in a couple of days time. When they have taken the Leader of the Opposition off the paraphernalia for voting for their candidate, Luke Richmond, that says something. It says they are abandoning the Leader of the Opposition, as his shadow ministers have. Their one shadow minister did not put in a dissenting report.

I absolutely endorse and confirm the support for the Leader of the House's motion for the upholding of the contempt finding for the Leader of the Opposition. He is not fit to lead the opposition. He is not fit to lead any political party in Queensland. Let's hope the people of Stafford show him the door on Saturday.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.28 pm): I want to begin my contribution to this debate by saying that every member of our parliamentary party stands by the essential decency, integrity and honesty of the Leader of the Opposition—each and every one of us. I also want to say that every member of the Labor Party in Queensland stands behind the essential decency, integrity and honesty of the Leader of the Opposition. I will tell you who else stands by those things: the people of Queensland. The people of Queensland know that the Leader of the Opposition is an incredibly decent human being. He is a decent man. Imagine my surprise when I read paragraph 77 of the report, where it says—

The Deputy Premier also stated that he has been the victim of reputational damage ...

Let me say this: you can only claim reputational damage if you have a reputation to defend. Can members imagine the strategic masterminds in the Premier's office after the Deputy Premier came into the parliament on Tuesday and drove the parliament through the gutter into the sewage treatment plant? It was the worst possible behaviour I have seen since my first election in 2009. Do not take my word for it. What did Sarah Elks, the senior reporter at the *Australian*, say? She described the display of the deputy leader, the member for Kawana, as grubby. The member for Kawana is a man with no shame. He came in here today presuming to judge other people when he himself had said things in the parliament that were grossly dishonest and false. What is more, the things he said on Tuesday were grossly dishonest and false and the Premier knew they were grossly dishonest and false.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Woodridge, I am looking at this motion we are debating. We are talking about an Ethics Committee report. If you could focus your attention on that, that would be great.

Mr DICK: I do want to respond in my comments to the things that the Deputy Premier said and also the things the Leader of the House said going to the essential integrity of our leader and the conduct and high standards of this parliament. If he said it once, he said it 10 times: the Leader of the House

talked about how important it was to uphold the standards of the institution of parliament and how all parliamentarians had a responsibility to respect the standards and processes of the parliament. We saw none of that on Tuesday when the Deputy Premier said things that were dishonest and false and that the Premier knew about because I had rung the Premier and spoken to him directly. It was written and authorised by the Premier.

Imagine my shock when I heard the Deputy Premier today complaining about his integrity being impugned when he is happy to drag anyone through the mud for political purposes. Let us look at this incredible report that sets a new 'high' standard. What does the committee say, by majority, in paragraph 101—

The committee cannot be certain why the Speaker deemed the original apology inadequate—

Government members interjected.

Mr DICK: That is no reflection on the chair but a comment by the committee on comments by the Speaker. That is what their words are.

Government members interjected.

Mr DICK: The paragraph goes on—if anyone had bothered to read it—

but considered that the use of the word 'however' in the final sentence may indicate some qualification with respect to the apology.

We are debating the use of the word 'however' by the Leader of the Opposition when he came in at the first available opportunity to apologise. The committee goes on—

Secondly, after noting that his original statement was incorrect, it is arguable that the Leader of the Opposition simply re-prosecuted the argument by stating his contribution was misunderstood. This suggests that the apology and retraction may not have been unreserved and unequivocal.

Have members ever heard a more conditional paragraph in the history of the Ethics Committee in Queensland? Listening to the members opposite, one would think they had forgotten the member for Warrego. The Leader of the House specifically talked about the member for Cooper, but what he failed to talk about was the egregious contempt of the parliament by the member for Warrego who made unauthorised disclosures from a committee proceeding, who made unauthorised disclosures to a member of the then opposition office, who deliberately misled the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee and who deliberately misled the Ethics Committee. That is a contempt. What happened to the member for Warrego? She was promoted by the Premier to the cabinet. Enough of this errant nonsense from the members opposite that this is some major offence against the Parliament of Queensland when the member for Warrego, who was found guilty of contempt for misleading a parliamentary committee deliberately, was promoted.

This is the LNP writ large: say one thing in the parliament, as we heard from the Leader of the House and the Deputy Premier, but expect another standard from other people. I want to associate myself with the words of the Manager of Opposition Business. I want to associate myself with those words that the Leader of the Opposition acted appropriately, that he apologised at the first opportunity and, when the report was tabled, he apologised to the parliament. That is where it should remain. Quite properly, that is what the motion says. This debate should conclude now because the Leader of the Opposition has done exactly the right thing because he is a man of integrity, honesty and decency.

When other members of the government have misled the House they have also come into the parliament but, as the Manager of Opposition Business has said, have never said the word 'apology', never said 'sorry', never said 'unconditional'. They have never apologised using the word 'apology' or 'sorry'—and it went no further. We should see this for what it is: an attack on the leader at a time of a by-election when the leader has done the right thing because of his essential decency, integrity and honesty.

I also want to repeat the words of the Manager of Opposition Business when he said the Premier has failed to act with integrity. We have seen from this government a failure to uphold the high standards of ministerial office. They presume to come in here and judge other members when, in the words of the committee, the word 'however' may indicate some qualification with respect to the apology made by the Leader of the Opposition initially.

We are not accepting the comments made by the Deputy Premier, the member for Kawana, nor are we accepting the comments made by the Leader of the House. We do not accept the characterisation of this motion. We do not accept their characterisation of this report. The report is very

clear: the Leader of the Opposition has done exactly the right thing, as you would expect him to do, and every single one of us on this side of the House knows that. Queenslanders will see through why this is happening in the parliament against the Leader of the Opposition.

The members of the opposition and all Labor members stand united behind our leader because he is essentially a man of decency and integrity. We accept the equivocal nature of that paragraph, possibly the most conditional paragraph I have ever read in an Ethics Committee report, a report that was passed by the use of a majority vote, which again is another breach of the standards and norms of the parliament that we have not seen for a long time. I cannot recall the last time we have seen that. That is also changing what happens in this parliament. We stand behind our leader.

Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (4.39 pm): I think what we have just heard is 10 minutes of an audition by the wannabe future leader of the opposition.

A government member: It wasn't a good one!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It was not a good one. After question time today, I did not think that the Leader of the Opposition's week could get any worse, but now he has had to sit through an audition from someone who himself has been found in contempt of the parliament. Goodness me!

I start by saying that we on this side of the House respect you, Mr Speaker. Thank you for the hard work that you do in this House. It is a robust House. It is difficult. However, when you make a decision, Mr Speaker, we on this side of the House respect that decision. I am actually mortified to think that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Manager of Opposition Business have decided to slight the Speaker of this great House in their debates.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those words. It is a gross misrepresentation. I ask the member to apologise.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw. Mr Speaker, you have a difficult job. When a decision is made by the Speaker of this House, it should be respected by every single member in this House. I have had to sit here and listen to the Manager of Opposition Business and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who has been found in contempt. He has been through this process. He has had to sit through these debates before. I am quite sure he did.

Mr Dick: No, I didn't.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take the interjection that he has not sat through such a debate. I apologise for that, but I am pretty sure I remember the time. Whilst I may have spent some minutes talking about the wannabe future leader of the opposition, I go back to the past and, while I stand to be corrected, I am pretty sure that former premier Palaszczuk has. That is a name never mentioned in this House anymore by those opposite. I have stood here and defended former premier Palaszczuk when we have talked about how those opposite treated her—many times over. However, she was found in contempt. A former premier of this state—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:—and the first premier ever to be found in contempt of parliament was former premier Palaszczuk.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, I just cautioned you. You are now warned.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The former leader of the Labor Party in Queensland, former premier Palaszczuk, was found in contempt for threatening and bullying in the first instance and now so has the current leader of the Labor Party in Queensland, the guy who has had one of the worst political weeks I can remember in my time in this great House.

A government member: It hasn't finished yet.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It has not finished yet; I take that interjection. The member for Murrumba, the current leader—for this week, anyway—of the Labor Party in Queensland has been found in contempt. This is not something that happens easily or lightly. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows all about it because he was found in contempt over misleading the House as attorney-general in relation to SPER debts. That is a bit before the time of most of those opposite, and I say to those

members: you have to do some time in opposition to understand that what you say in this place matters. At the start of this week, they tried to get on the integrity bandwagon. We have had to sit in this House and listen to the questions and the gutter politics of those opposite.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The member for McConnel can sigh all she likes. For many years I have listened to the member for Whitsunday and I would like to thank her—

Ms Scanlon: How about what you said about the former premier of Queensland not having children?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I did not hear the interjection from the shadow attorney-general.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I would love to take their interjections because they have never mentioned the name 'Premier Palaszczuk' in here that I am aware of—and I will retract that if I am wrong. I think the member for McConnel was one of only a few with the intestinal fortitude to stand up and thank her in this House. The current Leader of the Opposition spoke for one minute on her valedictory.

On numerous occasions the member for Whitsunday has spoken to me about the fact that she is the sole carer, financially and otherwise, for her disabled family member. If we talk of the integrity of those opposite, the Leader of the Opposition thinks it is okay to drag the Deputy Premier's wife through the gutter. Honestly! Then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition laughs about it. He laughs! He thinks that is okay. He can do it but we cannot.

Mr DICK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is a gross misrepresentation and I take personal offence. I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence and asks you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Attorney-General, speak to the motion.

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take the interjection from the honourable police minister. We know what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wants to be following the Stafford by-election on Saturday. Those opposite seem to think that, like every other by-election, there will be a massive swing against the government. I wonder what is going to happen to the Leader of the Opposition, who does not even appear on any of their election paraphernalia. It is as if they have forgotten who he is.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The quarrelling across the chamber will cease.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This motion we are debating today goes to the integrity of the Leader of the Opposition—the current Leader of the Opposition. We know that the former leader, Anastacia Palaszczuk, when she was premier of this state, was found in contempt. We know that the wannabe leader of the opposition, the member for Woodridge, has already been found in contempt. I would suggest that the member for Waterford, the other contender who wants to be the leader of the opposition, was protesting just a little too much when the Deputy Premier was speaking. That is interesting. I look forward to her speech.

I refer to the party that the Leader of the Opposition leads—for the moment. Mr Speaker, I am going to read from a list of apologies given in your parliament, the 58th Parliament. Steven Miles apologised for misleading on 2 April and apologised for misleading on 26 August. Mark Bailey apologised for misleading on 30 April. Grace Grace apologised for misleading on 11 February. Jennifer Howard apologised for misleading on 12 May. James Martin apologised for misleading on 12 May. Joan Pease apologised for misleading on 12 May and again on 14 October. Margie Nightingale apologised for misleading on 2 April. Jess Pugh apologised for misleading on 10 June 2025. The Manager of Opposition Business apologised for misleading on 28 October 2025. Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper, was found in contempt for breaching the broadcast terms of the House on 11 December.


Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer to the use of appropriate, correct titles. Mr Speaker, I ask you to remind the Attorney of that.

Mr SPEAKER: That is a valid point of order. Use correct titles, please, member for Nanango.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This is going to test me! The member for Cooper was found in contempt for breaching the broadcast terms of this illustrious House on 11 December 2025. The member for Morayfield apologised for reflecting on you, the honourable Mr Speaker, during estimates on 26 August. The member for Bancroft apologised for disclosing confidential committee matters during debate on 16 August. The member for Macalister apologised for breaching sub judice on 21 April this year.

The gutter politics of those opposite seems limitless. I will finish where I started: by thanking you very much, Mr Speaker, for your hard work. This side of the parliament will not reflect on your decisions as we have heard during this debate. It is a very long week for the Leader of the Opposition and I suggest that it will get even longer.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (4.49 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate. I start by joining members of the opposition in acknowledging the principled leadership of the member for Murrumba—a very honourable member of this House, a person of great integrity and great principle, who holds not only good values in that he has great compassion and concern for the people of Queensland, the people of his electorate and the people who make up this parliament, but also a person who respects both the institution of this parliament and the processes of this parliament.

Of course, the matter that is being considered at the moment is a matter that the member for Murrumba acknowledged. He came into the chamber and withdrew and apologised. He clarified his remarks. Again we see today he provided an unequivocal apology and, as an extension, we see now, in accordance with standing order 276, he has withdrawn from the chamber while this matter is being considered in respect of this particular motion.

I was going to explore the issue of apologies later on in my contribution, but, given the member for Nanango finished on that point, I thought it important to actually highlight now why it is important for the dignity of this House to accept apologies and not demonise apologies, as we saw from the member for Nanango, somehow seeking to draw down those members of this House who acknowledge that they may have made a mistake, that they may have made an incorrect remark, that they may have inadvertently misled, yet who get up and apologise. That is the right thing to do. It is not exclusive to one side of the chamber. We see those opposite also get up, acknowledge their error or omission and make apologies. If we get to the point where we start saying apologies are not good enough or apologies are a detriment to the dignity of this House, then that is a very sad place for this House to be.

I am concerned that when we have Ethics Committee reports that are not unanimous, that are not built around consensus then that will also impact the dignity of this House. The Ethics Committee works because all members of this House respect it. They respect it because it is a body of peers judging the conduct of each and every one of us. The importance around that is you get ownership, you get responsibility and you get accountability. The way that the Ethics Committee has worked, by building consensus, by ensuring that members have faith in the process, by members appreciating that it is not politicised on party lines, means that people subscribe to and honour the Ethics Committee and the findings that it makes.

The Leader of the House made a good point. He said findings of contempt are rare. That is because these processes are important and are taken seriously—that members subscribe to the Ethics Committee process and they respect it. The Leader of the House also said that contempt findings are not usually arrived at lightly. That is because the matters are considered seriously. The very point I was making around ensuring that the Ethics Committee does not divide on partisan lines is important not only for the dignity and respect of the Ethics Committee but also for the dignity of this House.

That is another point I wanted to make: it is ultimately up to this House to make the finding of contempt. The Ethics Committee considers the matter and makes recommendations. I have heard numerous members in the House today say that a finding of contempt has already been made. I say as well that that also undermines the dignity of this House. It is ultimately up to the House to make the finding, which we will do in a few moments time, but again it is about respecting process, the dignity of the process and the convention that goes along with the Ethics Committee process, as well as the determination of this House of recommendations by the Ethics Committee.

I mentioned before the timeline for the member for Murrumba in respect of this matter. My understanding, from reading the report, is that, as soon as the matter was brought to his attention, at the first opportunity he came into the House, clarified the remarks and made an apology. I note, of course, Mr Speaker, that you made a determination that the matter then needed to go to the Ethics Committee, and that is your determination and I will not reflect on it.


I do note that the Leader of the Opposition did, in his clarifying statement, say, 'For the dignity of the House, I retract the statement and apologise for the inadvertent error.' Every step of the way we have to ensure that not only we respect the Ethics Committee process but also we respect the convention around apologies and the seriousness with which people take the process.

I want to come back to this point with regard to a number of references in the committee's report. I note that in paragraph 83 and also numerous references in the minutes which are annexed to the report there is reference to a casting vote being used. That makes it very clear that there was no consensus in respect of this matter. It makes it very clear in paragraph 83 that the third element was found on a casting vote, cast by the chair. When you look at the minutes of 11 February, in respect of limb 1 of element 1, the votes being equal, the chair used his casting vote to make the determination there. In respect of the minutes on 25 February, on the third element the committee divided and the chair used his casting vote. In respect of the second element, in respect of the member for McConnel, the casting vote was used again. Again, I come to the point that, to retain the integrity of the Ethics Committee, members need to respect the Ethics Committee process and ensure that it is not politicised and that members have respect and ownership over not only processes but also, of course, the outcomes, the conclusions and the recommendations made by the Ethics Committee.

In the time available to me, I want to explore some guidance which the Ethics Committee provides around ensuring that moving forward we do not demonise apologies but that we ensure apologies are welcome, that they elevate the dignity of the House and that they are genuine, unequivocal and unreserved apologies. This is an issue very close to me. My colleague the Minister for Main Roads might remember this: I asked a cracking question on notice about Morayfield Road and it was such a cracking question on notice that the minister had to wriggle around it. He remembers it. He remembers it very well. He had to wriggle around it and I ended up catching him out. He came into the chamber on 17 September and provided one of the longest clarifications I have ever seen—four paragraphs—clarifying how I caught him out and that the question on notice was a good question on notice and the answer was not necessarily as accurate as it should have been. However, in that statement, there was no apology, there was no withdrawal, just the clarification. I do also note that the original question's answer has still not been updated either.

That being said, there is guidance for all of us in ensuring that the dignity of the House is elevated, not brought down; in ensuring that when we make mistakes we say sorry, we apologise and we elevate this House. Also, there is guidance for any of us who are on the Ethics Committee that we always ensure we respect the process of the Ethics Committee, that we seek consensus and that we build a process around the Ethics Committee that ensures it elevates the dignity of the House, not draws it down.

I wanted to finish by again acknowledging the honourable member for Murrumba—a decent person, a person of integrity, someone who contributes significantly to public life not only in the community—in his electorate and for all Queenslanders—but also in this parliament. The respect he has for this parliament and the way he conducts himself is, in my view, exemplary. I encourage all members to think carefully about this matter moving forward.

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.59 pm): Today one of the most serious findings that can be made against a member of this House has been made. The Ethics Committee has found the Leader of the Opposition in contempt. Saying, 'Sorry but not sorry' is not making an unequivocal apology.

A government member: A Clayton's apology.

Mrs GERBER: It is a Clayton's apology; I take the interjection. This is not simply a political disagreement, a touchy point or a heated debate in this House. This is an extremely serious finding by the Ethics Committee, and the matter was referred to the Ethics Committee by the Speaker himself. It means that the Leader of the Opposition has knowingly and intentionally misled this House and, by correlation, misled Queenslanders. It speaks to his conduct as a member of parliament. It speaks to the culture that the Labor Party are happy to accept. It is a culture that they perpetuate not only in this House but also in Queensland communities.

The Leader of the Opposition has been found in contempt for knowingly and intentionally misleading this House. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has been found in contempt. We know that the member for Cooper has been found in contempt. It goes to—

An honourable member interjected.

Mrs GERBER: The member for Waterford has not yet been found in contempt, but it appears to be a prerequisite to be a leader of the Labor Party. The member for Waterford might want to find herself in contempt in order to be the next opposition leader.

This issue goes to the very heart of this parliament. It goes to the trust that Queenslanders put in us when they elect us as their representatives in this House. The standard that the Leader of the Opposition accepts is laid bare in this Ethics Committee report by the fact that he has been found to be in contempt. The standard that he accepts is that he is prepared to intentionally and knowingly mislead. We see this when he perpetrates his scare campaigns in Queensland communities. Not only does he come into this House and intentionally and knowingly mislead; he goes into Queensland communities and spreads mistruths. He spreads mistruths.

How can Queenslanders trust anything he says when he has been found in contempt of this House? When he goes into Queensland communities, he perpetrates scare campaigns and mistruths. That is the record of those opposite: sneaky and deceptive politics and scare campaigns. These are desperate attempts because he is hanging on for dear life to the leadership.

