ISSN 1322-0330

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 15 September 2026

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TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2026

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

ABSENCE OF SPEAKER

The ACTING CLERK: Honourable members, I advise the House that Mr Speaker will be absent this sitting week due to his attendance at the 69th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. In accordance with standing order 12, the Deputy Speaker, Mr Jon Krause, will take the chair as Acting Speaker. The Acting Speaker will nominate one of the temporary Speakers as Acting Deputy Speaker.

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

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that on Thursday, 3 September Mr Speaker presented to Her Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill for royal assent, and Her Excellency was pleased to subscribe her assent in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.

I have received from Her Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letter will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable P. Weir MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Appropriation Bills and other Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of His Majesty The King on the date shown:

Date of assent: 3 September 2026

- A bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2026 and 1 July 2027
- A bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2026 and 1 July 2027
- A bill for an Act to amend the Environmental Offsets Regulation 2014, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2020 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes
- A bill for an Act to amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Public Health Regulation 2018, the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

3 September 2026

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 September 2026, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 3 September 2026 [1602].

ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Deputy Speaker

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I inform the House that, in the absence of the Speaker and in accordance with standing order 12(2), I nominate the member for Thuringowa to act as Deputy Speaker.

Absence of Clerk of the Parliament and Members

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise the House that the Clerk and the members for Toowoomba North and Waterford will also be absent this week due to their attendance at the 69th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, accompanied by Mr Speaker.

Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Whitsunday that she will be absent from the House from 15 September to 17 September 2026, inclusive of those dates. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A. I have received advice from the member for Cairns that he will be absent from the House from 15 September to 17 September 2026, inclusive of those dates. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A. I have received advice from the member for Kurwongbah that he will be absent from the House from 15 September to 17 September 2026 and from 13 October to 15 October 2026, inclusive of those dates. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A. I have received advice that the member for Algester will be absent from the House this week due to sorry business. I am sure all members will join me in extending condolences to the member for Algester and her family.

ACTING SPEAKER'S RULING

Brisbane Airport Rail Link (Airtrain) Buy Back Amendment Bill, Out of Order

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Brisbane Airport Rail Link (Airtrain) Buy Back Amendment Bill 2026 was introduced by the member for Maiwar on 26 August 2026 and referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee. I have considered whether the bill offends section 68 of the Constitution of Queensland 2001 and standing order 174. I rule that the bill does contain an appropriation and should not have been introduced without first being recommended by a message of the Governor in accordance with section 68 of the Constitution of Queensland 2001 and standing order 174. Accordingly, the bill is out of order and will need to be discharged and withdrawn by the member for Maiwar, failing which I will direct the removal of the bill from the *Notice Paper*. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling circulated in the name of the Speaker.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ABSENCE OF MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 68 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF QUEENSLAND 2001

The Brisbane Airport Rail Link (Airtrain) Buy Back Amendment Bill 2026 (**Airtrain Bill**) was introduced by the member for Maiwar on 26 August 2026 and referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee.

I have considered whether the Airtrain Bill offends section 68 of the *Constitution of Queensland 2001* and Standing Order 174.

Section 68(1) of the *Constitution of Queensland 2001* provides that the Legislative Assembly must not originate or pass a vote, resolution or Bill for the appropriation of—

(a) an amount from the consolidated fund; or

(b) an amount required to be paid to the consolidated fund;

that has not first been recommended by a message of the Governor.

The Airtrain Bill seeks to insert a new Chapter 7A (sections 92-95) into the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994* headed 'Brisbane Airport Rail Link buy back'. If passed, new section 93 would require the Minister, within 3 months after the date of assent to the Airtrain Bill, to introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly that achieves the following objectives mentioned in sections 94 and 95:

- The Brisbane Airport Rail Link Deed is to be terminated, compensation payable is not to exceed the amount calculated under section 94(2)(a), and any rights or obligations accrued by any party to the Brisbane Airport Rail Link Deed end on termination of the Deed.
- The Queensland Rail Transit Authority is to operate the Brisbane Airport Rail Link, and in any integrated mass transit service contract for the Brisbane Airport Rail Link, a fare charged for the use of this service must not exceed 50 cents.

The explanatory notes to the Airtrain Bill state:

> *The objectives of the Bill are to put in place a strategy for the government to terminate the existing unfair agreement with Airtrain Citylink Limited (currently owned by USS Axle Pty Limited—a wholly owned subsidiary of a UK-based superannuation company), which has given the company a monopoly on operating public transport to and from Brisbane Airport since 2001 (and will continue to do so for a further 10 years, until 2036), and to ensure AirTrain fares can be reduced to no more than 50c per trip.*

…

> *There are no significant cost impacts from these amendments because the Bill establishes a strategy for terminating the deed and bringing the AirTrain into public hands. It does not itself incur costs for implementation beyond the preparation of the required legislation.*

In a ruling by Speaker Wellington on 14 June 2017 (RoP pp1565-1566), a three-part test was adopted to determine whether there is an appropriation within a bill:

- Does the bill purport to confer any authority to pay an amount from consolidated revenue?
- Does the bill extend the objects and purposes of an existing appropriation?
- Does the bill alter the destination of an existing appropriation?

However, Speaker Wellington found that a bill is not an appropriation bill simply because its implementation may have some potential incidental cost implications.

In a ruling on 17 November 2021 (RoP pp3553-3554), Speaker Pitt stated:

> *The system of government in Queensland and the Queensland Parliament is guided by a number of constitutional conventions. One such convention is the 'financial initiative of the Executive'. This embodies the principle that only the Government may initiate or move to increase appropriations or taxes.*

Speaker Pitt quoted the Parliament of Australia's House of Representatives Practice (7th Edition pp415-416):

> *The principle of the financial initiative may be paraphrased as follows:*

- *The Executive Government is charged with the management of revenue and with payments for the public service.*
- *It is a long established and strictly observed rule which expresses a principle of the highest constitutional importance that no public charge can be incurred except on the initiative of the Executive Government.*
- *The Executive Government requests money, the Parliament grants it, but the Parliament does not vote money unless required by the Government, and does not impose taxes unless needed for the public service as declared by Ministers.*

From the information available to me, a buy back of Airtrain on the terms contained in the private members' bill would have significant budgetary implications. It follows that if the government introduced a bill to buy back Airtrain on these terms, that bill would contain an appropriation and require a message.

However, the Airtrain Bill is one step removed. It requires the relevant Minister to introduce a bill within 3 months of the Assent to the Airtrain Bill to buy back Airtrain for specified compensation and to set a specified fare for Airtrain services.

Within this context, I have considered the application of previous Speakers' rulings, the three-part test and constitutional principles.

There appears to be no previous bill in Queensland that is exactly analogous to this proposal, requiring a minister to introduce a bill that, if passed, would clearly incur costs to government. However, the following Speakers' rulings are relevant:

- Water Fluoridation Bill 2008—A proposed amendment to the bill requiring a rebate scheme to be established by regulation was ruled out of order as it contained an appropriation. The amendment, if passed, would impose an obligation on the government to pay money or rebates out of the consolidated fund in the absence of any other source. (Deputy Speaker English, 13 March 2008, PD p907)
- Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016—A government bill containing a provision that would enable a regulation to be made for a scheme of financial assistance to taxi and limousine licensees was ruled out of order as it contained an appropriation. The Bill was subsequently withdrawn and reintroduced with a message. (Speaker Wellington, 1 December 2016, RoP pp4882 and 4913)
- Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023—A private members' bill requiring the Minister to introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly to establish a compulsory housing acquisition scheme for no compensation was ruled in order. The bill was found not to be a revenue bill as it did not itself seek to compulsorily acquire property without compensation. This Bill also included the mechanism of requiring a Minister to introduce a Bill with provisions to achieve the bill's purpose at a later date. (Speaker Pitt, 11 May 2023, RoP pp1377-1380)
- Locking in Cost of Living Support (50 Cent Fares Forever) Amendment Bill 2025—A private members' bill proposing to cap relevant public transport fares at 50 cents indefinitely was ruled out of order as it contained an appropriation. The effect of the bill was to impose a liability on public expenditure that was not already authorised by legislation. (Speaker Weir, 13 March 2025, RoP pp407-409)

Applying the three-part test adopted by previous rulings, I am satisfied that the intended objective of the Airtrain Bill would satisfy the first part of the test of purporting to confer authority to pay an amount from consolidated revenue. While it does not directly authorise payment of funds to buy back Airtrain, it obligates (as opposed to merely enabling or allowing) the government to introduce legislation that would have this effect.

Applying the constitutional principle of the financial initiative of the Executive (i.e. that only the government may initiate appropriations), I am satisfied that the action sought from the Airtrain Bill clearly amounts to an appropriation by requiring the government to buy back Airtrain on the specified terms.

To allow any private members' bill drafted in this way to progress for consideration by the Legislative Assembly would erode the fundamental constitutional principle of the financial initiative of the Executive and would open the door for future bills or amendments to circumvent the requirement for a message in the same way. The majority of the abovementioned Speaker's rulings support this principle.

I am less inclined to rely on Speaker Pitt's ruling on the Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023. While that bill also required the government to introduce legislation to implement a specified policy, it related to revenue rather than appropriations. That ruling considered the use of the mechanism of requiring a Minister to introduce a Bill with provisions to achieve the bill's purpose at a later date noting that that mechanism had been allowed in the Australian Senate. However, I note the examples in the Senate referred to in that ruling did not involve such a clear case of an appropriation or significant financial impact as the Airtrain Bill. I also note Speaker Pitt's many misgivings about the 2023 bill.

I therefore rule that the Brisbane Airport Rail Link (Airtrain) Buy Back Amendment Bill 2026 contains an appropriation and should not have been introduced without first being recommended by a message of the Governor in accordance with section 68 of the *Constitution of Queensland 2001* and Standing Order 174.

Accordingly, the Bill is out of order and will need to be discharged and withdrawn by the member for Maiwar, failing which I will direct the removal of the Bill from the *Notice Paper.*

ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Integrity Commissioner, Resignation

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise the House that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity has written to the Speaker to advise of the resignation of the Integrity Commissioner. I table the correspondence for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 2 September 2026, from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity, Hon. Deb Frecklington, to the Speaker, Hon. Pat Weir, enclosing the resignation of the Integrity Commissioner [1603].

International Day of Democracy

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, today is International Day of Democracy. Together with the Electoral Commission of Queensland, parliament is marking the day by encouraging people across the state to learn more about our democratic processes and get involved. Democracy draws its strength from the people—from their voices, their choices and their participation. It is strongest when people understand how it works and participate in the democratic process.

International Day of Democracy is an opportunity to recognise the important role of parliaments and to encourage all Queenslanders to learn more about our democratic processes and the many ways they can participate. Queensland parliament belongs to all Queenslanders. It is where communities are represented, important issues are debated and our laws are considered and made. Participation extends beyond elections. You can contact your local member, start or sign a petition, make a submission to a parliamentary committee, visit Parliament House or watch proceedings online. Visit the Queensland parliament website to learn more about how parliament works and discover the many ways you can participate in our democracy.

Parliamentary Education Cup, Winners

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to inform the House of the outcome of the recent Parliamentary Education Cup Art Competition, which invited students from across Queensland to share what democracy means to them.

Brisbane School of Distance Education student Arwa was the senior winner. Her artwork *Fabric of Country* portrays democracy as a loom woven by many people, with each individual contributing a unique voice and perspective to create a shared society. The fabric, marked by loose threads and tears, reflects both the imperfections of democratic outcomes and the ongoing opportunity to work together to create something stronger.

The intermediate category was won by Isabella from Deception Bay State High School. Her artwork *Queensland Bunny Community Notice Board* uses a community of rabbits to show that democracy gives everyone the opportunity to share ideas, participate, help others and have a say in the decisions that shape their community.

Mrs Nam's Art Enrichment and Enhancement Program at Marsden State School won the junior category. The collaborative artwork *Democracy Forest* was created by Caius, Charlotte, Hunter, Imona, Issac, Jacob, Jahrelle, Janella, Jasmine, Kyra, Liana, Lincoln, Matthew, Savannah, Se'epa, Ariya, Natalie, Jana and Adrianna. Using a forest as a metaphor for democracy, the artwork celebrates how Queensland's diverse people, values and voices come together through participation and voting to build a thriving future.

The winning artworks are on display adjacent to the foyer of the Parliamentary Annexe, and I encourage all members to take the opportunity to view them.

Parliament House, Artwork

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, two more works from the Regional Council Artwork Collection are on display this week. The collection was originally assembled in 1979 to celebrate the completion of the Parliamentary Annexe and features artworks representing communities across Queensland. The first work, chosen by the Acting Speaker this week, is *Boonah of Yesteryear* by Estelle Petersen.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! There will be no reflection on the chair—for his choices of artwork, especially! *Boonah of Yesteryear* is by Estelle Petersen. Petersen studied at Brisbane Central Technical College before beginning her career in commercial art. She later established her own art studio and after spending three years working in London returned to Australia and continued working across both commercial and fine art, including teaching painting and drawing. This artwork was donated by the former Boonah shire council—the great shire council that it was—now part of the Scenic Rim Regional Council area.

The second work is *The Glen Upper Pilton* by artist Dexter Neidler. After training as an engraver and completing four years of art studies at East Sydney Technical College, Neidler worked as a wool classer before becoming a full-time artist in 1972. This artwork was donated by the former Clifton shire council.

You can also explore these works and learn more about the Regional Council Collection through parliament's online heritage collection. Next sitting week we will feature another two artworks as we continue to showcase the regional Queensland communities represented in the chamber.

Visitors to Public Gallery

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Wandoan State School in the electorate of Callide, Chancellor State College in the electorate of Buderim, Nambour Christian College in the electorate of Nicklin and Burleigh Heads State School in the electorate of Burleigh.

Charity Football Match

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I note that many members took part in a charity football match last night—that is, the round ball version. It was the Premier's XI against the Corporate XI. There are a few injuries being nursed here this morning, including by the Acting Speaker. We raised over $24,000 for a very worthy charity, Childhood Cancer Support. I thank all members who took part last night.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

Mr J KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.41 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. During the last sitting week the member for Clayfield stated in his reply speech on the health bill that members of our committee 'made no effort to appear or to seek to have people present evidence at the hearing'. He also stated—

> Having been afforded a full committee hearing for scrutiny, they were so satisfied that they could not be bothered turning up to ask questions.

The member for Clayfield has made offensive and misleading remarks about all of the members of the committee. I believe that the member has committed contempt under standing orders 266(2) and 266(12) and will be requesting the health committee refer this matter to the Ethics Committee for further investigation.

PETITIONS

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

Motor Neurone Disease

6,485 petitioners, requesting the House to urge the Minister for Health to establish the Aaron Reardon Protocol—Queensland Clinical Framework for Choice and Equity in Motor Neurone Disease Care [1576] [1577].

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

McLennan, Mr J

Mr Katter, from 2,613 petitioners, requesting the House to consider a reward for credible information leading to the location and recovery of Jack McLennan through existing Queensland Police Service reward frameworks and processes, and to review the missing persons rewards process [1578].

Birdwood Road, Velobridge

Mr J Kelly, from 1,008 petitioners, requesting the House to highlight the need for the construction of the last connection of the V1 Veloway and request the Minister to commit to starting the construction of the Birdwood Road Velobridge in the next 12 months [1579].

Willow Vale, Proposed Development

Mr Crandon, from 880 petitioners, requesting the House to do all in its power to oppose the proposed development in Willow Vale along Rosemount Drive and ensure full consideration is given to its impacts on residents, local infrastructure, and the character of the community [1580].

Vehicles, Bikeways

Mr Berkman, from 907 petitioners, requesting the House to prohibit the parking of vehicles in any marked bikeways, except in cases of legitimate use [1581].

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

AI Data Centres

1,268 petitioners, requesting the House to establish environmental safeguards and accountability for large AI data centres in Queensland [1582].

E-Mobility

369 petitioners, requesting the House to review Queensland's personal e-mobility device laws based on current evidence and strike an appropriate balance between public safety and public transport [1583].

Animals, Boarding Facilities

670 petitioners, requesting the House to review the regulation of commercial animal boarding facilities in Queensland and introduce mandatory licensing, minimum welfare standards, and transparent compliance reporting to ensure the welfare of boarded animals [1584].

AI Data Centres, Renewable Energy

1,149 petitioners, requesting the House to introduce legislation to mandate renewable energy and water security for AI Data Centres [1585].

Land Tax, Thresholds

1,153 petitioners, requesting the House to increase Queensland's land tax thresholds to reflect the rise in land values since 2007 and to automatically index those thresholds each year [1586].

Penalties and Sentences Act 1992

1,656 petitioners, requesting the House to amend section 9 of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to remove deportation hardship as a sentencing factor for child sex offences [1587].

Redland City Council, Mayor

255 petitioners, requesting the House to respect the democratic process and the choice made by the community at the ballot box and support Mayor Mitchell being allowed to continue serving the people of Redland City and carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to her [1588].

Local Government, Aquatic Facilities

1,116 petitioners, requesting the House to do all in its power to direct local governments to operate their aquatic facilities and not outsource and lease them to private enterprise [1589].

Local Government, Rates

823 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate the Guideline on Equity and Fairness in Rating for Queensland Local Governments to ensure all Queensland councils are bound by its principles [1590].

Greenbank, Antisocial Behaviour

295 petitioners, requesting the House to strengthen Queensland laws and police powers to deal with antisocial and criminal behaviour in Greenbank [1591].

Homelessness

939 petitioners, requesting the House to do all in its power to allow owners of acreage properties to add structures to their property that can accommodate the homeless, and to remove red tape barriers for approvals of these structures [1592].

Children, Vaccination

1,469 petitioners, requesting the House to do all in its power to cause a change in the requirements for Childcare Subsidy to exclude mandatory Childhood vaccinations [1593].

West End, Streetlights

151 petitioners, requesting the House to urge the Department of Transport and Main Roads to install more streetlights along Gray Road, West End 4101 [1594].

Speed Limits

680 petitioners, requesting the House to adopt a 30km/h default speed limit in built up areas unless otherwise signed to increase safety and liveability for Queensland residents [1595].

Legal Services Commission

571 petitioners, requesting the House to initiate a public inquiry into the Legal Services Commission's oversight of practitioners and law firms, to ensure integrity in litigation [1596].

Speed Limit, Violations

253 petitioners, requesting the House to do all within its power to ensure suitably qualified non-QPS, or off-duty QPS, be trained and paid to additionally record speed-limit violations by use of existing speed-recording signage, devices or current police vehicles [1597].

Self-Funded Retirees

1,927 petitioners, requesting the House to give self-funded retirees the same benefits as pensioners [1598].

Communication Skills, Training Programs

143 petitioners, requesting the House to conduct a national communication skills audit to measure competency, then roll out free communication skills training programs in the community as required [1599].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

28 August 2026—

1515 Statement for Public Disclosure: Expenditure of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

1516 Professional Standards Act 2004: Professional Standards (Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Professional Standards Scheme) Notice 2026, No. 129

1517 Professional Standards Act 2004: Professional Standards (Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Professional Standards Scheme) Notice 2026, No. 129, explanatory notes

1518 Professional Standards Act 2004: Professional Standards (Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Professional Standards Scheme) Notice 2026, No. 129, human rights certificate

1519 Professional Standards Act 2003 (Vic): Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Professional Standards Scheme

1520 Queensland Government: Report titled 'Statutory Review of the Transport Security (Counter-Terrorism) Act 2008'

31 August 2026—

1521 Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

2 September 2026—

1522 Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011: Nursing and Midwifery Workload Management Standard

3 September 2026—

1523 State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee: Report No. 33, 58th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 25 March 2026 and 12 May 2026

1524 Education, Arts and Communities Committee: Report No. 20, 58th Parliament—Oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission for 2024-25

7 September 2026—

1525 Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal—Annual Report 2025-2026

1526 Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 40, 58th Parliament—2026-27 Budget Estimates: Erratum

1527 Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 41, 58th Parliament—Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill 2026: Erratum

1528 Queensland Ombudsman—Annual Report 2025-26

1529 Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 42, 58th Parliament—Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill 2026

8 September 2026—

1530 Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Bleijie), to an E-Petition (4528-26), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 543 petitioners, requesting the House to review and reconsider Wynnum Central's MRAC classification as part of the current review of the ShapingSEQ 2023 Regional Plan

1531 Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Bleijie), to an E-Petition (4640-26), sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,200 petitioners, requesting the House to call on the Queensland Government to identify the authority responsible for MID-0425-0938, investigate the compliance concerns raised at the Ormiston College site, and amend the Planning Act 2016 so future MID process clearly identifies the agency responsible for compliance

11 September 2026—

1532 The Public Advocate—Adults with cognitive disability in the Queensland criminal justice system: Final Report, Reform Recommendations, August 2026

1533 Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 43, 58th Parliament—Report on the 2026 Budget Estimates Process

1534 Consolidated Fund Financial Report 2025-26

1535 Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority—Queensland Rural Debt Survey 2025

14 September 2026—

1536 Queensland Treasury Holdings Pty Ltd—Consolidated Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2026

1537 Brisbane Port Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2026

1538 DBCT Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2026

1539 Queensland Lottery Corporation Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2026

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Work Health and Safety Act 2011:

1540 Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice 2026, No. 123

1541 Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice 2026, No. 123, explanatory notes

1542 Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice 2026, No. 123, human rights certificate

South Bank Corporation Act 1989:

1543 South Bank Corporation Regulation 2026, No. 124

1544 South Bank Corporation Regulation 2026, No. 124, explanatory notes

1545 South Bank Corporation Regulation 2026, No. 124, human rights certificate

South Bank Corporation Act 1989:

1546 South Bank Corporation (Modified Building Units and Group Titles) Regulation 2026, No. 125

1547 South Bank Corporation (Modified Building Units and Group Titles) Regulation 2026, No. 125, explanatory notes

1548 South Bank Corporation (Modified Building Units and Group Titles) Regulation 2026, No. 125, human rights certificate

South Bank Corporation Act 1989:

1549 South Bank Corporation By-law 2026, No. 126

1550 South Bank Corporation By-law 2026, No. 126, explanatory notes

1551 South Bank Corporation By-law 2026, No. 126, human rights certificate

Fisheries Act 1994:

1552 Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) (Video Monitoring) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 127

1553 Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) (Video Monitoring) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 127, explanatory notes

1554 Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) (Video Monitoring) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 127, human rights certificate

Major Sports Facilities Act 2001:

1555 Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2026, No. 128

1556 Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2026, No. 128, explanatory notes

1557 Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2026, No. 128, human rights certificate

Education and Care Services Act 2013:

1558 Education and Care Services Regulation 2026, No. 130

1559 Education and Care Services Regulation 2026, No. 130, explanatory notes

1560 Education and Care Services Regulation 2026, No. 130, human rights certificate

Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011:

1561 Hospital and Health Boards (Nursing and Midwifery Workload Management Standard) Notice 2026, No. 131

1562 Hospital and Health Boards (Nursing and Midwifery Workload Management Standard) Notice 2026, No. 131, explanatory notes

1563 Hospital and Health Boards (Nursing and Midwifery Workload Management Standard) Notice 2026, No. 131, human rights certificate

Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990:

1564 Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment Notice 2026, No. 132

1565 Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment Notice 2026, No. 132, explanatory notes

1566 Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment Notice 2026, No. 132, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

1567 Rural and Regional Adjustment (Sugar Industry Participant Support Loan Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 133

1568 Rural and Regional Adjustment (Sugar Industry Participant Support Loan Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 133, explanatory notes

1569 Rural and Regional Adjustment (Sugar Industry Participant Support Loan Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 133, human rights certificate

Planning Act 2016:

1570 Planning Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 134

1571 Planning Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 134, explanatory notes

1572 Planning Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 134, human rights certificate

Drugs Misuse Act 1986:

1573 Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 135

1574 Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 135, explanatory notes

1575 Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation 2026, No. 135, human rights certificate

REPORTS BY THE CLERK

The following reports were tabled by the Clerk—

1600 Gazette Notice for the Queensland Government Gazette, dated 4 September 2026, regarding Waiver of obligation to comply with privacy principle requirements in the public interest No 1 (2026)

1601 Office of the Information Commissioner—Explanatory memorandum for the waiver made under the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

Revocation of State Forest and Protected Areas

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (9.47 am): I lay upon the table of the House a proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 and section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and a brief explanation of the proposal.

Tabled paper: Revocation of state areas: Proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 and section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and an explanation of the proposal, relating to the Beerwah State Forest, Burrum Coast National Park, Springbrook National Park and Walter Hill Range Conservation Park [1604].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Revocation of State Forest and Protected Areas

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (9.47 am): I give notice that, after the expiration of at least 14 days as provided in the Forestry Act 1959 and 28 days as provided in the Nature Conservation Act 1922, I shall move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:

   a) revoke by regulation under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 the setting apart and declaration of part of one state forest;

   b) revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of two national parks and parts of one conservation park;

   as set out in the proposal tabled by me in the House today, **viz**

Description of areas to be revoked

Beerwah State Forest	An area of about 73.64 hectares described as part of lot 561 on AP22457 (to be described as lot 1 on SP365430), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Burrum Coast National Park	An area of about 13 hectares described as part of lot 25 on NPW642 (to be described as lot 5 on SP359180), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Springbrook National Park	An area of about 0.278 hectares described as part of lot 15 on RP889011 (to be described as lot 2 on SP351458), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Walter Hill Range Conservation Park	An area of about 0.027 hectares described as parts of lot 112 on AP22491 (to be described as lots 1 to 4 on SP354962), as illustrated on the attached sketch.