Queenslanders have seen it all before because the last leader of the Labor Party, Annastacia Palaszczuk, was also found to be in contempt when she was the premier. Do any members know who else has been found in contempt?

Mr O'Connor: Who else?

Mrs GERBER: It was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is a culture that we are talking about here. It does not just point to the way that the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to conduct himself in this House; it points to the standard that he is prepared to accept. He follows that standard not only in this House but also in Queensland communities. It is a culture of misleading Queenslanders. He tries to justify any political line that he can by saying, 'They engage in grubby politics.' He is happy to say that when he thinks he is going to land a political punch. The truth comes second to their political survival. It always has. The finding of contempt by the Ethics Committee proves that.

This is a culture where Labor will say anything or scare anyone to try to get ahead. They have a long and dishonourable history of these scare campaigns—a long and dishonourable history. They have gone into Queensland communities and said that hospitals will not be delivered. The health minister has stood up in this place and delivered a Hospital Rescue Plan. They have gone into Queensland communities and said that there will be tolls on the Story Bridge, but that has been proven to be a baseless mistruth. They have gone into Queensland communities and said that they support tough laws and Adult Crime, Adult Time, but when they come into this House they vote against Adult Crime, Adult Time.

The fact that the Leader of the Opposition has come into this House and knowingly and intentionally misled it is evidence not only of his conduct in this House but also of the way he behaves in Queensland communities. The people of Queensland have put their trust in us to come into this parliament and act with dignity and uphold the standards of this parliament, but the Ethics Committee has found that he has not upheld those standards. He has been found to have conducted himself in one of the most egregious and serious ways that this parliament can find for a member in this House.

Let's look back on some of the Leader of the Opposition's other big failures. It starts with his refusal to concede the 2024 election. Do members remember that? Do members remember when he refused to do that?

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

Mrs GERBER: Here we go—the protection racket.

Mr DICK: The point of order is on relevance to the motion before the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, if you could focus more of your attention on the motion, that would be great.

Mrs GERBER: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Speaker. It does speak to a pattern of behaviour—a pattern of behaviour that those opposite are happy to stand by and condone. In fact, in this debate we have heard those opposite not only stand by and condone the behaviour but also trash the finding of the Ethics Committee. Mr Speaker referred the matter to the Ethics Committee because 'Sorry but not sorry' is not making an unequivocal apology.

The Ethics Committee has found that it was not an unequivocal apology. It found that he intentionally and knowingly misled this House, so it delivered a finding of contempt, which is one of the most serious findings that can be made against a member of parliament. That speaks to a pattern of conduct within the Labor Party that they are prepared to accept, stand by and continue to condone not only in this House but also in Queensland communities.

They go out into our communities and perpetuate scare campaigns and outright mistruths for the sake of their own political hides. They go into those Queensland communities and say one thing and then they come into this chamber and say another. This is a culture issue and it is a test—it is a test of the Leader of the Opposition's leadership.

Do you know what? It is fairly obvious, from what is happening in the Stafford by-election. The troops are not coming over the hill to support the Leader of the Opposition. It is fairly obvious by the way they are acting on the booths. Not only does he not have the support of the majority of the people sitting over there anymore; he himself knows that he is pretty much a dead duck walking.

This finding of the Ethics Committee demonstrates two things to the people of Queensland. It demonstrates—

Mr McDonald: Two?

Mrs GERBER: Let's go three. Do you want to go three? You can give me the third, member for Lockyer. It demonstrates two things. It demonstrates, one, that he does not respect the institutions of this House and that he is prepared to come into this chamber and blatantly mislead and intentionally tell untruths. It demonstrates to the people of Queensland that he stands by those same standards in their communities. He is prepared to go into their communities and blatantly mislead them and tell untruths for the sake of his own political hide. What is the third thing it demonstrates, member for Lockyer?

Mr McDonald interjected.


Mrs GERBER: You were meant to give me that one, member for Lockyer.

An honourable member: He's not up to it.

Mrs GERBER: It demonstrates that he is not up to the job. That is the third thing it demonstrates.

The finding of the Ethics Committee is a grave one. It is one of the most serious findings that can be made against a member of this parliament. It means that the Leader of the Opposition has knowingly and intentionally misled this House, and it speaks to a culture of conduct that the Labor Party is prepared to stand by and defend. The litany of speakers who have tried to trash the Ethics Committee and the Speaker himself prove that culture of conduct.

The people of Queensland, rightly, should be asking themselves: can we trust this Labor Party? The answer to that question is: no. Time and again the members of the opposition have proven that they cannot be trusted and they should not be trusted. The people of Stafford have an opportunity to send the Labor Party a message in this by-election. They can vote for Fiona Hammond, who has a plan for Stafford and can get a seat at the table, or they can vote for a Labor candidate who perpetuates scare campaigns and mistruths in their communities.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (5.09 pm): It is always a pleasure to follow the member for Currumbin, if for nothing else other than to give all of our eardrums a little bit of a rest.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Bonney. You will get your turn.

Ms FENTIMAN: We have now been debating this motion for over an hour. Taxpayer funds are paying for all of us to debate this motion for over an hour when the Leader of the Opposition has already apologised. He has accepted the findings of the Ethics Committee report. He has accepted the recommendation. He has apologised again today at the earliest opportunity. That really should be the end of the matter, but we have minister after minister coming in here and talking about the dignity of this place.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Currumbin!

Ms FENTIMAN: The member for Currumbin talks about the dignity of this place after one of the most undignified contributions I think I have ever seen in this place.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin!

Ms FENTIMAN: She talked about culture and standards. How many chiefs of staff have you been through, Minister?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Waterford—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, you are warned. Member for Waterford, your comments come through the chair. Do not argue across the chamber. You have the call.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It was an interesting contribution.

Ms Bates: How many staplers have you thrown?

Ms FENTIMAN: I now have the member for Mudgeeraba interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, I called for order. You are warned as well.

Ms FENTIMAN: Hasn't it been very interesting to see minister after minister come in here and talk about those members who have been found in contempt, but I have not heard anything from those opposite about those members of cabinet who have been previously found in contempt, including the member for Mudgeeraba—who could forget—and the member for Warrego. They have a long history on their side as well of being found in contempt, but they did not seem to want to talk about that today.

The reality is that the Leader of the Opposition has shown nothing but integrity during this entire issue. When something was wrong, he stood up straightaway and he said so. He accepted the findings and he apologised—clearly, unequivocally, without excuses, without qualification. That is what Queenslanders expect of their leaders. That is why Queenslanders know that our Leader of the Opposition is a man of integrity and honesty, with great values. That is why we are all absolutely prepared to back him. He is a fantastic leader, a friend, a colleague, and he has done absolutely what a leader should do—that is, he stood up straightaway and accepted it.

What have we seen from those opposite particularly this week in parliament? We have had serious integrity issues raised about members of the LNP cabinet. What have we seen from the Premier, the leader on that side? We have seen nothing but denial, nothing but blame shifting. When facts become inconvenient they seem to go into hiding. That is what we have seen from those opposite—no transparency and certainly not integrity.

Time and time again we have seen those opposite—LNP cabinet ministers—brought kicking and screaming to make admissions that should have been made from the very beginning. We have seen the opposite behaviour from our Leader of the Opposition. I think it is very telling that again he has stood up at the earliest opportunity and apologised. That should be the end of the matter, but here we are—again, taxpayers' money being spent—because those opposite just want to play politics with this parliament. That is what we have seen from them all week.

The Premier has allowed ministers to make decisions affecting each other's portfolios involving taxpayer funds. They have refused to answer those questions. I believe that Queenslanders deserve leaders who tell the truth, who are up-front, who are honest and who take responsibility. That is not the standard that we are seeing from this government.

I also want to talk about this Ethics Committee report. I do want to back in the statements that we have heard from the Manager of Opposition Business and other speakers about the fact that in this report it is very clear that, when it came to deciding matters of whether or not the Leader of the Opposition's conduct amounted to contempt, a casting vote of the chair was used on two occasions. That is outlined at paragraph 83 of the Ethics Committee report. I do not think that any of those opposite have actually made it to paragraph 83, particularly the Deputy Premier, who made statements that this was somehow a unanimous decision, when very clearly in the report it is outlined that it was not a unanimous decision, and the minutes in fact proved that.

I have to say that I have been here 11 years and I cannot recall an Ethics Committee report where a casting vote of the chair was used. I think we also need to see this Ethics Committee report for what it is. It means that the LNP chair of the committee has used a casting vote to find the Leader of the Opposition in contempt. The Leader of the Opposition has still stood up at the earliest opportunity, taken responsibility and apologised. That is what we are debating. We are debating a motion that notes an apology from the Leader of the Opposition that has already happened, and now we continue to debate this issue because those opposite want to continue to use this parliament as a political plaything. That is exactly what we are doing right now.

I also want to make a comment about the timing of the release of this Ethics Committee report. I am asking the question about how long this report has been with the committee and when it was decided to be tabled two days out from a by-election. I am merely asking the question. I think that that is coincidental. The government has been sitting on this report and waiting until two days before a by-election to release it. Again, that is another example of them using the parliament as a political plaything. That is what is happening here.

I know that the Premier has said this week of all weeks that he believes we should be talking about the issues that matter to Queenslanders. Why aren't we talking about the cost-of-living crisis, the affordability crisis, the fuel crisis? Instead, those opposite want us to debate this issue. They want us to note an apology that has already been given, using taxpayer money for us to debate a motion for over an hour when the Leader of the Opposition has already apologised. We could be talking about the affordability crisis. We could be talking about the upcoming budget and providing Queenslanders with the help that they need because they are doing it tough. Instead, those opposite continue to play politics. They are not interested in governing. They are not interested in helping Queenslanders doing it tough.

Time and time again we see those ministers come in here reeling off lists of names of people who have had to apologise for misleading the House including the Attorney-General's contribution where she also had to stand up and provide clarification for misleading the House, although I know she did not utter the words 'sorry' or 'apology' in her contribution. We had the member for Whitsunday do the very same thing this morning. That happens in this place.

The reality is that this Ethics Committee report used a casting vote of the chair twice to find the Leader of the Opposition in contempt. He has already apologised, yet we have this motion that we are all spending our time debating using taxpayer money because they want to play politics two days out from a by-election. We are here to say that we have absolute faith, confidence and trust in the integrity of the Leader of the Opposition. As I said before, he is a fantastic leader. He is a fantastic colleague. He has done the right thing.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, this is the last time I will caution you.

Ms FENTIMAN: That should be the end of the matter. Instead, those leaders opposite refuse to take responsibility for anything. They refuse to engage in the issues that are affecting Queenslanders. We have seen no action from this Premier on the issues that matter to Queenslanders right now in the middle of an affordability crisis. They all seem very happy to spend their time playing politics on an Ethics Committee report involving the Leader of the Opposition.


Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance in relation to the contribution.

Mr SPEAKER: The debate has ranged a little bit. You have 53 minutes to wrap up your contribution—53 seconds, not minutes!

Ms FENTIMAN: I will take the 53 minutes. Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, because there is so much more I could say about how the LNP government continues to treat this parliament as a political plaything. The contributions from those opposite had nothing to do with the motion. We are here to debate an Ethics Committee report where, for the first time any of us can recall, the LNP chair has used a casting vote. This is simply a political plaything for the government.

We heard the member for Currumbin talk about dignity. I am not sure the chair of the Ethics Committee using a casting vote to go after a political fight with the Leader of the Opposition is about the dignity of this place. This is absolutely a political witch-hunt. Our Leader of the Opposition has acted with integrity. He has already apologised. That should be the end of the matter, and we should start talking about the things that Queenslanders care about.

(Time expired)

 **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) (5.19 pm): I rise to speak to this Ethics Committee report and the motion that is before the House. I will firstly reflect on some of the contributions we have heard from Labor members opposite. Sadly, what has been outlined in the defence of their leader has been an undermining of the standards of this House in order to uphold their support for their leader—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you are warned.

Ms SIMPSON: I believe they have attacked the Speaker for having referred the matter to the Ethics Committee. I notice the aspersions being cast on the Speaker's right to assess prima facie whether there may be a contempt of the parliament and to send it to the Ethics Committee. That was the first step. When I heard members opposite try to undermine the right of the Speaker to make that assessment, I thought, 'Wow, they really do not respect the integrity of the parliament,' because this report talks about contempt being found with regard to the way the Leader of the Opposition acted. The behaviour of members opposite, his Labor comrades, has in fact led the people of Queensland to view the Parliament with contempt, because they have not recognised a number of key factors. It is the role and responsibility of the Speaker to make those referrals and the Ethics Committee makes that determination.

Let's go back a step to the initial statements the Leader of the Opposition made that got him into trouble in the first place. There was more than one statement; there were a couple of statements. Looking at how they have been outlined here in the report, it is more than tricky and it is more than weaselly with regard to how he tried to defend a blatantly untrue statement to this parliament. He tried to weasel around and provide a clarification that he did not mean that the Deputy Premier had wrongly outlined his register of interests. He tried to weasel around and say he had not inappropriately advised the people of Queensland. Look at the statements in this report. It is weasel words: sorry, not sorry. It was in fact never a real apology.

He was called out with regard to his original two statements. He could have taken the opportunity to apologise to the House far sooner than the subsequent inquiry and referral to the Ethics Committee. What we saw instead with regard to the April 2025 alleged apology to the parliament was that it was a qualified statement. A reasonable person would read that statement and notice it was not an unqualified statement. When a member has misled the parliament, either intentionally or unintentionally, they should come in here and offer an unqualified apology to the parliament for that.

With regard to the other statements the leader—that was almost a Freudian slip. He is still the Leader of the Opposition at the moment. We will wait and see whether he gets his double-digit swing at the Stafford by-election. He then had an opportunity to set the record straight with regard to his submissions to the Ethics Committee. As I read through those submissions I see that he keeps digging the hole. He flips with regard to whether he intended or did not intend, what he knew and what he did not know, and he still does not man up and address the fact that he had knowledge that his statements to the House were misleading. Then he tried to flip it around and say that he really meant something else. He just kept digging the hole. There were a series of grave missteps with regard to his opportunity—

A government member interjected.

Ms SIMPSON: Absolutely. He could have got it right more than 12 months ago. I heard the member for Waterford say that this is a waste of time, but the Leader of the Opposition could have got this right last year. He could have dealt with it then, manned up and done it the right way. He did not do it.

Mr Langbroek: Before he was referred.

Ms SIMPSON: Absolutely, before he was referred. Then he was referred to the Ethics Committee and dug the hole a bit deeper. The statements are in here. He kept digging himself in. Once again he failed to do it. We are supposed to believe that somehow he is a man of virtue. There has been a contempt finding, an attack against the Ethics Committee by members of the Labor Party, and somehow he is a man of integrity because he came in here and apologised? He should have offered an unqualified apology last year before it got to the Ethics Committee. He should have handled the Ethics Committee process with far more integrity. Somehow we are supposed to applaud him today because he finally said sorry? That is just not good enough.

There were a series of grave missteps not only with regard to the Leader of the Opposition and his pattern of behaviour and deceptive practices; there is also a pattern of behaviour of his colleagues in the Labor Party defending that deceptive practice, defending casting aspersions on the Speaker, defending casting aspersions on the Ethics Committee and trying to say it is really their fault. It is about time there was some responsibility taken. The Leader of the Opposition has failed to take that responsibility. His colleagues have made a grave misstep, because all we see is a pattern of behaviour. They intend to throw mud in the hope it will stick. When there is a process where it could have been addressed in a far more timely manner, they then throw mud at the Ethics Committee. There is a pattern of behaviour not only in the parliament but also outside the parliament.

Leadership is about integrity. The Leader of the Opposition has shown time and time again that he has none, particularly when it comes to his social media stunts, let alone with regard to the way he treats this parliament. The member for Murrumba likes to loiter at the entrance of the QUT Gardens Point campus and spread his Labor falsehoods to students who are just trying to get to class, but clearly these students had seen through his facade and were not giving him good content—

Mr DICK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance to the motion before the House.

Mr SPEAKER: There has been a bit of lenience in this debate, as you are well aware, member for Woodridge. I would ask the member to remember that we are debating this motion before the House.

Ms SIMPSON: It is important with regard to the parliament and ensuring that, when there is a contempt finding, the Leader of the Opposition should have manned up far earlier and dealt with the matter before it got so far along. There has been a pattern of behaviour in the way he has carried himself in public, in the parliament and in social media, such as the use of Young Labor minions to act as uni students to read off Labor's talking points about the wins of the time. We also saw it on his social media, with an outrageous video where he is calling for violent—


Mr DICK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. To clarify the point on relevance, the motion does not speak to the use of social media by the Leader of the Opposition. It relates to the Ethics Committee report. We can talk about character, but I think the honourable member has had a pretty good go.

Mr SPEAKER: While the debate has been broad, I think it is getting a little bit too broad. Come back to debating the motion, please.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker; I respect your ruling. It is on the public record so I will not unpack that particular unfortunate incident any further. What we have before the House is a serious report. I have heard Labor members try to make out that it is not serious. When former premier Anastacia Palaszczuk was found in contempt of the parliament it was a serious matter. Now that the Leader of the Opposition has been found in contempt of the parliament we have seen everything being done by his colleagues to try to undermine the nature of why this matters, the process and how it was handled right from when it was referred by the Speaker. Prior to it landing before the Ethics Committee there would have been opportunities for the Leader of the Opposition to deal with it.

During the process and subsequently there has been a pattern of behaviour. It does not matter how many times the truth is put before people; the Labor Party has a pattern of Labor falsehoods. They have done it throughout this process. Now they are trying to cloak themselves with some form of integrity because there has been this terrible finding with regard to the Leader of the Opposition. They do not think it matters. They do not think it is serious. They do not accept the fact there was no appropriate apology and attention to detail when it was pointed out in the first place just how wrong the Leader of the Opposition's comments were.

Truth does matter. Integrity does matter. The Leader of the Opposition's comments were always false, and then he tried to weasel around and blame another interpretation, saying that he was really talking about something else. Now we have the Ethics Committee report and we see what the Labor Party are really about: they are attacking the Ethics Committee, rather than acknowledging that this has been a failure of leadership from their own side right from the start. That is why we are addressing these issues in the parliament. It is appropriate we have the time to address these issues and acknowledge that there is quite substantial information before the House in this report. The Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues, now in chorus, all stand in condemnation, having lost the trust of Queenslanders, even when in opposition, for the way they have trashed this report and the respect for integrity and honesty in this place.

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (5.30 pm): Today this parliament is dealing with one of the most serious findings that can be made against a member of this House—that is, the Ethics Committee has determined that the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misled this parliament and committed a contempt of this House. We have heard a lot of commentary from those opposite about the votes within the committee, which are of course laid out within the committee's report. There is something that is missing from the committee's report, and that is a statement of reservation. If those opposite, including a shadow minister, were so outraged by the findings of this report, if they found this report to be something that they did not agree to, why did they not put in a statement of reservation? There would have been an opportunity to do that. They would have been given an opportunity by the secretariat to put in a statement of reservation but they did not do it. There is no dissenting report from the Labor members of the committee, including a shadow minister.