2. That the Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation for submission to the Governor in Council.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Justice System

Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.48 am): Our government was elected with a clear mandate to make Queensland safer. We promised to restore consequences for actions and to always put victims first. That is exactly what we are doing. We have made Adult Crime, Adult Time law, delivered a record number of police, and invested in new early intervention and rehabilitation programs. Daniel's Law has helped protect children through the creation of Queensland's first public child sex offender register, and Jack's Law has helped take weapons off the streets. We intend to make Breach Bail, Go to Jail law this year, with legislation currently before the parliament for consideration.

Today we will take another step towards restoring safety where you live by introducing stronger parole laws. The Protecting Queenslanders from Dangerous Prisoners and Strengthening Victims' Rights Amendment Bill will reform our parole system. Parole is a privilege and Queenslanders need to have confidence that the system will always put victims first.

Under Labor, criminals were prioritised ahead of community safety and victims were not supported properly. For a decade our parole system was mismanaged and dangerous prisoners were released on parole. Our new laws will keep the most dangerous violent offenders behind bars longer. The bill will expand restricted prisoner laws to cover all offenders serving life sentences. Currently, the Parole Board can only apply restricted prisoner laws to murderers who kill more than one person. Our changes mean the worst criminals—murderers, rapists and serious sexual offenders—can be declared restricted prisoners and stopped from applying for parole.

The bill will also close a gap in the No Body, No Parole laws. It will ensure convicted murderers cannot escape consequences in cases where a victim's remains have been destroyed or cannot be located. The laws will also ensure that victims will be proactively notified about updates regarding the offender. Community safety must come first in the consideration of parole—our laws will make sure that is the case. After a decade under Labor when laws were weakened and victims were ignored, we are restoring the balance. We will continue to listen to victims. We will back our police. We will strengthen our justice system and hold offenders accountable. There is more work to do, but everything our government does is about making Queensland safer.

Justice System

Hon. LJ GERBER (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.51 am): Today the Crisafulli government is introducing the strongest parole laws in the nation. We promised we would deliver major reforms to Queensland's parole system to put victims first and to make Queensland safer, and that is exactly what we are doing. These reforms will restore confidence in a parole system that all too often failed Queenslanders under the former Labor government—a parole system that under Labor put the rights of criminals and prisoners ahead of the rights of victims and community safety.

Under our laws, the rights of victims and community safety will be the paramount consideration for all parole decisions, as it always should have been. The Parole Board must be empowered to deliver decisions in line with community expectations that put victims and the safety of Queenslanders first, and that is exactly what these laws will deliver.

Our reforms will fix Labor's broken No Body, No Parole laws, which allowed dangerous offenders to be given parole despite not revealing the whereabouts of victims' remains due to technical legal loopholes. These changes send a clear message that, if a prisoner has not done everything they can to reveal the location of a victim's body, they will not be granted parole—and that is not all. We are expanding Queensland's restricted prisoner framework, meaning some of the most dangerous offenders who commit the most heinous crimes, including domestic violence murderers, rapists and sadistic killers, could stay locked up for life.

Life should mean life. That is why there is no limit to how many times the Parole Board could prevent a restricted prisoner from being released on parole under our laws. Currently, under Labor's framework, the Parole Board is only allowed to apply restricted prisoner laws to child killers and murderers who kill more than one person. We are ensuring our laws apply to all prisoners serving a life sentence. We are talking about the worst of the worst here. We are talking about domestic violence killers Gerard Baden-Clay and Brian Earl Johnston. We are talking about murderers and sadistic child killers.

These reforms are for victims and their families across the state who have lost their loved ones to the most heinous crimes so they can get the justice they deserve after being let down by the former Labor government's weak laws. We know that for the families of murder victims, for the loved ones of women killed through domestic violence and for the survivors of horrific sexual violence, the impact of these crimes does not end just because the offender is sentenced. The victims get a life sentence themselves. That is why these reforms are so important for the victims and their families, so they can get the justice they deserve.

Justice System

Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (9.54 am): The Crisafulli government's crackdown on crime does not stop at the prison gates. Today we take another victim-centred step that redresses the former Labor government's insipid approach to parole by ensuring Queensland's worst criminals face more time behind bars. Our first act when we came to government was to implement Adult Crime, Adult Time—serious youth offenders dealt the same punishment as adults. We have since strengthened a raft of laws to keep Queenslanders safer in their homes and on our streets and to hold offenders accountable.

When murderers, rapists and serious sexual offenders are permitted to walk free all too easily, communities cannot be anything but paralysed by fear, and living a nightmare is re-created for victim families and friends. These are exactly the conditions that prevailed under those opposite on their soft-on-crime decade of decline when Labor put the interests of prisoners ahead of victims, presiding over a parole system mired in backlogs, botched appointments and legislative failure, orchestrating parole reviews in secret, sidelining community safety and shutting out victims from the parole process.

Today's reforms to be introduced by the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support are a watershed moment. They slide the scales back to victims by turning parole laws on their head. These will be the strongest parole laws in the nation—fixing Labor's failure by expanding restricted prisoner laws to all prisoners serving a life sentence so that some of Queensland's most violent criminals could be prevented from applying for parole for up to another 10 years, resolving loopholes so that the No Body, No Parole laws apply for the full time an offender is in prison and introducing a range of new victim-responsive transparency on Parole Board decisions.

Our message to victims is clear: community safety will be the paramount consideration for all parole determinations. Every day Queenslanders expect to live, work and play free from harm, and they are right because the first and foremost responsibility of a government is to keep people safe. That is why the Crisafulli government will continue to place victims at the heart of our justice system and keep Queensland's most dangerous offenders for longer under lock and key.

Justice System; Gollschewski, Mr S

Hon. DG PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (9.57 am): The Crisafulli government will always put the rights of victims ahead of the rights of criminals. It is what we said we would do before the election and it is what we are doing now. It is why the Crisafulli government is moving to close the loopholes left by Labor in the No Body, No Parole laws.

Under Labor's botched laws, victims' families have suffered the indignity of being told the person who took the life of their loved one is not a No Body, No Parole prisoner, despite the fact the victim's remains have never been found and there was no proper goodbye. Labor botched these laws and left victims devastated. Worse still, they gave them hope knowing full well there was none.

The Crisafulli government is moving to strengthen this framework and incentivise prisoners to cooperate in a timely manner, giving victims' families reassurance and a greater chance their loved one's remains will be found. The Crisafulli government is putting the rights of victims ahead of criminals.

While I am on my feet, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the passing of a great man. In February I stood in this House to pay tribute to Steve Gollschewski after 46 years in uniform. I said at the time that he should go fishing and spend time with his family. Sadly, he did not get long to enjoy his retirement. Yesterday Queensland said goodbye to 'Golly.' He was one of the most respected police leaders this country has seen. Golly took the oath in 1980, following his father and his older brother, who had long careers in uniformed policing.

We heard yesterday how disappointed his father was when Golly came home one day and announced to the family that he wanted to be a detective. He had lofty goals of maybe one day becoming a detective sergeant. He had well and truly reached that lofty goal by the time I met him at Boondall CIB in the 1990s. In 2024 Golly was appointed Queensland's 21st commissioner. Steve Gollschewski was a sharp, strategic and steadfast leader, relentless about reform. He mentored a generation of officers and he made time for those who held no rank at all. Golly faced down serious illness and came back to work because that is who he was, yet the titles he treasured most were husband, father and grandfather. On behalf of the Crisafulli government, I extend my deepest condolences to Rebecca, his children, his grandchildren and the men and women of the Queensland Police Service who are grieving a leader and a friend. In 1980 a young Stephen Gollschewski took an oath to serve and protect the people of Queensland. He kept it for 46 years. With honour he served.

Trade Mission, United States of America

Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (10.00 am): I recently returned from a trade mission to the United States of America. Across five days our delegation engaged with industry and government to advance Queensland's priorities across critical minerals, energy, defence, AI, agricultural innovation, investment attraction and games preparedness. In Sacramento I signed a five-year memorandum of cooperation to strengthen collaboration in agricultural innovation and research, establishing a framework to support productivity, resilience and growth across

our primary industries sector. We also met with major investors and held productive meetings with the US government, where I made it clear that Queensland is open for business and ready to compete for the industries shaping the future.

When I last addressed this House I spoke about how critical minerals and data centres present new opportunities for Queensland jobs in the same way that the gold rush, base metals, tourism and gas did in generations gone by, but we must get it right and it must be on our terms. Queensland is home to many of the world's most sought after critical minerals. Our vision is to be a trusted partner who can supply these critical minerals to countries like the United States. We met with the White House, we met with the Department of War and we met with export and import investors, and the message was clear: invest in Queensland companies and together we can build a safer future for the world. It is about economic opportunity and it is about global security. There are opportunities for us and it is our duty to be part of this.

I also put forward Queensland's case for investment in data centres, meeting with world-leading companies including Anthropic and OpenAI. I also made the case to Nvidia as to why they should choose Queensland. If we can secure investment and use it as a catalyst to drive more energy generation, we can secure our jobs and data sovereignty and lower energy bills for Queenslanders. We are the only state that can do this because we own our generation. We own our distribution assets and we struck a deal with Canberra to acknowledge this. We will back investment, but it must be on our terms. It must add energy generation, it must protect local water supplies, it must respect the communities where projects will be and it must never be in suburban backyards.

Queensland cannot afford to watch from the sidelines. What we saw overseas showed that investors are looking for reliable partners. With sensible planning and strong safeguards Queensland can be that partner. We can create jobs, attract investment and build a stronger economy for generations to come.

Housing Supply

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.03 am): The Crisafulli government inherited a housing crisis on top of the health crisis, the cost-of-living crisis and the youth crime crisis, and we have been doing everything we can and pulling every state lever possible to address the housing needs and aspirations of Queenslanders.

I can announce today that in less than 23 months the Residential Activation Fund has unlocked more than 163,000 homes across all of Queensland. In addition, $28 million was recently announced for South-West Queensland with another $28 million for North-West Queensland, and only last Friday I announced a record $70 million for the South Burnett and Somerset regions to unlock over 710 homes. I stood with the Attorney-General on a vacant block of land with a real estate sign behind us that had been up for 20 years. For 20 years they tried to sell blocks of land that did not exist—but now they will. The mayor of the South Burnett said—

> This is the biggest investment I have seen from a state government in my over 20 years' experience as a Councillor and now Mayor.

We are getting on with the job. We will build the infrastructure and the land will finally be released. The blocks of land that were advertised 20 years ago—I suspect the prices might have increased slightly—will be up for sale and people will be moving to the South Burnett region.

I can also announce today that we are unveiling the draft Mount Peter development scheme, which is open for consultation. It is on track to deliver 18,500 homes in the Mount Peter PDA in Far North Queensland and will remove red tape, deliver landmark infrastructure and support the long-term growth of the Cairns region. The Halls Creek development scheme is also out today, supporting 12,000 homes in the Caloundra electorate, and I thank the member for Caloundra for her advocacy in housing in her electorate.

I have declared four PDAs in a year and a half, two of which Labor failed to declare. We have planning and funding in place for the PDAs as a result of a deal we struck with the federal government for $2.4 billion, with the feds particularly targeting first home owners. All forms of housing are important. The State Facilitated Development and Ministerial Infrastructure Designation pathways are also unlocking homes for our state. There have been eight SFD approvals under this government—zero SFD approvals under the former Labor government, I might add—totalling 4,232 homes. Can you believe it!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Interject all you want. Mr Acting Speaker, are you ready for this: 264 are affordable homes, because all homes are important. What the Labor Party will hate even more than everything I have said already in highlighting their record is that I have approved 26 ministerial infrastructure designations totalling 1,578 homes. On average, we are approving 69 social and affordable homes per month under ministerial infrastructure designations compared to 30 under Labor. We have more than doubled the number of social and affordable housing approvals under the MID process that they delivered. They say a lot about social and affordable housing, but what they will not say is that I am approving over double the number of social and affordable homes under the MID than they ever did. If they want to have a debate on social and affordable housing, bring it on! This is in addition to the government's investment in new social and affordable homes, with 6,900 under contract or in construction and supported by a $5.7 billion investment by the Crisafulli government over four years.

Economy, Credit Rating

Hon. DC JANETZKI (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (10.07 am): From the very first moment the Crisafulli government was elected I warned that Queensland had inherited an inevitable credit rating downgrade after a decade of Labor's fiscal vandalism.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left, the member is not being provocative. Order! We will have silence before we proceed.

Mr JANETZKI: Last week's decision by S&P Global Ratings and their rationale confirms that what we have been warning is true. The path to this downgrade was laid by the former Labor government and it was set in stone by Jim Chalmers.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! We will hear the Treasurer.

Mr JANETZKI: S&P's decision confirms it.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Logan, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr JANETZKI: Queensland's budget performance score was cut in September 2024 following Labor's final budget, before the state was placed on a negative outlook in February 2025, which was before our first budget, when MYFER exposed the full extent of Labor's debt, deficits and deception. As such, Friday's decision had largely already been taken into account in market pricing.

S&P's decision clearly states that the increases in operating expenses that contributed to this downgrade were incurred by the former Labor government. S&P also credited Queensland's massive infrastructure pipeline—'major transportation projects, energy projects, hospital upgrades, and infrastructure for the 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games'—as contributing to the downgrade. These were projects that Labor had failed to budget for and failed to deliver. S&P also stated—

Property tax changes by the Australian government in its May budget will also hit Queensland's stamp duties.

They also noted smaller GST receipts. In black and white, Canberra contributed to this downgrade. S&P made clear that we have softened the landing and affirms the budget improvements of our first two budgets with improving deficits and a surplus in the last of the out years, lower debt and no new or increased taxes. Queensland will continue to fight for its fair share of GST, call out billions of dollars in federal Labor government cost-shifting on the NDIS, natural disaster funding and stranded Australians, and hold Jim Chalmers accountable for a broken promises budget that has smashed Queensland's stamp duty revenues.

We also await Moody's decision and note their recent recognition of the government's 'gradual fiscal consolidation'. Although S&P would have preferred Queensland to raise taxes, reduce services and stop building, these are decisions we are not willing to make. We will continue to invest in frontline jobs and services, support Queenslanders doing it tough in a national affordability crisis and build roads, rail, hospitals, schools and housing to support a growing population as we move towards the 2032 games and beyond.

Resources Industries, Approvals

Hon. DR LAST (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (10.11 am): Today I will be introducing new legislation to deliver a more efficient and targeted framework for objections to mining lease applications while putting a stop to those who lob vexatious claims and intentionally use this process to frustrate or delay project approvals. Assessment requirements are currently duplicated across mining and environment legislation, resulting in unnecessary procedural steps that delay decisions for potentially years at a time, create uncertainty and increase costs for applicants, objectors and decision-makers.

We only need to look at the debacle of the long-running legal battle that the New Acland coalmine expansion experienced to understand that this process has to change. For close to 15 years the mining company and community did not have certainty on the project's future, and the former Labor government allowed this to happen. They left the community, local farmers, local council and resources workers in limbo for close to 15 years. We are changing that. No community should have to go through another New Acland experience. The bill being introduced today addresses these issues. We are replacing the automatic referral of objections to the Land Court with a more targeted and proportional referral process to reduce the number of projects held up in court. Further, the grounds for an objection will need to be based on the decision-making criteria.

I want to make this point crystal clear for those opposite. This is not about sacrificing environmental conditions; it is about finding the balance between upholding our strong environmental standards, listening to the concerns of affected persons and local communities, and enhancing Queensland's investment attractiveness. It is about amending the objections process by granting objection rights to the people who are directly affected by a proposed mining project—local farmers, landholders, community members and local government. It means activists, who are often based thousands of kilometres away, and green groups, many funded by foreign overseas entities, are no longer eligible to have a say.

Using the Land Court to hold up a mining project does not serve anyone. It does not serve the local farmer who wants to know if a mine is going to be built down the road, it does not serve the local government needing to plan for infrastructure, and it does not serve Queensland workers who are waiting for a job in the mining industry. We made a commitment that we would streamline approvals, restore confidence and provide certainty—certainty for proponents, communities, local landholders, businesses and workers. It is about getting to a 'yes' or a 'no' faster, and we are doing just that.

Hospital Infrastructure

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.14 am): The Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland, with our fully funded Hospital Rescue Plan powering ahead. Cranes are swinging, piling rigs are drilling—'drill, baby, drill', which is the new motto for the health infrastructure department, thank you—thousands of construction workers are on worksites across the state, and productivity is up because there is no CFMEU BPIC.

Mr Bleijie: He rolled his eyes.

Mr NICHOLLS: Exactly. Since the budget in June we have announced that CPB and Hansen Yuncken will deliver the next stage of the Cairns Hospital expansion, including a new helipad and the health innovation and surgical centre, with more operating theatres and more beds by 2031 and a new 1,000-space car park. That is on top of the 32 beds we opened in Cairns in August and the 32 more coming next year. We have released the new hospital masterplan for the Mackay Base Hospital that will deliver 128 new beds and 1,000 more car parks. Major contractors are now engaged to deliver the next stages of the bigger and better Redcliffe, Coomera and Bundaberg hospitals. These projects will deliver almost 1,000 new beds for Queenslanders, which is 265 more than was going to be delivered under Labor's failed capacity expansion program.

We have also announced a new eight-bed perinatal mental health unit at the Nambour General Hospital, we have opened the new 32-bed adult mental health unit in Rockhampton, and we have delivered new birthing suites in Biloela with additional staffing options. Across the state, the Crisafulli government is getting on with delivering more hospital beds for Queensland.

Talking about Biloela, I am pleased to inform the House that yesterday the Crisafulli government restored birthing services in Biloela, and Cooktown, I might say. These services languished for years under Labor—for almost 1,000 days in Cooktown and almost 800 days in Biloela. Queenslanders voted

for a fresh start and this is exactly what we are delivering. In fact, I am pleased to advise the House that at 2.11 am today we had our first birth in Biloela—a fresh start for Biloela. What are the naysayers, doubters and do-nothings saying now? There he is—another blunder by the member for Miller, another fail by the member for Miller.

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

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health, will you withdraw, please?

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. What about all the naysayers and doubters out there who said it would not happen? Let me say this to Bronwyn and Benn: congratulations on the birth of your new baby and congratulations on being the first to use the fully restored birthing suite in Biloela, funded by the Crisafulli government. Birthing in Bilo meant this family did not need to travel the 300-kilometre round trip to Rockhampton. In fact, they are now back at home in Orange Creek, 15 minutes away. That is the choice—

Mr Bleijie: And they named their baby Tim.

Mr NICHOLLS: They may well have, but I will not go there. Their travel was 15 minutes and 20 kilometres, as opposed to three hours and 300 kilometres. That is delivering services. Bronwyn was supported by amazing midwives Toni and Rhianna. How amazing is it that a midwifery student, Emma, had the opportunity to also be in the room, because we are delivering more staff in more places? I give a big shout-out to the member for Callide, Bryson Head, for his advocacy. We said we would restore birthing services in Biloela and Cooktown. We have delivered what we said we would, despite the naysayers. Labor closes birthing services; the LNP government opens birthing services.

Bushfires, Preparedness

Hon. A LEAHY (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (10.19 am): As Queensland—

Ho**nourable members** interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Miller, member for Clayfield, cease your quarrelling. We are not going to start that way today.

Ms LEAHY: As Queensland enters the higher risk bushfire season we have seen our frontline firies jump into action for what forecasts indicate will be a busy season. The first weekend of our season saw our volunteer and paid firies respond to 184 bushfire incidents with 420 resources across Queensland. Knowing the risk ahead, we have been helping our firies prepare during a record amount of work and preparation for this season.

When it comes to fire mitigation on state lands this year, there has been a 74 per cent increase on Labor's last year in government. Private landholders have also done a record amount of fire mitigation this year, a 45 per cent increase on Labor's last year in government. The former Labor government was going in the wrong direction. They proposed to cut 40 specialist fire rangers from the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in their final budget. The work we have done has only been possible because we are making fire mitigation a priority.

We have also been empowering our volunteer firies to get on with the job. We have increased the number of fire trucks being delivered by over 400 per cent on Labor's last year in government. We have built new sheds across the state and we will continue to do so. We have reversed Labor's decision to take interest from brigade bank accounts. We are ensuring firies have access to the most comprehensive firefighter workers compensation with a budget allocation of $15.7 million per annum. We have amended the legislation to empower rural fire brigades to act on their own accord. Because our firies do so much, they deserve our backing, and back them we will.

We also want to acknowledge that tomorrow is Yellow Ribbon Day. We will stand here with the RFBAQ and say thank you to our rural firies across the state. To all our firies who have been preparing over the past months, to those who have already been called out and to those who will give their time over the coming months to keep our community safe, the Crisafulli government and I say thank you for all that you do.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (10.21 am): I advise that, as the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence will be absent for this week's sitting, the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers will answer questions for the minister in question time this week.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION

Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.22 am): I seek leave to move general business notice of motion No. 1 standing in my name.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

In division—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Attorney-General, member for Pine Rivers and other members who like to quarrel, please cease.

AYES, 34:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Hatcher, Head, Hutton, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Vorster, Young.

Pair: Camm, Enoch.

Resolved in the negative.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I advise that question time today will conclude at 11.27 am.

Ambulance Service

Mr MILES (10.27 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. Olympic skateboarding coach Patrick Gemzik and his mum join us in the gallery today. In March Patrick experienced a 36-hour ordeal which resulted in brain damage and irreversible damage to his eyesight. Can the minister advise why Patrick waited four hours for an ambulance that never arrived?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Of course, I welcome consumers of our medical services into the gallery here today.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members.

Mr NICHOLLS: I welcome them to the gallery today and, of course, this is the place for those sorts of questions to be asked. As always, I am happy to address those issues. I am unfamiliar with the particular details of the matter that has been raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I am happy to investigate those details if they have not already been referred through my office to the appropriate hospital and health service for response. Inevitably, that is the course of action when we receive correspondence from those people who contact our office: we pass that on to the hospital and health

service for response and to address that issue. As always, if there are instances where the service fails to deliver what it ought to deliver and there are reasons for that, we investigate and attempt to improve the service, as you would always expect us to do.

More than 1.6 million consumers a year enter our emergency departments. Despite the best efforts of our hardworking staff—the triage nurses and the clinicians who are there—there are occasions when it does not work perfectly, and that is regretted. That is why we always take the opportunity to investigate, to review and to deliver better services.

Mr Bleijie: Did they refer it to your office? How long have you had this? Did you refer it to the minister's office?

Mr NICHOLLS: In respect of that, I am absolutely happy to investigate the details if I am unaware of them. Obviously in instances where the results are unsatisfactory or they are as has been described by the Leader of the Opposition, I extend my sympathies and my condolences. We do everything we can to provide support to patients in those circumstances to ensure that where possible the support that is necessary is provided. I am very happy to extend that offer again today.

That is also why we are investing in new hospitals. That is why we have put more than a billion dollars into the Queensland Ambulance Service to deliver 200 more vehicles and to deliver 230 more ambulance officers—paramedics—throughout the state in order to be able to respond more quickly, because it is in fact the person in the community that the Ambulance Service does not have visibility of who is of most concern to us. So, Leader of the Opposition, I am absolutely prepared and happy to investigate that further and offer my condolences to the people in the chamber whom you have brought along today.

Health System

Mr MILES: My question is to the Minister for Health. After Patrick's parents drove him to Redland Hospital he was transferred by ambulance to the PA Hospital, where there was no bed available for him. I table a document released to the family which shows that the PA Hospital told Redland that Patrick should not be sent.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 19 March 2026, titled 'Progress Notes' [1605].

Can the minister advise why Patrick was sent to the PA Hospital against advice?

Mr NICHOLLS: Obviously I have not had an opportunity to peruse the document that has been tabled. As I have indicated to the Leader of the Opposition, I am personally unaware of the circumstances in relation to this. If it has been referred to my office—and it may well have been—my office will no doubt have passed that on to the appropriate person—usually the chief executive of Metro South—for investigation, for response and for advice. That is our invariable practice within 24 hours. I believe, if my office is aware of it, that that would have occurred.