We have heard a lot about the apology by the Leader of the Opposition. I think every Labor member who has spoken on this motion has mentioned the apology and every Labor member has found that apology to be adequate, but I think it is important to go back to the original apology that the Leader of the Opposition made. Remember this has to be unequivocal and it has to be unreserved. There is an important word in that apology, and that is the word 'however'. The committee found in their consideration of this that it may indicate some qualification with respect to the Leader of the Opposition's original apology. The committee found that the Leader of the Opposition may have been re-prosecuting the argument.

Ultimately, none of our views matter on whether this apology was unequivocal or unreserved. None of the views of the members who have contributed to this debate matter on whether this was unreserved or unequivocal. The only person whose view matters on this is yours, Mr Speaker. In your referral to the Ethics Committee, which is the entire reason this report exists, you said—

I note the Leader of the Opposition made a statement in the House in relation to this matter on 1 April 2025. However, I consider that the clarification and apology was not an adequate apology.

That is the whole reason we are here, and every member opposite who has disagreed with that is disagreeing with your ruling on that.

This is not an allegation that has been found by the Ethics Committee, it is not speculation and it is not political commentary; this is a formal finding of deliberately misleading this House. This is extraordinary. The committee found that the Leader of the Opposition knew that the statements he made were incorrect at the time he made them. That is a serious stain on the important office that he holds. This goes to trust, integrity and whether Queenslanders can believe anything that those opposite say. The committee's findings could not be more crystal clear.

For years, the Deputy Premier has repeatedly disclosed the matter through parliament's official processes, through the register of interests, publicly in the House itself and through the media. The Leader of the Opposition admitted that he knew these facts. Despite that knowledge, he stood in this chamber and decided to invent his own definition of what disclosure meant. He cannot just make up his own definition of what disclosure meant. That is why the committee found that the Labor leader's statement was 'clearly factually incorrect'. The committee went further. They found that his comments were not off the cuff, that they were pre-prepared. That really matters. This was not a slip of the tongue in the heat of a debate; it was a calculated political attack on another member of this House. As the government speakers have articulated tonight, Queenslanders should think very carefully about that.

This is the same Labor Party that presided over a decade of housing failures in our state. It is the same Labor Party that sold nearly 2,000 social homes during their term in office. It is the same Labor Party that delivered an average of just 509 social homes. As passionate as I am about housing and the failures of those opposite, I will move onto some other points. Every act of lawlessness that the Labor Party allowed drove up the cost of construction and that flowed through to one of the most important crises we are experiencing.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I thought you were moving back to the motion.

Mr O'CONNOR: I will. Even though that member was the one who sold more social homes than anyone in this House, I will move on. While this government focuses on delivery, those opposite are once again consumed by scandal and integrity failures. These are the same integrity failures that Queenslanders so comprehensively turned away from in October 2024.

What is probably the most telling thing about this whole situation is that when the Leader of the Opposition was found out, when these allegations were found to be correct, he could not even bring himself to apologise correctly. I really need to re-emphasise that point because that is the core of the debate we are having today. Mr Speaker, you deemed that apology inadequate and noted that he had simply re-prosecuted the argument. That is what the committee found. Even when caught out and confronted with those facts, the Leader of the Opposition's first instinct was not to go for accountability; it was to go straight to political spin.

This is the same Leader of the Opposition who refused to concede an election that he had clearly lost. Tonight we are seeing the Labor Party standing behind this leader. We have seen member after member get up in this House and say that he is their leader and that they are ambitious for him. They are ignoring the findings of this comprehensive factual report. Bizarrely, this is the new standard for a Labor leader in this state: to be found in contempt of this parliament. That is what this motion is debating. The government believes that Queenslanders deserve better than that. Queenslanders deserve leaders

who tell the truth. They deserve a parliament that people can trust. They deserve a government that is focused on building homes, restoring integrity and delivering outcomes instead of political games. That is exactly what the Liberal National Party will continue to do. With that, I move—

That the question be now put.

Question put—That the question be now put.

Motion agreed to.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 20 November 2025 (see p. 3779).

Second Reading

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (5.39 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee for its detailed consideration and report tabled on 30 January 2026 regarding the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I also acknowledge the many stakeholders, organisations and individuals who made submissions or appeared before the committee during the inquiry process. Their contribution has been valuable. I note the committee's report contained one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for this recommendation.

Queenslanders expect strong environmental standards, but they also expect a system that is practical, efficient and easy to navigate. They expect the government to protect Queensland's natural environment, while ensuring regulatory systems are not weighed down by unnecessary duplication, delay and complexity. That is what this bill delivers.

This omnibus bill improves multiple acts across my portfolio to cut duplication, reduce unnecessary delays and improve regulatory certainty. It delivers a simpler, more efficient system while maintaining strong safeguards for Queensland's natural environment. Importantly, these reforms respond directly to stakeholder feedback. Industry, local government, tourism operators and communities across Queensland have consistently raised concerns about unnecessary red tape, administrative inefficiencies and regulatory processes that add cost and delay without improving environmental outcomes. This bill is about fixing that. It is about modernising environmental regulation in a practical and sensible way. It is about ensuring environmental protections remain strong while making the system clearer, faster and easier to navigate. It is about ensuring government effort is focused where environmental risk is highest, not buried in unnecessary process.

This bill will achieve this by amending the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011, the Water Act 2000, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Forestry Act 1959 and the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006. Together, these reforms modernise Queensland's environmental regulation through seven key areas: reforming the regulation of environmentally relevant activities, defining Queensland's environmental priorities, improving mine rehabilitation and closure, strengthening compliance and enforcement, updating timeframes for investigating offences, streamlining underground water management and reducing red tape for ecotourism.

These reforms are about delivering clearer rules, faster decision-making and better coordination across government. A key focus of the bill is improving the regulation of environmentally relevant activities, otherwise known as ERAs. These are activities such as exploration drilling, chemical manufacturing and meat processing. The bill introduces a more targeted, risk-based approach to regulating these activities. Importantly, it establishes a clearer, more consolidated framework around significant environmental values, helping guide decision-making and ensuring the matters most important to Queensland's environment remain priorities for protection.

The bill also introduces ERA codes as a modern regulatory tool. This will allow lower risk activities to operate under standard conditions without requiring individual environmental authorities. That means less duplication and faster approvals for lower risk activities while ensuring regulatory effort continues to be focused on higher risk operations where stronger oversight is needed. Again, this is about common sense: strong protections where they are needed most—let me repeat that: strong protections where they are needed most—and less bureaucracy where it adds no environmental value.

The bill includes measures within the licensing framework to assist environmental authority holders in transitioning to the progressive rehabilitation and closure plan framework for resource activities. These changes, along with enhancements to the management and reporting of activities impacting underground water, are designed to improve efficiency and streamline processes.

A significant part of this bill also delivers on the Crisafulli government's Destination 2045 commitment to streamline approvals, reduce duplication and make it easier for tourism operators to do business in Queensland. As members would have heard me say on numerous occasions, Queensland is the home of the holiday. If we want to remain the tourism and events capital of the country, we need systems that support investment, support operators and support jobs. Right now tourism operators can face multiple permits, multiple applications, multiple fees and multiple expiry dates for the same activity across different land tenures. That is not efficient and it does not improve environmental outcomes. This bill creates a single integrated permission for tourism activities conducted across parks and forests—one application, one permission, one fee and one expiry date. That means less time navigating bureaucracy and more time investing in tourism experiences, in employing Queenslanders and in growing our regional economies. The Crisafulli government is doing what we said we would do and delivering, through this bill, a key commitment of Destination 2045.

I turn to the substance of the committee's report on the bill. In recommending the bill be passed, the committee noted sufficient regard was given to fundamental legislative principles and was satisfied that the bill is compatible with the Human Rights Act 2019. The committee undertook some analysis of impact to property rights. In the committee's examination of the bill, comment was made around a lack of direct analysis of property rights implications in the bill's statement of compatibility, specifically in relation to the changes regarding the submission timeframes for underground water impact reports under chapter 3 of the Water Act. Underground water impact reports are essential for understanding the impacts to landholder water bores associated with resource activities. These reports currently undergo a comprehensive reassessment every three years unless extended. The reports ensure the prediction, monitoring and management strategies for affected water bores remain accurate and effective. The amendments proposed in the bill will extend the timeframe for submitting the next underground water impact report, increasing it from three years from the report's first anniversary date—that is the first time the report was approved—to up to five years from the last report's approval. Importantly, annual updates to report changes for potentially affected water bores are also being provided for.

I would like to make clear that the statement of compatibility for the bill does not reference property rights in relation to underground water impact report amendments. The analysis of human rights impacts determined there were no limitations to property rights as a result of the bill. The risk of impacts on landholders' water bores will not increase as the bill maintains the existing safeguards. For example, the Queensland government will maintain adequate oversight of the underground water management framework through the existing powers of the chief executive to request preparation of the report earlier. This could include preparing a new report within two, three or four years from the previous report as well as powers to direct an amendment to an approved report. Additionally, the extended routine reporting cycle does not change the frequency of monitoring or management obligations or reporting of data about potential or anticipated impacts to water bores. The framework will remain responsive to emerging changes through annual reporting processes.

The committee's examination of the bill highlighted stakeholder requests to enhance transparency and accountability of activities operating under the proposed ERA codes. I would like to assure the House that a registration process for operators working under an ERA code has been accounted for by the bill. Visibility of operators will be maintained. This will require information such as the name of the operator, the location of the activity and the ERA code being operated under, which would provide an indication of the nature and scope of the activity.

The bill will also introduce a requirement to maintain a formal register of ERA code activities under section 540A of the Environmental Protection Act, ensuring this register is publicly accessible. There is flexibility in requiring registration of code regulated activities as some activities are already

registered under other legislation. For example, operators of resource activities are already registered through their tenure details, which includes the name of the tenure holder and the type of activity being undertaken. In this case, the fact that the activity is being carried out under an ERA code can be noted through the existing registration process rather than an additional one. Requiring registration in such a scenario would be duplicative as I am informed this information is already made accessible.

The bill proposes changes to the way the generic terms of reference for environmental impact statements are consulted upon. The amendments in the bill mean that there will no longer be a requirement to publicly notify draft terms of reference. This change intends to reduce unnecessary regulatory burden. The committee noted that the revisions of the generic terms of reference for environmental impact statements have contributed to a reduced need for public consultation on a draft terms of reference for specific projects. The department regularly reviews the generic terms of reference for environmental impact statements to ensure alignment with current environmental standards, legislative requirements and the obligations outlined in the bilateral agreement with the federal government. Additionally, the generic terms of reference are an approved form under the Environmental Protection Act and there is no legislative requirement to consult on changes to an approved form. Nevertheless, the department actively engages with key stakeholders before making any significant changes to these important documents and will continue to do so. To this end, I have asked the department to consider whether regular, fulsome review of generic terms of reference would be beneficial considering the potential impacts of such a review on key stakeholders, including other departments and the federal government.

The bill proposes to introduce changes to increase the timeframes for commencing summary proceedings in a court for an alleged offence. Changes also provide that a court can require forfeiture of seized evidence to prevent further offending. The committee acknowledged one submitter's recommendation to provide clearer guidance on prosecutorial decisions and communication during investigations. In response, I note that the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation maintains published enforcement guidelines. These will be reviewed alongside our other guidance materials to ensure the changes introduced by the bill are supported by effective implementation and communication. A number of government departments initiate summary proceedings for offences, including indictable offences. I know the Attorney-General is committed to delivering outstanding recommendations from the criminal procedure review of the Magistrates Court. The department has assured me that it will continue working with the Department of Justice in relation to that review and then consider whether further guidelines are needed for administering authorities under the Environmental Protection Act specifically.


The department's enforcement guidelines adopt the Queensland government's model litigant principles to ensure that the department meets the community's and the court's expectations. This includes that the department deals with claims, including commencing any proceedings, promptly and does not cause unnecessary delay in the handling of claims and litigation. I have asked that the department continue to undertake investigations, enforcement and litigation in a timely manner and routinely communicate with those who are the subject of an investigation to ensure that they are kept informed about its status. The proposed amendment to the statutory time limit does not diminish the department's responsibility to finalise any investigation and decision-making in a timely manner.

The committee noted that there may be a concern that contaminated water bores are not identified in the underground water impact report and addressed through the make-good process. The underground water impact report plays a vital role in understanding, predicting and managing the effects of groundwater extraction for resource activities, including how declining water levels and water quality may affect the environment and water users. Resource tenure holders exercising their underground water rights may influence water levels and groundwater quality, affecting whether bore water is suitable for drinking by humans or animals. This is why there is already a clear link in the legislation to acknowledge that any water supply or quality issues found through the underground water management framework can be managed and addressed appropriately under the Environmental Protection Act. This includes the potential to update environmental authorities.

The committee noted concerns about increased demand for local government services as a result of the proposed streamlining of tourism permitting under the single integrated permission. I am informed that, in accordance with the committee's request, the department is considering further how information about single integrated permissions can be made available to local governments to further support local governments as part of the delivery of Destination 2045.

At its core, this bill is about practical, commonsense environmental reform—reform that delivers certainty, reform that delivers accountability, reform that reduces unnecessary duplication and delay, and reform that delivers better outcomes for Queensland’s natural environment. This bill delivers a modern environmental framework that protects the environment while supporting investment, jobs and Queensland’s future growth. I commend the bill to the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Before I give the member for Nudgee the call, because some of you are in the room, I want to go through those who are on the warning list at the moment, and there are a fair few—Pine Rivers, Miller, Waterford, Greenslopes, Currumbin, Mudgeeraba and McConnell.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.54 pm): The minister has variously described the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill as improving the regulatory framework, achieving administrative efficiencies and streamlining, and delivering red- and green-tape reduction for industry, local governments and the department, but what is not clear is how this bill in any meaningful way improves the protection of our environment in this state, which is the very object of the act that this bill predominantly amends. What in this bill from Queensland’s environment minister safeguards our natural ecosystems, biodiversity or public health from pollution and degradation? Arguably, nothing; at best, almost nothing. It introduces code managed environmentally relevant activities, which stakeholders argue will reduce oversight and compliance; it removes public notification for terms of reference for environmental impact statements, which stakeholders to the bill state reduces local environmental engagement with major projects; it removes public interest tests from progressive rehabilitation and closure plans, which stakeholders to the inquiry warned could lead to even worse outcomes for unrehabilitated mines; and it extends permits for activities in protected areas to 15 years. What it does not do is enhance safeguards for our natural ecosystems, biodiversity or public health from pollution and degradation.

Reducing unnecessary red tape and enhancing administrative efficiencies for industry are goals that the Labor opposition supports—of course we do; we worked closely with industry throughout our time in government to likewise do so where appropriate—but not at any cost and not without appreciating that legislation also has a very clear and vital role in maintaining appropriate safeguards. The primary purpose of the Environmental Protection Act is not to facilitate more development; the primary purpose of the Environmental Protection Act is to protect Queensland’s environment while allowing for development that improves the total quality of life in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends—ecologically sustainable development. This must be the guiding principle against which all amendments to this act are considered—environmental protection—because environmental regulation and environmental protection are not always mutually exclusive.

As a former Queensland environment minister, I know it is a balance, and not always an easy one—certainly not one industry will always welcome—but a critical balance nonetheless, and particularly critical when Queensland’s biodiversity is in decline, largely driven by alarming rates of habitat loss through deforestation. There needs to be a consistent focus on new and improved strategies to halt biodiversity decline and there needs to be a commitment to regulation that gets the balance right, and very often it falls to the environment minister in government to assert that balance, because if it is not the environment minister who puts a handbrake or limitation on development when required then who will? This environment minister is not doing that—not in this bill, not in respect of advocating for real action on climate mitigation, not in respect of honouring the commitments Queensland made to UNESCO to protect the Great Barrier Reef, not in respect of phasing out lethal take of flying foxes, of respectfully working with traditional owners on country or respecting their wishes—

Mr Powell interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Minister, she is not taking your interjections.

Ms LINARD:—in the cape to pursue World Heritage protections for their culture and country. The list grows daily, and it is a damning list.

Government members interjected.

Ms LINARD: This environment minister and this Crisafulli LNP government have not got the balance right and it has become alarmingly clear that the environment has no genuine advocate or voice in this LNP government and that no priority—

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms LINARD:—is placed on genuine environmental protection or conservation by this minister.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right, order!

Ms LINARD: These are not just my sentiments; they reflect concerns raised by environment and conservation stakeholders in response to this bill. The concerns they have raised are equally concerning.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nudgee, I ask you to please take your seat. That went too far. I do not need help in the chair and I ask everybody to refrain from cross-chamber chatter. Thank you.

Ms LINARD: These are not just my sentiments; they reflect concerns raised by environment and conservation stakeholders in response to this bill. The concerns they have raised are equally concerning and have yet to be addressed by the minister. The bill proposes a significant reframing of how activities with potential environmental impacts are regulated, yet there is a concerning lack of detail in this bill and its supporting materials about how that will occur in practice.

Further, there is a very legitimate concern that reframing of how environmentally regulated activities are managed reduces the burden on government and industry by shifting risk away from proponents and onto the environment and affected communities. That would represent a very poor and inequitable outcome indeed. There is very little detail about how significant environmental values will be defined and used to protect Queensland's nature, and even less confidence that they will be.

Greater clarity is required in respect of how the licensing of tourism operators in protected areas will be managed for environmental protection. The introduction of code-based regulation for environmentally relevant activities allowing prescribed ERA codes to operate in place of individual environmental authorities in certain circumstances is not supported by environment stakeholders, due to a very real concern that it will reduce oversight and compliance when there are already sufficient fast pathways to environmental authorities through existing provisions. The current approval system for standard EA applications already offers a means for proponents to gain EAs for lower risk activities which satisfy certain criteria in a streamlined way.

The bill proposes that eligibility for environmentally relevant activity codes would be self-assessed by the proponent, with no prior scrutiny or oversight by government or the public. In effect, this totally negates the very regulatory functions that DETSI should perform to protect the environment and communities.

The Environmental Defenders Office in their submission rightly drew attention to the inconsistent way this government is approaching how activities are determined to be impactful and the standard of regulation they are subject to. Amendments passed to the Planning Act 2016 through the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Act resulted in most renewable energy projects being impact assessable regardless of the risk posed, but, under this bill, proponents in the mining and waste industry—just to name two—would only be required to register their activities if a regulation requires it. This represents a totally inconsistent determination of what is and is not impactful. How does the minister explain such an inconsistent approach? If renewable energy projects pose such a risk that they are impact assessable, how can the government argue that mining and waste activities may be deemed less so? The EDO said—

EDO continues to hold concerns with the proposal to transition of some EAs to mandatory ERA codes for certain activities considered 'lower risk'. The current approval system for standard EA applications is sufficiently streamlined and offers a means for proponents to gain EAs for lower risk activities which satisfy certain criteria without public consultation, discretion from the administering authority whether to approve the application or third-party merits appeal rights. The Bill proposes that eligibility for ERA codes would be self-assessed by the proponent, with no prior scrutiny or oversight by government (or the public). This is antithetical to the regulatory functions that DETSI should perform.

The EDO further submitted that all activities under an ERA code should be publicly registered to assist the community as well as DETSI and other agencies in understanding how a project is being regulated, particularly if any issues arise. Thank heavens the Environmental Defenders Office continues to operate in the public interest with submissions and suggestions such as these, particularly given the Crisafulli government discontinued their funding last year.

AgForce similarly raised significant concerns regarding oversight, compliance and enforcement under a code-based model and supported the EDO's call for a publicly accessible or departmental register of code assessable ERAs. Without such a register their concerns included: limited visibility by

the department of what activities are occurring, where they are occurring and when they commence; an undermining of effective compliance monitoring and risk-based enforcement by the department; that cumulative environmental impacts may go unidentified; and that landholders and neighbouring producers may face increased uncertainty and reduced transparency. In their submission AgForce state—

Currently, environmentally relevant activities (ERAs) are regulated through an environmental authority (EA) assessment and approval process, which provides regulatory visibility, environmental safeguards, and certainty for landholders and regulators, alike.

The Bill proposes to expand the use of self-assessable codes for low-risk ERAs, replacing individual environmental authorities in certain circumstances. While AgForce acknowledges the intent to streamline regulation, there are significant concerns regarding oversight, compliance and enforcement under a code-based model.

In particular, the Bill does not provide for a publicly accessible or departmental register of code-assessable ERAs. Without such a register:

- the Department may have limited visibility of what activities are occurring, where they are occurring, and when they commence;
- effective compliance monitoring and risk-based enforcement will be undermined;
- cumulative environmental impacts may go unidentified; and
- landholders and neighbouring producers may face increased uncertainty and reduced transparency.

They rightly raise—

This lack of regulatory visibility creates risk not only for environmental outcomes, but also for primary producers whose land, water or operations may be affected by nearby ERA activities.

Trust for Nature in their submission articulated—

While code-based approaches may be appropriate for genuinely low-risk activities, they inherently limit site-specific assessment and reduce opportunities for public input. Without clearly defined thresholds and safeguards, this approach risks allowing environmentally harmful activities with specific and serious impacts to proceed without adequate scrutiny.

They consistently cautioned the government during consultation on the bill against substituting environmental authorities for codes where activities may affect sensitive ecosystems or areas containing significant environmental values, reflecting the practical reality that environmental degradation risks are often highly location dependent and are not capable of being managed through generic conditions; however, this was ignored.

The very real question the government needs to answer here is: how can sufficient oversight and compliance be achieved if environmentally relevant activities are not referred for state assessment at all but rather merely self-assessable, and how can the government continue to understand the cumulative impacts that occur from multiple activities in a small area when transparency is reduced in this way? The Sunshine Coast Environmental Council put it this way—

We do not support code managed Environmentally Relevant Activities

SCEC does not support the transition to codes for Environmentally Relevant Activities (ERA) as an alternative to environmental authorities. We are not convinced by the Government's consultation report and justification that sufficient oversight and compliance can be achieved if environmentally relevant activities are not referred for state assessment at all. In particular, this reduces the ability for the Government to understand cumulative impacts that occur from multiple activities in a small area. This appears to place the burden of monitoring compliance solely on the Department, while their ability to enforce compliance is reduced.

How can affected communities possibly understand and track nearby developments, particularly when issues arise? How can rural landholders be confident that effective environmental oversight and enforcement will not be diminished by this bill and appropriate risk-based compliance responses by the department undermined? These are important questions that must be answered by this minister before potential irreparable and cumulative harm is done to our environment and rural landholdings by watered-down environmental regulations. While I recognise the intent to allow public consultation on the codes initially, they are henceforth regulatory rather than legislative in nature, having the practical effect that further changes would not have to be publicly notified or consulted upon.

The bill also relies heavily on the concept of significant environmental values to guide regulatory application in decision-making, but it is not entirely clear how these will be used. Without clear definitions or thresholds, a substantially heavier reliance is placed on discretion, which invariably leads to unpredictable outcomes. Multiple submissions emphasised that significant environmental values must operate as enforceable constraints within regulatory frameworks rather than discretionary considerations applied inconsistently.

Queensland Environmental Law Association stated—

The amendment to s 4 of the EP Act extends beyond addressing an efficiency or streamlining opportunity and represents a fundamental reform to the legislation. While the intent of the amendments is to “*provide clarity to stakeholders, applicants and those administering the legislation on the aspects of the environment that are a priority for the State government ...*” practically these amendments would appear to facilitate the introduction of a new layer of regulation, rather than streamlining the existing regulatory frameworks.

This particular aspect of the Bill warrants further consultation and analysis of the regulatory impact to ensure that the legislation is appropriately justified and proportionate to the desired policy outcome.

They should consider the significant work done under our former government in respect of bioregional planning and attempt to define areas of irreplaceable habitat which should be protected from all development.

Trust for Nature rightly asserted—

Without transparent criteria and publicly accessible information, there is a risk that protection of highly valuable environmental assets becomes uneven or biased.

....

Significant environmental values be clearly defined using ecological and scientific criteria, supported by transparent mapping and identification processes. Regulatory members should be required to explicitly demonstrate how these values have been identified and considered, ensuring accountability and consistency across approvals.

In respect of the proposed removal of public notification on terms of reference for environmental impact statements, we have been here before. The last time the LNP was in government the Labor opposition stated it did not support reducing local communities’ engagement with major projects that may affect them. We did not support it the last time the LNP was in government and we do not support the removal of it now. Projects assessed by way of EIS are typically complex, high-impact projects. Early community input ensures that all locally relevant environmental matters are considered from the beginning of the project, potentially reducing the need for further revisions of the EIS. The Queensland Law Society stated—

The Bill removes the requirement to notify terms of reference for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in effect removing the rights of the public to provide submissions on the issues which must be considered in an impact assessment of a relevant project.

QLS anticipates there may be some public concern with this proposal.

They anticipated correctly. I continue—

The change would mean an EIS conducted under the EP Act is subject to different consultation requirements to an EIS under other legislation, including the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 (Qld)*.

This may lead to further inconsistencies and confusion about the opportunities for public participation in assessment processes.

In these circumstances, QLS calls for this change to be reconsidered.

If the government is going to ignore the multiple submitters who oppose this removal of public consultation—and I think that is exactly what they will do; true to form—then there should at the very least be consultation about what the standard terms of reference should be.

Progressive rehabilitation and closure planning plays a critical role in ensuring environmental impacts are not deferred to the end of a project’s life, but rather are progressively rehabilitated as land becomes available to minimise the risks of environmental impacts and reduce cumulative areas of disturbance. The bill proposes to remove the requirement for public interest evaluation when assessing non-use management areas or areas of land that cannot be rehabilitated to a stable condition such as active void pits, excavation or depression from open-cut mining. The ongoing management of non-use management areas presents a costly liability to the state and the cumulative scale of such areas is significant, with one study available from the Office of the Queensland Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner estimating that there are 128 active voids in the Bowen Basin alone.

While I acknowledge that public interest considerations will remain part of the PRCP application requirements through new section 126E, the current public interest evaluation provides an important impartial check, overseen by the Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner, to provide further independent analysis of how non-use management areas are being regulated. Mine rehabilitation laws have undergone reform over many years, which led to the public interest evaluation being introduced. There is no reason to remove these provisions, Minister.

The concerns I have aired today are not an exhaustive list of the issues identified. I have touched on the core and key weaknesses of this bill. Submitters have raised many additional matters that have not been adequately addressed in this bill. For example, the Queensland Farmers' Federation state—

... QFF has a clear and substantive objection to the proposal to expand the UWIR reporting cycle from three to five years.

While annual updates will continue to provide monitoring data, the statutory mechanisms that recalibrate impact zones, update management settings, adjust monitoring obligations and activates make-good arrangements can only occur through a full UWIR revision.

Extending this interval materially weakens the responsiveness of the underground water management framework at a time when extractive activity and cumulative groundwater pressures are increasing. The longer reporting period significantly delays the point at which emerging or unexpected aquifer responses can be translated into enforceable regulatory action, thereby reducing the timeliness and effectiveness of protections for bore owners and agricultural water users.

For the purpose of clarity, the area of greatest concern covered by a UWIR, is the area that overlays the Condamine Alluvium, one of Queensland's richest agricultural areas.

While activities by the tenure holder have long been planned, at the time of writing there has been no active CSG extraction east of the Condamine River.

Development across this highly sensitive area is proposed in the medium-term future and extending the UWIR reporting cycle now would be counterproductive.

Many land holders across this area hold significant concerns, and UWIR reporting will be critical in identify any unforeseen impacts or alternatively providing positive assurance that CSG extraction is not causing harm to this critical water supply or the land above it.

Mr VORSTER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I put to you that the member is anticipating debate, noting that a bill has been introduced into the House dealing with alluvium matters specifically.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): I will take some advice and I will have silence while I am taking that advice. Member for Nudgee, I will ask where you are leading with that, if you are anticipating to stay within the long title of the bill?

Ms LINARD: I am not anticipating. It is a submission that I read from about this bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will be listening very carefully.

Ms LINARD: Wildlife Queensland had the following key issue with the bill, stating in its submission—

Wildlife Queensland does not support the proposed open-ended amendments to the Forestry Act that would allow unregulated or insufficiently regulated commercial activities in State Forests and Timber Reserves. We recommend clearer and explicit drafting to ensure strong statutory protections for biodiversity and ecological integrity.

Specifically:

- Commercial activity agreements must be explicitly subject to ecological sustainability principles and compliance with the Nature Conservation Act 1992 (NCA), Vegetation Management Act 1999, Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, and Commonwealth EPBC Act.
- Commercial activity agreements must include mandatory biodiversity protections, impact monitoring, and public reporting obligations.
- Scientific Areas (Schedule 4) and Feature Protection Areas (Schedule 3) be fully exempt from commercial activity agreements.
- Spatial accuracy is essential: Agreements must specify precise mapped boundaries, not only the name of a forest or reserve.
- Transparency and public accountability must be legislated, with all commercial activity agreements (subject to narrow commercial-in-confidence exceptions) publicly accessible.

These amendments are necessary to ensure that public land held in trust for Queenslanders is managed primarily for conservation, ecological function, and long-term community benefit.

NRM Regions Queensland, in its submission, stated—

We wish to express concern with the proposed amendment changes to remove the requirements for operators of small scale mining to pay a financial surety.

There is another issue of concern in this bill. They said—

How will the rehabilitation of these sites be monitored and shared publicly? History would show that a surety provides a stronger incentive for rehabilitation to occur in a timely manner, whilst the effect of slow or rehabilitation to a minimum standard across multiple sites (irrespective of size) can have a significant cumulative negative impact on biodiversity and landscape resilience.

These are just three additional issues that I had not canvassed in my earlier comments and now put on the record for these submitters who have taken an interest in this bill and raise their concerns for the minister.

There are also elements of the bill that we welcome. We welcome the additional powers for conservation officers and additional rights for landholders to protect their water under the Water Act. I have very deliberately used my time today as shadow environment minister to focus on the key risks this bill presents to the protection of our environment because that is the primary role of a shadow environment minister. It should be the primary role and goal of an environment minister to protect the environment, to prioritise and give a voice to the environment and the very large number of Queenslanders who do not want to see efficiency come at the cost of appropriate environmental regulation and protection.

Environmental authorities should remain the primary mechanism by which activities and projects with the potential for significant environmental impacts are assessed and monitored in Queensland. While improving efficiency is a legitimate objective, reform tailored to deliver efficiency for industry must never outweigh the primary purpose of environmental protection legislation to prevent irreversible harm being done to the environment—resources that once lost cannot readily, or indeed potentially ever, be restored. The bill does not find the balance. It arguably shifts risk away from proponents and onto the environment and affected communities.


This bill reduces transparency, reducing both cumulative impact assessment and public input. I will conclude with the words of one very erudite submitter to my office on this bill who stated—

The Bill would be strengthened by limiting code-based regulation, ensuring significant environmental values operate as enforceable constraints, preserving meaningful public participation, maintaining robust rehabilitation and closure planning frameworks, embedding safeguards in primary legislation and supporting strong compliance and enforcement. With amendments to this affect, all of which are canvassed in the submissions to the committee inquiry, and were canvassed during the department's consultation prior to introduction—the Bill has the potential to deliver improved regulatory efficiency while continuing to protect Queensland's environment.

However, currently the bill does not deliver on any of those key values.

I thank the submitters to this inquiry. I thank those who have raised their concerns in the departmental consultation. I thank them for taking the time to contact my office and raise these concerns. They have raised these issues with the department and the minister and the committee. I again put them on the record and raise them with the minister. I ask that their very valid and reasonable concerns be considered and this bill improved and that assurances be given that, indeed, the act which is designed to provide environmental protection in this state continues to do so.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Before I call the member for Southport, I advise the House that we have some guests from the electorate of Southport in the gallery today. I welcome the chapel of Southport.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (6.22 pm): That was a very interesting speech from the shadow minister. I am not actually sure whether they will be supporting the bill or opposing the bill. I find it somewhat amusing that for 30 minutes we heard about problems with the bill, yet there is no statement of reservation from that side of the House. Tonight we hear a whole raft of concerns.

I rise to speak in support of the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I commend the minister on the excellent job that he and his team have done in seeking to speed up environmental approvals for meaningful business enterprises and opportunities in Queensland. For far too long we have been bogged down with unnecessary red and green tape. This bill seeks to address some of those concerns.

As chair of the committee, I am pleased to speak on the legislation as it does deliver practical, commonsense reform to Queensland's environmental framework while maintaining strong environmental safeguards. Queenslanders expect high environmental standards but they also expect a system that is efficient, practical and easy to navigate. After a decade of decline under Labor, stakeholders were left dealing with unnecessary duplication, administrative complexity and delays that often added costs without improving environmental outcomes. This bill begins to fix that.

The committee's role was to carefully examine the policy objectives of the legislation, consider whether the bill had sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of parliament, and assess its compatibility with the Human Rights Act 2019. Following detailed consideration from some 36 submissions—only 36 submissions from the entire state of Queensland—

from stakeholders, the committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I thank those individuals and organisations that made submissions to the inquiry, appeared before the committee and contributed to the process as well as the staff of the Parliamentary Service and the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

This bill modernises several areas of Queensland's environmental and tourism legislation to reduce duplication, improve coordination and deliver greater regulatory certainty. Importantly, it adopts a more targeted, risk-based approach to regulating environmentally relevant activities. That means focusing regulatory effort where environmental risks are greatest while reducing unnecessary red and green tape for low-risk activities. This is a sensible reform. Strong environmental protections should be backed by efficient and effective legislation, not layers of bureaucracy for the sake of bureaucracy.

The bill also improves mine rehabilitation and closure processes after significant issues emerged under Labor's rehabilitation and closure framework introduced in 2019. Stakeholders identified that the framework was overly complex, duplicative and difficult to transition into. These amendments provide clearer pathways, more practical audit timeframes and a more workable system that will ultimately improve rehabilitation outcomes. This legislation also strengthens compliance and enforcement powers, improves offence investigation processes and streamlines underground water management arrangements to reduce unnecessary administrative burden.

One of the most significant reforms in this bill is the introduction of a single integrated permission framework for tourism operators. How important is the tourism industry to our state! As one whose electorate and city rely heavily on tourism operators to drive visitation, support local jobs and strengthen our economy, I am very pleased to see this reform included in the legislation. Queensland's tourism operators have made it clear that the current system is overly complicated. Currently, businesses operating across protected areas, state forests, recreation areas and marine parks can require multiple permits under different pieces of legislation for essentially the same activity. That is exactly the kind of duplication that frustrates business and slows investment.

This reform, which delivers on the Crisafulli government's Destination 2045 commitment, creates a framework for operators to submit a single application through one online system and receive one integrated permission across multiple land tenures. There will be a single fee, a single expiry date and a far simpler process for operators to navigate. Importantly, environmental and cultural protections will remain in place.

Existing assessment conditions will continue to apply to ensure Queensland's natural assets are protected. This is about improving administration, not weakening safeguards. It is a practical reform that supports ecotourism, reduces unnecessary red tape and helps make Queensland's tourism industry more competitive internationally. These tourism experiences showcase some of the most beautiful natural environments in the world and they play an important role in supporting regional economies and local jobs across the state of Queensland.

The bill reflects a practical philosophy of government, one that recognises that environmental protection and economic growth can and should work together. The reforms deliver clearer rules, faster decision-making processes and better coordination across various levels of government. They respond directly to stakeholder feedback and address many of the inefficiencies left behind after Labor's mismanagement and overcomplicated regulatory processes.


I want to take a moment to reflect on some of the past failings of the previous government because we have had to deal with them. I am sure that the minister is only too well acquainted with some of the failings highlighted not just by stakeholders and industry but also by the Queensland Audit Office. What have we seen from the previous ministers in this portfolio area? We have seen a failure to deliver clear tourism strategies—

Mr J KELLY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The member is straying very far from the long title of the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): The point of order is relevance. Member for Southport, please wait a moment while I take some advice. Member for Southport, is this relevant to the bill?

Mr MOLHOEK: I believe it is. I will change my tack briefly. I am conscious of the time.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

 **Mr MOLHOEK:** This bill reflects a practical philosophy of government, one that recognises environmental protection and economic growth can and should work together. The reforms deliver clearer rules, faster decision-making and better coordination across government. They respond directly

to stakeholder feedback and address many of the inefficiencies left behind after years of Labor mismanagement and overcomplicated regulatory processes. Queenslanders want environmental safeguards that are strong, but they also want systems that are practical, effective and fit for purpose. This bill fits that balance. I commend the committee's report, and I commend this bill to the House.

Mr J KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.31 pm): Having sat on the *Notice Paper* for nearly six months, I am surprised this bill was not declared urgent and then held over for several weeks and then declared urgent again, but it seems this bill is the legislative wing of 'Operation Boring' being rolled out in Stafford which sees the member for Kawana being kept away from voters. Here we have a bill designed to keep more controversial bills away from the voters. I have to wonder why the bills dealing with e-mobility and regional planning have been kicked down the road. It is probably for the same reason the CEO of the Metro North HHS was dragged into parliament last week in a pathetic misuse of parliamentary resources—that is, to try to win the Stafford by-election. You only have to look at the \$40,000 being wasted every week on billboards to know—

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Greenslopes is off to a great start, but I would challenge on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Greenslopes, you have only been speaking for a short time. I know you will come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr J KELLY: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. This bill, I think, reveals a disturbing trend that is rolling out under the watch of this minister and the LNP Crisafulli government. We have a minister who is much more interested in ecotourism than ecology. When you look at the behaviour of this government, their combined actions over a range of bills demonstrate they have no commitment to action on climate change, no commitment to protecting the Great Barrier Reef and no commitment to maintaining biodiversity. They certainly do not have much interest in listening to the community, particularly those who speak up on behalf of our natural environment.

Of course, Labor supports ecotourism, but as the member for Nudgee said in her contribution, 'environmental regulation and environmental protection are not always mutually exclusive' and achieving the balance is 'not always an easy one—certainly not one industry will always welcome—but a critical balance nonetheless'. I think the really concerning thing about this bill is the lack of detail, and that is where the devil will be.