I cannot explain or answer for decisions made operationally on the ground by our staff in these circumstances. What I can say in relation to the PA Hospital is that the construction of the additional beds at the PA Hospital is now running ahead of schedule so that the Hospital Rescue Plan that we have put in place will deliver more beds at the PA Hospital. It will also repair—fix—the issues that have been discovered there, including the failure to ensure that the fire suppression system in the PA Hospital is satisfactory, and we have had to invest more money to fix 10 years of maintenance failure in respect of that. We have had to invest more money in the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems because none of those had been repaired for a decade. We are also investing in a new kitchen so that the people who are at the PA Hospital receiving care receive the meals that they need from a properly functioning kitchen, which again, upon investigation, had not been properly maintained.

As I said to the Leader of the Opposition—and I extend the offer to the family who are here today—I am more than happy to investigate and to respond and if there have been failures in the delivery of healthcare services they will be addressed, as they always are. However, I want to emphasise: none of the people who go to work for Queensland Health in our emergency departments go there other than with the best of intentions to deliver services. All of them—even on their toughest days—go to work, front up and make the effort to care for those 1.6 million people who come through the doors every year in our hospital service.

The fact that there are not enough beds because there are a thousand stranded Australians taking up beds in our hospitals—the PA is one of them, as is Redlands, which is another one where the Premier and I launched the 'stranded Australians' program—is not the fault of those doctors and nurses and nor is it the fault of the people who expect care. Rather, it is the fault of a federal government that

is not funding aged care, that is not providing primary care and that continues to avoid its obligations. Whilst Queensland Health and Queensland are stepping up to the mark, this federal government fault continues to be a problem. To reiterate, we will investigate. If something has been done wrong, we will act to fix it and we support and provide care for patients in those circumstances.

Community Safety

Mrs POOLE: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. How is the Queensland LNP government continuing to make Queensland safer, and is the Premier aware of any policies that put the rights of offenders before the rights of victims during a decade of decline?

Mr CRISAFULLI: What a great question from someone who has dedicated much of her life to keeping her community safe and someone who has also been at the forefront of being that messenger into the community, and I acknowledge the great work of the now member for Mudgeeraba in her former role with the Queensland Police Service. The member asks: what are we doing? Everything we are doing is about putting victims ahead of offenders—everything we are doing—and today there is yet another opportunity for this parliament to embark on the next wave of putting victims ahead of offenders.

The member asked: what are we doing? It is simple: it is stronger laws, more police, early intervention and rehabilitation, and all four of those areas were epic failures for those opposite. We have a long way to go, but when I see the improvement I know that we are finally as a state on the right track because of stronger laws, because of early intervention, because of rehabilitation and because of more police. When I see independent reports from the likes of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Insurance Council and look at independent police data, all of them are pointing—for the first time in a long time after a decade when victim numbers increased by 193 per cent—finally to a glimmer of hope and finally a turn in the right direction, but we must keep going.

When I visit the member's community, as I did again on the weekend, what do people say? They say, 'Keep going.' Today we have an opportunity again to now fix a broken parole system after the work that the minister has done and an independent review that was launched. As I said, we now have a detailed opportunity to fix what those opposite broke. The honourable member for Logan can shake his head, but he is part of the guilty party. He is part of a former government that broke the parole system. Today is about keeping dangerous prisoners behind bars for longer, because the restricted prisoner laws were too restrictive which put the rights of crooks ahead of the rights of victims. Government has changed and so has the attitude of this parliament towards victims. We put them first. As the minister said earlier today, victim safety will be paramount. How could those opposite argue against that? How can they come into this place and vote against Adult Crime, Adult Time? How can they stand by and watch victims' rights trodden on for a generation? Things are changing—stronger laws, more police, early intervention and rehabilitation.

Health System

Mr DICK: My question is to the Minister for Health. Before being sent to the PA Hospital, a CT scan found Patrick had a cancerous brain tumour. Can the minister advise why Patrick was ramped at the PA Hospital for more than four hours in this condition after the PA Hospital said he should not be sent there?

Mr NICHOLLS: I say again in relation to Patrick Gemzik and his mother, who are here: if something has gone wrong we are more than happy to investigate. If my office has received it, that investigation will be underway. In the event that the investigation occurs—as the members for Woodridge and Murrumba both well know—the Hospital and Health Boards Act prevents the disclosure of identifying patient materials and information. They would know that if they had done their job. They would know that if they had an ounce of common sense. They would also know that their government presided over a failure to provide adequate hospital beds and saw ambulance ramping increase to the worst quarterly rate in Queensland's history.

What are we doing about it? In the last quarter, we saw the lowest ramping since COVID. In many areas—for example, the Gold Coast—we saw the lowest ramping rate in a decade. While those opposite presided over a ramping rate going up, we are working night and day to see that number come down. We have not achieved the target yet and there is more work to be done. That is to ensure that we do not have incidents like those which have been referred to by the members for Woodridge and Murrumba today, so those who attend our hospitals get the care they need within the time they need and so we can deliver more services. In doing that, we are also employing an extra 10,000 staff across our workforce.

What do we say in relation to that? It means more hospital beds and a fully funded Hospital Rescue Plan. Today, I have outlined that more construction work is underway, including at the PA Hospital. More money is going into the Ambulance Service—resulting in a lower ramping rate—more transit lounges are being provided and more clinicians are working on the floor. Is the system perfect? No. Is it getting a lot better than how it was left by those opposite? Yes. In respect of those people who have turned up and received an outcome that is not what they hoped for or expected, we will always investigate, seek to improve and deliver better services. In the meantime, we will continue to support everyone who presents to our hospital and health services.

Victims of Crime

Mr DALTON: My question is to the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government continuing to prioritise the safety of victims in Queensland, and is the minister aware of approaches that prioritised offenders over victims during a decade of decline?

Mrs GERBER: This is an excellent question from the member for Mackay. He is another LNP member who has dedicated his life to protecting communities as a former police officer. Today, the Crisafulli government is introducing some of the strongest parole reform laws in the nation to put victims first and to ensure community safety is at the forefront of parole decisions. For too long under the previous Labor government the rights of prisoners came before the rights of victims. For too long the interests of dangerous prisoners competed with the safety of Queenslanders and the rights of victims. This government will always stand on the side of victims.

The member asked about alternative approaches. I want to tell the member the history. Our reforms fix Labor's No Body, No Parole broken laws. Nobody knows the consequences of Labor's failed approach better than a family in the member's own electorate of Mackay—the family of Tim Pullen. Tim disappeared in 2012. He was 34 years old. His body has never been found. His parents, Gary and Leanne, fought for No Body, No Parole reforms because they wanted what any parent would want—to bring their son home—but Labor failed them.

In 2017, Gary and Leanne stood alongside Labor celebrating the laws that they had fought for, the No Body, No Parole laws, but there was something Labor was not telling them. One of the men convicted over Tim's death had already been granted parole. They stood alongside the then corrective services minister, the member for Morayfield, and celebrated Labor's laws. The member for Morayfield knew; his office had been briefed. He had met with the former president of the Parole Board. He knew that Tim's killer had been released on parole and he did not tell the Pullens. He failed to tell them. Leanne describes feeling utterly duped, deceived and used like a political pawn. Labor did not just fail the Pullen family once—they failed them again. By 2022 Tim was still missing and the last man imprisoned over his death was still behind bars, but Labor's botched No Body, No Parole laws stopped applying to him. The Pullens asked for Labor to fix it. Did they fix it? No, they did not. They did nothing to fix it and today that killer is free.

The Crisafulli government is reforming those laws. We are ensuring we fix Labor's loopholes in the No Body, No Parole laws. We are ensuring we have some of the strongest parole laws in the nation, because the rights of victims should always come before the rights of offenders.

Health System

Mr BAILEY: My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the minister apologise to Patrick Gemzik and his family for the failures he experienced?

Mr NICHOLLS: I now have an opportunity to provide more information to the House in relation to this matter. As the Leader of the Opposition stated in his first question, this matter occurred in March this year. The matter came to my office. On Sunday, 29 March—the day it was received—it was immediately referred by my office to both Metro South Health and the Queensland Ambulance Service for appropriate action. I have been advised that on 2 April both the QAS and Metro South Health reached out to Ms Gemzik to discuss the matter, offer a meeting to discuss the issues and request any specific questions she needed answered. She was also referred to the PA Hospital patient liaison line.

I have been advised that, on 30 April, the commissioner of the QAS wrote to Ms Gemzik and noted that she had been contacted on 2 April to discuss her concerns, that on 27 April the QAS provided Ms Gemzik with the outcome of the review and that she was appreciative of the information. As at 7 May, Mr Gemzik remained an inpatient at the Princess Alexandra Hospital within the Brain Injury Brain Rehabilitation Unit, as has been described. The matter was reviewed on 24 April and PA Hospital

remains engaged with Mr Gemzik and family in relation to his care, noting family meetings were scheduled for 11 May 2026. There are other details which I am not at liberty to discuss because they go to patient confidentiality. This matter was dealt with immediately and action was undertaken by my office.

As always, when the outcome is unsatisfactory from a consumer's perspective, we try to find out the story and the truth behind it. We look at the clinical notes and arrange for interviews and discussions to occur so that people can be assured that their concerns are taken on board and that there are opportunities for improvement. I understand that Mr Gemzik is running a GoFundMe page. There is currently about $23,000 in donations on that page, which has been running since the middle of this year. I would encourage those who feel they can to support and go to that GoFundMe page.

This matter has been dealt with appropriately and compassionately by both the QAS and Metro South. We seek to learn at all times, and if the family feels that the care provided was not up to standard then, of course, we seek to do better every time.

Justice System

Mr HUNT: My question is to the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering tougher consequences for violent criminals, and is the minister aware of any approaches that failed to deliver consequences for actions during a decade of decline?

Mrs GERBER: That is another excellent question from another LNP member who has dedicated his life to protecting Queensland communities. As a former police officer, the member for Nicklin has locked up crooks and now he can proudly stand with a government that is keeping the worst of the worst offenders in Queensland behind bars for longer, with some of the strongest parole laws in the nation. We are empowering the Parole Board to deliver decisions in line with community expectations. Under our laws, the most dangerous offenders who commit the most heinous crimes, including domestic violence, murder, child killing and rape, could stay locked up for life. Under Labor's narrow restricted prisoner framework it only applied to child killers and people who murdered more than once. These reforms from the Crisafulli government are about restoring confidence in the parole system, a parole system that for too long under the two failed former ministers on the other side failed victims.

Labor reviewed the Parole Board three times. They kept two of those reviews secret from Queenslanders, at a cost of $1.18 million. Even when the current president of the Parole Board asked the Leader of the Opposition to see those reviews so he could do his job, the Leader of the Opposition said no. He continues to keep those reviews secret. The Crisafulli government has conducted an independent review of the Parole Board, we have made it public and today we are going to implement the recommendations to put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders. Under the former Labor government the Parole Board president was referred to the CCC, the board was operating at half capacity for months with no president and, as recently as August this year, members of Labor were wearing T-shirts with slogans that put the rights of prisoners before victims: 'All my homies hate prisons'. Is it any wonder they continue to put the rights of prisoners and crooks ahead of the rights of victims?

The most shocking part of all of this is that victims were left in the dark. The rights of victims in the parole process and community safety were not prioritised. Our reforms mean the rights of victims are now prioritised. It gives victims the opportunity to appear before the Parole Board. It allows for the Parole Board to publish decisions. The Parole Board have to consider community safety as the paramount consideration. Labor did not do that. Their laws did not make community safety a paramount consideration. Imagine that, in a parole process that is meant to protect the community. Every change we make is about protecting victims and keeping Queensland communities safe. Since coming to government we have not only restored stability in the Parole Board, with more Parole Board members and a new Parole Board president, but also strengthened the laws to safeguard the community, and now we are delivering nation-leading reform to put victims first.

Ambulance Service

Ms GRACE: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. The QAS CAD system update forced QAS staff to manually dispatch ambulances for between 12 and 24 hours. Can the minister advise if his office or the Ambulance Service briefed the Acting Premier or the Acting Premier's office on this significant event prior to the Acting Premier's media conference on 4 September?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for McConnel for her question, and I want to acknowledge the fact that she is the mouthpiece not only for the CFMEU but also for the United Workers Union.

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

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, would you withdraw your comment, please?

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, I withdraw. I am happy to advise that the Deputy Premier was, of course, fully briefed on the circumstances, as was I. I want to set the record straight in relation to the Queensland Ambulance Service. In doing so I want to note, and I think the House should note with disgust—with absolute disgust—the claims made by the member for Miller in a report in the *Courier-Mail*, and I think also broadcast on the Channel 10 news that evening, where the member for Miller, when asked about the QAS issuing a statement on Thursday saying the dispatch system was fine, said they had lied. This is a direct quote.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I understand you are reading directly from a document. Would you withdraw the unparliamentary language?

Mr NICHOLLS: I am happy to withdraw 'lied'. The quote speaks for itself. Then the member says, 'I've no doubt in my mind that they were'—unparliamentary word—'if they said everything was fine.' He said, 'I have absolutely no faith in anybody who said that yesterday because clearly they knew that there were problems.' That is the member for Miller. The history of the shadow minister for health is disgraceful. He went to Toowoomba—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I have two points of order. Firstly, I take personal offence and ask that those comments be withdrawn.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I will deal with the first point of order. Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, will you withdraw?

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Miller, what is your second point of order?

Mr BAILEY: Simply relevance.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: In relation to your second point of order, I have been listening carefully to the Minister for Health's response and I believe he is being relevant.

Mr NICHOLLS: In relation to the CAD system, where the member for Miller in his usual fashion set about demeaning and belittling the hardworking staff in the QAS, just as he did in Toowoomba when he falsely claimed that surgeries had been cancelled and he posted it all, because he loves getting onto his social media and fiddling around with his digits, and then had to withdraw—but where did he withdraw from?

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question was not put by the member for Miller; it was put by the member for McConnel. To engage in a political attack on the member for Miller, I submit to you, is irrelevant.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: The point of order is relevance.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on the point of order. The minister is being relevant. He is challenging the veracity of the information that has been put in relation to the issue as posed to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I will seek some advice. Thank you for your points of order, Manager of Opposition Business and Leader of the House. I have been listening to the Minister for Health and there was a specific part of that question which he has 30 seconds more to respond to. If you could do that, please, Minister for Health.

Mr NICHOLLS: Just to conclude my last comments before I come to respond, we know that the member for Miller did not like admitting he was wrong. He apologised to the people of Toowoomba on his Bluesky account. No-one even knows what that is. Talk about a Foghorn Leghorn!

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. You asked the minister to be relevant.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, you have five seconds to conclude your answer. Please remain relevant to the question.

Mr NICHOLLS: No triple 0 calls were affected. The system worked as it was meant to work. The system continues to work, with 50,000 people seen over the last five days.

Justice System

Mr FIELD: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering the laws required to keep dangerous offenders off Queensland streets, and is the Attorney aware of any alternate policies during a decade of decline?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I love getting a question in this House from the member for Capalaba. He has lived through pain and trauma as a victim. Each and every day, we on this side of the House do everything to put victims and community safety first and foremost. I am really pleased that, while the first bill the Crisafulli government introduced in this House was in relation to Adult Crime, Adult Time, today the first-ever Minister for Victim Support will introduce some of the toughest parole laws in the nation. This means a huge amount to victims because they were waylaid under the former Labor government. The former Labor government pretended they were fixing the parole system by tinkering around the edges. They were dragged kicking and screaming by a former detective and now police minister, the member for Ninderry, to make some changes to the parole system. Then what did they do? They got it completely wrong!

A government member: They botched it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They botched it; I take that interjection. Today is an extremely important day for many families across this state who are considering what will happen to their loved ones when a dangerous prisoner is released on parole. Of course, I am taking about Gerard Baden-Clay. I want to talk about that beautiful woman, Allison Dickie, who was my deputy school captain and played the piano at our school assemblies. I have been talking to my girlfriends from school. I thank the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services on behalf of all of my school friends and on behalf of Vanessa Fowler, Kerry-Anne Walker and Mark Ainsworth, who is an incredible police officer. Alongside the Dickie family, they have been fighting to ensure justice for the victims of that gross human being. That is exactly what we are doing here today. It is a wonderful day. I very much thank those people.

However, they are not the only victims. There are so many other victims who will be able to rest easy. They will not have to make victim impact statements year after year. Dangerous serious sexual offenders should remain behind bars because, if they are given life, life should mean life. That is what the Crisafulli government say. Those opposite constantly say that the offender should be let free. We say enough is enough. It is about time to put the rights of victims first. Today is another example of the Crisafulli government doing exactly what we said we were going to do.

Ambulance Service

Ms McMAHON: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. The minister said that the government was '... not aware of any reports that anyone has made that they've had to drive themselves because they were unable to get through to triple 0.' Does the minister stand by that statement?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Macalister for the question as it allows me to address some of the mistakes and myths that were being pushed by those opposite during the transfer of the QAS's call-taking and dispatch systems to a new computer-aided dispatch system. We have to go back in time to see why that was necessary. In 2021 Labor disbanded the public sector business agency and transferred all call-taking and dispatch systems for emergency services to the Queensland Police Service. The Queensland Police Service were left with outdated and ineffective technology. In 2022, being the forward-thinking organisation that they are, the Police Service said they could not maintain that and that they needed to move on. They made submissions to the government about how that should occur, but, of course, nothing happened. The fire brigade, the Queensland Police Service and the QAS were on a legacy system that was failing and falling over more and more frequently.

Upon coming to office, I was advised of the project to transfer the call-taking and dispatch systems to a new CAD system. We funded the project to proceed because we wanted the Ambulance Service to have the best possible means of being dispatched to people. There was a lengthy process. It took about a year or so of preparation to source the vendor. The same organisation that supplies our CAD system also supplies New South Wales. It is a large American organisation with expertise in that area. The changeover was planned and carefully—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I submit to you that the question was not asking for an explanation of the issue. It was asking whether or not the minister stood by comments he had made about this previously. My point of order is on relevance.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The minister is providing the broad context with respect to the question as asked. He is providing a contextual basis and I am sure that he is coming to the other elements of the question in his response.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Miller, I do not need your support in this decision-making process. Members, thank you for your points of order. I have been anticipating this point of order. The Minister for Health was asked if he stands by his statement about a state of mind. The minister is entitled to provide context and background to the answer that he gave previously. The minister is doing so and being relevant in answering the question.

Mr NICHOLLS: There was careful planning including a contingency plan or, if you like, a business continuity plan in case something went wrong because sometimes things do not go exactly as planned. After six hours on the new program, the business continuity plan was enacted. It was enacted because there was a slowdown in the processing time for the new software program.

No triple 0 calls went unanswered. No ambulances were not dispatched. There was a period, I think, in Hervey Bay when there was a delay in an ambulance reaching a person who was triaged as a 1C, as I understand it. That was because there were 23 code 1s on at the same time. Those were the circumstances there. In Biggenden, a person who was experiencing an episode and felt unwell called the ambulance. They were under the care of the clinical hub but a police officer who happened to be in the vicinity offered to drive them to the hospital. Well done to the police officer and thank you for doing that. No-one was not under care at any stage.

I stood up and spoke on the Friday morning, after the Deputy Premier referred the matter to me, as is appropriate, to get the fuller detail. The advice I received was that no-one had missed out on an episode of care. All people were under care and, as reported to me at that time, no-one had had to drive themselves to a hospital. That was the information I had at 10.30 or 11 am in Sydney on Friday morning.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, member for Miller! You are warned under the standing orders. Your interjections and quarrelling have been consistent and disorderly.

Community Safety, Police Resources

Mr McDONALD: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. How is the Crisafulli LNP government giving police the resources they need to keep Queenslanders safe from violent offenders, and is the minister aware of any policies that failed to keep them away from innocent Queenslanders during a decade of decline?

Mr PURDIE: I thank the member for the question. We have another former police officer asking a question today. The member has dedicated his adult life to protecting Queenslanders, particularly victims of crime, not only when on the front line but also for the whole time he has been in this place. I am proud to be part of the Crisafulli government, which has as our highest priority the safety and security of our citizens. We are not just doing what we said we were going to do in opposition; we are continuing to do what we did in opposition.

The LNP were in opposition when the Kingi family, who live in my electorate, contacted me and led the campaign, which received over 72,000 signatures, calling on the government of the time to stop the release of Barrie Watts. We all know the tragic circumstances that led to the torture and murder of Sian Kingi on the Sunshine Coast. That is what we did in opposition. It is not just about doing what we said we were going to—we have always done that. As a police officer, the member did it on the front line and we did it in opposition. We are proud to do that. When in government, Labor were dragged kicking and screaming to address keeping Barrie Watts in custody, but they just tweaked at the edges of the system.

That is why I am proud to be part of this government, and I acknowledge the minister. Today we are acting again and it is our highest priority. We are not only protecting people from knife crime with Jack's Law, protecting children from paedophiles with Daniel's Law or protecting Queenslanders from serious repeat violent juvenile offenders. We are also protecting Queenslanders and getting justice for those offended against through the most heinous of crimes, the unlawful killing of a loved one or a serious sex offence. Those criminals are the worst of the worst. We will continue to do everything we can to punish and hold perpetrators to account, and to stand with and get justice for victims.

In stark contrast to those opposite, we will stand with victims. We will not stand on them and we will not deceive them. In 2017, when Labor announced their No Body, No Parole laws, which they botched, they took advantage of a vulnerable family who are still searching for answers: the Pullen family, whom I have met with. We now know that the police minister at the time, the member for Morayfield, knew when he stood with that family that he was providing them with false hope that they would be eligible for those laws. Today, we are righting that wrong. I acknowledge the Crisafulli government for continuing to do what we did in opposition, what we said we were going to do. We will always stand with victims of crime. We will always hold perpetrators to account. We will not rest until we get justice for those people, particularly those victims of crime who have suffered the most heinous of crimes. I call on those opposite to support our tough laws.

Palmer, Mr C

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Premier. Billionaire Clive Palmer, who recently rebranded his coal company, has donated thousands of dollars to Labor and the LNP and had three separate meetings with the Premier. Is the Premier's pro-coal stance influenced by his close relationship with Clive Palmer?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the honourable member for the question. The honourable member asked a question about someone who is indeed a member of a different political party to mine, as is the honourable member. I will say one thing to the honourable member: people who are members of different political parties can have different political views. He and I do have different political views on coal. I am very pro the mineral. I believe it is vital for this state and for this nation, and I want to see more of it. I will explain why I want to see more of it.

Firstly, coal plays a massive role in steelmaking. We should be very proud of the role that we play in metallurgical coal, and we are unashamedly open for business. Let me address thermal coal. Queensland has the best thermal coal in the globe. It is mined to the highest environmental standards. Workers are paid the best and they are the safest. Why on earth would we prevent supplying a market that exists from this state wherever that market exists? The only thing we could do by stopping the coal industry in Queensland is make a political point at the altar of environmental stupidity, and we are not prepared to do that. There are hardworking people in this state who have a job because of the coal industry. This government is pro coal. We are very proud of that.

This government is also pro critical minerals, and we will continue to drive that. This government is also pro agriculture, and we are building more water security because of it and giving farmers the right to run their land. This government is pro tourism, and that is why we are prepared to go in and use our environmental opportunities in a sensible and dignified way and create jobs for the next generation. This government is pro environmental research and pro medical. This government is pro new wave opportunities for things like data centres where there are opportunities to do it in a safe way and bring on additional power. This government is pro defence, and I know that is also contrary to the member.

I understand that the member and I have different views and different values. I respect his right to have his. He puts them forward in a respectful and a forceful way, but we have very different views. I say to the honourable member: I will always stand up for opportunities. For anyone who wants to invest in Queensland, I will always stand up for that right. We have strong environmental standards and we should not waver on that. We should set them and be proud of them.

The days of a government, which those opposite presided over, finding new ways to stop opportunities for things like mining, tourism and agriculture because of ideology are over. This government will always stand up and provide opportunities for anyone to invest in Queensland, even if they are our political opponents.

Workplace Safety

Miss DOOLAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning—

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Lytton, you are warned under the standing orders. Members will be heard in silence when they are asking questions. Please start your question again, member for Pumicestone.

Miss DOOLAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. Further revelations regarding the conduct of the CFMEU continue to shock Queenslanders. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering safe worksites, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any policies that allowed bad behaviour to flourish during a decade of decline under those opposite?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the honourable member for Pumicestone for the question. Everybody in this chamber knows that this member works more than nine to five every day of the week. She is a trooper not only for young people but also for her constituency. She is also a member, I might say, who has experienced a level of harassment like no other. I was there in the pre-poll and on election day when this member experienced the harassment of the Labor Party thugs, the Labor Party union members. I would say there would have been CFMEU members participating in the election campaign orchestrated by not only the Labor Party but also the former member, Ali King.

Mr O'Connor: Currently advising the opposition leader.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the housing minister. It was such a vicious campaign against the youngest woman ever elected to parliament, and what did the opposition leader do? He employed her in his office. Ali King is now employed in the opposition leader's office. That is what they do—promote the people who are vicious and deal out the harassment.

We will not tolerate it. We will not tolerate it in Queensland. We will not tolerate it on construction sites. That is why we have the CFMEU royal commission. I have to say that people should look at some of the testimony that has been given recently, particularly by hardworking public servants. Amanda Yeates, a former deputy director-general of TMR, said—

At that point, Mr Ingham said he would stop at nothing to destroy me.

Ms Yeates also gave evidence to the inquiry that the CFMEU knew the names of her children, their locations, what they had been doing, the sports they played and where her daughter caught the local bus. When Ms Yeates was asked at the commission about the former minister, the member for Miller, and his behaviour—because he was in the meetings when this happened—she said—

I felt that he was perhaps suggesting that this was just the way they operated and that it was—what he really wanted was for me to keep them happy.

That was the response from the former deputy director-general of TMR, Amanda Yeates, about being in a room and being verbally abused by the CFMEU. She alleges the former minister, the member for Miller, just said it was unions being unions, dismissed it and wanted her to keep them happy. The Labor Party lecture people about women and abuse of women. Show leadership! Where was the leadership from the member for Miller? Where has he been and why has he not stood up and explained himself? He did a press conference the other day. Did he explain himself and these allegations that have been raised? Then it went on. With regard to then minister Bailey's staff, Ms Yeates said—

I felt there was a perception—

by then minister Bailey's staff—

that—almost a, you know, "This is all just for show. It's a bit of showmanship. Put up with that and then get to the heart of the real issues and just have discussions around the BPIC and keep them happy."

I would say to the member for Miller and the opposition leader: this is not a show. These are real people—real women who have been victimised by the CFMEU. The Crisafulli government will not tolerate it. It is a shame you did not do the same.

Toowoomba Hospital, Maternity Services

Ms HOWARD: My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister advise when he was first made aware of the third placental abruption death at the Toowoomba maternity unit?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for the question, and I also commend the hardworking staff—the midwives, nurses, obstetricians and gynaecologists and the administration—at the Toowoomba Hospital for the work they do, delivering more than 2,700 babies every year. Throughout the Darling Downs and beyond, it is the place to go. Since the private sector has ceased providing those services, the public sector and our hardworking teams have stepped up.

Of course, that service will only get better as we continue with the Hospital Rescue Plan, which will see a brand new Toowoomba hospital built at the Baillie Henderson site. It will all be on one site, unlike Labor's failed capacity expansion program which would have had doctors travelling 30 to 40

minutes between the old city site and the new Baillie Henderson site and patients travelling even more and would not have had the integrated electronic medical records system. What possibly could have gone wrong in those circumstances!

The team there do a tremendous job delivering those services. Birthing is still a very fraught process, and I think sometimes we forget how significantly modern medicine has changed the process of giving birth since the Second World War. However, there are still instances where it does not go according to plan. Placental abruption is not a result of any medical intervention; it occurs during birth or it can occur at a number of different times during gestation. People who experience a placental abruption call an ambulance and get transferred to hospital for treatment. It is not something that occurs during the process; it is something that occurs during gestation in the lead-up to birth.

It is up to our hardworking clinicians to respond to that emergency in a way that is caring, compassionate and women centred. It is an emergency. It is a serious emergency. One cannot understate the degree of seriousness, and it has to be dealt with quickly. When it occurs, it is important that the teams are ready to go, and in Toowoomba they are ready to go.

It can be the case that the baby loses their life when a placental abruption occurs, despite best efforts. That is the reality of it. With that sort of presentation in an operating theatre in an emergency department with three or four clinicians and probably 10 or 12 nurses, it is a very strenuous and difficult situation. We undertook the maternity assurance review earlier this year to ensure we are delivering the best services.

Building and Construction Industry, Workplace Safety

Ms HATCHER: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering skills and training to support more women in the construction industry, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any instances where violent and misogynistic behaviours dominated during a decade of decline?

Mr BLEIJIE: Absolutely. We are building $119 billion of infrastructure over the next four years—the biggest infrastructure spend in Queensland's history. We are building a brand new TAFE centre of excellence in the electorate of Caloundra. We love seeing that coming up out of the ground. We need the young people to go through it so they can build the $119 billion of infrastructure in the future, whether it is road and rail, hospitals under the Hospital Rescue Plan, education facilities under the department or Olympic and Paralympic infrastructure, which the Labor Party seem to oppose now. I put it to the House that I think the Labor Party will cut infrastructure projects across the state, because that is what they are posting about at the moment.

To tackle the issue of misogyny, bullying and intimidation on construction sites, we have to tackle the CFMEU. Those who benefited for 10 years from the CFMEU's influence in Queensland have to stand up and respond to the serious allegations that have been raised. I was talking before about the member for Miller. I say to the member for Miller that it is his lucky day. I have just been told the member for Miller is doing a press conference later on a health issue. I say to the honourable member for Miller—

Mr Nicholls: Is he on life support?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection; maybe it is his unlucky day, not his lucky day. Here are some questions the member for Miller should be answering today. With respect to testimony given by Ms Yeates, did he or did he not tell Amanda Yeates and other public servants, particularly females, to accept what the unions say because it keeps them happy? Did he say that? That is the testimony that was given.

Did he know that the CFMEU were about to storm the TMR building? He sat in his office—in the coward's castle—as his public servant and a security guard were pushed over by the CFMEU. Did he know that the CFMEU were going to storm the TMR building? Did he warn his department and public servants that it was going to happen? Did he say, as alleged, when asked about the CFMEU, 'This is unions just being unions'? What is his response to the serious allegations being raised in the CFMEU commission of inquiry? Even Julie Mitchell, a deputy director-general from transport and main roads, gave testimony that because it was government policy to support the CFMEU—

... the contractors were, I believe, worried that the CFMEU were fully supported by government ...

There is a bigger question the member for Miller must answer today when he stands up: why did he put the rights of the CFMEU above women public servants? They were victims in the 10 years of the former Labor government.

Toowoomba Hospital, Maternity Services

Ms MULLEN: My question is to the Minister for Health. Maternity advocates and affected mothers continue to call for a part 9 investigation into the mistreatment of mothers and three infant deaths at the Toowoomba maternity unit. Will the minister launch a part 9 investigation into the Toowoomba maternity unit today?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: You have two minutes, Minister.

Mr NICHOLLS: The Labor Party continue to belittle and denigrate the hardworking staff in our Hospital and Health Services. They allege mistreatment. They make allegations without a shred of evidence. They turn up here and continue to undermine the hard work being done by the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service. That is their aim. It started with the member for Miller. After he had been facilitated a visit and briefed by the health service chief executive, he stood outside and made a false claim. He said that surgeries had been cancelled when they had not. He got the numbers wrong. He got the process wrong. Having posted it on his digital driver, he then had to apologise. Instead of using the same vehicle he used to get the message out, he went onto some other app that has three people watching—God help those three people.

We know the member for Miller's form. He has had to apologise in here for misleading the House. He does not respect the House. He does not respect hospital and health services staff, despite the courtesy they provided him.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question was addressed to the Minister for Health. It was about a specific inquiry that he could launch today. My point of order is on relevance.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health, there was reference to a part 9 investigation into the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service. Could you come back to that part of the question, please?

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I will come back to the part 9. They continue to denigrate the hard work of the staff by making unsubstantiated allegations. I have explained the work that goes on in that hospital, which deals with some of the most difficult and complex presentations around birthing. As a result of matters raised by concerned members of the public and by some consumers, we sought an assurance review of the five previous reviews into the Toowoomba maternity unit, including a secret one in 2018 that had not been released by those opposite. The assurance review was to ensure recommendations of those previous investigations and reviews were implemented and that we were delivering the services that they need. That is the review that the director-general recommended. That is the review that was undertaken. That is the review that is being implemented. People can have confidence in the Toowoomba maternity services.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Resources Industries, Critical Minerals

Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (11.27 am): I rise to make an urgent ministerial statement. I spoke earlier this morning about my recent trade mission to the United States and the opportunities to unlock Queensland's critical minerals to the world. Following my trade mission, I am heartened to tell the House that a deal that will supercharge Queensland's critical minerals and see Queensland tungsten used to deliver security for the globe has just been announced.

Australian-based company EQ Resources joined us on our trade mission, with a view to working together to drive more investment in Queensland. Following the meetings held on this trade mission, EQ Resources has announced that tungsten from its Mount Carbine mine in Far North Queensland in the electorate of Cook will be manufactured at a US-based processing plant. When I say Queensland is open for business, this is what I mean. When I say we want to drive jobs in regional Queensland, this is what I mean. When I say the world is seeing what Queensland is doing at the moment, this is what I mean. This is a big deal for the state.

With the backing of the US government, the processing plant will be a joint venture, taking Queensland's tungsten and preparing it for use in more than 100 US Defense programs. In total, 4,000 tonnes of tungsten will be supplied over eight years. For Queensland this means the Mount Carbine

mine will expand, with more jobs and more opportunities. It means EQ Resources will expedite the recommercialisation of Wolfram Camp, also in Far North Queensland, and look at expanding to further sites.

Currently, the world's supply of tungsten is dominated by one country—and this deal will deliver an alternative source and it will mean greater global stability. This deal will see Queensland tungsten enter the global supply chain, serving the aerospace, defence, energy and advanced manufacturing sectors. The US has confirmed the deal will support Defense operations across their fleet of F-35 jets, Patriot missiles and Virginia and Columbia-class submarines. The deal is a significant vote of confidence in our state. We have already been streamlining the approval processes required to support projects like this. This will continue to drive investment in Queensland jobs.

Securing investment in shovel-ready Queensland projects is the very reason I travelled to the United States. Deals like this sit at the heart of what the meeting with the vice-president was about—projects where Queensland has the minerals to provide and a government they can work with, and the message we are clearly getting back is that the world likes what they see under a fresh approach. This deal sends a strong message: Queensland can compete on the world stage. We have a long way to go to repair a decade of decline that we inherited. This state needed a fresh start, and this government is delivering it on the global stage.

MOTION

Business Program

Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.31 am): In accordance with sessional order 3A, I move—

1. That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Criminal Code (Dangerous Driving) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages as follows:
   - (a) second reading debate, with separate questions being put in regard to the second readings;
   - (b) consideration of the bills in detail together; and
   - (c) separate questions being put for the third readings and long titles.
2. That the following business will be considered this sitting week within the times as specified:
   - (a) the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill:
     - (i) minister to be called on in reply by 4.30 pm today;
     - (ii) all stages to be completed by 5 pm today.
   - (b) the Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill:
     - (i) minister to be called on in reply by 12.30 pm on Thursday, 17 September 2026;
     - (ii) all stages to be completed by 1 pm on Thursday, 17 September 2026.
   - (c) the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Criminal Code (Dangerous Driving) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (cognate debate):
     - (i) minister to be called on in reply by 8.20 pm on Thursday, 17 September 2026;
     - (ii) all stages to be completed by 9 pm on Thursday, 17 September 2026.
   - (d) two government motions to be moved by the Leader of the House immediately after matters of public interest today in relation to the application of the same question rule to government bills.
   - (e) a government motion to be moved by the Leader of the House—a total of two members, with five minutes for each member.
3. If all stages of the bills have not been completed by the specified times, Mr Acting Speaker:
   - (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes, any statement of compatibility or any override declaration to their circulated amendments; and
   - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill including clauses and schedules en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill without further amendment or debate.

The purpose of a business program motion is to provide a clear and orderly framework for the consideration of government business. This occurs during each and every sitting week. This motion identifies the legislation to be considered this sitting week and establishes when the business is to be completed. It provides certainty and clarity to members, assists them to prepare their contributions and ensures the effective management of the House.

The program provides for the completion of important legislation concerning Queensland's container refund scheme, the government's Circuit Breaker youth justice reforms and also matters pertaining to road safety. The time allocated provides members with meaningful opportunities to contribute, examine the proposed reforms and address matters identified throughout the parliamentary process.

The motion also provides, in accordance with standing order 172, for the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Criminal Code (Dangerous Driving) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages. Without pre-empting the substantive debate on these bills, it is appropriate to briefly explain why their cognate consideration is sensible and pragmatic.

The bills form complementary parts of the government's broader road safety reform agenda and address closely connected issues involving dangerous and unlawful conduct on Queensland roads. The Criminal Code bill proposes to modernise Queensland's dangerous-driving framework and strengthen the consequences for serious and aggravated offending. The transport bill addresses associated road safety matters including drink and drug driving, combined drink and drug driving, extreme speeding and seatbelt offences. There is a clear relationship between the subject matter of the bills.

Considering the bills together will allow members to address these concurrent and overlapping issues comprehensively. It will avoid unnecessary repetition while providing members with a proper opportunity to examine the distinct provisions and policy objectives of each bill. The bills were introduced on the same day, referred to the same parliamentary committee and considered concurrently throughout the committee inquiry process, so a cognate debate is logical when it comes to those matters.

This motion will also facilitate the moving by the Leader of the House of motions relating to the same question rule following matters of public interest today. These are straightforward procedural motions which will provide members with clarity and certainty about the consideration of those matters.

The government legislation listed in this motion is, of course, only part of the important business before the House. There are also matters of public interest and private members' statements. Also, the member for Nudgee will move a disallowance motion later on. The business program motion, therefore, strikes an appropriate balance. It preserves meaningful opportunities for members to contribute while ensuring the House can consider and determine the business before it.

In concluding, I also acknowledge the Dickies, who are in the gallery—Geoff and Priscilla Dickie, as well as Allison Baden-Clay's sister, Vanessa Fowler. It was a pleasure to attend a recent event with them in Brookfield, along with Councillor Greg Adermann. I commend the motion to the House.

Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (11.36 am): The opposition opposes this motion. Quite frankly, on the International Day of Democracy it is outrageous that the Leader of the House should be proposing such a motion stifling democracy. If ever there was a place where we should be seeing democracy in action, it is this place—it is this parliament where there should be ample and healthy debate on every bill amongst members of parliament who have been elected by Queenslanders across this state, where laws are introduced and amply debated, where there is time for inquiry, where laws can be refined through debate and amendment and where they are all the better for the democratic process. I think that is what Queenslanders expect of us, but they would be shocked if they knew how many times the Leader of the House has stood up to propose that debate be truncated on important bills, that there be no consideration in detail so they cannot be interrogated and amendments cannot be made. If they actually knew that this happens every single sitting week on every single bill, they would be absolutely shocked.

From the Premier who said, 'Let the sun shine in,' what in fact is happening is that we are keeping the sunshine out in this state. On almost every single bill there is almost no consideration in detail whatsoever. I am not going to speak on all of the other bills that the Leader of the House just talked us through for which there will be very little debate. Each of those laws is absolutely critical to the Queenslanders to whom they apply. What I can talk about is the youth crime bill and, in this instance, it is the Circuit Breaker bill. This happens on every single one of the youth crime bills. I can attest to that because the Circuit Breaker bill is the fifth youth crime bill we have seen, and we already have a sixth one on the table. It is a default position that we should limit debate on them, that we should limit inquiry on them.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Members to my right!

Ms FARMER: We all know why they are limiting consideration in detail on these bills. We all know why the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support does not want too much debate on them. It is because youth crime is the topic that they made really big promises on before the election. In fact, the Premier staked his leadership on it, so they are absolutely desperate to look good on that and to look like they are taking action. They have their fancy slogans. Each bill is named with a fancy slogan or a set of rhyming words. The cold, plain, hard facts are that their youth crime laws are just not working. Despite all the fudging of figures, what we know from QPS figures is that the number of offences being committed has actually increased by 6.15 per cent in 2026.

They have nowhere else to go on their youth crime laws. We have had one youth crime law after another. First, youth crime was going to be down by the first Christmas after they were elected. Then it was going to take a bit longer. Then we were going to have green shoots. Then we had another piece of legislation brought in. They rig all the questions, go around doing the media and paying for all that government advertising, then they bring in another law, then it is advertised and lots of money is spent telling Queenslanders that everything is working. Madam Deputy Speaker Marr, you only have to go out into your community in particular. You and your fellow members in Far North Queensland are hearing it and we are seeing it on your social media. We see it in every single one of our Facebook community groups.

This minister and this government are desperate to keep on introducing laws so it will look like there is some action being taken, but with every single law Queenslanders are seeing it more and more and they are feeling it. It is their daily experience that those laws are not working, so this minister needs to ensure there is no debate. This minister needs to ensure there is no consideration in detail. This minister needs to ensure there is limited time for debate because she does not want us to ask the tricky questions. We oppose this motion; we support democracy. Let's put it in action this week.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Before I call the member for Mundingburra, I want to remind those members who are on a warning. They are the members for Logan, Miller and Lytton.

Mrs POOLE (Mundingburra—LNP) (11.41 am): I rise in support of the business program motion moved by the Leader of the House. Yes, today is a day of democracy and every voice counts, and this motion supports that. This is about every voice. Yes, we have introduced a number of tranches in relation to Adult Crime, Adult Time. We came into this chamber on the back of Queensland voting for a fresh start. We said that everything we do will be about making Queensland safer, so we are strengthening laws, introducing consequences for actions and putting the rights of victims before the rights of offenders. We have consistently proven that. Every single thing we have done has been about strengthening laws. I would ask the member for Bulimba and those opposite how they are going to vote for the circuit breaker bill. How are you going to vote on Breach Bail, Go to Jail?

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This is a procedural motion, not an opportunity to debate the motion.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mundingburra, that is a point of order I am going to accept. If you could bring it back to the motion, thank you.

Mrs POOLE: This motion is about giving people a voice. This motion is about when debates conclude and when the House makes decisions—

Mr McDonald: Calm and methodical government.

Mrs POOLE: I will take that interjection. It is about a government that is calmly and methodically delivering for Queensland and it is about balance. Everything we do is simply to provide for the orderly management of the business of this House, which is what the people of Queensland have been crying out for for 10 years. After a decade of decline and chaos under the former Labor government, they now have a government that is calm, methodical and balanced. Everything that we—

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

Dr ROWAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is in relation to the point of order from the member for McConnel and is that the member for Mundingburra is being relevant. She is providing context as to the reasons within the procedural motion this government each and every week under its business program motion takes a calm and methodical approach to outline for all members the business program for the week, which includes the legislation, the ability to make speeches and other bits and pieces—

Ms Grace: You never said that.

Dr ROWAN: I hear the member for McConnel interjecting. They do not like the 10 years of decline under the former Labor government—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Member for Moggill, please take your seat. The time allocated for this debate has expired.

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

In division—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the standing and sessional orders, which both set out the provisions for the business program motion and also the word limit on motions to be considered by the House. I draw your attention to the standing orders, which set down the maximum word limit usually applied to motions for which notice has been given. I also draw your attention to a long series of rulings by Speakers that that also applies to motions given without notice. As this motion is without notice under sessional order 3A, I submit to you that consideration should be given to whether or not the motion before the House exceeds the word limit applied in previous Speakers' rulings.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I have sought advice from the Deputy Clerk. I am not going to make a ruling on your point of order right now; I am going to put the motion. I undertake to come back to you and the House with a decision on your point of order once we have had time to fully consider it.

AYES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Hatcher, Head, Hutton, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 33:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Pair: Camm, Enoch

Resolved in the affirmative.

PROTECTING QUEENSLANDERS FROM DANGEROUS PRISONERS AND STRENGTHENING VICTIMS' RIGHTS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Hon. LJ GERBER (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (11.51 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act 2024 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I also table a statement of exceptional circumstances. I nominate the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Protecting Queenslanders from Dangerous Prisoners and Strengthening Victims' Rights Amendment Bill 2026 [1606].

Tabled paper: Protecting Queenslanders from Dangerous Prisoners and Strengthening Victims' Rights Amendment Bill 2026, explanatory notes [1607].

Tabled paper: Protecting Queenslanders from Dangerous Prisoners and Strengthening Victims' Rights Amendment Bill 2026, statement of compatibility with human rights [1608].

Tabled paper: Protecting Queenslanders from Dangerous Prisoners and Strengthening Victims' Rights Amendment Bill 2026, statement of exceptional circumstances [1609].

The Protecting Queenslanders from Dangerous Prisoners and Strengthening Victims' Rights Amendment Bill 2026 delivers major reforms to Queensland's parole system to keep the state's most dangerous offenders behind bars longer, to strengthen community safety and to put the rights of victims

first. A strong parole system must protect the community, give victims confidence that their safety comes first and safely manage offenders as they transition from custody back into the community, because that is what parole should do: safeguard the community.

That makes parole decisions some of the most consequential decisions in the justice system. They determine whether a prisoner remains behind bars or is permitted to serve the remainder of their sentence in the community with supervision and enforceable conditions. For victims and their families, those decisions carry great significance. That is why Queenslanders rightly expect a parole system that recognises the gravity of parole—that it is a privilege, not a right—and that is why any decision regarding parole must properly assess risk, put community safety first and put the rights of victims and their families before the rights of offenders. For too long, Queensland's parole system fell short of these standards.

In 1987 Sian Kingi was abducted, tortured, sexually assaulted and brutally murdered. She was just 12 years old—a daughter, a sister, a young girl who should have had her whole life ahead of her. One of her killers, Barrie Watts, was sentenced to life imprisonment. However, decades later, Sian's family was forced to confront something no family who has endured such an unimaginable loss should ever have to face—the prospect that the man responsible for taking their daughter's life might not serve his whole life sentence—so they fought to keep him behind bars. In doing so, their fight became something much bigger: a fight to change the law so that life means life, to give families like theirs greater certainty that they would not be forced to relive that same trauma time and again.

It took the LNP member for Ninderry's, Dan Purdie, the current police minister, bringing their fight into this parliament to see any action. In 2021 the member for Ninderry tabled a petition signed by more than 72,000 people demanding stronger laws to keep prisoners like Sian's murderer behind bars. The Labor government at the time were dragged into drafting restricted prisoner laws, but they did the bare minimum and continued to prioritise prisoners. Despite overwhelming community response that life should mean life, Labor limited the framework to only a narrow group of life-sentenced prisoners: child killers and multiple murderers.

That meant that life could not mean life for hundreds of murderers sentenced to life imprisonment. Under Labor's narrow laws, life did not mean life for families like Allison Baden-Clay's. Allison was 43, and her family are here in the gallery today. She was a daughter to Geoff and Priscilla, a sister to Vanessa and Ashley, and, most importantly, a mum to three young girls. In April 2012 she was murdered by her husband, Gerard Baden-Clay. The next morning, he reported his wife missing. When police noticed scratches on his face, he deceived them and claimed he had cut himself shaving. While he covered up his actions, Allison's family waited, for 10 agonising days, while hundreds of police and SES volunteers searched day and night for her. Gerard Baden-Clay even joined in on the pretence—driving the streets of Brookfield, acting as though he too was looking for her—but he knew that Allison was never coming home.

Ten days after she disappeared, Allison's body was found 13 kilometres from her home. What followed compounded the cruelty. Gerard Baden-Clay continued to deny what he had done. He persisted with his deception. He perpetuated suggestions that Allison's mental health may have explained her disappearance. He forced the people who loved Allison through a trial where they had to listen to the woman they knew—their daughter, their sister, their mother—being diminished in an attempt to explain away her murder.

The judge who oversaw the trial condemned Gerard Baden-Clay's behaviour. He described his treatment of Allison's memory as reprehensible. He spoke of the grave impact on her family and of the three young girls who had their devoted and loving mother taken from them. Critically, he warned that whatever Baden-Clay might one day say in an application for parole would need to be treated with considerable scepticism.

After two long years, a jury found Gerard Baden-Clay guilty of Allison's murder and he was sentenced to life imprisonment, but for Allison's family a life sentence could never give them back what they had lost. Geoff and Priscilla lost their daughter, Vanessa and Ashley lost their sister and three young girls were left to grow up without their mum. After all they had been through, they deserved the certainty that a life sentence would be treated with the gravity those words carry. However, when the restricted prisoner framework was introduced, Allison's family was left outside it. Gerard Baden-Clay becomes eligible for parole next year. This bill fixes that failure.

Allison's family is not alone. Kelly Wilkinson was just 27 years old—a daughter, a sister to Danielle, who is also here today in the gallery, and a mum to three young children. In the weeks before her death, Kelly was trying to escape a relationship she feared. She had separated from her husband,

Brian Earl Johnston. She had sought help and obtained a domestic violence order. She was trying to build a life for herself and her children away from him. However, in the early hours of 20 April 2021, Johnston came to her home in Arundel armed with a knife and carrying a 20-litre jerry can filled with petrol. Johnston stabbed her, poured petrol over her and set her alight. Horrifically, two of Kelly's children witnessed the attack. Those children lost their mum in circumstances no child should ever have to comprehend. Kelly was 27 years old, and her children have been irreversibly left to grow up without their mother and with that trauma. Johnston eventually pled guilty to Kelly's murder. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, but after 20 years he may become eligible to apply for parole. The families of these victims will never get that chance. There is no parole from their grief, no eligibility date after which their loss comes to an end. The families carry that sentence for life.