There is a significant change to the way in which activities with potential environmental impacts are regulated, but there really is a lack of detail. To me, this bill seems to make it easier to dig a small mine or to take your fat-wheeled bikes on tours through national parks or go paddling through sensitive Barrier Reef ecosystems and then seems to decrease the capacity of the community to have any say on that and increase the minister's ability to control whether that goes ahead. When you have a minister who has demonstrated a bias towards ecotourism rather than ecology, it is very worrying. Even if that was not the case, it would still be very worrying.

We have seen this before the last time the LNP were in government—trying to silence the voices of dissent, be they in the environmental, social services, health, education or public advocacy sectors. Let's look at some of this in detail. As the shadow minister—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Your interjections will cease.

Mr J KELLY: Thank you for your protection, Deputy Speaker. They were some of the most hopeless interjections I have ever heard in my life. It was like having Statler and Waldorf, except they are not very good at being Statler and Waldorf, I can tell you that, Deputy Speaker. As the shadow minister said in her contribution—

The introduction of code-based regulation for environmentally relevant activities allowing prescribed ERA codes to operate in place of individual environmental authorities in certain circumstances is not supported by environment stakeholders, due to a very real concern that it will reduce oversight and compliance when there are already sufficient fast pathways to environmental authorities through existing provisions.

So that all seems a bit at odds to the approach taken in relation to renewable energy projects. If you are doing something beneficial for the environment, then you have to jump through a whole lot of hoops, but if you are doing something that is potentially damaging, then it is, 'Let's just push those hoops out of the way and let's get going!' So, if you want to build a windfarm to help respond to climate change, fill out form 54B in triplicate and ensure every member of the community and their dog signs it and so on and so on, but if you want to tear through a national park, let's go right now! The Environmental Defender's Office rightly pointed out this inconsistency in their submission.

Now before you write off the EDO, do not forget AgForce also raised significant concerns about oversight, compliance and enforcement under this code-based model and supported the EDO's call for a publicly accessible or departmental register of code assessable ERAs. I guess I should not be surprised that the minister under whose watch a hardworking CEO for Coex was sacked and replaced by an LNP mate, Trevor Evans, is acting in a manner that could be considered completely contradictory—

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, can you refer me to which particular part of the bill you are speaking to?

Mr JKELLY: I will move on, Deputy Speaker. This bill calls for self-assessment, and I think that anyone watching the actions of this government should be able to determine for themselves that self-assessment sadly often means no assessment.

Having spent a bit of my youth in Charters Towers, I want to briefly refer to the progressive rehabilitation and closure plans. I want to acknowledge the reforms led by former minister Anthony Lynham in this area and anything that diminishes these reforms would be a regressive step. Overall, this bill reduces the assessment of environmental impacts and reduces opportunities for community input. This is very concerning to the Labor members of this chamber.

I would like to table a document for the benefit of the House. We have had a long debate about misleading the parliament tonight and, in that very debate, the Attorney-General misled the parliament. I table a copy of the Labor how-to-vote card showing the Leader of the Opposition clearly on the same election material as the Labor candidate for Stafford, Luke Richmond—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you have had a couple of warnings about relevance. Straying from the bill in order to table an irrelevant document is a step up again. If you stray one more time, I am going to warn you and after that I will sit you straight down. Consider yourself on notice, member for Greenslopes.

Mr JKELLY: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, I do intend to write to the Speaker about this matter because the Attorney-General has misled the House—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you are warned under—


Mr JKELLY:—and if she showed the same level of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes! You are defying the chair. I consider it a discourtesy to the chair. You will come back to the bill, you will not quarrel and you will not be irrelevant. Do you understand?

Mr JKELLY: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I have nothing further to say.

Mrs STOKER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As I understand it, the member for Greenslopes was on a warning.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is warned under the standing orders, for sure, but if he keeps his copy clean, he will be right for the rest of the sitting.

 **Ms DOOLEY** (Redcliffe—LNP) (7.38 pm): I rise in strong support of the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. As a member of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, I had the opportunity to closely examine this legislation through the committee process, to hear from key stakeholders during public hearings and to consider submissions from industry, environmental experts and community organisations. What became very clear throughout the process was that Queenslanders want strong environmental protections, but they also want a system that is practical, efficient, transparent and easier to navigate, and this bill achieves that balance. It modernises Queensland's environmental framework while maintaining the safeguards that protect our natural environment for future generations.

This legislation is about reducing unnecessary duplication, improving regulatory certainty and ensuring government resources are focused where they are needed most: on genuine environmental risks and environmental harm. It is about smarter regulation, not weaker regulation. Importantly, the committee process demonstrated broad support for the intent of this bill. Industry groups, environmental law experts and tourism operators all acknowledged the need to modernise Queensland's environmental regulatory framework. The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies stated in its submission—

The overall consultation process has been outstanding, with recognition and amendments made to address many concerns.

The Property Council of Australia also noted that it had been ‘broadly supportive of the policy intent to modernise the Environmental Protection Act ... streamline processes, and remove unnecessary duplication, whilst maintaining strong environmental protections’. Likewise, the Civil Contractors Federation said—

This Bill ... should have the effect of protecting the environment, whilst making it easier to get approvals for low-risk activities through.

Those comments reinforce exactly what this legislation is designed to do: protect the environment whilst improving efficiency and reducing unnecessary red tape. As a committee member, I was pleased to see that, after scrutiny and consultation, the committee recommended the bill be passed. Importantly, I note—after the member for Greenslopes’ display—that opposition members did not even provide a dissenting report or statement. There was no statement of reservation. That reflects the practical and balanced nature of these reforms.

This bill delivers reforms across several key areas, including environmentally relevant activities, mine rehabilitation, compliance and enforcement, underground water management and ecotourism. One of the most significant reforms is the move toward a more targeted, risk-based approach for environmentally relevant activities, known as ERAs. Currently, Queensland’s system can be overly complex and administratively burdensome, even for low-risk activities where environmental harm can be effectively managed through standardised operating conditions.

This bill allows certain low-risk activities to operate under ERA codes instead of requiring lengthy and expensive environmental authority processes. These codes will maintain strict environmental safeguards, but they will help to reduce unnecessary costs and delays for businesses, local governments and operators. That matters greatly for regional communities and growing areas, like my electorate of Redcliffe.

In Redcliffe we are seeing continued growth in small business activity, tourism operations, marine-based recreation and infrastructure investment, particularly on Moreton Island, which is known as the jewel in the crown in the electorate of Redcliffe and the City of Moreton Bay. We have tourism operators who are tied up in bureaucratic environmental red tape. I take this opportunity to give a shout-out to Captain Kerry Lopez from Brisbane Whale Watching, who is celebrating a whopping 30 years of whale watching in Brisbane’s beautiful Moreton Bay. Kerry Lopez is recognised as the only woman captain who owns and skippers a whale-watching venture in the whole South Pacific rim. Her incredible love and knowledge of whales and other marine animals makes her whale-watching adventure second to none in Queensland. Brisbane Whale Watching invites local and international tourists to come on board the magnificent boat *Eye-Spy* for an encounter with the whales as they migrate south.

Local operators, like Kerry, want certainty. They want environmental protections that are clear and enforceable, but they also want processes that are proportionate and efficient. For example, local councils and operators involved in low-risk activities such as small extraction works, dredging or water treatment infrastructure will benefit from reduced administrative burdens while still meeting environmental standards. That means faster approvals, reduced costs and more time spent delivering services to the community rather than navigating unnecessary paperwork. Importantly, environmental safeguards remain firmly in place, and ERA codes will only apply where environmental risks are well understood and can be effectively managed.

Another important reform in this bill is the clarification of Queensland’s environmental priorities through the identification of significant environmental values. Currently, these priorities are spread across multiple legislative instruments, making the system unnecessarily complicated and difficult to navigate. This bill consolidates those priorities into a clearer, more accessible framework. That will improve certainty for government, industry and the community whilst ensuring environmentally sensitive areas, endangered wildlife habitats and important ecosystems continue to receive strong protection.


For coastal communities like Redcliffe, environmental certainty is critically important. Our local environment has some of Queensland’s greatest assets, including the magnificent Moreton Bay, our foreshores, our marine habitats and our recreational areas. Moreton Island, as I discussed before, has the world’s highest coastal sand dune—Mount Tempest—at 285 metres, and multiple ecotourism experiences, including snorkelling at the Tangalooma Wrecks, feeding wild dolphins, sand tobogganing and kayaking in clear-bottom boats, but it is suffering from sand erosion. Protecting these environmental values while supporting sustainable economic activity is essential for ecotourism, local jobs and lifestyle. This bill will help to achieve that balance.

This bill will also help to improve Queensland's mine rehabilitation and closure plan framework. These reforms respond directly to implementation challenges that have been identified since the progressive rehabilitation and closure plan framework commenced in 2019. Importantly, these reforms also maintain the principle that mine sites must be rehabilitated in a way that leaves them safe, stable and nonpolluting. At the same time, they remove administrative uncertainty and inefficiencies that have slowed down the process.

This legislation strengthens compliance and enforcement powers. Queenslanders rightly expect strong action to be taken against those who deliberately and intentionally damage the environment or repeatedly breach environmental laws. This bill gives courts the strong powers needed to prevent repeat offending by allowing for the forfeiture of vehicles and equipment used in environmental offences. That is particularly important in relation to illegal waste dumping and the unlawful transportation of regulated waste. Communities should not have to tolerate repeat offenders who continue to cause environmental harms because of gaps in enforcement powers.

This bill means better protection for communities and better environmental outcomes across Queensland. It also helps with Queensland's groundwater resources, which is vital for agriculture. Importantly, these reforms improve procedural fairness and provide greater certainty for landlords and resource operators alike.

Finally, the bill delivers important reforms for ecotourism by reducing red tape through a single integrated permission system across protected areas, state forests, recreation areas and marine parks. In closing, I thank the committee, Minister Powell and the secretariat for their hard work. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr O'SHEA** (South Brisbane—ALP) (7.48 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. In addressing this omnibus bill, I would first like to acknowledge the work of my colleagues on the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee and the hard work of the committee secretariat in supporting the committee in its review of this proposed legislation.

This bill proposes to amend a number of acts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of environmental legislation, including the Environmental Protection Act 1992, the Water Act 2000, the Forestry Act 1959 and the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006. When reviewing this bill, it was important to ensure, alongside the proposed efficiency and streamlining changes, there were sufficient safeguards in place to protect the unique and precious environment of this state. In working to achieve this balance, I am grateful to the stakeholders who provided submissions and gave evidence at the public hearing into this bill.

In my contribution to this debate I will address some important issues raised by stakeholders during the committee inquiry. Firstly, concerns were raised about the proposal in the bill for lower risk environmentally relevant activities, or ERAs, to transition from environmental authorities to code managed ERAs. Numerous submitters raised the need for mandatory registration of these code-based ERAs as well as the establishment of a centralised publicly available register.

In their submission, AgForce strongly recommended that a mandatory register of code assessable ERAs be established stating, 'Such a register should record the location, nature and commencement of code-based activities.' They went on to state that the register would support effective environmental oversight and enforcement, enable appropriate risk-based compliance responses by the department and protect the interests of AgForce members and other rural landholders. Establishing a centralised publicly available register would maintain transparency and accountability for these code-based activities.

Submitters also raised concerns about the proposal to remove the need for a surety to be paid by an operator for small-scale mining activities. Sureties are currently paid for these activities to ensure that any future rehabilitation work arising from them is funded by the operator rather than those costs falling on taxpayers. The Queensland Environmental Law Association opposed the proposal, noting in their submission—

If no financial security or residual risk payments are required for small-scale mining activities, landholders (or ultimately taxpayers) could be exposed to rehabilitation liabilities if an operator becomes insolvent or otherwise does not comply with its obligations.

Submitters also raised concerns about how cumulative impacts from small-scale mining activities would be managed. As the committee report notes, codes for new ERAs governing these small-scale mining activities are still being developed. It is essential that these codes address the risks associated with cumulative impacts of small-scale mining activities and the rehabilitation responsibilities of the operators.

The bill also proposes to introduce a single integrated permission for tourism activities in recreation and protected areas. Rather than applying for multiple permits for tourism activities across different areas, these changes will enable tourism operators to apply for a single permit for their business irrespective of where the activity takes place. In their submission, Wildlife Queensland supported administrative streamlining to reduce duplication as long as strong environmental protections were maintained but stated they did 'not support any changes that weaken environmental safeguards, reduce transparency, or enable unfettered commercial activity inconsistent with sustainability principles'. The Queensland Conservation Council also raised concerns about nature protection in their submission and called for a publicly available register of permits with accurate mapping attached to each permit.

In light of stakeholder concerns about the risk of overtourism and subsequent adverse environmental impacts, I would request the department ensures that information about the new integrated permits is made publicly available, particularly for local governments, without the need to resort to right-to-information processes.

It is of vital importance that we protect our groundwater and maintain reserves of clean, unpolluted water in this state, so it is essential that we have regulator monitoring of the underground water framework and of the impact on water bores from activities by resource companies. This bill proposes to extend the current timeframe for underground water impact reports, or UWIRs, from three years to five years. There was strong opposition to this extension from many stakeholders due to concerns about the risk of bore impairment not being identified or addressed for a longer period of time. In its submission, AgForce opposed the extension of the reporting timeframe stating—

- it increases the risk that impacts to groundwater and dependent primary production businesses and regional/rural communities will go unmanaged for longer periods;
- it may delay identification and remediation of impacts affecting landholders' water supplies; and
- it is likely to result in poorer environmental and landholder outcomes.

AgForce strongly recommended the retention of the current three-year cycle, pointing out there was already provision for an extension of time to prepare a UWIR in special circumstances under the Water Act. In its submission, the Environmental Defenders Office also advised that the current timeframes for reporting were appropriate and extending them 'could lead to late detection of critical environmental impacts and harm to landowners' water resources'. Stakeholders were also concerned about the department's lack of consultation on this proposal, with Glendon Farming Co. stating in their submission—

During the prior consultation ... there was no mention whatsoever of a move to change the UWIR cycle from 3 years to 5 years. This had completely come out of leftfield.

In their response to submissions, the department acknowledged that the specific proposal was not included in the draft legislation provided to stakeholders for consultation.


In view of stakeholder concerns regarding extending the reporting timeframe and the lack of adequate consultation on this proposal, I would urge the department to maintain the three-year timeframe for UWIRs but change the reporting requirement from the anniversary of the date that the initial report was first approved to three years from the date that the last report was approved. This approach would allay concerns about maintaining the integrity of the underground water management framework while allowing for an ongoing three-year reporting period irrespective of an earlier report being delayed due to a required extension.

Another important issue regarding water bore monitoring was raised by Central Downs Irrigators Ltd. They stated in their submission that they were—

... concerned that the UWIR process is only capturing those water bores identified as long-term affected (LAA) by a decline in water level and not any water bores that may be impaired by free gas or contamination only, that do not exhibit a decline in water levels.

As noted in the committee comment, I would request that the department consider how the underground water impact report process could be applied to capture contaminated bores as well as those experiencing a decline in water level.

I would encourage the minister and the department to listen to the concerns of stakeholders with respect to the proposals outlined in this bill to ensure that our environment continues to be protected with respect to the competing demands of mining and tourism activities.

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (7.57 pm): I rise to speak to the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. My electorate of Hervey Bay arguably has the most pristine coastline in Queensland. The iconic and largest sand island in the world, Fraser (K'gari) Island, is located at our backdoor. In 1992 Fraser (K'gari) Island was crowned as a UNESCO World Heritage site for its exceptional beauty and outstanding natural values. The island is approximately 184,000 hectares and has 40 kilometres of strikingly coloured cliffs. It constitutes a major portion of the Great Sandy National Park. In 2019 Hervey Bay was recognised as the world's first whale heritage site by the World Cetacean Alliance. The heritage site forms 6,000 square kilometres of the Great Sandy Marine Park. For these reasons, we have an obligation to preserve and protect our environment and leave an enduring legacy for future generations.

The objective of this bill is to improve efficiency and streamline the regulatory framework for the conservation and protection of our environment. This omnibus bill will amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011, the Water Act 2000, the Forestry Act 1959 and the Nature Conservation Act 1992.

There are two central functions under the Environmental Protection Act. There is, firstly, a general framework for protecting the environment which includes general environmental duties, GEDs, and, secondly, a framework for approvals for environmentally relevant activities, ERAs. Presently, the Environmental Protection Act empowers the minister to make codes of practice. This bill amends the existing scheme and provides for the chief executive officer rather than the minister to create GED codes, which take effect on the day approved by regulation.

The bill also introduces significant environmental values, SEVs, to guide the introduction of ERAs. A SEV will only be declared through regulation where the minister is satisfied that the value is significant and should be protected. A consolidated reference list of SEVs will streamline the regulatory framework as a one-stop shop for applicants; however, SEVs are not to be applied retrospectively to activities. Importantly, ERAs impose obligations beyond a GED.

The Environmental Protection Act identifies certain activities as ERAs and requires a person carrying out such an activity to have an environmental authority. The current approach to ERAs has resulted in regulatory requirements being disproportionate to the risk of environmental harm. Therefore, the bill amends the existing framework to provide for all ERAs to be defined and regulated under a consistent, risk-based approach. The bill classifies ERAs into two categories: prescribed ERAs by regulation into general or resource ERAs; and agricultural ERAs, which will continue to be defined under section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act. The bill introduces a new mechanism to allow lower risk ERAs to be declared by regulation as code managed ERAs.

Clause 54 of the bill provides the minister with a discretion, in accordance with relevant criteria, to declare and register a code managed ERA. The bill furthermore amends the existing framework, providing for small-scale mining activity to transition to a code managed ERA, and removes the requirement for surety, providing for the refund of sureties.

I now turn to progressive rehabilitation closure plans for larger resource activities that require site-specific EAs. These closure plans ensure that mined land is progressively rehabilitated throughout its operation. A progressive rehabilitation closure plan includes the identification of any proposed non-use management land. This is land that cannot be rehabilitated to a stable condition. It currently requires a public interest evaluation. This bill replaces the public interest evaluation with a requirement for public interest considerations, which are identical to the public interest evaluation. These can be addressed in the closure plan schedule when the progressive rehabilitation closure plan is submitted for approval.

The bill also removes the requirement for a rehabilitation audit every three years. The new trigger for an audit will be a notice issued at the discretion of DETSI based on a risk assessment. The current approach makes it an offence to carry out activities without a progressive rehabilitation closure schedule. This bill provides that it will be an offence under section 431A of the Environmental Protection Act not to submit a schedule. Furthermore, environmental authority holders will have 60 business days to resubmit a progressive rehabilitation closure plan application prior to the revised section 431A offence applying. The bill also amends section 765A of the Environmental Protection Act to provide a new transitional provision. Where an environmental authority is transferred to a new owner, they have 60 business days following the transfer before the section 431A offence applies.