If a crime is so serious that the court sentenced an offender to life imprisonment, then our parole laws should recognise the gravity of that sentence. Life should mean life, and this bill does that by expanding the restricted prisoner framework to every prisoner serving a life sentence—every single one. Today, 71 prisoners are captured by the restricted prisoner framework. Under our reforms, 334 life-sentenced prisoners will be captured. We are not just expanding the framework; we are also strengthening it.

Under Labor's laws, a restricted prisoner declaration is discretionary—there is no guarantee one will be made. If one is, there is no minimum period for which that protection must apply. We are changing both. Under this bill, when a life-sentenced prisoner first becomes eligible for parole, a mandatory restricted prisoner declaration will now be made. For the first time, that initial declaration must be made for at least five years and can be for up to 10 years. When the first restricted prisoner declaration ends, subsequent restricted prisoner declarations can be made of up to 10 years. They can be made over and over again. This is a fundamentally stronger framework. It gives victims and their families greater certainty, longer periods without the prospect of another parole application hanging over them and the confidence that a life sentence will be treated with the gravity it deserves. Most importantly, these changes put victims first.

The former government's record on failing to keep the state's most dangerous offenders behind bars does not end with restricted prisoners. There is another part of Queensland's parole laws where the former government had every opportunity to get it right and failed: No Body, No Parole. The principle behind these laws is simple: if you take someone's life, conceal their body and refuse to give their family closure, you should not get the privilege of parole. While that prisoner sits in a cell knowing what they did and where they left their victim, that victim's family is waiting—waiting to know where their son or daughter is, where their husband or wife is or where their mum or dad was left. They are waiting for the chance to bring them home, to lay them to rest and to get closure.

There is one Queensland family whose experience exposes just how badly the former government got these laws wrong: the family of Timothy Pullen. Tim was 34 years old when he disappeared from Mackay in 2012. His body has never been found. Six people were ultimately convicted of Tim's manslaughter, but for Tim's parents, Gary and Leanne, who are watching online right now, and his sisters, Angela, Sherry and Lisa, those convictions did not answer the question that mattered most: where was Tim? They wanted their son and brother back. When the people responsible for his death refused to give them that answer, the Pullen family turned their grief into action, into a fight to change the law.

In August 2017, Gary and Leanne stood alongside the former government's then attorney-general, Yvette D'Ath, and the then corrective services minister, the member for Morayfield, as Labor publicly celebrated its new No Body, No Parole laws. For the Pullens, this was the culmination of years of fighting. Their son was still missing, but now there would be a law designed to give the men responsible for his death every possible incentive to finally tell them where Tim was—or, at least, that is what Labor allowed them to believe. When Gary and Leanne stood beside those Labor ministers, smiling, shaking hands and being congratulated on the laws they had fought so hard to secure, the member for Morayfield knew something they did not. A week earlier his office had been notified that one of the men convicted of Tim's manslaughter had already been granted parole. The member for Morayfield had been briefed, he had met with the then president of the Parole Board, but he later stood beside Gary and Leanne and said nothing. He did not tell the Pullens. He did not tell the Pullens their son's killer had already been granted parole.

When the Pullens eventually found out, Leanne said they felt 'utterly duped', 'deceived' and used 'like a political pawn'. Sadly, that would not be the last time the former Labor government failed the Pullen family. By November 2022, Zane Lincoln was the last of the six people convicted of Tim's

manslaughter still behind bars. Tim was still missing, but inexplicitly, under the former government's laws, Lincoln stopped being a No Body, No Parole prisoner because he argued he had finished serving that part of his sentence. The very reason for No Body, No Parole still existed—Tim had not been found, his family still did not know where he was and the last man imprisoned for his death was still behind bars. However, Labor's laws simply stopped applying.

If a prisoner remains behind bars and the victim remains missing, that prisoner should not escape No Body, No Parole by saying they are now serving a different part of that sentence. This bill makes sure of it. We are fixing Labor's definition of 'period of imprisonment' so that No Body, No Parole applies for the entire period a prisoner remains imprisoned. It means a prisoner cannot wait out one sentence, move on to another and leave No Body, No Parole behind. That is not the only loophole in Labor's laws we are fixing.

Under Labor's laws, a prisoner can escape the No Body, No Parole framework because their victim's missing remains no longer exist. Think about what that means. If a victim is missing and those remains are still somewhere waiting to be found, No Body, No Parole can apply. However, if those same remains have been completely destroyed—burned away, decomposed, taken by animals or otherwise lost to the environment—No Body, No Parole does not apply because it treats them as though there are no longer any missing remains to locate. No Body, No Parole is supposed to give a prisoner every possible incentive to cooperate, to tell the authorities what they know, to tell them early and to give a grieving family the best possible chance of recovering their loved one. Instead, it created a situation where a prisoner could ultimately be better off if their victim's remains were destroyed so completely there was nothing left behind to find.

This is not a hypothetical loophole. This is what happened in the case of Shaun Barker, who was subjected to a prolonged and horrific ordeal. Shaun was assaulted, held captive in a commercial fishing esky for days, denied his freedom and subjected to severe pain and suffering. Shaun never came home. However, it was not until April 2014 that the first parts of his remains were found in a state forest. Around 80 per cent of Shaun's skeletal remains were ultimately recovered but not all of him. Part of his shin was missing, his hands and his feet were missing, and his family never got them back. Matthew Armitage was found responsible for the death and torture of Shaun Barker and interference with his corpse, but in 2023 the Court of Appeal found that 'remains' meant only parts of a victim that still existed and were capable of being located. Under Labor's drafting of No Body, No Parole, Armitage was not a No Body, No Parole prisoner because the remaining parts of Shaun were no longer in existence.

Think about the absurdity of that. Shaun's body had been burned, his remains scattered and his family had never recovered all of him, and the very destruction that denied Shaun's family the chance to bring all of him home was the very reason Labor's No Body, No Parole laws did not apply. In January 2024, Armitage was released on parole, but did Labor fix their laws? No, they did not. The consequences did not end with Shaun Barker; they flowed directly into other cases.

Jay Brodgen was just 21 years old when he disappeared from the Whitsundays in 2007. Jay was a young concreter living and working in Airlie Beach. He disappeared without a trace. His family was left without answers. They did not know where Jay was, they did not know what had happened to him, and most painfully, they did not have his body to bring home to lay to rest. Years passed before the truth about Jay's death began to emerge. Braddon Butler was ultimately convicted of Jay's death and interfering with his corpse. Butler later provided authorities with coordinates identifying where he said Jay's body had been left. However, those coordinates could not bring Jay home; it was too late. He had been dumped and after so long exposed to the conditions at sea, there was no longer any prospect of recovering Shaun. Butler could point to a place on a map and provide the coordinates, but Jay's family could not recover their son. Because Jay's remains were no longer capable of being located, his killer was no longer a No Body, No Parole prisoner. This bill fixes those errors in the law.

Under the Crisafulli government's reforms, it will no longer matter whether a victim's missing body or remains still exist or are capable of being located. It will not matter whether those remains have been destroyed by the prisoner and/or destroyed by some natural cause. If the whole of the victim's body or remains have not been located, the prisoner can still be captured by No Body, No Parole and the Parole Board can determine whether to make a no-cooperation declaration, because no prisoner should ever be placed in a better position for parole because their victim has been more completely destroyed and no family should lose the protection of the No Body, No Parole framework because there is nothing left of their loved one for them to bring home. The focus should be on timely and satisfactory cooperation, and now it will be.

These were not isolated failures. The loopholes in restricted prisoners and No Body, No Parole were symptoms of a parole system that, after a decade under Labor, had lost sight of its fundamental purpose: to protect the community and victims of crime. This bill addresses those failures by delivering major reforms from the Crisafulli government's independent review of the Parole Board. Labor reviewed the Parole Board three times and still failed to fix it. Two of those reviews were kept secret from Queenslanders and were never publicly released. That is right: Queenslanders were not allowed to see what Labor's reviews had found about the operation of its parole system. If that was not bad enough, Labor went even further. Just last year the president of the Parole Board requested to access those reviews to assist in the performance of his role and Labor refused his request. The Leader of the Opposition refused to release those reviews to the very person charged with leading the board responsible for making some of the most consequential decisions in our justice system. Labor commissioned reviews into Queensland's parole system, spent more than a million dollars of taxpayers' money on them and then chose to keep them secret. This is in stark contrast to our government, which has made our independent review public.

While Labor kept its reviews hidden from Queenslanders, the problems within the board continued to mount. Labor's former Parole Board president was referred to the Crime and Corruption Commission and subsequently resigned, leaving the board without a permanent president for seven months. Labor's former corrective services minister, the member for Pine Rivers, negotiated a resignation date that fell just one day after the seven-year anniversary of his appointment as president. Do members know what that means? That one day matters. By orchestrating for his appointment to pass the seven-year mark, Labor secured its former Parole Board president, who was referred to the CCC, an additional $30,000 per year in pension for life.

The instability at the top of the board was only one of the problems that Labor left behind. Labor left the Parole Board operating at half capacity and failed to properly appoint its members. Professional board members continued making decisions well after their appointed terms had expired, including one whose term expired in 2022, while acting professional members resigned and were never replaced. These were not minor administrative oversights. Labor's failures became so serious it was forced to rush retrospective validation laws through parliament to protect thousands of parole decisions from potentially being undone. These are decisions about whether prisoners, including serious, violent and sexual offenders, should be released back into the community or kept in jail. Perhaps Labor's approach to parole makes a little more sense when one of its own members is proudly photographed wearing a T-shirt declaring, 'All my homies hate prisons'. Perhaps that explains why, for 10 years, the former government put the rights of prisoners ahead of the rights of victims, why victims were not given the voice they deserved, why its own reviews failed to properly consult victims, and why time and time again when Labor had a choice between strengthening protections for victims or protecting the interests of prisoners it chose to prioritise the rights of prisoners.

Behind all of these failures—the hidden reviews, the instability, the botched appointments—were victims and their families who depended on a parole system to protect them, to inform them and to treat them with respect. Victims and their families were let down time and time again. Our reforms are for them—families like Kylie and Kent Payne, who are also in the gallery today, the parents of 18-year-old Harrison Payne, who was killed by a dangerous driver in 2021. Despite being on the victims register, Kent says he was not given an opportunity to make a submission before the offender was released—no phone call and no opportunity to be heard; just an email after the fact telling him that the person responsible for his son's death was being released. The Payne family was not alone. It also happened to Brett and Belinda Beasley—the family of 17-year-old Jack Beasley, who was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise. In December 2023, Brett was contacted and told that one of the offenders responsible for Jack's death had applied for parole. The family were told they had 21 days to make a submission, but just four days later they received an email informing them that a decision had already been made to release the offender on parole.

Labor's broken parole system failed to put victims first, and that is why we committed before the election to conduct an independent review of the Parole Board to put victims and their families front and centre in the parole process. In June last year we delivered on that commitment with the independent review of the Parole Board and this bill delivers legislative reforms to implement the recommendations that the Crisafulli government has supported from that review to put the rights of victims first. This bill fundamentally strengthens how parole decisions are made by putting community safety and the rights of victims at the heart of the parole process. For the very first time, the Corrective Services Act will expressly provide that the safety of the community is the paramount consideration when the Parole Board makes a decision about whether to release a prisoner.

Mrs Frecklington: As it should.

Mrs GERBER: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General: as it should. That may sound like common sense, but after almost a decade in government Labor never put that fundamental principle into law. The Parole Board makes decisions about whether prisoners, including serious, violent and sexual offenders, should remain behind bars or be released back into the community. Those decisions can have profound consequences for the safety of victims, their families and the broader community, yet Labor never expressly provided in the act that, when those decisions are made, community safety must come first. We are changing that.

Under this bill, there will be no ambiguity about the overriding consideration that must guide the board—that is, the safety of Queenslanders is paramount. We are backing that principle with a stronger statutory framework for assessing the risk posed by a prisoner before they are released on parole. The board will now be required to consider matters including their likelihood of reoffending, the prisoner's criminal history and pattern of offending, their behaviour in custody and any report available to the board which includes any potential psychiatric condition which means that they should not be released on parole like narcissistic personality disorder, as has been spoken about in the case of Gerard Baden-Clay. The board will be required to consider these things before granting parole. The board will also be required to consider whether the offence for which they were imprisoned was committed in the presence of a child—something Danielle Carroll and the Kelly Wilkinson Foundation have been fighting for. They have been calling for it and fighting for it, and I am proud to say that we are delivering it. Critically, the board must consider any submission made by a victim, the likely impact releasing that prisoner would have on the victim and their family, the risk of harm to victims and whether any conditions should be imposed on a prisoner's parole order to protect victims.

However, parole decisions are only as good as the information the board has before it. The independent review exposed just how far that had deteriorated under the previous government. Once, the reports provided by Queensland Corrective Services to the Parole Board were comprehensive. They brought together a prisoner's classification, placement, breach history, safety orders, rehabilitation, employment history, substance use and any other relevant information, but under the previous government those reports were reduced and the review found that their quality suffered. When the board is deciding whether a serious offender should remain behind bars or be released back into the community, it should not be forced to assemble a risk assessment piece by piece from fragmented records and the prisoner's own account. This bill fixes that. QCS will be required to provide a comprehensive report to assist the board in making its decision, because community safety demands more than a prisoner's version of the story.

Parole is a privilege; it is not a right. A prisoner seeking to serve part of their sentence outside the secure perimeter of a correctional centre should only be allowed to do so where the board is satisfied that the risk can be safely managed. When the interests of a prisoner seeking release come up against the safety of the Queensland community, this bill makes absolutely clear which comes first—Queenslanders, and putting Queenslanders first means putting victims first too, because the failures of Labor's parole system were not abstract.

Brett and Belinda Beasley know what it is like to be told they have 21 days to make a submission about the parole of one of the offenders responsible for Jack's death, only to learn four days later that the decision to release that offender had already been made. Victims should not feel like spectators in a process dealing with the person who changed their lives forever. Under this bill, they will not. We are giving victims more time, more information and a stronger voice in the decisions that affect them. Victims will now have 42 days to make a submission to the Parole Board, giving them a genuine opportunity to have their voice heard before a decision is made.

We are removing Labor's restriction on what a victim can tell the Parole Board. Under the current laws, a victim can only provide information that was not before the court when the prisoner was sentenced. That means a victim may have stood before a court years earlier and described the devastating impact that crime had on their life—the trauma, the fear, the loss, the consequences for their family—and if those impacts are still being felt years later when the offender applies for parole, the victim is prohibited from telling the board that. Victims have a right to explain that the fear has not disappeared, that the trauma has not ended, that the loss is still felt and that the prospect of that prisoner being released may have very real consequences for their safety and their lives today. Under the former government's laws, information could be excluded simply because it had already been put before the

sentencing court. We are removing that restriction. The passage of time does not erase the impact of crime and victims should be able to tell the Parole Board the full story of how that offending continues to affect them.

When a victim has the courage to put those experiences into words, their submission will be protected. This bill expressly prohibits a victim's submission from being given to the prisoner whose parole is being considered. For many victims, being able to put their experience on paper is not enough. They want the opportunity to appear before the board and tell them what the release of that prisoner would mean for them and their family. The previous government knew that, and they failed to act. In 2023, Leanne Pullen told a parliamentary inquiry into support provided to victims of crime that victims should be able to attend parole hearings and express their concerns in person, rather than being limited to a written submission. After more than a decade navigating the justice and parole systems following Tim's murder, Leanne told that inquiry that victims never seemed to have a voice and that that needed to change. The previous government had an opportunity to listen. They had an opportunity to act. They did neither.

When our government undertook the independent review of Parole Board Queensland, victims told us the same thing. The difference is that we have listened and we are acting. Under this bill, with the leave of the board, victims will be able to appear before the Parole Board and make their submission orally. They will not have to do it alone; a support person or advocate will be able to be there with them.

We are renaming the eligible persons register for what it actually is—the victims register—and we are creating a proactive pathway for eligible victims to be referred to Queensland Corrective Services so they can be contacted and given the opportunity to register. Instead of expecting a grieving family to find the system, navigate the paperwork and ask to be kept informed about the person who harmed them or took the life of someone they love, the system will reach out to them, because that is what a victims-first justice system should do. As we strengthen the victims register, we are ensuring its protections reflect the strong laws this government has introduced to restore consequences for offending. Under our landmark Breach Bail, Go to Jail laws, an offender who commits an Adult Crime, Adult Time or prescribed offence while on bail will face a mandatory minimum period of 12 months behind bars. This bill ensures victims of the offending can also access the victims register.

Putting victims first also means recognising that the parole process itself can cause harm. Every new parole application can force a victim or grieving family back into the trauma of the original offending—another notification, another submission, another period spent wondering whether the person who changed their life forever might soon be released. Under this bill, when the Parole Board determines the period during which a prisoner cannot make another parole application, it will be expressly required to consider the interests of the victim. Victims should not be unnecessarily dragged back through the parole process again and again without the impact on them even forming part of that decision.

This bill delivers greater transparency around the decisions of the Parole Board. Under the previous government, the Corrective Services Act contained a provision requiring the board to publish information prescribed by regulation about its decisions. There was just one problem, Labor failed to prescribe the regulation and failed to prescribe any information in the regulation. This bill fixes that failure by expressly empowering the president of the Parole Board to publish decisions where the president considers publication is in the public interest. Queenslanders should be able to have confidence in how these extraordinarily consequential decisions are made. Where there is a genuine public interest in understanding a decision of the board, the law should provide a proper mechanism for that decision to be made public.

This bill also makes clear that particular provisions of the Human Rights Act will not apply to the exercise of certain powers under the Corrective Services Act. Our correctional officers manage some of the most serious and dangerous offenders in Queensland. Their job is to maintain the security and good order of our correctional centres, protect staff, manage the risks to victims and the community and exercise the lawful powers parliament has given them to do exactly that. They should not have to undertake an additional human rights assessment in the interests of an individual prisoner before taking otherwise lawful action necessary to perform those responsibilities.

This is particularly important in respect of persons supervised and managed under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act, DP(SO)A offenders. These are offenders who have completed their sentence and cannot continue to be held in prison but who have been found by a court to pose an ongoing risk of committing a serious sexual offence if released into the community without appropriate supervision. In managing these offenders, QCS must be empowered to act protectively and

with no tolerance for risk to community safety. The individual human rights of a DP(SO)A offender should not prevent QCS from taking otherwise lawful action necessary to maintain the safe and effective operation of contingency accommodation precincts, enforce the conditions applying to offenders, or protect QCS officers, other officers and persons in the broader community from harm. The safe and effective management of prisoners should not be made harder because of an individual prisoner. The security and good order of our correctional centres, DP(SO)A precincts and the community should not be compromised because of an individual prisoner. The officers we entrust to keep dangerous offenders securely behind bars should be able to exercise their lawful powers with one overriding priority—keeping Queenslanders safe.

This bill significantly tightens the circumstances in which a prisoner can be released on exceptional circumstances parole. The Parole Board can grant exceptional circumstances parole where it is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist, but there is no statutory test setting out what constitutes exceptional circumstances. There is no defined threshold a prisoner must meet. Instead, the act gives the Parole Board a broad discretion to grant parole where it considers exceptional circumstances exist. A pathway that can allow a prisoner to be released when they would not otherwise be eligible for parole is not good enough. This bill provides a clear and deliberately high statutory threshold based on the stringent test that applies to restricted prisoners. A prisoner must be in imminent danger of dying or incapacitated because of a diagnosed disease, illness or medical condition. The board must be satisfied that the prisoner is physically incapable of causing harm to another person, that their release would not pose an unacceptable risk to the community and that granting parole is justified in all the circumstances—the same test that currently applies to restricted prisoners.

Finally, the bill strengthens the modified discrimination complaints framework to put safety where it belongs: at the centre of decision-making. This bill expands the framework so that QCS can properly take account of the safety of victims, the safety of the broader community and national security when making decisions about discrimination complaints. Queensland Corrective Services manages serious and dangerous offenders and decisions about how those prisoners are managed can have consequences for victims and the community well beyond the correctional centre itself. Our laws should recognise those risks. A prisoner's discrimination complaint should not prevent legitimate and lawful action necessary to protect a victim, protect the Queensland community or respond to a national security risk. This bill makes that clear.

This bill is about one thing: ensuring Queensland's parole system puts community safety and victims first. It keeps dangerous offenders behind bars for longer, it strengthens No Body, No Parole and it gives victims more information and prioritises their voice in a parole process that for far too long failed victims and left them behind. This bill fixes the failures of the former Labor government and puts victims and community safety first. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. LJ GERBER (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (12.29 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

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

MINERAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Hon. DR LAST (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the legislation

mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Primary Industries and Resources Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Mineral Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 [1610].

Tabled paper: Mineral Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, explanatory notes [1611].

Tabled paper: Mineral Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, statement of compatibility with human rights [1612].

I rise to introduce the Mineral Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026. Under the former Labor government, the mining industry lost confidence. When we came to government, I was met with a pile of approvals which had been left sitting on a shelf, some dating back to 2019. We made a commitment that we would streamline approvals, restore confidence, welcome investment and provide certainty—certainty for proponents, communities, local landholders, businesses and workers. It is about getting to a 'yes' or a 'no' answer faster. We are doing just that.

This bill will amend the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to deliver a more efficient and targeted framework for objections to mining lease applications while limiting the ability to use this process to intentionally frustrate or delay project approvals. Importantly, it will do so while upholding Queensland's stringent environmental conditions and the rights of landholders and the community in which mining projects operate—and rightly so. It will also repeal mining lease conditions for the Byerwen Mine, conditions that were introduced by the former Labor government with no consultation, 18 minutes notice and 25 minutes of debate. Who can forget the ramifications the introduction of that particular legislation had on the Glenden community? There was no consultation, no consideration of the impact on services and no consideration of the future of that community and the impact that would have.

Queensland's mining industry is one of our longest standing industries, contributing billions of dollars to the economy annually and employing thousands of Queenslanders across the state. The current framework that dictates one's ability to object to a proposed mining lease is outdated. Despite contributing more than $115 billion to our economy last year alone, and supporting nearly 550,000 direct and indirect jobs, the framework at the very core of the industry is inefficient. Currently, assessment requirements are duplicated across mining and environment legislation. This duplication often results in unnecessary procedural steps that delay decisions for potentially years at a time, create uncertainty and increase costs for applicants, objectors and decision-makers, leaving Queensland landholders, local governments, businesses, workers and families in the dark about their future. This includes needless delays due to the automatic referral to the Land Court for all objections, regardless of what the objection is, who made it or what the objector's interest is in the project. Most baffling, even if an objector walks away from their objection or does not show up to court the objection is still considered by the Land Court. These referrals occur without determining whether this action is necessary to resolve the objection, leaving landholders, local governments, communities and potential workers in limbo. One only needs to take a look at the debacle of the long-running legal battle that the New Acland coalmine expansion experienced to understand that this process has to change. For close to 15 years the mining company and community did not have certainty on the project's future. This has to change, and the bill being introduced today addresses these issues.

This is about streamlining approvals and making faster decisions. It is delivering on the Crisafulli government's commitment to make it easier to do business in Queensland and restore investment confidence across the mining industry. By improving regulatory certainty and timeliness in project decision-making we are sharpening Queensland's competitive advantage. This is not about sacrificing environmental standards; it is about finding the balance between upholding our strong environmental standards, listening to the concerns of affected persons and local communities, and enhancing Queensland's investment attractiveness.

These practical reforms amend the objections process by focusing granting objection rights to the people in the local communities and those directly affected by a proposed mining project. This means activists based thousands of kilometres away and green groups funded by foreign overseas entities are no longer eligible to have a say. Instead, the bill will limit who can object to an MLA or a draft EA to either 'affected persons' as currently defined under the Mineral Resources Act, including relevant local governments and communities, or owners or occupiers of land within 125 kilometres of the boundary of the MLAs that make up the mining project. Objections received from a person or group outside the 125-kilometre boundary whose interests would not be affected will no longer be accepted. Further, the grounds for an objection will need to be based on the decision-making criteria for either the

MLA or the EA application. These changes will focus objections only on matters relevant to decision-making. The grounds for objection must be aligned with the criteria the decision-maker must consider when deciding an MLA or EA application. Put simply, an objection that does not relate to the relevant decision-making criteria will not be accepted. It will no longer be possible to lodge an objection on any grounds.

'Environmental impacts' is being removed from the criteria that the minister and the Land Court must consider under the Mineral Resources Act and will not be a ground for objecting to MLAs. This will reduce duplication and the situation where the assessment process can result in different evaluations of environmental impacts for the same mining project. I must stress, though: environmental impacts remain as grounds for objection to an environmental authority. Environmental impacts will continue to be comprehensively assessed as part of the environmental authority assessment process. Where an objection is made to an EA application, the matter can be referred by the decision-maker to the Land Court for consideration through the EA referral process. This will eliminate the exacerbated process where an EA for a mining project has already been approved but objections are raised on an MLA in relation to environmental impacts, resulting in the reprosecution of issues that have already been addressed through the EA process as part of a Land Court hearing for the MLA.

No longer can an environmental impact objection be made against a mining lease. If someone reasonably affected wants to object on environmental grounds, they may provide input on large proposed mining projects through environmental impact statements and site-specific applications for environmental authorities. Both established environmental assessment pathways provide an appropriate avenue for environmental impacts to be expressed and considered. This will occur through the environmental authority administered by the environment minister. Removing the opportunity for environmental impact objections from the mining lease assessment eliminates duplication in the Mineral Resources Act and allows for faster decision-making.

Importantly, an environmental authority will still be required for a mining lease to be considered and granted. This means that a mining lease application will not be considered until a project has passed the stringent environmental conditions required by an environmental authority. The bill also streamlines approvals for low-risk environmental authority applications related to mining leases by removing public notification and objection processes. This will be managed by the department of environment. This process is consistent with standard variation applications for other environmentally relevant activity. It will cut red tape and reduce unnecessary administrative burden for industry and government. This is about reducing legislative burden and delivering certainty to industry without compromising Queensland's strong environmental standards or outcomes. The public can still contribute to the development of the standard conditions that apply to an environmental authority for lower impact activities through a public consultation process on the standard conditions.

As they are one of the biggest hindrances on project timelines and delays, we are laser focused on improving approval timeframes. By replacing the automatic referral of mining lease objections to the Land Court with a more targeted and proportional referral process, we are reducing the number of projects held up in court. This not only benefits the relevant mining proponent; it also provides certainty to the landholders surrounding the proposed project, certainty to local councils needing to plan their infrastructure spend, certainty to local businesses and contractors on local content opportunities and certainty to potential workers on the employment options available.

For each mining lease application, the minister will evaluate all objections against the criteria to inform their decision-making. Where matters warrant hearing or independent review, the minister may decide that the application or objections should be referred to the Land Court to support the decision-making process. This could include consideration of the entire application and all properly made objections, or only a specific matter raised in one or more objections. Land Court recommendations will be limited to the matters referred, bolstering government decision-making while reserving hearings for issues decision-makers believe require independent consideration.

The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation will have a corresponding ability to determine when an environmental authority application should be referred to the Land Court. This will enable Land Court hearings to focus on complex matters where independent judicial consideration is warranted. This ensures the expertise of the Land Court and its resources are directed to the matters that require and benefit from it instead of being used as an avenue to disrupt, delay and frustrate the mining lease approvals process.

The targeted referral process will also reduce costs for objectors and applicants because we recognise that the costs and time implications from participation in Land Court hearings is significant. By removing duplication of 'environment impacts' consideration in the Mineral Resources Act and removing the automatic referral to the Land Court, we will see significant improvements in approval timeframes and, potentially, improvements measured in years, not months, because we know that time is money for these companies and their projects. The longer a project is held up in approvals, the less economic it becomes. Importantly, the longer a project is held up, the more uncertainty is created in communities. This bill is about delivering certainty to proponents and the local community, reducing legislative duplication and streamlining approvals while maintaining our environmental standards.

Separately, the bill also repeals workforce accommodation obligations introduced by the former Labor government, without any consultation, forcing QCoal to move its entire Byerwen coal mine workforce into the town of Glenden by March 2029. Not only did the former Labor government not consult; they did not take into account the availability of basic services such as water security, critical infrastructure, the quality and quantity of accommodation available or land tenure considerations. They did not consider workforce health and safety or fatigue management given the forced move added up to two hours of additional travel each shift.

Repealing this legislation will provide certainty and flexibility to workers at the Byerwen coal mine to choose where they live. It will also allow workforce accommodation arrangements to respond to operational requirements and changing circumstances. Work is underway to identify future ownership arrangements for Glenden and move away from the current model, which relies on one employer to sustain the town. This does not work, as we have seen with the closure of the Newlands mine, which the town was originally built to service. This is about providing certainty to future investors, residents, local government and other interested parties going forward because Glenden matters. As I have said to the residents and businesses in that town, their future is important to us. What we are doing is securing the future of that community. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. DR LAST (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (12.43 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Primary Industries and Resources Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Primary Industries and Resources Committee.

ACTING SPEAKER'S RULING

Motions, Word Limit

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, before we move to the next order of the day, I will make a statement and ruling in relation to the Manager of Opposition Business's point of order raised during the division on the business program motion. Earlier today, in a division on the business program motion, the Manager of Opposition Business rose on a point of order in relation to the number of words in the business program motion. Section 70 of the standing rules and orders sets a word limit of 250 words for notices of motion. The practice of this House has been to apply a 250-word limit to motions sought to be moved by members where leave is given to move them without notice.

The business program motion is established by sessional orders. Sessional orders are a higher status than the standing orders and prevail where there is a conflict with the standing orders. Sessional order 3A is a specific standing order designed to regulate the business program motion process and does not contain a word limit.

To impose a word limit on the business program motion would be perverse in instances where there is much business to be considered by the House, as is the case most sitting weeks. The sessional orders in the 57th Parliament, where the business program motion was last employed, equally did not

impose a word limit on the business program motion. In fact, the Table Office has found an example from the 57th Parliament where a business program motion was 570 words in length. Accordingly, I rule that the business program motion put to and agreed by the House earlier today was in order.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING (STRENGTHENING THE CONTAINER REFUND SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 26 March (see p. 834).

Second Reading

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (12.45 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Queenslanders have embraced Containers for Change. They return their containers, they collect their refunds and they support local charities, sporting clubs and community groups. The LNP has long supported the principle of a container refund scheme and called for one to be established in this state because the scheme should be about Queenslanders. The money within it should be working for Queenslanders: more money back in their pockets through 10-cent refunds; more support for the local charities, sporting clubs, schools and community groups Queenslanders choose to back; and funds within the scheme transparently and responsibly managed to deliver better recycling, better community and better environmental outcomes.

However, the parliamentary inquiry led by the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee showed that Queenslanders were not getting everything they should from the scheme that Labor established. It exposed serious failures in governance and accountability and weaknesses in transparency and oversight. Significant surplus funds had accumulated while the scheme repeatedly failed to achieve its legislated 85 per cent recovery target. Labor had years to get the settings right; they did not. We inherited that legacy and we are getting on with fixing it. This bill strengthens the governance, transparency, accountability and oversight of the scheme because ultimately we want Queenslanders to get the most out of Containers for Change: more containers returned, more refunds claimed and a scheme that works harder for Queenslanders, their communities and their environment.

As I mentioned, following the earlier parliamentary inquiry into improving Queensland's container refund scheme, the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee made 21 recommendations. The Crisafulli government supported, or supported in principle, 20 of those recommendations. This bill delivers legislative reforms responding to 13 of them. The reforms are substantial. They strengthen the governance of the product responsibility organisation. They increase transparency around the operation of the scheme and the management of scheme funds. They strengthen accountability and independent scrutiny. They provide greater protections for container refund point operators and they provide a mechanism to reduce the burden on small beverage manufacturers. These are technical reforms but their purpose is straightforward: a better run scheme, more containers returned, more refunds claimed and better outcomes for Queensland communities and our environment. In its submission, Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland said—

This Bill represents an extraordinary body of work by the Queensland Government in a short period of time. Following the Parliamentary Inquiry, the speed and seriousness with which the Government has translated recommendations into legislation should be recognised. The majority of the reforms put forward reflect what industry has been asking for and provide a strong platform for the next phase of the scheme.

I thank Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland for their comments and I must say that I agree. The bill provides important reforms and ensures Queenslanders can have confidence in the operation of our container refund scheme.

I will address the specific reforms and the issues raised by stakeholders and members in turn. A number of contributions focused on the governance arrangements for the PRO. The bill introduces a stronger governance framework, consistent with the significant role the PRO plays in administering the scheme. It strengthens the composition of the board and ensures appropriate expertise across the different parts of the scheme. The board will be required to include expertise in waste and recycling, local government, community and social enterprise, as well as small and large beverage manufacturers.

The reforms also provide for a majority of directors to be independent of the beverage industry. Directors will be appointed for fixed terms of up to three years. Board appointments will require approval from the responsible minister and that approval may be withdrawn in appropriate circumstances. While

directors may be reappointed, no director will be able to serve for more than 10 years in total. The board will also undergo an annual performance evaluation conducted by an independent auditor. The bill provides additional powers for the minister to require an audit of the PRO. These are important safeguards. Queenslanders deserve confidence in the organisation entrusted with running their container refund scheme. Stronger governance and independent scrutiny help provide that confidence and keep the focus on the performance of the scheme.

Contributors to the original inquiry also rightly focused on transparency. If Queenslanders are going to get the most out of the scheme, there needs to be transparency around how it is operating and how funds within it are being managed. The bill broadens the existing requirements for the PRO's operational and strategic planning. It also requires additional documents and plans, including a governance and investment plan, a document setting out scheme payments and the contribution methodology, a network of container refund points plan, an employment and industrial relations plan, and a document setting out a complaints management framework. Some of these documents will require ministerial agreement. They will also be required to be published on the PRO's website. This provides greater transparency around how the scheme operates, how funds are managed, how payments are determined and how the refund point network is planned. Importantly, the governance and investment plan provides a clearer framework for the investment and allocation of surplus and retained scheme funds.

The bill also expands the functions of the PRO to support environmental and community programs and the development of recycling and waste transport infrastructure. This means there will be greater transparency and accountability around how funds are managed and a clearer ability for the scheme to deliver benefits consistent with its objectives. This is an important reform for Queenslanders.

The inquiry also heard concerns about the treatment of container refund point operators, including concerns about unfair contracts and discriminatory behaviour. Many of these operators are small businesses, charities and community organisations. They are an important part of making Containers for Change accessible to Queenslanders right across the state. The bill, therefore, provides that the PRO must not unfairly or unreasonably discriminate in performing its functions. That directly responds to concerns raised through the inquiry and provides greater protection for the businesses and organisations that help deliver the scheme.

Contributors also raised the impact of the scheme on small beverage manufacturers. The bill provides a mechanism for an exemption to be prescribed by regulation for small beverage manufacturers from paying a contribution for a prescribed number of containers manufactured. That recognises the disproportionate administrative and financial burden that can fall on smaller producers while maintaining the integrity of the scheme.

The bill also enables eligible lids, caps and closures to be included and recycled through the scheme. It is a practical reform. If we want Queenslanders to get more out of Containers for Change, we should also be looking at more practical ways to recover more material and improve recycling outcomes.

The requirement for a network of container refund points plan will provide greater transparency around the existing network and its future development, including the expansion of the network and the economic viability of existing refund points. That is particularly important for regional Queensland. Queenslanders should have reasonable opportunities to participate in the scheme wherever they live. A stronger and more transparent approach to network planning helps deliver that.

I would like to thank the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee for its report on this legislation. I note the committee's report contained two recommendations: first, that the bill be passed; and, second, that the bill be amended to clarify that the product responsibility organisation, PRO, is and always has been a unit of public administration under the Crime and Corruption Act 2001. The government supports both recommendations, and the government's response to the committee's report was tabled on 17 August 2026.

Having outlined the substantive reforms, I want to turn to the statement of reservation from opposition members. What is striking about it is what it does not say. There is no acknowledgement of the failures identified by the parliamentary inquiry, no accountability for the governance, transparency and oversight problems that developed under the scheme Labor established, and no recognition that Labor had years in government to address them. Instead, we have a statement of reservation that criticises the reforms without taking responsibility for why these reforms are necessary in the first place. That is a political dodge. The original inquiry identified the problems. It made 21 recommendations. The

Crisafulli government supported, or supported in principle, 20 of them, and we have got on with the job of turning those recommendations into reform. Queenslanders expect us to fix problems, not make excuses for them.

I will address the specific reservations raised by opposition members. Opposition members have raised concerns about the level of ministerial oversight provided for in the bill. I respectfully disagree. The scheme provides an authorisation framework for relevant beverage manufacturers to sell eligible beverage products in Queensland. It generates funds from beverage manufacturers and uses those funds to administer the scheme and deliver its intended community and environmental benefits. Given the scale and public significance of the scheme, there must be clear accountability to government and, ultimately, to Queenslanders. After all, Queenslanders pay for the scheme and should benefit from it. It is Queenslanders' money, after all. Do the opposition dispute that?

That does not mean the minister runs the day-to-day operations of Containers for Change. It means appropriate oversight exists when performance falls short or the legislative requirements applying to the PRO are not being met. The bill includes appropriate safeguards, including show cause processes and review rights. With responsibility comes accountability. Queenslanders should expect nothing less from an organisation entrusted with running a scheme of this scale.

Opposition members have also raised reservations about the power to appoint a special manager. Under the existing act, an administrator can be appointed but only where the PRO's appointment has been suspended or cancelled. The bill provides an additional option by allowing a special manager to be appointed in circumstances involving noncompliance with the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act where alternative oversight is required. The powers are broadly consistent with those provided under the Casino Control Act 1982 and comparable provisions in other jurisdictions. Given the governance and integrity issues documented through the parliamentary inquiry, it is appropriate that government has the tools necessary to respond to noncompliance.

Concerns were also raised about cost recovery. The existing act already requires beverage manufacturers to contribute towards the administration of the scheme. Historically, however, the costs incurred by government in overseeing the scheme have not been passed through. The enhanced oversight arrangements in this bill will increase the costs incurred by government. It would not be appropriate for all Queensland taxpayers to bear those additional costs for regulating a scheme applying to a particular industry sector. The proposed costs are modest. An annual estimated cost recovery process will allow for any over-recovery or under-recovery to be corrected. The approach also broadly aligns with arrangements in other jurisdictions.

The member for Noosa raised concerns about the absence of an independent complaints mechanism. I thank the member for raising that issue. There are existing mechanisms available to scheme participants. I also understand the Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland and Coex are in well-advanced discussions regarding the establishment of a dispute resolution service. The government has also committed to investigating options for an independent external complaints body. That work will be informed by the response to the enhanced governance, transparency and oversight arrangements contained in this bill. The objective is to ensure scheme participants, including the small businesses and community organisations operating refund points, have confidence that they will be treated fairly and have appropriate avenues available when disputes arise.

Members also raised the availability of reverse vending machines and container refund points, including opportunities at government sites. The government wants Queenslanders to have convenient access to Containers for Change, but development approvals and decisions about specific locations are generally matters for local government and collaboration between councils and Coex. We respect that role. Local governments are genuine partners in delivering waste and recycling outcomes, and this bill does not seek to override their planning independence. In relation to container refund points, the Local Government Association of Queensland submitted—

> The State Government ensures the independence of the local government planning and development approval processes is maintained and that these matters remain the responsibility of local government.

That independence will be maintained. At the same time, the government will continue to explore opportunities for participation at government buildings. The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation has established a cross-agency working group to identify practical measures to improve access, awareness and long-term engagement with the scheme.

Debate, on motion of Mr Powell, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): The LNP Premier and Treasurer have done something no government has for 17 years: they lost Queensland's AA+ credit rating. Friday's statement from Standard & Poor's is a damning assessment of the LNP's first two budgets and first two years in office, and the result is a downgrade. It is not only an assessment of their budgets; it is an assessment of their entire fiscal strategy, which will end up costing every Queenslander more.

Instead of taking ownership of their choices, decisions and budgets, this Treasurer tried to blame everyone but himself. First of all, he tried to blame the federal government, but that was very quickly disproved when the medium-term projections for stamp duty revenue were pointed out. If anything, it was the Treasurer's own budget that had excessively optimistic stamp duty revenue, which would have to be revised, based on the view of Standard & Poor's. It was further disproved by the fact that New South Wales retained their credit rating, despite being even further exposed to changes in property values and the follow-through impacts on stamp duty revenue.

The big difference between Queensland and New South Wales is the LNP government in Queensland have the wrong priorities. They have trashed our budget in just two years. After jettisoning the New Norm approach to the Olympics, they are pursuing a gold-plated Olympics plan, headlined by their $1.2 billion swimming pool with 17,000 temporary seats. That was not recommended by their own independent delivery authority. In fact, their own independent delivery authority said that it would not be fit for purpose. Of course, we only know that $1.2 billion cost estimate because it slipped out. To stop more things slipping out, the Deputy Premier has now gagged the supposedly independent delivery authority from briefing the opposition.

Make no mistake: Friday's damning assessment of their two budgets and their budget strategy will end up costing Queenslanders more. That independent delivery authority does not appear to be very independent when it cannot talk to anyone without the Deputy Premier's permission. Queenslanders are left with no idea what their gold-plated Olympics plan will cost. The current best estimate is more than $20 billion—three times the budget estimate—but we will never know the real cost because the Deputy Premier is determined to hide it. Standard & Poor's saw through that. S&P Global Ratings said—

> A sustained uptick in infrastructure spending in the lead up to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympics Games will keep overall cash deficits larger than that for 'AA+' rated peers.

That is right. It is this government's reckless spending and wrong priorities that have led to Queensland losing its AA+ rating. I am happy to read further from the report. It states—

> The … outlook on the long-term … reflects our view that Queensland's budgetary performance will remain weak over the next few years ...

Standard & Poor's went on to say that Olympics, like the one planned by the Deputy Premier, always go over budget. They will not tell us how much over budget it is because they know that it is true.

It is not only the Olympics on which this reckless spending is writ large. Let's remember the half a billion dollar gift they gave Adani—a multinational mining company that should be contributing to Queenslanders instead of getting a handout from those opposite. Of course, we had blue ad after blue ad bombarding Queenslanders across this state. I can guarantee that we will not see a blue billboard telling Queenslanders that the LNP has delivered for them a credit rating downgrade.

It is not just spending that Standard & Poor's called out; they also called out this government's failure to meet its own savings goals. Their decisions to spend more and to not deliver on their savings promises mean those opposite have lost all credibility. They tried to blame the previous government, but, again, it is clearly untrue. The Standard & Poor's report from September 2024 was a much more glowing assessment of the Queensland state budget. It described Queensland's exceptional liquidity coverage, its large holding of financial assets and its wealthy economy. It pointed out that debt in 2026 was expected to be lower than most AA+ rated states. This report says debt in 2028 will be higher than other AA+ rated states. It is clear that in September 2024, having considered every aspect of Labor's budgets—all of them—Standard & Poor's found our state to be AA+ credit rated with a stable outlook. After only two years of this Premier's, this Treasurer's and this LNP government's reckless spending, Queensland has lost that credit rating.

As all premiers and treasurers should, we on this side of the House take responsibility for our budgets. I know that I do. I know that the deputy leader does. We take responsibility for all of the surpluses, for all of the cost-of-living relief, for all of the infrastructure that was delivered and for the AA+ credit rating. No wonder the Premier signed up to our budget before he had even seen it. It was that good. That is what the LNP inherited, and in two budgets they have broken it.

'It's not that hard ... it was already there. All you had to do was keep it.' That should sound familiar to at least one person in this House because that is what the member for Surfers Paradise said 17 years ago: 'It's not that hard ... it was already there. All you had to do was keep it.' I am reminded again why one does not want to stay here quite so long as the member for Surfers Paradise has. Words do tend to come back to bite you eventually, member for Surfers Paradise. Friday's announcement is a damning assessment of this reckless-spending LNP government making all the wrong choices for Queenslanders—spending on the wrong priorities, not delivering their savings targets and only making savings where it cannot be afforded, like homelessness services and domestic violence services.

Labor Party, Performance

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (2.10 pm): I find it interesting with the Leader of the Opposition because they have spent two years saying, 'Cut, sack and sell,' and now they are saying we are spending too much. What is it? What is Labor saying? I made an interjection while the Leader of the Opposition was speaking. There was all the misinformation during the election campaign. They said, 'If you elect the LNP government, they're not going to deliver the infrastructure. They're not going to do this and they're not going to do that.' Now they are saying we are building too much infrastructure and he talks about 'reckless spending'. Here is the question to the Leader of the Opposition: is it reckless spending fixing the Bruce Highway, one of the most dangerous roads in Australia that the transport minister—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: They have found a voice! What is this reckless spending? Is it the Bruce Highway?

Mr Miles: It's the swimming pool. It's Adani. It's the advertising.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection—the swimming pool. Let me get back to the swimming pool in a minute. I will talk about that and I will talk about a letter I know you have received from Swimming Australia by the way, old chap. I will deal with that in a minute.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! Let's just pause there for a moment. Deputy Premier, I remind you to use appropriate titles in the chamber, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: We have done a deal on the Bruce Highway—80-20 funding. Will they cut Country Roads Connect? What are they going to cut to account for this apparent 'reckless spending'? Is it the Bruce Highway funding? Is it Country Roads Connect? Is it the Hospital Rescue Plan? He is shaking his head now—no, no, no. Now that they have said there is reckless spending, they have to tell Queenslanders what they are going to cut if they get elected.

Mr Miles: It's the swimming pool. It's Adani. It's the advertising.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. He said a swimming pool. When I asked what Labor is going to cut, he said a swimming pool. Here we go—

Mr Miles: I said that's what the reckless spending is.

Mr BLEIJIE: Reckless spending—but you have not said what it is. You said a swimming pool.

Mr Miles: A swimming pool not fit for purpose.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. On that assessment, if the only thing he can come up with in two years is a swimming pool—the National Aquatic Centre is going to be the best aquatic centre in Australia.

Mr Power: Gold-plated.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection—gold-plated. Swimming is one of the most popular sports in Australia. If the Labor Party are going to pick a fight with any athlete, you do not pick a fight with the swimming community. Here we go: a gold-plated swimming pool, he says. We got the Olympic and Paralympic Games back on track. I will tell you what is gold-plated, Leader of the Opposition—a $2.25 billion temporary stadium at QSAC. That is gold-plated.

Mr Miles: This is a temporary stadium.

Mr BLEIJIE: It's a what?

Mr Miles: Seventeen thousand temporary seats.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Put your comments through the chair, please, members.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. The Labor leader is still happy to proceed with $2.25 billion temporary seating at QSAC that will be ripped up as opposed to a permanent swimming legacy with the National Aquatic Centre.

Mr Crisafulli: I'm embarrassed for him.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Premier: I am embarrassed for him. For two years as infrastructure minister—

Mrs Nightingale interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am going to go around the state. I am going to go everywhere we are delivering infrastructure and ask: if the Labor Party believe this is reckless spending, where is it? Is it in Far North Queensland, Western Queensland, Outback Queensland? Put the list up that the Labor Party will cut at the next election for this apparent reckless spending.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr BLEIJIE: While they are at it, where are the answers to the CFMEU commission of inquiry—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr BLEIJIE: Listen to them. Anytime you mention the CFMEU they just go back to their defensive position of the CFMEU. Did former minister Bailey answer questions at a press conference today about allegations that have been raised against him in the CFMEU inquiry including from Amanda Yeates? She said when she walked in the room the CFMEU official said, 'You're a woman. Get me a glass of water.' Did he defend it or did he condemn it? He should have condemned it. What we are hearing in testimony is that all he said was, 'Just make it work. They're the unions.'

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

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause for a moment, Minister. Member for Miller, do you have a point of order?

Mr BAILEY: I do. I obviously take personal offence at the comments by the Deputy Premier and ask that he withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, will you withdraw, please?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. In conclusion, I ask the Leader of the Opposition to table recent correspondence he has received from the swimming community supporting the National Aquatic Centre. If he thinks it is gold-plated, show the letter. Show it because it is supported by everybody but the Labor Party.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: The member's time has expired.

Mrs Nightingale: Sit down!

Mr Mellish: Sit down!

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Who shouted out, 'Sit down'?

Mrs Nightingale: That was me, sorry.

Mr Mellish: Yes, I did.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Oh, two? Thank you. Member for Inala and member for Aspley, you are both warned under the standing orders.

Economy, Credit Rating

Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.16 pm): I rise in the House this afternoon on a very significant matter of public importance. Last Friday, because of the fiscal failure of Premier Crisafulli and his 'Eeyore' Treasurer, David Janetzki, because of the fiscal failure of this LNP Premier and this LNP government to properly manage the state's finances, Queensland received—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Woodridge, I am going to remind you to refer to members by their appropriate titles and not by any other term. I ask you to withdraw that comment.

Mr DICK: I withdraw, Mr Acting Speaker. Because of the financial and fiscal incompetence of this LNP Premier and this LNP government, Queensland received its first credit rating downgrade in 17 years. What a day of abject failure and humiliation for Premier Crisafulli and his LNP government. Every Queenslander would be disappointed and dismayed—and some would even be disgusted—by the credit rating downgrade delivered by Premier Crisafulli last Friday.

Make no mistake: the wrong priorities of this LNP Premier and the wrong decisions made by this LNP government have led to this downgrade. The LNP's credit rating downgrade means one thing: Queenslanders will pay more and get less under this LNP government. While Queenslanders are unable to pay their bills because of the LNP's affordability crisis, the LNP will spend more of their hard-earned money on interest payments than on providing the real and genuine cost-of-living relief that the Premier promised.