I now turn to the draft terms of reference for environmental impact statements. This bill will remove an environmental impact statement and capture community feedback through a streamlined and clear public notification process, avoiding the existing administrative burden and duplicative notice requirements.

The Water Act regulates the planning, allocation and use of water in Queensland and establishes an Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment, OGIA. The act requires the preparation of an underground water impact assessment every three years from the anniversary date of the first report, although this time may be extended. The underground water impact report is used to predict and assess potential impacts and inform decisions under both the Water Act and the Environmental Protection Act. Clause 184 of the bill will now extend the current three-year timeframe, calculated from the anniversary date, to five years from the previous underground water impact report.

DETSI informed the committee that the existing three-year timeframe made compliance difficult. Multiple extensions were required and the timeframe was too short to consider impacts and gather data to prepare the next report. A shorter timeframe may still be triggered in circumstances where the annual revision process identifies material changes in industry development plans. Existing provisions within the Water Act provide for the CEO to request an earlier report or an amendment to an approved underground water impact report. This goes some way in terms of mitigating the perceived risks in extending the timeframe.


The bill amends the requirements for baseline assessment plans. Currently, resource tenure holders prepare a baseline assessment plan for water bores that are on tenure as well as an underground water impact program of baseline assessments for water bores outside the resource tenure but within the long-term affected area. This often results in inconsistencies and duplicative processes. This bill provides for a consolidated strategy for water bores both on and off tenure within the CMA to be administered by OGIA. No longer must resource tenure holders within the CMA prepare baseline assessments. Instead, they will be subject to a baseline strategy prepared by the OGIA.

This bill also provides for make-good agreements between the landholders/bore owners and resource tenure holders who take water from the aquifer. Clauses 203 to 206 provide for the subject matter, reporting and outcomes of make-good agreements.

The bill amends the Nature Conservation Act to empower conservation officers to exercise certain powers in relation to offences under the Planning Act to the extent that they relate to a nature conservation matter. Those extended powers are set out in clauses 140 to 148.

The bill finally provides a streamlined, single, integrated permit system for tourism operators across protected areas like state forests, recreational areas and state marine parks. Hervey Bay tourism operators will now be able to apply for a single permit with one application fee.

In closing, the Crisafulli government is committed to providing a contemporary framework for the conservation and protection of Queensland, including our UNESCO World Heritage K'gari (Fraser Island), the Great Sandy National Park, our world's first whale heritage site and our wider pristine Queensland environment. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (8.07 pm): I rise to place on the record a number of my concerns on behalf of our Bundamba community with the contents of this bill, and I will begin by briefly outlining some of the reforms those concerns stem from.

The bill introduces code managed environmentally relevant activities, ERAs, as an alternative—achieved by regulation—to existing environmental authorities. According to the bill and according to the minister and the government speakers, those ERAs that will move to code management under this bill are deemed lower risk. I will get to more on that a little bit later in my contribution. The bill also amends the progressive rehabilitation closure plan framework for some mines.

My concerns on behalf of our community stem from the potential application of the reforms in this bill to waste operators in Swanbank et cetera. Many that still have resource permits are old mines or old quarries, so I would like the government and the minister to be very clear about how this bill is going to affect waste operators in my community, in other communities throughout Ipswich and elsewhere.

Let's delve into some of the concerns and clarifications that I am seeking. The committee report states—

Some activities that are currently ERAs may no longer be ERAs, and some activities that are not ERAs may become ERAs.

Page 18 of the committee report then states—

It is estimated that approximately 32% of current EAs, which meet standard criteria and progress as standard EA applications, may be suitable for conversion to an ERA code.

That is about a third, which is a significant change. This is a significant number of environmental approvals that will move to be code managed under this bill.

Mr Powell: Potentially.

Mr McCALLUM: Potentially; I take the minister's interjection. My understanding is that there will be a process to transition through. That is not finalised yet, and that is one of the concerns that has been raised by some stakeholders. Conservation, local government and legal stakeholders were largely opposed to this reform and raised concerns about how cumulative impacts would be identified and managed. That is a really important point. We heard from the member for Greenslopes that disparate stakeholders like AgForce and the Environmental Defenders Office have come to the same position and have raised the same concerns. When two very disparate leading stakeholders raise the same concern, that sounds a large alarm bell.

The EDO itself said that it did not support code managed ERAs and noted that there are already pathways to achieve the outcome that the government is seeking by having this reform and moving around a third of existing resource EAs onto code managed activities. Effectively, the government is using the reforms that are contained in this bill to alter the way environmentally relevant activities are regulated. It is going to lead to a reduction in the amount of departmental and regulatory oversight for some activities, and that is a concern.

The bill states that it will only establish code-based regulation for low-risk environmentally relevant activities. However, anybody who has taken the time to read the report and the submissions from stakeholders would know that there is a lot of confusion because there is a lack of clarity about what a low-risk environmentally relevant activity is. The government might say that they are providing clarity, but it is there in black and white in the submissions from stakeholders that they are confused about what a low-risk activity is. They are concerned about the move towards code management of around a third of existing EAs. I think that is a very important concern that has huge potential consequences for communities like mine and many others throughout Queensland.

A reduction in the external scrutiny of how businesses or proponents conduct themselves and their activities can have huge consequences. We live that in Bundamba, and it can in fact lead to reduced levels of compliance with very serious and ongoing impacts on our environment, and in some cases those impacts will be permanent. In their submission to the bill, the Queensland Trust for Nature stated—


Without clearly defined thresholds and safeguards, this approach risks allowing environmentally harmful activities with specific and serious impacts to proceed without adequate scrutiny.

The EDO said—

The Bill proposes that eligibility for ERA codes would be self-assessed by the proponent, with no prior scrutiny or oversight by government (or the public). This is antithetical to the regulatory functions that DETSI should perform.

They are pretty serious concerns that have been raised. Similarly, the issue of public consultation is another area of concern. There is going to be less public consultation under the changes proposed in this bill. We have heard that draft terms of reference will not go out for public consultation anymore. There is all this talk about reducing green tape, but if you step outside into the broader context and you look at the requirements for renewable energy projects, they have gone completely the other way. There is no consistency whatsoever. If you want to build a wind farm, you have to consult heavily, but if you want to conduct an activity under this bill, well, let it rip. That is a very strong contrast which the government has not satisfactorily explained—not for the stakeholders and certainly not in my view.

Despite this bill being over 200 pages long, it frankly raises more questions than answers for the conservation sector, the environmental sector and industry alike. Queenslanders expect that the government will take proper steps to protect our environment and our communities, particularly when it comes to environmentally relevant activities of industry. I sincerely hope the minister will state on the record that none of the reforms in this bill will take away any of the protections that are currently afforded to our community by waste operators. I can guarantee that Labor Ipswich MPs will be watching this like hawks.

 **Hon. AJ STOKER** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (8.17 pm): Redlanders love the natural environment. We are blessed with a beautiful coastline enjoyed by boaties and birdwatchers alike. We have fragrant bushland, Straddie's spectacular beaches and koalas that are beloved by locals, with a recent report card giving our local populations the tick of approval for their stability. It is an issue that draws passion

too because, as our city grows to meet our demand for ever better services in health and education, better transport infrastructure and places for the next generation to live, there is a balance to be struck between protecting what we have and love with bringing in and building what we need for the future. Those two needs do not have to be incompatible. Not every development application is an existential threat to our environment, but nor should we be reckless or uncaring for the natural environment around us.

In fact, we absolutely should have high environmental standards, but high standards do not have to mean slow processes. It should not mean delays and it should not provide an excuse for administratively sluggish processes and red tape. It should not be an invitation to engage in lawfare—the weaponisation of the courts to try to defeat proposals by endless legal challenges and seemingly infinite costs.

This bill delivers on the Crisafulli LNP government's commitment as part of the Destination 2045 plan to streamline approvals, reduce duplication, reduce red tape and make it easier for tourism operators to do business here in Queensland. Our region has so much tourism potential, but it will take investment to be able to reach it. Those who want to invest in our region deserve clear rules of the game, fast decisions and better, clearer coordination across government.

There has been a real misunderstanding among those opposite and, indeed, federal Labor. They seem to think that better environmental protection requires delay, bureaucracy and expense, but all these things deliver is the kind of strung-out uncertainty that kills investor confidence and leaves our communities stagnant. When that confidence dissolves, our regions are denied jobs in construction and in operation, denied the growth in the small business ecosystem that is at the heart of ecotourism, especially on Straddie, and denied the great experiences and world-class events that we would love to be able to share with family and friends.

Whatever people might have thought about the proposal for Toondah Harbour, whether in its modest initial form as originally proposed, in its supersized form by former deputy premier Jackie Trad or in the smaller, more middle-of-the-road form more recently floated, it is a tragedy that the proposals floated around for a decade—a decade, no less—as they were tossed around the regulatory processes, federal and state, only to fail because the drawn-out, expensive and conflicted processes, made the people who had once been willing to invest in our region ultimately decide to walk away in favour of other easier opportunities. What a terrible message that sends to those who might have been running the ruler over a Redlands investment.

Again, whatever people thought of the various versions of the project, we are now a decade down the road without the marine and parking infrastructure that it promised to deliver and without the coastal dining and entertainment precincts that it had the potential to offer. Meanwhile, the marine and parking infrastructure at Toondah has become aged, neglected and quite inadequate. Also quite understandably, no sensible person would invest in upgrading these elements while the project status was in the never-ending waiting room. We need a framework that gets good proposals underway swiftly and provides clarity to unsuitable projects in a timely way so that they can then be either revised in an economical way or released to move on.

There are seven parts to this bill to update and streamline Queensland's environmental regulation. Those parts are: first, reforming the regulation of environmentally relevant activities to streamline and simplify processes and deliver fast and simple arrangements to get low-risk activities approved; second, defining Queensland's environmental priorities to ensure that we have those really high environmental standards; third, improving the arrangements for situations where a mine is to be closed and rehabilitated; fourth, strengthening the tools that are available for compliance and enforcement because it is really important that those who ignore, flout or abuse environmental laws are held accountable at law; fifth—and it is a related step—providing clear and compact timeframes so we have timely investigation of offences; sixth, streamlining the process for underground water management; and finally, and I would say importantly for the Redlands, reducing red tape for ecotourism projects to get underway.

It brings together the current disparate arrangements for getting permission for tourism activities into a single integrated process and permission structure. Right now there are different permits and requirements for protected areas versus state forests. It is different again for recreation areas and different again for state marine parks. That is inefficient and it does not make much sense. We are making it simple, with a single avenue, and it is a direct response to the requests from the tourism industry to reduce the complexity they face. Under this bill, it will be a single application with a single permission that is capable of covering each of these situations. It does not drop the standards of protection, but it does make it much easier to navigate and comply with the rules.


If people want to see new and attractive accommodation offerings in Cleveland and on Straddie, we need to build our ecotourism offering to be more exciting and more efficient while still respecting our unique local character and environment, and that is what this bill helps to bring within reach. There are over 500 authorised operators providing nature-based ecotourism activities in Queensland's parks and forests. There are another 550 providing vessel-based tours in marine parks across our coastline. We want them to thrive, to keep their employees, to grow, to hire a few more, to offer world-class experiences to domestic and international visitors and to draw prosperity into Queensland and, with it, opportunities that extend across the generations. We can help that happen by making the regulatory burden, both in time and in cost, lighter on those who are building our ecotourism offering to the world.

This bill is a commonsense, practical measure. I only wish it were matched by better arrangements at the federal level, where Labor has made the regulatory arrangements for pretty much any project a mess of complexity, delay and cost. Here in Queensland we will take every step we can and help every project we can to build the sustainable Queensland tourism and events offering to become the jewel in the world's crown that we know it can be.

Interruption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S RULING

Tabled Paper, Out of Order


 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Honourable members, I refer to a document purported to be tabled by the member for Greenslopes when making a contribution to the second reading debate on this bill. Members of the House have an almost unfettered right to table documents, at least in the first instance. However, previous Speakers have ruled out of order attempts to table documents that are not immediately and obviously relevant to the question before the House.

As per Speakers' rulings—and I refer to Speaker Simpson's ruling on 30 April 2013 and Deputy Speaker Watts' ruling on 22 May 2013—tabled documents need to be relevant to the matter. I rule the document presented by the member for Greenslopes as not relevant to the matter before the House and ask the Clerks at the table to return the document to the member.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (8.26 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I want to begin by acknowledging how incredibly lucky we are here in Queensland to have such fantastic natural biodiversity across this great state. I know my community enjoys the benefits of great local nature estates such as White Rock-Spring Mountain in my electorate, which offers great walking trails and opportunities to connect directly with nature. Most recently I was pleased to see the Spring Mountain Forest Park Trail Care recognised with a nomination at the City of Logan People's Excellence Awards. They are a terrific group of volunteers caring for our local environment and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to access it. I also give a shout-out to Springfield Lakes Nature Care, of which I am a proud member.

It is a point of pride for all Queenslanders to know that we have natural wonders such as the Great Barrier Reef, the Daintree Rainforest, the Tablelands and the beautiful sandy shores of the Whitsundays and Minjerribah right in our backyard. The Queensland Labor opposition will always support actions to streamline and improve the efficiency of our state's development, so long as said efficiency does not come at the expense of protecting our incredible environment. At first glance, efficiency is an appealing concept. We all want decisions made faster, processes simplified and unnecessary bureaucracy removed. However, efficiency when stripped of accountability risks becoming a shortcut not to better outcomes but to poorer ones.

I highlight proposed amendments in this bill which will alter the way environmentally relevant activities, ERAs, are regulated. These amendments seek to introduce code managed ERAs for lower risk activities as an alternative to the current requirement to apply for an environmental authority, EA. We, of course, do not know what the LNP consider to be low-risk. In fact, even the industry and

conservation stakeholders in their submissions to the committee made it clear that they were left confused and uncertain. However, what we do know is that the implementation of code-based regulations for certain ERAs will see a significant reduction in the oversight of projects whose proponents will essentially be given autonomy to manage themselves. This raised red flags for several stakeholders including the Environmental Defenders Office, who stated—

The Bill proposes that eligibility for ERA codes would be self-assessed by the proponent, with no prior scrutiny or oversight by government (or the public). This is antithetical to the regulatory functions that DETSI should perform.

In addition, the Queensland Trust for Nature stated in their submission—

Without clearly defined thresholds and safeguards, this approach risks allowing environmentally harmful activities with specific and serious impacts to proceed without adequate scrutiny.

These changes could have very real and significant consequences for communities such as those in the Ipswich city local government area who neighbour waste management and composting facilities in Swanbank and New Chum.

In recent years we have seen serious concerns around landfill management, including contamination risks such as PFAS entering local waterways, and repeated breaches of environmental conditions. We also saw significant action by the former Labor government to address waste issues in Ipswich, particularly in relation to odours. The former Labor government commissioned an independent review into the adequacy of existing powers and penalties of the Environmental Protection Act 1994. This review was undertaken by the esteemed retired judge Richard Jones and barrister Susan Hedge and aimed to identify whether the tools available under the EP Act, particularly in relation to environmental nuisances, are sufficiently contemporary to address current and future challenges. The review found that, while the EP Act generally contained an adequate range of powers and penalties to enforce environmental obligations and reduce the risk of environmental harm, changes were required to clarify and make the operation of powers, penalties and tools in the EP Act more proactive, and I repeat that—more proactive. We put through legislation that ensured there was appropriate emphasis on human health, wellbeing and safety in Queensland environmental laws and shifted the focus to proactive prevention of environmental impacts. The legislation also clarified that environmental nuisance can be considered serious or material environmental harm.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Jordan, I am sorry to interrupt you. Please pause the clock. Members, there is too much chatter going on. It is interrupting my concentration listening to the member for Jordan, so if you want to have a conversation take it outside. Thank you.

Ms MULLEN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. This enabled a greater range of enforcement tools and stronger penalties for persistent issues such as odour that were more proportionate to the impact on the community. In that context, to suggest that we should now reduce consultation and streamline scrutiny of ERAs, particularly for waste, is deeply concerning. The lesson is clear: when oversight is insufficient, communities carry the cost. All the work that we had done to reduce odours in Ipswich and make compost companies more accountable is at risk here.

Another area that has raised significant concerns for the opposition is proposed changes to narrow opportunities for public consultation and to reduce visibility of decision-making processes. The bill seeks to remove public notification on draft terms of reference for environmental impact statements of new projects. It seems apparent that this LNP government has decided that it is fed up with public consultation despite only last year attacking the Labor opposition over the importance of public consultation for renewable projects. The Deputy Premier said at the time—

Queenslanders deserve to have a say on any major development in their local community, which is why our Government introduced new nation-leading laws to give them a voice on issues that impact that future of their towns.

Wasn't that short lived? Suddenly public consultation is being redefined in this bill as a source of delay and inefficiency. This is just another example of those opposite changing the goalposts to suit their ideological needs in the moment. If it is for renewable energy projects they will leave no stone unturned, but if it is for projects by their mining and property developer mates Queenslanders are told, 'Nothing to see here.' Stakeholders noted that limiting public notification requirements and shortening consultation periods risks excluding regional and particularly First Nations communities. The North Queensland Land Council stated in its submission—

Early access to project information is crucial for the protection of cultural heritage interests and agreement-making between NTPs—

native title parties—

and proponents. The removal of this requirement also removes the rights of NTPs, as affected persons, to make an objection, provide comments on the draft terms of reference and if required, request amendments to the terms of reference.

The Queensland Conservation Council further stated—


We do not support the removal of public notification for TOR.

That is, terms of reference. It continued—

This public notification provides early opportunity for community input into the assessment of major projects.

That is not efficiency; it is exclusion by design. Public consultation is not a hurdle to overcome; it is a safeguard. It ensures that communities, especially those most directly affected, have a voice. It allows local knowledge, scientific expertise and lived experience to inform outcomes that are often complex and long lasting. To characterise consultation as inefficiency is to misunderstand its purpose entirely.

Environmental decisions are rarely reversible. Once a habitat is destroyed, once water systems are compromised, once air quality declines, the damage cannot simply be streamlined away. We can have both efficiency and integrity. This bill should be about finding that balance for us to continue improving productivity for our growing state whilst protecting our beloved home, but what we have instead received is a very unclear way forward and a government that is more concerned with ideology than science.

 **Ms JAMES** (Barron River—LNP) (8.34 pm): Queenslanders, especially Far North Queenslanders who are surrounded by two World Heritage areas in the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics rainforest, expect high environmental standards. Our community has a deep love for the outdoors and as a tourism-driven region we are powered by hardworking, resilient tourism operators, and that is why it is essential that our regulatory system is practical, efficient and cuts through unnecessary complexity so small businesses can focus on what they do best. The Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 delivers on that expectation.

Since becoming the Assistant Minister for Tourism nearly 18 months ago, I know one of the things that the tourism industry has been thrilled with since we came into government is that the Minister for the Environment is also the Minister for Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation. This collaboration between these departments has meant a huge move forward for the tourism industry. It has been a game changer and a masterstroke by the Premier to put them together which has seen feedback like this come from the industry as the tourism industry is also a custodian of our environment. Too often the tourism industry is painted in a way that is not fair. The tourism industry puts science in front of millions of people every single year, whether it is in national parks or on the Great Barrier Reef or one of our incredible ecotourism or tourism assets.