While Queenslanders are stuck in traffic, the LNP will spend more of their money on interest payments than on roads. While Queenslanders are waiting for trains that never come, the LNP will spend more of their money on interest payments than on delivering better rail services. While Queenslanders are left languishing on waiting lists waiting to see a specialist in a public hospital, the LNP will spend more of their money on interest payments than on employing more doctors, nurses and health professionals.

The living proof of the LNP's fiscal failure is the 36 hours of public hospital hell that Patrick Gemzik—an Olympic skateboard coach with a bright future here in our Olympic state—had to endure. What happened to him? Something went wrong and our public hospital system failed him. It failed him for 36 hours and left him with profound, irreversible damage. That is what happens when you put people in charge of the public finances of this state who simply cannot deliver.

Premier Crisafulli's fiscal mismanagement and the LNP's credit downgrade means that, just like Patrick, Queenslanders will pay more but get less at a time when they can least afford it. Before the last election the Premier was entirely dishonest with Queenslanders about how he would manage the public finances of our state. The credit rating downgrade is all this Premier's doing. When he was in opposition the Premier promised to spend more, tax less and lower debt. That was never going to be the case. Premier Crisafulli said he would lower taxes and lower debt without cuts or a credit rating downgrade. That was never going to be the case. When the Premier, in a craven attempt to pander to voters, committed to everything in Labor's 2024 state budget, not just for that financial year but for the three years following, both capital and operating expenditure, I said that the then opposition leader—

... needs to explain how he can deliver the same budget with extra promises while lowering revenue and debt.

Without cuts and asset sales it is impossible.

I stand by those words, because the inevitable consequence of all of the craven conduct of the member for Broadwater when he was the opposition leader, all of his dishonesty and dissembling before the last election about how he was going to manage public finances, has led to this moment: the inevitable credit rating downgrade of Premier Crisafulli's LNP government.

If you ran a company the way this Premier is running Queensland it would be trading while insolvent. As a matter of fact, the Premier did exactly the same thing when he was running SET Solutions. S&P Global Ratings have seen right through this man's spin. He ran a business while it was trading insolvent, and now that the Premier has his hands on the state's purse strings it has all turned to custard yet again. This is a man who cannot be trusted. He cannot be trusted with the public finances of Queensland. This LNP credit rating downgrade is an inevitable consequence of his dishonesty.

CFMEU Inquiry

Hon. ST O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (2.21 pm): For 10 years Labor did not just tolerate the CFMEU's reign of terror over Queensland's construction industry; they embraced it. They enabled it. The evidence now coming

before the commission of inquiry is exposing just how bad things got in our state. We have heard of builders and industry leaders being intimidated and targeted, people fearing the CFMEU would turn up at their homes, fearing for their families and their children. We heard the extraordinary testimony of former transport and main roads deputy director-general Amanda Yeates, a long-serving public servant, who told the inquiry she believed the CFMEU was following her family. I table the ABC's reporting about that evidence at the commission of inquiry.

Tabled paper: Article from ABC News online, dated 27 August 2026, titled 'Queensland CFMEU bosses made 'frightening' comments about children, senior official says' [1613].

She gave evidence that union figures knew where her children were, where her daughter caught the bus and even where her child played netball. Her family had to change the way her daughter travelled to school because they were so scared of these thugs. Ms Yeates said she feared retribution so strongly that she felt she could not even go to the police. Ultimately, she resigned from the Public Service because she believed it was the only way to protect her family. What did she say happened when she raised her concerns with the then minister, the member for Miller? Nothing. There was no action. She gave evidence that the member for Miller just wanted her to keep the CFMEU happy. Think about that, Mr Acting Speaker: a senior public servant feared her children were being followed and she felt that she ultimately had to quit her job to stay safe, and the then minister's priority was keeping a militant, misogynistic union happy.

We have heard evidence of the results of Labor's decision to put a senior CFMEU official on the board of the very regulator charged with policing the building industry. QBCC inspectors could not plan their days because of the random calls they would get from the CFMEU telling them whom to target. We know that Labor's Best Practice Industry Conditions were not simply influenced by the CFMEU; the CFMEU literally wrote those procurement policies. They allegedly got to vet the subcontractors who were able to bid for government work, submitting lists of favoured suppliers directly to ministers. Again, the member for Miller was there to bend to the will of the CFMEU. Hundreds of CFMEU protesters stormed his department's building—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the comments made by the member for Bonney and ask that he withdraw.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw. A security guard was knocked over and public servants were left traumatised. The director-general could hear union members going from room to room looking for him. Where was the member for Miller? He mysteriously disappeared that morning, coincidentally apparently after being tipped off about the protest.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those inaccurate comments made by the minister and ask that he withdraw.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw. The member for Miller is welcome to correct the record any time. The media are waiting. He left his public servants to cop the brunt—

Ms Boyd: Back to story time.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Nanango and member for Pine Rivers, cease quarrelling across the chamber, please. Member for Bonney, can you make an unequivocal withdrawal, please.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw unequivocally. I take the interjection from the member for Pine Rivers, who called these allegations story time.

Ms BOYD: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am being verballed by the minister. That is not what I remarked.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Do you have a point of order?

Ms BOYD: I find the comments made by the minister to be personally deeply offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members, let's just stop for a moment. The cross-chamber arguing needs to cease. Member for Bonney, please withdraw your comments.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw. The member for Miller left his public servants to cop the brunt of the CFMEU while he stayed safely out of the way.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Bonney is continually and persistently misrepresenting events. I find his comments personally offensive for the third time and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Government members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members on my right! Member for Bonney, the member for Miller has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Before you continue, member for Bonney, I caution the member for Miller and other members that, if you wish to make a point of order about a member misleading the House, conflating that with taking personal offence is not the way to do it. I give that general caution to members.

Mr O'CONNOR: When the member for Miller's then director-general later raised what had happened with the member for Miller, the evidence before the commission of inquiry is that the member for Miller dismissed this as 'just unions being unions'. Public servants were put in harm's way, the CFMEU stormed the member for Miller's department's building, and it is apparently 'just unions being unions'. It is a disgrace.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I anticipate a further point of order from the member for Miller—

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to standing order 234, which indicates that those sorts of imputations are considered to be 'highly disorderly'. I submit to you that repeated expressions of the same type give rise to a potential finding. I submit to you that the minister is being highly disorderly.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I understand your point of order.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to standing order 234, it is up to individual members to take a point of order in relation to a personal reflection and ask that it be withdrawn. In relation to the Manager of Opposition Business, I also submit that you have already given some guidance to members of the House in relation to appropriate mechanisms should they wish to write about other matters in relation to those issues.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I am going to seek some advice about this point of order. Members, give me a moment, please. Manager of Opposition Business, thank you for your point of order. In this case, there is no point of order. Only a member who has taken personal offence can rise on that point. Having taken advice from the Deputy Clerk, there is no point of order in relation to the issue you were raising about the comments from the member for Bonney, but any member may take personal offence if they deem it appropriate to do so.

Mr O'CONNOR: It was remiss of me earlier to not directly link the member for Springwood to the allegations I made from the commission of inquiry around the minister who received the drafting instructions for Queensland's procurement policies from the CFMEU. The evidence before the commission of inquiry is that that was the member for Springwood. It was allegedly the member for Springwood as well who received that list of CFMEU approved suppliers who could subcontract on government work, locking out the vast majority of the building industry.

The result of all of this type of behaviour is that Queenslanders have paid the price. Under Labor, it cost more and it took longer to build anything in our state. Construction productivity has fallen by around nine per cent since 2018, meaning that our state has 77,000 fewer homes than if that productivity had remained at those levels. We are turning things around. We have scrapped BPICs and they will not be coming back as long as there is a Liberal National Party government in this state. We have overhauled procurement. We are rebuilding our building regulator, and the CFMEU no longer has a place on their board. Because of that, productivity on major projects is back to around 85 per cent. We are delivering for Queensland. We have more homes under construction right now than at any point in recorded history.

Economy, Credit Rating

Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (2.31 pm): It is a serious issue in Queensland when you get a credit downgrade. There is no doubt about that. Yet the Deputy Premier, who is on CBRC, could not sustain an argument in his speech here a short time ago—and the Premier was in here for some part of that—and he did not mention the credit rating downgrade once—not once. He could not bring himself to do it. Let me quote another person, the Treasurer. In October 2024, he said in this House—

I don't want to be a treasurer that has a ratings downgrade on my watch. It's that simple.

Yet 687 days later we see a monumental failure by this Treasurer, because that is exactly what we have here in Queensland: the first ratings downgrade in nearly 20 years. What do we have to show for it? Absolutely nothing—no cost-of-living relief, hospital builds delayed without the hospital beds that we need right now, transport projects pushed off into the never-never, trains that never arrive and no costs on the games total infrastructure spend. Budgets are about choices, and it is the choices that those opposite made that have us in the first credit rating downgrade in 20 years.

Here are some of the facts. I have the treasurer from September 2024 sitting beside me. After Labor's last budget, the independent ratings agency S&P reaffirmed Queensland's AA+ credit rating and confirmed the outlook was stable. That is a fact. Even though those opposite try to blame everyone else, it is largely their operations expenses growing by 1.7 per cent in 2025-26 and 4.9 per cent in 2026-27—an increase of $5 billion—that is causing this, but the blame game continues.

No matter how much money the federal government has given to Queensland, it is never enough for this lot. Queensland is getting billions of dollars more in support from the Commonwealth. GST payments are the highest they have ever been—at almost $20 billion this year, which is up $2.6 billion since last year. They get extra billions for roads. They get up here and say that they were able to secure the 80-20 deal, but it is never enough. On education, they say, 'We signed the agreement with two cannoli,' but it is never enough. They are getting money for housing, but they still complain.

The biggest issue is that they never take responsibility—never. Stamp duty takings for this government soared by 58 per cent in the last two years and coal royalties continue to pour in, but it is not enough for this government. What happened to the government's promised $7 billion in savings on consultants? Rather than saving $7 billion, their budget for consultants and contractors blew out by $3 billion. That is their choice. This explains why S&P said on 7 February 2025, 'We're going through that midyear fiscal update because we really don't know what's real and what's politics.' That is what they said. I believe the credit downgrade answered that question. They may want to fool the people of Queensland but they will not fool the ratings agencies.

Recently, when the Treasurer was asked what action he has taken he admitted that he did nothing to stop it—on the presumption, I gather, that he can come in here and try to blame everyone but themselves. Blaming the Commonwealth changes on lower stamp duty bears no weight, because at the same time New South Wales had their AA+ credit rating reaffirmed and they are subject to even more volatility because of their changes.

S&P also states—and this is one of the bigger ones—that all of this delay in infrastructure, all this deficit being pushed out into the final years, will mean the forecast total tax supported debt will reach 160 per cent of Queensland operating revenue in fiscal 2029, up from 101 per cent in fiscal 2024. That is a 60 per cent increase. The LNP do not know what they are doing. They blame everyone else, they take no responsibility and they are not open and transparent. Don't dare criticise them or you'll have your funding cut.

CFMEU

Hon. BA MICKELBERG (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.36 pm): The member for McConnel talks about taking responsibility. Let's talk about the CFMEU and taking responsibility for a culture of fear, intimidation and misogyny perpetuated by the CFMEU and aided and abetted by a Labor state government. I rise to speak about some very concerning testimony recently provided to the CFMEU commission of inquiry about my department and its former minister. In late August, the former deputy director-general of TMR—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I hear those opposite interjecting. The member for Logan continues to defend the behaviour of CFMEU thugs like Jade Ingham and Michael Ravbar. That is their record. They continue to aid and abet the CFMEU. They do not want to fight for women like Amanda Yeates; they want to fight for the CFMEU because that is who lines their pockets.

Amanda Yeates, an upstanding public servant, gave evidence that her family was stalked by the CFMEU. She gave evidence that her family was stalked by the CFMEU, and the member for Logan interjects and condones the behaviour of CFMEU thugs stalking public servants. That is their record. The CFMEU knew where she lived. They knew what bus her kids took to school. They even told Amanda Yeates what a good game of netball her daughter had recently played—an implied threat deliberately designed to instil fear. Ms Yeates said, 'This was very frightening to me. I had certainly never discussed my children or their activities with Mr Ingham.'

This is the sort of CFMEU intimidation that we on this side of the House have been talking about for years. Our government has always stood against this behaviour. It is why we set up the CFMEU commission of inquiry. It is why we got rid of BPIC, the CFMEU tax. Do you know who was not standing up to the CFMEU? The member for Miller, the former minister for transport and main roads. He aided and abetted the CFMEU.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the comments made by the minister and ask that he withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, would you withdraw those comments, please?

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. We all saw what happened when TMR offices were stormed by the CFMEU during a QTRIP industry briefing. We had much public hand-wringing from the Labor government at the time, but in private what did the member for Miller reportedly say? He said that it was just 'unions being unions'. Apparently, that is the way unions behave and apparently it is acceptable to the member for Miller. Is it any wonder that construction sites became lawless and rife with CFMEU thuggery and intimidation?

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Once again, I take personal offence at the comments of the minister and ask him to withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, would you withdraw those comments, please?

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. It is because there was a minister who thought it was perfectly okay for CFMEU thugs to push their way into a workplace, knocking over a security guard, going room to room—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Once again, I find the comments of the minister personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Transport and Main Roads, would you withdraw your comments, please?

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. Apparently it is just unions being unions. No Queenslander should have to put up with that in the workplace. When Ms Yeates spoke to Mr Bailey, as reported in evidence to the commission of inquiry, about this verbal abuse she had been receiving from the CFMEU during meetings about Labor's CFMEU tax, she said—

Minister Bailey was empathetic and suggested I tell Mr Ravbar and Mr Ingham that they shouldn't behave like that, but he also wanted me to keep them happy.

I repeat: he wanted her to keep them happy, not stand up and absolutely repudiate this disgraceful behaviour by CFMEU thugs. Keep them happy! If that is not aiding and abetting the CFMEU, I do not know what is. We have a CFMEU thug threatening to destroy a senior female bureaucrat's career, following their children, verballing abusing them in meetings and the best advice that the minister she worked for could give was: make sure you keep them happy. That is not just foolish. He was complicit.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Once again, I find the comments of the minister personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Transport and Main Roads, would you withdraw your comments, please?

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. He was not just foolish; he was complicit. He did not take offence at public servants being bullied, intimidated—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again I find the comments of the minister, who persists in making them, personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Transport and Main Roads, would you withdraw those comments, please?

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. Those weak former Labor ministers opposite had to keep their union masters happy at any cost. They were happy to throw the career of a senior public servant under the bus and that was just collateral damage. They come in here and they take personal offence, but they were not standing up for the public servants they supposedly represented. They come in here and say these are untruths, but they will not step out there and correct the record, which says everything. If they genuinely believe that what we are saying is untrue, if they genuinely believe that the testimony before the commission of inquiry is untrue, they should step outside, front up to the media and address these disgraceful allegations.

Crisafulli Government, Performance

Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (2.42 pm): We have seen two Crisafulli government budgets, two years, one downgrade and one Premier not taking responsibility. Before taking office the Treasurer said, 'I do not want to be a treasurer who has a ratings downgrade on my watch.' It has happened already on Premier Crisafulli's watch. Queensland suffered its first credit rating downgrade since 2009, 17 years ago, with S&P cutting the state from AA+ to AA. The Premier went to the election promising respect for taxpayers' money and lower debt, but instead he is spending like a drunken sailor and on the wrong priorities. Less than two years later we have more debt, a lower credit rating, more interest being paid out by government and another broken election promise by Premier Crisafulli.

After Labor's final 2024 budget S&P reaffirmed Queensland's AA+ rating with a stable outlook. Labor handed Premier Crisafulli a AA+ stable rating at the election and in only two years he squandered it—in record time. This credit downgrade hangs like a dead albatross around the neck of Premier Crisafulli. They were warned three times: in February 2025, October 2025 and February of this year; three warnings from S&P. Did they listen? No! Premier Crisafulli does not listen to anyone. S&P estimates Queensland's operating deficit for 2025-26 at 6.1 per cent of operating revenue, the worst of any Australian state. Queensland under this government is dead last; they have hit the bottom on the scale. Queensland is at rock bottom in two years flat and they are not taking responsibility for it. This credit downgrade after two budgets and half a term in office proves the Crisafulli government cannot manage Queenslanders' money on their behalf. They are not even spending it on the right things: the capital underspend on health infrastructure is substantial while they prioritise a $1.2 billion swimming pool.

Health under this government is just as badly managed. We saw the Queensland Ambulance Service IT upgrade of triple 0 services and operations centre was an absolute cluster! The planned IT upgrade failed on 3 September and the new CAD system failed, the backup failed and there was no roll back contingency, so QAS had to go back to manual processing as triple 0 jobs piled up. Hundreds of ambulances were delayed, swathes of QAS staff were called in to help and patients were left waiting. Their attempt to downplay the largest QAS IT bungle in their history is classic secret LNP government. Every QAS operations centre worker, every paramedic, every ED health staff member who worked through 3 September knows exactly what happened, yet this health minister refuses to take responsibility and tries to spin it away.

Today what did we see in question time? Minister Nicholls threw the Deputy Premier under the bus. I table the article from the *Courier-Mail* saying exactly that.

Tabled paper: Extract from media article, undated, titled 'Health Minister throws Bleijie under the bus over QAS failure' [1614].

The day after the meltdown we had Acting Premier Bleijie telling the media he had not been briefed on what had happened with the IT bungle and yet today the health minister revealed to the House that, in fact, the Acting Premier was fully briefed about the IT bungle on 3 September. Deputy Premier Bleijie has serious questions to answer about why he told the Queensland media the absolute opposite of what the health minister has said to the House today. They both cannot be correct. Either the health minister is correct or the Deputy Premier is correct. One of them is not telling the truth. Which one is it? Who is not telling the truth? They need to answer these questions.

It is not open and it is not transparent for them both to contradict each other on such a fundamental issue. The health minister has exposed the Deputy Premier today for his duplicity and they need to clarify this immediately to Queenslanders and to the Queensland media, whom Acting Premier Bleijie misled on 4 September. So much for LNP unity! Let them both clarify it. They are clearly not on the same page. What hope does this state have with a Deputy Premier and a health minister who will not cooperate with each other?

We also saw the health minister today claiming credit for having a permanent downgrade of maternity services at Biloela Hospital at level 2. What an arrogant and out-of-touch minister we have in the health minister.

Women, Workplace Safety

Hon. RM BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (2.47 pm): A woman starting an apprenticeship or traineeship expects to work hard. She should be able to ask a question without being humiliated and raise a concern without fearing for her job. There is no point telling women there is a career waiting for them if we are prepared to tolerate a workplace culture that drives them back out, and that is what Labor never understood. For too long keeping the CFMEU happy mattered more than asking hard questions about what was happening on our worksites. Keeping the union on side mattered more than standing up to intimidation. When people finally did raise concerns, the response that we have heard attributed to the former transport minister, the member for Miller, says it all: unions being unions. That is not good enough. It is not good enough for the public servants who are frightened in their workplace, it was not good enough for the workers who were intimidated and it is certainly not good enough for young women trying to build a career in construction.

The Crisafulli LNP government launched the Commission of Inquiry into the CFMEU to put an end to the misogyny, bullying, sexual harassment and intimidation on our worksites and it is clear that it is working. We sent a message that the days of Labor's CFMEU mates threatening and sexually harassing women on worksites are over. It is clear that that message is being heard.

We are seeing not just more women join the industry but also more Queenslanders overall. The Crisafulli government has delivered a record number of apprentices—male and female—completing their qualifications, and more than 5,000 new construction apprentices started out in the past financial year. We are getting the construction industry out from under the boot of Labor's CFMEU mates and Queenslanders know that they will not have to cop the disgusting behaviour which was rampant under those opposite.

What else did Labor's decade of cowering to its union overlords get us? Billions of dollars in budget blowouts and lost productivity and a construction skills shortage the size of an empty Suncorp Stadium. We inherited a construction industry which was 50,000 workers short because those opposite were more worried about keeping the CFMEU happy than about backing Queenslanders with skills and training to get a job. We have already brought Labor's skills shortage down considerably and, as with every mess Labor made, we will continue to calmly and methodically clean up its failures. Our TradieStart program is supporting 2½ thousand construction apprentices with incentives of up to $16,000 for businesses that give them their start and we are backing another 2,000 apprentices through the Crisafulli government's Small Business Apprenticeship Program, which delivers wage subsidies to help keep future tradies on the job.

In the past financial year the Crisafulli government invested more than $95.8 million in construction training which supported more than 28,000 students, because, unlike those opposite, we know that if you back—not bully—and if you encourage—not intimidate—and if you help—not harass—Queenslanders will answer the call. The Crisafulli LNP government is delivering a generational infrastructure pipeline and a wealth of opportunities for our construction industry workers. We are breaking down barriers for women and stamping out the horrific behaviour of the CFMEU which those opposite allowed to fester for a decade. Women's careers and the homes, schools and hospitals Queenslanders need are too important to be put at risk. The member for Miller can stand up and attack the government as much as he likes, but first he should answer the questions: did he say it and why did he not stand up to the CFMEU then, and why should any woman entering construction trust Labor to stand up for her now? The member for Miller has the opportunity to answer those questions today and he should take it.

Economy, Credit Rating

Mr MELLISH (Aspley—ALP) (2.51 pm): The Crisafulli LNP government's careless budget management has led to the first credit rating downgrade in Queensland in 17 years. The LNP-led Ethics Committee called this Premier careless in the discharge of his obligations when it came to managing the finances and declarations of a business. Now we can add careless in the discharge of his obligations to the people of Queensland in ensuring their budget is being appropriately managed too.

Let's be clear here: the lack of fiscal discipline by this government, particularly on the Olympics, had led to this downgrade—they are the words of S&P—and the excuses keep coming. This Treasurer is spinning and dancing through the playbook and cannot work out which Labor government to blame—the former state Labor government or the current federal Labor government. He spins so poorly he is surely the 'Raygun' of Queensland politics. Standard & Poor's Global warned the Crisafulli government on no fewer than three occasions that this budget was weakening, and the weak excuses from this Treasurer do not even withstand the slightest breeze.

What does a rating downgrade mean to everyday Queenslanders? To quote a member of this place speaking on a previous downgrade—

> This condemned Queensland to billions of dollars more in interest expenses over the years. That is money that has been taken from hospitals, schools and police.

An opposition member: Who said that?

Mr MELLISH: That was the now Treasurer in just the last term. He described getting a credit rating downgrade as an abject failure. However, the Treasurer does not want to be held to his own standards, of course, so what have others had to say? One said—

> In this budget there is no mention of the AAA credit rating, there is no intention to get the AAA credit rating back, there is no intention to pay down debt, there is no intention to look at debt, consider it and worry about it. It is not even mentioned.

That was what the now Deputy Premier said in 2018. He will not commit to getting AAA back. He will not even commit to getting AA+ back. In the same speech the now Deputy Premier said that $83 billion of debt was too much. He had better not look at his own budget papers, because it is now going to hit over $200 billion under this government, even by its own forecasts. Even by the end of this financial year its own budget papers say it will be over $160 billion—almost double what the member for Kawana cried was unacceptable. He said of $83 billion—

> This is a whopping credit card. If all of these little credit cards were put together, they would go around Queensland a few times with the amount of debt that we have got now—that $83 billion debt. What is quite concerning is that Labor have no plan to repay the debt.

What do we need from the Deputy Premier on this, and we heard him screaming earlier in this debate? To put it in terms he can understand, we need a little less conversation and a little more action. What have others said about credit ratings? To quote another member of this House—

> They also know that the Newman government is doing everything it can to change that situation, such as finally balancing our books and, in the process, restoring the state's AAA credit rating.

We know that did not happen, and who said that? It was former Newman government minister Crisafulli in 2012. He went on to say—

> Most people in this place will know that when Labor lost the state's AAA credit rating I was serving my community in the Townsville City Council. I knew how much that credit dive was going to cost just my council alone to service the interest on our loans and I knew the misery that would be shared around the state. Instead of the state being famous for its growth and opportunities, Queensland became infamous for having the worst credit rating of all the states.

That is what he said in 2012. I have some news for the Premier: we are now equal last again, thanks to his government. Well done, Premier! Maybe his experience at SET Solutions of letting debt get out of control may have tempered his views since then, but no. In 2018 the member for Broadwater then said—

> I would cop these new taxes if we were making a little bit of an inroad into the debt, but it is going to hit $83 billion and those opposite have given up trying. We lost a ... credit rating in this state ... and I can remember collectively what that did to our reputation and to the way we felt as Queenslanders. We have given up even dreaming about getting it back. Somehow we are clawing on to AA-plus as though that is the zenith of where we are going to reach. We have given up.

I agree with the Premier: he has given up. He has given up on holding on to the short leash of the Deputy Premier and his wild Olympic spending. Infamously, the Premier agreed to the 2024 Labor budget before it had even been released.