This bill supports the Crisafulli government's Destination 2045 commitment to streamline approvals, reduce duplication and red tape and make it easier for businesses, particularly tourism operators, to operate across Queensland, which is why this bill is so important to the industry. It also impacts a wide range of sectors including tourism, mining and resources, energy, agriculture, forestry, construction, waste management and regional infrastructure. These changes are particularly important in Far North Queensland, where industries such as ecotourism, agriculture, resources and infrastructure are critical drivers of local jobs and economic growth. This bill focuses on three key priorities: streamlining regulation, maintaining strong environmental protections and supporting economic growth and regional development. It is another important step towards reducing duplication and delivering a more practical and efficient regulatory framework.

For Far North Queensland this bill represents a significant opportunity for ecotourism. As I said earlier, tourism is one of the fundamental pillars of our regional economy. In Tropical North Queensland alone, visitor expenditure exceeds \$3.4 billion annually, highlighting just how critical tourism is to the region's economy and local jobs. It supports more than 29,000 jobs, accounting for around one in seven jobs in our region. However, operators have consistently raised concerns about complex, duplicative approval processes that create delays, increase costs and reduce certainty. This bill delivers on a key commitment to introduce a more integrated and streamlined approval pathway for tourism activities across multiple land tenures such as national parks, state forests, recreational areas and marine parks. In practice, what this means is moving toward a single, integrated permit system that simplifies approvals and reduces unnecessary duplication and cost while maintaining environmental safeguards.

Local operators have made it really clear what these delays mean in real terms. Billy Tea Safaris—a really great local tourism business in Far North Queensland—has been operating in our region for more than 40 years. It provides four-wheel drive tours through some of the most remote and environmentally significant areas of the Daintree and surrounding regions. I have spoken directly with Peppi many times and he told me that last year alone his business was under really significant strain due to delays in the permit approval process. Despite him operating for several decades in these national parks, he faced a situation where his renewal approval was delayed to the point where he could not plan ahead or sell tours for the next year because he would be in breach. It was a real strain for him. He could not invest in his company. He was going to buy new buses but did not. This is where regulatory burdens and green tape can cause these problems for these types of businesses because he did not know when the permit would be renewed.

This has real consequences on small businesses, and what businesses need is certainty. They need a system that recognises responsible operators, supports low-impact activities and allows them to invest confidently in the future. Cairns Adventure Group is another award-winning local business that runs guided tours to the Daintree Rainforest and Cape Tribulation. It has also experienced the same issues firsthand. Like many others, it has had to navigate a complex and duplicative approval process that creates uncertainty and delays, even for low-impact, well-established operations.

It is not just the land-based operators. Our reef tourism operators have also been dealing with unnecessary layers of regulation, with some requiring several permits to undertake essentially the same activity. Importantly, this bill is not about weakening environmental protections. Higher risk activities will still be subject to appropriate scrutiny and oversight. What this bill does ensure is that unnecessary bureaucracy does not stand in the way of sensible, sustainable projects that support tourism and regional development and jobs. Reforms like this will help reduce unnecessary delays and improve coordination, making it easier to deliver important regional projects efficiently while maintaining strong environmental standards.

To tourism operators watching this right now I say: if you have not used our tourism hub, it is a really great initiative. You can ring and they will help you through this process. I know that the tourism hub recently helped a small business that was going through this. They would have lost their permit if it was not for the tourism hub helping them through it. They got it sorted in a matter of days. It is just incredible. The tourism hub is a one-stop shop you can call to get assistance.


It also benefits agriculture, another cornerstone of the Far North Queensland economy. Agriculture in Far North Queensland generates around \$600 million to \$700 million annually in production value and is a cornerstone of the regional economy alongside tourism and resources. About 94 per cent of Australia's bananas are grown in Far North Queensland and we have the best mangoes in the world grown in our backyard, of course, as well. In Queensland we produce the majority of Australia's sugar, with Far North Queensland playing a key role in that industry. This bill introduces a more flexible, risk-based approach to regulation, including the use of clear codes of practice for certain low-risk activities. For farmers this means greater certainty, reduced compliance costs and less time navigating complex approval processes, because we know that in business time is money. It allows producers to focus on their operations while still maintaining appropriate environmental safeguards.

The same principles apply to regional development. This bill introduces a more risk-based framework, ensuring higher impact developments receive appropriate scrutiny while low-risk projects are not held up unnecessarily. By reducing unnecessary delays for straightforward developments, this bill supports investment, infrastructure delivery and regional growth. You keep hearing me say 'regional growth'—this is what these bills are all about. It includes enabling key infrastructure and community projects to move more efficiently from planning to delivery.

In essence, this bill just cuts the red tape. It streamlines processes and helps get critical infrastructure underway sooner without compromising environmental protections. It also has important implications for disaster recovery. Far North Queensland communities continue to recover and rebuild following events such as Cyclone Jasper and the Jasper floods in 2023. We know that when disaster strikes the real work begins afterwards—rebuilding homes, restoring infrastructure, rebuilding roads and getting communities back on track. Delays in approvals can slow that recovery process and add frustration during already difficult times. This bill helps create a more responsive system, ensuring low-risk recovery and resilience works are not unnecessarily delayed by administrative processes while still maintaining proper oversight.

Queenslanders not only expect strong environmental protections but they also expect a system that is efficient, practical and fit for purpose. This bill strikes that balance. In Far North Queensland, tourism supports local families, small businesses and entire towns across our region, from reef operators to rainforest guides. These businesses work tirelessly to deliver experiences that simply cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world. Our tourism operators are not faceless corporations; they are my friends, my neighbours, parents raising families, volunteers in our community and organisations and hardworking locals who care deeply about protecting the very environment that sustains their livelihoods, because if you see it, you will love it and you will protect it. They understand better than anyone that the Great Barrier Reef and our natural landscapes must be protected for future generations, but too often excessive red tape and unnecessary regulatory burdens make it harder for these operators to do what they do best. Instead of spending their time creating world-class experiences for visitors and supporting local jobs they are buried in paperwork, delays and duplicated processes.

I thank the minister and his team for their hard work. It means a lot to my community and to the tourism industry. We know that when the tourism industry succeeds, our communities succeed too. Thank you very much to the minister for his hard work. I look forward to delivering more for Far North Queensland with a faster, fairer and more efficient regulatory system. I will continue to back my region—protecting the environment while supporting jobs, investment and growth.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (8.44 pm): I rise to contribute to the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. Queensland's natural environment is unique and it is worth protecting. Our national parks, our rainforests, our waterways and our wildlife not only support our diverse ecosystem but also support thousands of jobs and draw visitors from all over the world. Living in pollution-free cities and suburbs is important to our health and wellbeing as well. When our environment is degraded, the cost is real and borne by Queenslanders. The Queensland Labor opposition will always support actions that streamline and improve the efficiency of our state's development, but it cannot come at the expense of protecting Queensland's unique and incredible environment.

There are some concerning changes in this bill which could have adverse consequences for the environment, especially in my electorate of Ipswich. The new laws propose to weaken the oversight and monitoring of some environmentally relevant activities. This is a real concern in Ipswich in particular, where we have been fighting for years to crack down on rogue waste industry operators emitting very offensive odours. For too long Ipswich residents have had to put up with these odours and other environmental breaches committed by waste operators who thumb their nose at the law and operate without a social licence.

In 2024 the former Labor government passed legislation that delivered stronger and more effective protections for communities impacted by odours caused by waste operators. We also introduced tougher new composting regulations that required composters to install enclosed or in-vessel facilities for receiving odorous waste. Ipswich residents should be rightly concerned that the LNP is introducing new legislation that could strip back the tough new laws that Labor introduced. Take for example the way the proposed changes in this bill alter the way environmentally relevant activities are regulated. This bill establishes code-based regulation for low-risk ERAs, but the LNP have left out the detail on what activities they consider low risk. The bill offers no clarity on what types of low-risk activities would be eligible for code managed ERAs. DETSI gave some examples of low-risk activities in their briefing to the committee, such as small-scale mining activities, small sewage pump stations, chemical storage and certain bulk material handling facilities.

The bill also states that an ERA may be declared a code managed ERA where the minister is satisfied that the risk of environmental harm from the activity is known and the environmental harm can be effectively prevented, minimised, rehabilitated or remediated by requiring compliance with an ERA code. This could refer to a lot of environmentally relevant activities, including waste operators. Alarming, it was pointed out by the Environmental Defenders Office—the same Environmental Defenders Office that had its funding cut by the LNP—that eligibility to operate under ERA codes would be self-assessed by the proponent, with no prior scrutiny or oversight by the department. These low-risk code managed ERAs could lead to a significant reduction in oversight and scrutiny for projects.

Through my time as the member for Ipswich we have been fighting in our community to get justice for those residents who have been suffering from offensive odours. In that time, my experience of waste operators is that they act in their own self-interest and that they will test and break the laws to see what they can get away with. Many of them have zero regard for nearby communities. Some of these operators get away with what they can, and if they get hit by a penalty or enforcement notice they will

just take it to a court to appeal it. We have seen it time and again. Recently one of those operators declared that they are taking the Ipswich City Council to court after the council knocked back a request to grant them a three-year extension to build an in-vessel facility to enclose odorous composting operations. Labor implemented in-vessel composting regulations in 2024 to reduce the offensive odours in Ipswich. This operator was given until September this year to get this done. They should actually be at the finishing line of building this in-vessel facility, yet it seems they have not even started.

This operator is testing the laws to try to get what they want and in the meantime they are testing the community's patience. Publicly available information shows that from 2018 to 2025 there were at least 17 penalty infringement notices issued to waste operators in the Swanbank and New Chum area—likely more—plus multiple fines, enforcement notices and at least one prosecution. These were all due to the department significantly ramping up its monitoring activities.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. While I accept there is reference to the waste industry in the legislation, this is sounding more like an adjournment speech than a contribution to the bill itself.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I will seek some advice about that. Member for Ipswich, I understand the context you are trying to give to some of the principles of the bill—you are able to do that—but please come back to those principles of the bill. You cannot make your entire contribution about something that is not dealt with in the bill.

Ms HOWARD: Just to wrap that up, the department did ramp up its monitoring activities and that resulted in many of those penalties. If the monitoring was removed, for example as part of this bill, it could affect that. We would be very concerned in Ipswich about what impact that would have because a lot of work has been done in that space.

When it comes to consultation on projects that have environmental impacts, the LNP are trying to change the goalposts to suit their ideological needs. The Deputy Premier made it very clear last year that when it came to renewable projects Queenslanders deserve to have a say, but now those opposite want to remove public consultation on the draft terms of reference for environmental impact statements for new projects that have well-known environmental impacts. The LNP do not think that Queenslanders should have a say on these types of projects. One might ask what is the percentage of cases where public notification of the draft terms of reference resulted in changes to the final terms of reference, and I would say 100 per cent. The committee report even says that the requirements for consultation on draft terms of reference is intended to ensure that the EIS process is robust, comprehensive and assesses all necessary areas where there could be environmental, social or economic impacts arising from a project. That is a pretty strong argument for keeping it. But to the LNP this is an administrative burden. Yes, public consultation is seen as a burden for them because their industry mates do not want to do it.

On a similar note, the bill also seeks to remove the public interest test and monitoring for progressive rehabilitation closure plans where mines propose non-use management areas. These areas will never be able to be rehabilitated once they have completed use and they can cause significant environmental risk. We have seen that in many parts of Ipswich over many decades. Under the EP Act an independent public interest evaluation is required to assess whether a NUMA is in the public interest. The Environmental Defenders Office said the LGAQ opposed the change, with the LGAQ warning that it could increase the risk that local government will inherit long-term environmental and social legacy issues, but the LNP have bowed to their mining industry mates who back the change.

On renewable energy projects the LNP have turned the screws on clean energy companies by demanding they do significant community consultation before even lodging a development application, but the LNP's mining mates are given free rein to ignore the community. You cannot pick and choose which projects you want public consultation on based on ideology. Ultimately, this bill shows that the LNP is more concerned with ideology than with science. This is a party of staunch anti net zero advocates and climate deniers who put the environment and renewables last on their list of priorities. While the Labor opposition supports improvements in efficiency and streamlining in relation to development of this state, this should not come at the cost of protecting our environment and our communities.

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (8.54 pm): I rise to support the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill—legislation that strikes the right balance between protecting what we value and enabling responsible access to it. Queensland's environment is not just something we preserve; it is something we live in, we rely on and, increasingly, it is something that grows and sustains local economies, including my electorate of Redlands.

Mr McDonald: And we love it!

Mrs YOUNG: We do love it. This bill delivers a clear commitment from the Crisafulli government to cut unnecessary red tape while maintaining strong environmental protections. Importantly, it recognises that environmental stewardship and economic opportunity are not mutually exclusive; they go hand in hand. For too long tourism operators across Queensland have been tied up in a complex web of permits, multiple applications, duplicated fees and inconsistent processes, often just to operate within the same area. That is not good for business and it is not good for investment. This bill introduces a single, integrated, one-stop shop permit system. It removes duplication, it aligns expiry dates, it simplifies processes, but it does not lower environmental standards, and that is the key point here. This is not about weakening protections; it is about making the system work better for everyone.

This reform is the cornerstone of the government's Destination 2045 plan. The minister is in the House tonight and I want to thank him for his vision for tourism in this state—a long-term vision to position Queensland as Australia's ecotourism powerhouse. To see what that looks like in practice, I invite all my colleagues, as I always do, to come to Redlands. The Redlands Coast is home to more than 1,400 conservation areas, parks and reserves. It is a place where environmental protection is not an abstract concept; it is a part of our everyday life. From the mangroves of Redland Bay to the bushland of Mount Cotton, from the migratory shore birds at Oyster Point to the pristine waters of Coochiemudlo Island, from the globally recognised beauty of the Southern Moreton Bay Islands to the community focused environmental education hub at IndigiScapes, this is ecotourism and it is already happening in the Redlands.

If you come to the Redlands seeking wildlife, nature and authentic local experiences you will find it. From kangaroos in the wild to sea eagles perched along the foreshore, spending a weekend in the Redlands will not only show off our natural beauty and hospitality, but the way it is protected, respected and shared. That is what this bill supports. It ensures that tourism operators, whether they are running guided walks, kayaking tours or wildlife experiences, spend less time navigating paperwork and more time delivering world-class environmentally responsible experiences. When we get this balance right the benefits flow directly into my local community.

In the Redlands we are already seeing that potential unfold. The Crisafulli government has committed funding to progress the Koala Coast Ecotourism Trail, an exciting project that will link Bayview Conservation Park through to the Daisy Hill Forest. This is not just a walking and riding track; it is an economic opportunity, it is a tourism drawcard and it is a way to connect people with nature while supporting local businesses, cafes, accommodation providers and tour operators. Importantly, it is being developed with community input because locals understand the value of these natural assets better than anyone. That is exactly what Destination 2045 is all about—unlocking opportunities while protecting what makes Queensland so special. Nowhere is that balance more important than in places like the Emerald Fringe on Coochiemudlo. The Emerald Fringe is a heritage-listed environmental treasure encircling the island, with over 40 hectares of diverse ecosystem from littoral forest to tidal mangroves. The housing minister, when he was the shadow minister for the environment, visited the Emerald Fringe.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mrs YOUNG: It is a place of ecological significance, it is a place of cultural importance and it is a place deeply valued by the local community. That is why the Crisafulli government has delivered funding to protect and sustain the unique environment for future generations. Protection does not mean locking people out; it means managing access responsibly and it means creating opportunities for low-impact educational experiences, like bird watching and small-scale ecotourism facilities, that allow people to connect with nature without compromising it. That is exactly the philosophy that is underpinning this bill.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Young, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.00 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Stafford By-Election, Pauline Hanson's One Nation



Mr MARTIN (Stretton—ALP) (9.00 pm): I rise to address the dodgy deals between One Nation and the LNP in the Stafford by-election.

Government members interjected.

Mr MARTIN: Here they go! They always love this one. The people of Stafford and the people of Stretton deserve to know: has a deal been done between the Premier and One Nation? If so, what was the trade-off? I think we had better have a closer look.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Members on my right, I cannot hear the member for Stretton.

Mr MARTIN: They can.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right, I need to hear the member for Stretton to ensure he is being in order.

Mr MARTIN: What do we know? We know that One Nation, although they are polling very well, strangely decided not to run. Despite potentially leaving thousands of dollars of funding on the table and it being a big benefit to the LNP, it is a surprise that they have decided not to run. Today we found out from a Facebook page—and it has been tabled in the House—that the One Nation Supporters Network have officially endorsed the LNP and shared their how-to-vote card. Extraordinarily dodgy!

It is a pretty logical conclusion that the people of Queensland might suspect that a deal has been done. That got me thinking, what could the trade-off be? What trade-off has the Premier made? I thought it was most likely to be the member for Mirani. I think he is probably the first sacrificial lamb—or sacrificial chicken, maybe. Could it be the member for Lockyer or maybe the member for Warrego, who is a big superstar over there? Maybe he has traded off the member for Warrego.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock, please. Members, there will be order before the member for Stretton continues.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr VORSTER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. No utterance came from my mouth.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, that is not a point of order. You remain warned under the standing orders.

Mr MARTIN: After that interjection, I wish One Nation was polling a bit higher in Burleigh. I think he might be traded off. What about federal members of parliament? Might any federal members of parliament be on the chopping block? Have they been traded off? The truth is that we do not know, but we deserve to know. Both One Nation and the LNP have denied it, but the circumstances are extraordinary. As they say, if it walks like a duck, swims like a duck and quacks like a duck then it is probably a duck. There is probably a deal between the Premier, the LNP and One Nation.

I can tell members what happens if you do a deal with One Nation. We need only look at Farrer and what has happened down there. I think this is something the LNP might regret. It will be a little bit of short-term gain for long-term pain, because One Nation are coming for the LNP and if they do not stand up to One Nation then they will get voted out.

(Time expired)

Far North Queensland

 **Ms JAMES** (Barron River—LNP) (9.04 pm): Today, I want to take a moment to recognise some great people in my community because, without them, Far North Queensland simply would not be what it is. As it is Small Business Month, it is only fitting that we start with the incredible small businesses, tourism operators and community clubs that keep our community thriving.

Freshwater Tennis Club is about to celebrate an incredible 70 years. Marsh Butcheries in Stratford is celebrating 100 years of service. Rainforestation Nature Park turns 50 this year—our oldest tourism asset. Bransfords Tackle Shop at Clifton Beach recently clocked up 32 years. A huge congratulations to these businesses and every small business owner across my electorate who puts in the early mornings, the late nights and everything in between.

One of the highlights for me last month was watching a dream finally become a reality. Minister Powell and I travelled to Green Island for the official sod turn on the Turtle Rehabilitation Centre. Jennie Gilbert has been waiting 15 years for this moment, and under our government that dream is finally becoming a reality.

Speaking of passion and dedication, we have some incredible young people in our region. Scarlett Jean from Trinity Anglican School, just 11 years old, has raised nearly \$5,000 for turtle research. I met Scarlett last week, and I can tell you she is an absolute superstar. Samuel Chesters is proudly representing Barron River in Youth Parliament as he finishes his final year of school. Tonight we are joined by year 11 students from Redlynch State College who are in the gallery. Kya, Holly, Grace and Audrey, welcome! It is great to have you here in parliament for the first time.


Great news also—the Australian government has confirmed an additional contribution to the upgrade of the Cairns Western Arterial Road. The Crisafulli LNP government has already backed this with \$54 million as part of our 2032 Delivery Plan to be fast-tracked for the 2032 Olympics. This project will finally deliver a duplication of the remaining sections of the Western Arterial Road, easing congestion and improving safety.

Another big win this week has been progress on the Cairns Airport bus. I want to thank the minister for listening, and I want to thank every single person who filled out the survey. Some 96 per cent support this bus service, and I will keep pushing to ensure it becomes a reality.

We are also starting to see real progress in health as construction begins on the Cairns Hospital expansion through the record \$1 billion investment. We are already delivering outcomes. A constituent recently told me she had been on the elective surgery waitlist for a significant amount of time. After contacting my office, her knee replacement was fast-tracked and she is now at home recovering. We are clearing the health waitlist backlog left by Labor, calmly and methodically.

Construction has now officially begun on the \$31.9 million Queensland Ambulance Service Triple Zero Operations Centre in Cairns. They have been waiting for this for a long time. It has been announced and re-announced. There is a lot more to do, but we are a government that rolls up our sleeves.

Health Services

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (9.07 pm): We have seen health lurch from crisis to crisis to crisis under Premier Crisafulli—

Government members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I hear a lot of slurred interjections from the LNP backbench, but nothing will distract me. Their slurred and loud interjections will not—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Miller! Pause the clock! I will seek some advice. Member for Miller, you have the call.

Mr BAILEY: We have seen the CHO scandal. We have seen health cuts after the Premier said in this chamber there would be no health cuts. We have seen the hospital expansions put on the never-never—Townsville, Redcliffe, Mackay, Coomera, Prince Charles Hospital on the north side, of course, but we will come back to that. The 2,200 beds promised by 2028 was junked, and in an embarrassing faux pas, the health minister said he had never heard that promise made, but the ABC clip was run that night and he was humiliated.

We have seen the LNP try to claim credit for Labor's hospital expansions at PA, Logan and QEII, with millions of taxpayer funds, with their blue blitz going out there. We saw the botched flu season that meant we had the worst ramping in Queensland history in a single month—last July—under this Premier and this health minister. We see ramping continue to be a problem and a fudging of the figures by this government, and we see the outpatients' waitlist blow out to a huge degree. That is an absolute disgrace. This government has not got its eye on the ball when it comes to health.

To give members an idea, the answers given by the health minister today to two questions were quite extraordinary. There was a question from the member for Greenslopes, who is sitting next to me right now, about the death of a woman in her 40s in Cairns. He started his response with a political attack on the opposition—just extraordinary. Once he realised that, he said, 'Before we go down that path—' and suddenly he started to show empathy. This is a minister who has struggled with empathy when it comes to difficulties in this portfolio. We also heard his response to my question about an 88-year-old woman who waited six—


Mr Chiesa interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, you are not in your assigned seat, so please do not interject.

Mr BAILEY: All of these interjections are extraordinary. I am talking about an 88-year-old woman who waited six hours for an ambulance. What we heard today was the health minister attacking her for being a member of the Labor Party, as if that somehow means she should not get decent health care. This lack of empathy, this remoteness, from the health minister is an incredible indictment on his management of this portfolio. He even called Luke Richmond a 'so-called local' in the by-election. He lives in the electorate, unlike the LNP candidate—a veteran politician—who does not live in the electorate. We see this sleight of hand from those opposite, but those at the by-election will send—

(Time expired)

Maryborough Electorate, Community Safety

 **Mr BAROUNIS** (Maryborough—LNP) (9.10 pm): I rise today to speak on the Crisafulli LNP government's ongoing commitment to restoring safety and order in our communities. For far too long, the people of Maryborough have endured unacceptable levels of antisocial behaviour throughout our CBD. After a decade of Labor's weakened laws surrounding public drunkenness and publicly decency, businesses, residents and visitors have been left to deal with the consequences.


In November 2024 I held a town hall meeting to listen to the concerns CBD business owners and residents had about antisocial behaviour. That meeting was attended by over 400 angry locals. The message was very clear: clean up our city. I immediately informed our Premier and, together with the new LNP government, a multi-agency taskforce was set up to offer wraparound services to those experiencing homelessness and, more importantly, displaying antisocial behaviour. Productive meetings followed the initial community response, including: a visit by the Premier, who met and listened to CBD stakeholders and residents; the attendance of Assistant Minister Trevor Watts at the second meeting; and a parliamentary committee meeting held in Maryborough. A local consultative community committee is now holding monthly meetings to share information and work together for the betterment of the Maryborough CBD, and I continue to address the media to keep my community updated on the progress we are making on this issue.

The introduction of the Making Queensland Safer Laws has already made a difference—that is, Adult Crime, Adult Time; Daniel's Law; Jack's Law; and the Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026, which introduced designated business and community precincts. Designated business and community precincts will be commencing in Maryborough in the very near future. This will stop people from continually displaying antisocial behaviour in our CBD and community. This is going to restore community safety and provide the police with the powers they need to do their job.

Whilst we realise these issues will never completely disappear, business owners and locals are looking forward to seeing our city returning to the friendly and welcoming town that it was well known for. Next week I will be holding a community meeting to provide residents and local businesses with a full update on the multi-agency taskforce's work, discuss the outcomes that are already being delivered and outline the long-term vision for revitalising our city centre.

(Time expired)

Pauline Hanson's One Nation

 **Ms ASIF** (Sandgate—ALP) (9.13 pm): On Sunday a man walked into Masjid Taqwa in Bald Hills and threatened to shoot worshippers, claiming he had an AK-47 in his car. This is the same mosque that was defaced with a swastika and vile anti-Muslim graffiti in December last year. A place of worship should be a place of peace. No-one, regardless of their faith, should fear for their safety when they gather to pray—not in Bald Hills, not in Queensland, not anywhere. Unfortunately, these are not isolated incidents. They are a part of the rising tide of racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism across Australia and that tide is being fed, deliberately and cynically, by politicians who see division as a path to power.

Pauline Hanson has spent decades demonising Muslim Australians, migrant communities and anyone she deems insufficiently Australian. Her political career is built on fear and division. That project has real consequences—consequences felt by families in our communities. Just tonight Angus Taylor stood up and delivered a budget reply speech that could have been drafted by One Nation itself. He spoke of migrants with the 'wrong values'. He invoked 'radical and violent Islam'. He announced plans to strip welfare from noncitizens, to curtail protection claims and to deliver, in his words, 'one of the biggest cuts to immigration in Australian history'.

Let me tell members what migrants with so-called 'wrong values' do in our community. They open small businesses. They teach in our schools. They care for our elderly. They volunteer at our local events. They coach our kids' football teams. They pay their taxes; raise their families, like we do in our community; and contribute to the fabric of our community every single day. This is not economic policy; it is an attack on hardworking people who contribute to our economy.

I know that in the Sandgate electorate we are richer, stronger and more vibrant because of the people who have come here from every corner of the world and made it home. Here in Queensland the Crisafulli LNP government needs to decide whose side it is on. You cannot cosy up and cut deals with One Nation, as they did in the Stafford by-election, and then claim to stand for all Queenslanders. You cannot stay silent when your federal counterparts adopt One Nation's playbook—


Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order, members! Pause the clock. Members on my right! Member for Hill, thank you for taking your seat. You have been standing up for a little while. Member for Sandgate, you have the call.

Ms ASIF: You cannot stay silent when your federal counterparts adopt One Nation policies out of their playbook and expect migrant communities to not notice. The overwhelming majority of Australians believe in fairness and equality, but we have to be willing to call out those who seek to divide us—whether they sit in the Senate, in the House of Representatives or in the Queensland parliament. Our diversity is not a weakness to be exploited; it is our strength. I will always stand up for every member of our community no matter where you come from, no matter what language you speak, no matter how you pray.

(Time expired)

Reedy Creek, Quarry

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (9.17 pm): It was a proud moment last week when I, alongside my colleagues the member for Burleigh and the member for Currumbin, confirmed that the Crisafulli LNP government has ended Labor's decade of uncertainty and inaction over a Reedy Creek quarry.

I particularly wish to acknowledge the actions of the Deputy Premier, who called in the development application. The application has now been withdrawn by Boral. To ensure a quarry proposal cannot simply reappear down the line, the Deputy Premier has removed the key resource area designation over the Reedy Creek site—a designation originally put in place by Labor in 2007. Removing the KRA designation sends a clear message that our community does not want an industrial-scale quarry near homes and schools, and encroaching on our natural environment.

With the removal of the KRA, our community has been given certainty—certainty that locals have been denied for far too long. It was disappointing that, despite strong and sustained opposition from locals, successive Labor governments ignored our concerns and refused to remove the KRA designation. I know how important this issue is to our community. We have all stood alongside locals in opposing this quarry since the very beginning—me particularly in 2010—through rallies, petitions and the appeal. I promised Reedy Creek residents that there would be no quarry, and I cannot thank them enough for the trust that they put in me and my colleagues to protect our beautiful part of the world.


This is without doubt one of the greatest victories of my political career, not just for our community today but for the generations who will call Reedy Creek home in the future. Make no mistake: this outcome was only possible because of the strength we showed as a community, and I am eternally grateful to each and every person who used their voice to shout down this quarry. These are people like Stop the Gold Coast Quarry stalwarts: the originals—Sam Stewart; Rob Balanda, rest his soul; Lorraine Cook; and Tony Davis—right through to the new generation, including Kimberley Seymour and her beautiful daughter Isabella, Mike Keith, Bronwyn Wright, Emma Brown and Susan-Ann Hagan.

Our community will celebrate this incredible achievement this weekend on Sunday, 17 May at the Varsity Lakes Community Resource Centre. All are welcome to join us from 10am to 11.30am as we celebrate this important win for our locals. I believe that the member for Burleigh is manning the barbecue as well, so if you are coming for a sausage he is your man.

A government member: On the tongs.

Ms BATES: On the tongs. This is what good government looks like—listening to the community, acting decisively and providing certainty. Thanks to the Crisafulli LNP government our community has been heard. No quarry, no way!

Mission Beach, Revitalisation Project

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (9.20 pm): I rise tonight to set the record straight regarding the Mission Beach revitalisation project. Recently there were disingenuous claims by the current government and the newly elected member for Hinchinbrook, who were taking credit for the funding and delivery of this project. This project did not suddenly appear out of thin air in 2026. It began back in 2020 with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council seeking letters of support and backing funding submissions for the project. From day one I supported the council's vision of revitalising Mission Beach and their goal of creating a better tourism hub. I provided letters of support, met with the minister, publicly backed funding applications and advocated strongly for state support.

At a federal level, Bob Katter's office pushed relentlessly to help secure Commonwealth funding for the project. In fact, his office had been chasing the release of federal funding and was advised the money would flow once the Queensland government had signed the heads of agreement. I was specifically asked by council to intervene with then minister Grace Grace to help expedite the process, which the minister, to her credit, actioned straightaway and federal funding was delivered. I do wish to note that I was critical of the disruption caused during construction. I put my views forward for the desperate need to provide better support to local business during this period. However, Mission Beach is one of North Queensland's best tourism destinations and deserved the funding and revitalisation.

This project was not born in the last five months. It took years of advocacy from the council and local stakeholders as well as federally and from myself at the state level. The funding arrangements were already locked in well before the current government came to power and well before the current member for Hinchinbrook entered parliament. The current government and the member for Hinchinbrook had zero involvement in the Mission Beach project, yet a government media release headline reads 'Crisafulli government breathes new life into Mission Beach'. The member for Hinchinbrook states, 'By working closely with council, we are ensuring communities like Mission Beach have the infrastructure they need to grow, attract visitors and thrive well into the future.' When did the member for Hinchinbrook ever work with council to secure funds on this project other than the ribbon-cutting ceremony? I look forward to the member for Hinchinbrook's explanation for claiming credit for a project outside his electorate that he had nothing to do with. I table the media release.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 17 April 2026, by the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers, Hon. Ann Leahy, titled 'Crisafulli Government breathes new life into Mission Beach' [\[727\]](#).


Mr Chiesa interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Member for Hinchinbrook, you are warned under the standing orders for interjecting outside of your seat—again.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Theodore, you are also warned under the standing orders for interjecting out of your seat.

Cook Electorate, Crime Stoppers

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (9.23 pm): The Far North Queensland Volunteer Area Committee of Crime Stoppers was established in 2019 to foster community safety and support Crime Stoppers' Queensland initiatives throughout the region. Whilst there was an existing Cairns committee, the FNQ Volunteer Area Committee was created to promote Crime Stoppers throughout the vast northern area comprising the Atherton Tablelands, Mareeba and the north-eastern reaches of the Gulf of Carpentaria, Cape York and the Torres Strait.


The Far North committee is supported by a diverse volunteer base of some 50 members with solid experience in working with metro and remote communities across Far North Queensland. This volunteer base understands and appreciates the unique issues impacting the safety and social cohesion in these communities, enabling the committee to advise the Crime Stoppers head office on the needs and concerns of the communities most vulnerable to crime and exploitation. The Far North committee takes a progressive approach to maximising opportunities to promote and share the Crime Stoppers message 'Safety where you live' through a variety of localised and large-scale community events.

Over the past five years, the volunteers supporting the committee have helped connect Crime Stoppers with the community through promoting Crime Stoppers at large community events, such as Laura Races, Savannah in the Round, the Weipa Fishing Classic, the Weipa Rodeo, the Mount Emerald

Wind Farm walk, the Grey Nomads Christmas in July and so on. No matter where you go in my vast and spectacular electorate, if there are people gathered you can be assured the good old Crime Stoppers will be there cooking sausages, spreading the message and bringing people together.

Volunteers do a lot of heavy lifting in Queensland when it comes to community services, often complementing or filling the gap of frontline services. You can only imagine the distress and concern of these loyal Queenslanders when they learned the Crime Stoppers Queensland board decided that volunteer committees would be dissolved in favour of a regional ambassador. This decision was ill-conceived without proper consideration of the service of the committee and volunteers—a decision I hope the board will reconsider.

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.26 pm): Didn't we see the Crisafulli LNP government befoul this parliament this week in ways we have not seen since the Bjelke-Petersen government. The architects of it all were the Premier and the Deputy Premier. They regard Joh Bjelke-Petersen as their idol. We know that. The boy from Ingham and the bloke from Kawana regard Joh Bjelke-Petersen—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Woodridge, use appropriate titles in the chamber, please.

Mr DICK:—as their idol. You could smell the stench emanating from this parliament and the LNP government all the way up the coast to Ingham. That is how bad it was. Mr Deputy Speaker, you do not have to take my word for it; you just have to go to what Sarah Elks said in the *Australian*. She said—

David Crisafulli was stern last week when he declared he was an “intensely private person”—

what a joke—

who refused to inquire into MPs' private lives.

...

Lucky for—

the Premier—

he has his deputy ... to do his dirty work for him.

The member for Kawana—

... leapt right into the muck, using parliamentary privilege this week to sling mud at opposition MPs.

In a desperate attempt to distract from the genuine ministerial integrity issue dogging—

the Premier, the member for Kawana 'hit a new low'. The article went on—

He named ... Labor MPs, threatening to “talk more” about them—without offering even a whiff of detail or justification—if the opposition dared ask more questions about the government's ongoing ministerial woes.

How did she finish the article? She said—

It was a grubby display.

What did we get from the Attorney-General and Minister for Integrity? She said in the debate on the contempt motion today, 'What you say in this place matters,' and then she went on to say that the Leader of the Opposition 'isn't even on any of their election paraphernalia'. Take a look at that, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Put the prop down, please.

Mr DICK: There is the Leader of the Opposition on our election paraphernalia. For the benefit of the LNP and this House, I table both the Labor how-to-vote card and the article by Sarah Elks.

Tabled paper: Media article, undated, titled 'Crisafulli's deputy slings mud at opposition MPs' [728].

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'How to vote Labor: Luke Richmond—Labor for Stafford' [729].

We will be putting that how-to-vote card in the hands of 41,000 people by the end of the by-election. My challenge to the Attorney-General—


Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Woodridge has a big voice but I could not hear him then.

Mr DICK: My challenge to the Attorney-General is to do what the Leader of the Opposition did and come in and apologise for deliberately misleading the House because—

(Time expired)

Rally Queensland 2026

 **Hon. AJ PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (9.29 pm): Across the weekend of 17 to 19 April, Gympie was transformed into a major motorsport and entertainment precinct with the outstandingly successful Rally Queensland 2026. People came from right across Queensland and interstate, and the CBD became the epicentre of all the action. I was very pleased to have my colleague the Minister for Small and Family Business, the member for Chatsworth, Steve Minnikin, in Gympie for the launch. He even had the chance to jump in one of the rally cars. What made this event special was the community behind it.

Mary Street was packed for Wheels on Mary on Friday night, bringing cars, crews and drivers into the heart of town and giving locals and visitors the chance to get up close. That alone brought close to 11½ thousand people into the CBD. From there Campbell's Super Special Stage lifted things again, with rally cars running at speed through the CBD and flame pillars lighting up River Road. It is something you would only expect to see at a world championship level. It happened right in Gympie because local people made it happen.

Saturday was our biggest day, with 15,000 people moving through the precinct to get a glimpse. The forest stages of Brooyar and Derrier Road also drew thousands of spectators. Around 40 per cent of attendees came from outside the Gympie region, from across South-East Queensland and interstate. Early figures point to more than \$8 million in economic benefit through tourism, accommodation, hospitality and local business activity. That is real money flowing into a regional community because locals back their town.

I want to acknowledge the organisers, volunteers, emergency services, officials, sponsors, community groups, and small and family businesses who gave their time, their money and their energy to make this possible. Craig Campbell, Glen Brinkman, Paul and Sue Vella, Brian Everitt, Matt Allard, Velmec Automotive, 4Tint2u Cooloola, the Gympie RSL, Booth & Bar Co., Diablo Co., Darling Downs Bank, Campbell's Truck and Bobcat, Tom Grady, Trio Towing, Offaly Civil Engineering and the Gympie Regional Council and many others jumped on board. Every one of them stepped up for their community.

In welcome news, the Mayor, Glen Hartwig, has already said that next year will be bigger and better. With the street stage, the crowds and the quality of what has been delivered this year, Gympie is now firmly positioned for conversations around future World Rally Championship pathways. This year proved that Rally Queensland is more than a motorsport event. It is proof of what happens when a regional community backs itself, and the Gympie region should be proud of what it has built.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.32 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, Hatcher, Head, Howard, Hunt, Hutton, James B, James T, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly G, Kelly J, Kempton, King, Kirkland, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Linard, Lister, Mander, Marr, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Shea, Pease, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stoker, Vorster, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Young