Turning to this full-of-excuses Treasurer—the man who cannot say no to the Premier and cannot say no to the Deputy Premier—he said in October 2024, 'I don't want to be a treasurer that has a ratings downgrade on my watch. It's that simple.' If the treasurer had any mettle or backbone behind those comments, he would do the honourable thing and resign this week. If those words on his economic stewardship meant anything whatsoever, he would resign. It is that simple, in his own words. The now Treasurer talked a big game in opposition, waxing lyrical about bond spreads and borrowing markets, making himself out to be the big economic brain over there, so which is it: does the Treasurer lack the smarts or does he lack the power internally to prevent this credit rating downgrade, because it is one

or the other? Queenslanders will pay the price for this reckless Deputy Premier and this passenger Treasurer, but today there has been absolute silence from the Premier. He made three ministerial statements to this House—three ministerial statements—and he did not go near the credit rating downgrade because, as the Premier himself said—

... Queensland became infamous for having the worst credit rating of all the states.

Premier, I could not agree more.

CFMEU

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.56 pm): I would love to delve into the Labor Party's financial mismanagement of this state over a decade of decline. It never saw someone else's money it could not spend fast enough and it never saw a promise it could not make without funding fast enough. When we came to office we found that the centrally managed budget in the Department of Health was overspent and overcommitted with no source of funding and letters saying, 'We propose spending this although there's no source of funding,' signed by the former health minister to the former treasurer about it.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: We hear those opposite speak with forked tongue, and none more forked than the member for Logan. The member for Logan and the member for Bundaberg both want to get higher and higher up the ladder, but it ain't coming soon! It is not happening. It has not been happening for a while.

I want to talk about something of equal importance to the people of Queensland and to my portfolio of health, and that is the commission of inquiry into the CFMEU and the bullying, the misogyny, the thuggery, the intimidation and the corruption by the CFMEU, because as we go about building hospitals in Queensland we find more and more evidence of it. The independent report found that we were losing a number of days in working-week productivity each week in that in Queensland we were doing less work under the CFMEU BPICs under Labor's failed capacity expansion program than they were in New South Wales and under the comrades in the democratic socialist workers republic of Victoria. They were working harder down there, if you can believe it, than up here.

The commission of inquiry has revealed much about the attitudes of those opposite with respect to this shocking behaviour, including of course the member for Miller. It is important because he holds himself out as the shadow health minister. The commission of inquiry heard that transport and main roads staff lodged workplace health and safety claims detailing how 'the 300 or so large burly CFMEU protesters … invaded my workspace and intimidated me and my colleagues'. Police body cam footage shows unionists knocking a security guard to the ground, forcing the building into lockdown. What did the then transport and main roads minister say? The member for Miller shrugged it off, saying, 'Well, that is just unions being unions.'

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the comments by the minister personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Health, would you withdraw?

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. The former TMR director-general submitted that the member for Miller shrugged off the confrontation. There was indeed an article about that which I am happy to table in due course. Further, I table an article from 4 September where the member for Miller is directly quoted as saying the Queensland Ambulance Service had—and I use the phrase 'unparliamentary language', mistruth.

Tabled paper: Bundle of media articles relating to the CFMEU and QAS dispatch system failure [1615].

The member for Miller has failed to apologise to the commissioner, the administration or the paramedics at QAS for undermining their hard work to deliver health services. False allegations and a scare campaign from the member for Miller and those opposite only serve to undermine public trust in the triple 0 system and puts Queenslanders' lives at risk. This is a system that continued to serve Queenslanders all the way through the changeover to the new CAD system. Despite four statements from the Queensland Ambulance Service commissioner in relation to this matter within 24 hours, the member for Miller continued his fear campaign to catastrophise, claiming that the QAS was spreading mistruths in its statements.

These statements by the member for Miller are far from rare. The member for Miller also chose to slander the hard work that was being done by the people at the Toowoomba Hospital when he suggested 42 surgeries were cancelled last year. He said 42 surgeries were cancelled last year after he had just been briefed by the chief executive. The chief executive had told him clearly what was going on. What did he do? He got his camera, snuck out the front, took a selfie and said, 'Surgeries are cancelled.' When the chief executive wrote to him—not me, but the chief executive—and said you actually got it wrong and you are undermining the hard work of people, he apologised. Where did he apologise? It was on Bluesky—whatever that is! He does not even have the courage to apologise on the vehicle he spread the mistruth on.

The commission of inquiry into the CFMEU has heard extensively about the lax attitude of the member for Miller and those opposite when confronted with the CFMEU's appalling actions. The only people the member for Miller is concerned about are his mates in the CFMEU and the union movement.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the comments made by the minister personally offensive and I ask they be withdrawn.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw.

Economy, Credit Rating

Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (3.02 pm): I make reference to the downgrading of our credit rating by Standard & Poor's and the opportunities that now presents to the government of Queensland to change direction. I have been hearing just now the back and forth of members about who is responsible. The reality is that Labor has been in government for the majority of the last 20 years and it should own a great deal of the responsibility for where we are at as a government. It is not good enough either for this government to say, 'That is all Labor and we cannot make decisions to change because we will let Labor back in and they will do it all again.' I am not interested in that.

Saul Eslake reportedly said the other day that the Crisafulli government inherited the situation but has so far done nothing to correct the situation and at the margins its decisions have made it worse. I think what he is trying to say is that they are adopting the decisions made by Labor. The two big ones are the Olympic Games and the coal royalties. If they hold onto those, we will keep going in the same direction. It is not about tinkering at the edges—this hospital or that hospital—it is about thinking big about what makes and has made this state and how we can turn the situation around.

More than ever, it is crucial for the government in power to be laser focused on ensuring that any available spending goes towards wealth-creating activities. This means creating jobs rather than buying jobs with taxpayers' money. We must use the money available to build infrastructure that not only creates income-generating activities but also creates a sovereign benefit for the taxpayer. It is not good enough to just say 'drill, baby, drill' and get more gas out of the ground if you do not have an effective gas reserve policy or a way to capture that wealth and deliver it to the people of Queensland.

One thing you would not say is let's have an event in five years time and build sports stadiums and more short-term accommodation and that will be our economic salvation, that is the way out of this. In doing that, you would not say let's punish and strangle the $76 billion coal industry so that we can rip money out in the short term to pay for discretionary spending on sports stadiums and sports events. That does not make sense to me and I do not think it makes sense to most average Queenslanders. It certainly does not make good economic sense.

We should be laser focused on things like CopperString. Bureaucrats are still saying: does it pay for itself; does it make money? Both sides of the House have celebrated the construction of the Little Eva copper mine, which will be the biggest copper mine in Queensland and will run off a diesel-fired generated power station. One mine alone provides the business case for CopperString. Everyone in here is talking about getting critical minerals out of the ground. We need effective energy prices to make that happen. CopperString would be the project you would push to the top. Sports stadiums are something you would push to the bottom. I do not care whether we have to reutilise Commonwealth Games assets and scale the whole thing back, but we need to reprioritise what we are spending our money on as this is getting very serious for the state.

This is an opportunity for the government to reset and say that they need to refocus. I think Queenslanders would appreciate the honesty. They do not want to be told over and again how wonderful the Olympics will be, how they will be this economic panacea for the state and how happy we will be. I think people are starting to see through it. The government has a good opportunity now to pull it in and say, 'Let's be real and let's be honest with people that we are in trouble.'

That leads me on to the coal industry. Trying to pretend that there are not problems there is a big problem. Everyone said four years before the car industry left Australia, 'It seems to be going alright; they are still operating,' and then it was gone. I have been talking with interest about the coal industry. Everyone seems to want to think it is down when the rest of the world is experiencing demand increases of four per cent for metallurgical coal and iron ore, but exports in coal are down two per cent at the same time. What does that tell you? The rest of the world wants four per cent more of our metallurgical coal but we are producing less than two per cent. Need I say any more? That is the most damning empirical fact about where the coal industry in Queensland sits right now. You can keep pointing at Dhilmar and saying, 'We have investors.' I can point to another 20 sources of evidence that show it is being white-anted at the moment by coal royalties. That must be addressed if we need industry to pay for stupid things like the Olympic Games in the future.

MOTIONS

Suspension of Standing Orders

Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.07 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing orders 87 and 150 be suspended to allow the Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill 2026 and any amendments circulated by the minister to be moved and considered.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.07 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing orders 87, 96 and 150 be suspended to allow:

1. the Criminal Code (Dangerous Driving) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026; and

2. the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026

and any amendments circulated by the minister to be moved and considered.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING (STRENGTHENING THE CONTAINER REFUND SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2773, on motion of Mr Powell—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (3.08 pm), continuing: What will success look like when this bill is passed? Queenslanders do not judge Containers for Change by the number of governance documents it produces; they judge it by whether the scheme works for them. Can they easily return their containers; can they claim their 10-cent refund; can their local sporting club, charity, school or community organisation benefit; are more containers being recycled rather than becoming litter or going to landfill; and can they have confidence that the money within the scheme is being properly and transparently managed?

That is why these technical reforms matter. Stronger governance provides greater confidence in the people making decisions about the scheme; greater transparency provides clearer visibility over how the scheme and its funds are managed; protections against unfair or unreasonable discrimination provide a fairer deal for the small businesses and community organisations operating refund points; better network planning provides a clearer focus on access, including for regional Queenslanders; and stronger oversight provides accountability when the scheme is not operating as it should. The end goal is simple, and I have said it many times during this contribution: more containers returned, more refunds

claimed, better access, stronger community benefits, better recycling and environmental outcomes—that is, Queenslanders getting more out of Containers for Change, and that is what these reforms are about.

I acknowledge the work of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee and thank all stakeholders who contributed to the parliamentary inquiry and the committee's consideration of this bill. Their contributions have helped shape substantial reforms to a scheme used by Queenslanders right across the state. I also acknowledge the considerable work of officers within the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation in responding to the inquiry and developing this legislation. We said we would review the scheme and we did. We said we would fix the problems. This bill delivers those reforms and it puts Queenslanders at the centre of what Containers for Change should be about. I commend the bill to the House.

Hon. LM LINARD (Nudgee—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise on behalf of the Labor opposition to say, firstly, how proud we are to have introduced Queensland's container refund scheme. It has been good for this state, good for communities and good for our environment. It has delivered real results and Queenslanders have embraced it. Billions of containers have been returned, more than $1 billion has gone back into Queenslanders' pockets, and charities, community groups and schools have benefited. In service of its core purpose, the scheme has helped drive a major reduction in beverage container litter in our environment. Labor has every reason to be proud of that record. We established the scheme with highly ambitious and legislated targets because we were ambitious for the scheme and what it can deliver for Queenslanders and the environment. We worked towards making that happen. We expanded eligibility to include wine and spirit bottles, which was nation-leading reform. We oversaw an almost 50 per cent increase to the beverage container recycling rate, bringing Queensland in line with return rates achieved by jurisdictions that have had their schemes in place for decades longer—in some circumstances, four decades longer.

While we are proud of introducing the scheme and while we are proud of its many achievements, we have never rested on our laurels in respect of the scheme but rather have sought to continuously improve and expand the scheme, which is why in late 2023 my then director-general of the department of environment advised the chair and chief executive officer of Coex of the department's intention to conduct a review of the container refund scheme governance. On 19 March 2024, as the then environment minister, I wrote to Coex advising that an independent governance review would be held into the scheme. We engaged Clayton Utz to carry out the independent review because it was time, after five years of operation, for such a review, because we wanted to ensure that the scheme was fit for purpose and was fully servicing the interests of Queenslanders, industry and the businesses that work within it and because I wanted to address issues being raised in respect of the operations of Coex.

The final report from our governance review of Coex was provided to the now Crisafulli LNP government almost two years ago but was not publicly released until the conclusion of the committee's inquiry in October 2025, almost a year later. Almost two years ago the LNP government had clear answers in front of it that it could have acted upon to improve the scheme. The governance review commissioned by Labor had already given them many of the recommendations we see implemented in this bill—recommendations to improve governance and the operation of Coex to the benefit of the many operators and small businesses that make this scheme what it is—but instead of doing what good governments do and getting on with the work of addressing issues in front of them, they decided to delay action and play politics, launching a lengthy committee process to arrive at the same conclusions.

While we are accustomed at this point to the LNP handing in our homework as its own, for the avoidance of any doubt or obfuscation from those opposite, and for the benefit of the House, let me make clear the parallels between the Clayton Utz report commissioned by Labor and this bill. Recommendation 3 of the Clayton Utz report we commissioned called for annual external independent evaluations of the board's performance, including senior management feedback. This bill introduces annual board audit and evaluation mechanisms. Recommendation 5 of the Clayton Utz report that Labor commissioned called for ministerial approval for constitutional amendments relating to membership or directors. This bill strengthens the legislative requirements around the constitution and board. However, it also expands ministerial control over appointments and governance settings. The bill goes much further than what was recommended in the Clayton Utz report in this regard.

Strong governance matters, but strong governance is not the same thing as expanding ministerial powers at every turn. This bill gives the minister greater control over board approvals, the power to withdraw that approval and the power to appoint a special manager even while questions remain about the circumstances for that appointment, the intended limits of the role and the safeguards around its

exercise. That risks creating uncertainty about where proper oversight ends and political reach begins. Queenslanders want a scheme that works better in practice. They do not want a government whose first instinct is always to pull more power into the minister's office. There is a very legitimate question here about whether this represents just another example of ministerial overreach under this LNP government. Comments at the hearing from the current acting Coex CEO, Mr Trevor Evans, were instructive in this regard.

A government member: Hear, hear!

Ms LINARD: I am glad you are so supportive. You will like his comments then—

Broadly speaking, the committee and the department have recognised that you have two levers at your disposal: one is transparency and one is increased government involvement, and that might be by virtue of a minister or a government having an approval or a veto power or, indeed, having something more than that which is the power to direct. When it comes to a lot of the issues and challenges that the committee has identified in its work, I think the draft bill probably sometimes blurs the lines between whether the lever being pulled is to increase transparency or to increase the scope for government involvement or, indeed, ministerial direction.

In respect of the proposed appointment of a special manager, greater clarity is needed about the circumstances that would warrant such an appointment, the criteria by which a special manager would be selected, the limits of that person's role and the safeguards that would ensure the power is exercised appropriately and not more broadly than intended. Those are not minor questions, and this reflects the concern that has arisen repeatedly under this LNP Crisafulli government: inappropriate political interference and politicisation of independent bodies.

Having outlined the clear parallels between the Clayton Utz report commissioned by Labor and this bill in respect of recommendations 3 and 5, I now turn to recommendation 6 of the Clayton Utz report Labor commissioned. Recommendation 6 called for Coex to hold an AGM within five months of the end of its financial year. This bill inserts annual general meeting requirements into the new governance framework. Recommendation 8 called for complaints, including whistleblower matters, to be overseen by a board committee with an independent majority and independent chair. This bill introduces new complaints and governance obligations, though not to the full extent that some stakeholders sought. Recommendation 9 called for annual reporting about gifts and benefits policies and compliance. This bill substantially expands annual and quarterly reporting obligations more broadly.

Naturally, the Labor opposition supports much of what is in this bill to improve governance of the scheme. They are improvements that have arisen from the very governance review we initiated when in government to improve the scheme, so of course we support them. The bill strengthens oversight of the product responsibility organisation; improves the performance management framework; provides for a ministerial statement of expectations; requires annual board audits and enables the minister to require an audit of the organisation itself; establishes a fixed-term appointment and renewal framework for the PRO; expands reporting and transparency obligations; and requires a governance and investment plan and a network extension plan.

These are all welcome improvements, but it must also be said that they are improvements that could have been dealt with and introduced far sooner. Sadly, it appears that this government cares far more about trying to score political points and the optics than it does about actually improving the scheme—a scheme that Queenslanders are incredibly supportive of. Nowhere was that made more obvious than by the shameful way this government tabled in the House the inquiry report into the scheme—a report that was itself overly political—and then, one by one, the environment minister and the Deputy Premier proceeded to use it to attack the opposition leader who introduced the scheme that Queenslanders are so supportive of. It was extraordinary how they were able to immediately stand up and make their impromptu speeches when the report had barely been distributed to members in the House. Certainly we had not seen it. However, that is okay because, for all of their blustering and politicking and trying to get on the evening news, not one constituent contacted me about their antics or those reports—not one.

What Queenslanders want to see is more easily accessible collection points. Business owners and industry want to see more transparency and certainty in their contracts and operations. We want to see the scheme continue to improve and expand to serve both these purposes and the environment. That is what we are interested in, working constructively with Queenslanders, industry and stakeholders to see the scheme continuously improve.

Beyond the important governance improvements that I have already touched on and outlined that the Labor opposition supports, I turn to what the average Queenslander who uses the scheme will see in real terms as a result of this bill. What does it actually mean to the people who are most invested, whom we all stand in this place to represent? What does it mean to the community groups in my

electorate and in all of yours who use the funds they raise from this scheme to help vulnerable members of our community? For instance, what do these reforms mean to George Tobler from my electorate who, year after year, drives around our neighbourhood collecting drink containers to return in order to raise money to buy Christmas gifts for children being treated at the Prince Charles Hospital?

Those who are invested in the scheme have been watching this process to see genuine and real improvements but they are very disappointed in this bill because, while it was stated that the committee inquiry was initially established to examine how to further increase rates of return, none of the proposed changes in this legislation which purport to respond to that inquiry support this objective. From the outset, the minister ruled out any consideration of increasing the refund value despite a recent poll of Queensland consumers overwhelmingly supporting it and recommendation 11 of the inquiry report recommending it.

Of the 21 recommendations made by the committee during the initial inquiry all but one were supported in full or in principle by the Crisafulli LNP government. However, this bill fails to implement any of the recommendations that were specifically targeted at increasing or expanding uptake of the scheme. That includes recommendation 12 stemming from the inquiry, which advised the government to boost long-term participation in the scheme by expanding access and convenience through corporate and government workplaces as well as apartment complexes, increasing reverse vending machines and reviewing whether local planning rules are limiting scheme growth. Despite the government's response tabled on 26 March this year indicating their support for this recommendation, it is omitted from the bill.

Coex gave insight into just how effective this recommendation would be for increasing uptake and recovery rates, with Mr Evans stating that this recommendation alone was expected to potentially increase the overall recovery or recycling rate by as much as eight to 15 per cent statewide. Gayle Sloan, the CEO of Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia, whom I note the government quoted at will to support their attacks on the opposition leader when the inquiry report was tabled, which is interesting given that she is objectively no fan of this LNP government's bill, stated during the public hearing that recommendation 12—

... has not been addressed: how we actually improve, on the ground, the recycling recovery rates; how we address commercial and industrial; how we make sure the regions operate. I read the 9 April transcript and your point was absolutely valid, Mr Kelly—

referring to a member of the committee—

it cannot be left to the vibe to increase recycling and recovery rates. At this stage that is what we have been asked to do.

With respect to recommendation 11, the minister assured Queenslanders that the container refund scheme would be incorporated into the broader policies of the new Queensland Waste Strategy. The Waste Strategy should act as a guide to key stakeholders in terms of waste reduction and recycling in the long term. The draft strategy released in April clearly states that the final strategy will incorporate stakeholder feedback when it is finalised and released in mid to late 2025. However, it is impossible to say whether or not the scheme has been incorporated into the strategy because the strategy has more pictures than substance. When I submitted a question on notice on the matter to the minister, he refused to answer when we might actually see that stakeholder feedback incorporated more broadly.

While those opposite were elected based on slogans, one of them being a guarantee to deliver everything on time and on budget, the reality with this government is very different. In respect of inquiry recommendation 16, it has also been overlooked in the bill despite offering clear, practical opportunities to strengthen Queensland's container refund scheme beyond governance reform alone. Recommendation 16 proposed a feasibility study into using container return points to collect soft plastics, batteries and other recyclable materials. This would offer a practical pathway to transform existing refund points into broader recycling hubs for Queensland communities. Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland CEO, Alison Price, made clear the missed opportunity of this reform, stating—

This bill should explicitly allow the scheme coordinator to co-fund shared logistics with other stewardship schemes, making it legal and easy for operators to accept multiple streams, like e-waste or batteries, in future.

The bill proposes to require Coex to prepare, each financial year, a plan for a network of container refund points that will require the minister's agreement and that will be published on the website for transparency, all of which I support as positive change. However, it would not go far enough if it becomes a mere tick-and-flick exercise without meaningful involvement of the minister and department, as champion, to see barriers to additional collection sites delivered across the state. I know

stakeholders feel likewise in this regard. I am aware that numerous operators feel that they have put forward detailed plans for additional collection sites across the state to make access to collection points more convenient and to deliver higher returns than in the past but without, in their view, an adequate response from Coex. We will take a watching brief in this regard.

I also note that in respect of recommendation 7 and the establishment of an independent external complaints body, the bill is silent and oddly so given the testimony at the committee hearing from the Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland that WRIQ and Coex are now currently finalising an MOU to establish an independent dispute resolution service following the removal of an independent body from the original draft bill. Obviously it was the government's intention to introduce an independent body or at least establish a legislative mechanism for operators to access an independent complaints mechanism, as per the original government response to the initial inquiry report, and that such a mechanism was contained in the original draft bill. Therefore, I ask the minister why he has changed his mind in this regard.

It is clear from the submissions from both the national and state waste management and resource recovery associations that operators and industry do not support Coex continuing to manage such complaints internally. In the case of WMRR, they do not support reliance on informal or voluntary dispute mechanisms that are not truly independent and able to deliver binding dispute resolutions, at least not without legislative change. Both associations want to see clear and fair operator contracts, with appropriate safeguards and access to independent dispute resolution processes. This bill does not deliver that. For the benefit of the House and operators, I invite the minister to outline why this is so and any future intentions in that regard.

Like many bills under this Crisafulli LNP government, stakeholders raised as a key concern the lack of consultation and the short turnaround time required for a response on the bill. In the public hearing, the Independent Brewers Association stated—

> ... we were really rushed to get our response through to you guys. It was an incredibly short period of time that we had to digest it and come up with something to get back to you guys.

At the other end of the field, Lion also raised issues with the lack of consultation alongside a compact timeframe, saying—

> 'Constrained' is the word we would use. There were short timeframes and we understand that; sometimes things cannot take a long time. There was limited consultation and only verbal. I think there is a guideline of five weeks for any new bill to be reviewed and I do not think that was followed.

There is no obvious reason this this bill needed to be so rushed that stakeholders could not be shown the respect of an adequate period of consultation, particularly given the government took two years to respond to the governance review that Labor initiated in the form of this bill. Why not show stakeholders adequate respect and allow them due consideration?

Ultimately, Queenslanders deserve a bill that paired stronger governance with practical, consumer-based reforms—a bill that focused on improved accountability where needed but also made it easier for people to participate, easier for the network to expand, easier for the scheme to keep growing and easier for the operators who put their heart and soul into the scheme to do business with the PRO. Instead, what we have is a bill that is at times heavy on structure and process but light on the practical reforms that would help drive the next stage of the scheme's success and increase recovery rates. Stakeholders themselves made that point during the inquiry. Several warned that the proposed changes did little to address the underlying barriers to higher return rates and stronger participation.

As I outlined earlier, the Labor opposition will not oppose this bill because scheme improvement is welcomed and has always been so and because much of this work reflects concerns our government had already identified and acted upon through the governance review, but we do say governance reform alone is not enough. If this parliament is serious about actually improving the container refund scheme then this cannot be where the work ends. The next step must be practical reform—reform that improves convenience, boosts participation, supports expansion and helps the scheme deliver even more for Queensland communities and our environment. At its core, this scheme exists to deliver tangible benefits to the community, and we will continue to advocate for a container refund scheme that continues to deliver for Queenslanders and for the environment.



Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (3.30 pm): I am gobsmacked at the response from the member for Nudgee, who has had so much to say now. It is a shame that the member for Nudgee and the other former ministers who had carriage of the scheme previously were not quite as focused as the member for Nudgee was today on the attention to detail, because what we inherited was an absolute shambles. While there was criticism about the time that was taken, I remind members that we actually applied for

an extension to the hearing process and the committee process because we needed more time to deal with the significant number of whistleblowers who came forward to lift the lid on a scheme that was in significant turmoil. In fact, I remind members also that this is probably one of the first times in the history of this parliament that a committee has ever made direct referrals to the CCC because of some of the issues and some of the evidence that we heard through the process of the committee's review. I remind the member that it is not just about governance issues. There were other issues of misconduct and other allegations that needed to be dealt with. Standing orders prevent me from going into any further detail about those matters because many of those matters are still before the CCC.

I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill. When our committee began its inquiry, I expected we would simply be looking at how to make a good scheme better—how we could lift recovery rates, improve collection facilities and deliver greater community benefit. Instead, we uncovered serious concerns about governance, management and accountability. We heard from operators and whistleblowers who described bullying, harassment and intimidation. We heard concerns about conflicts of interest, complaints handling, contractual arrangements and a concentration of control within the scheme.

This parliament cannot ignore the voices of the people who had the courage to come forward, and that is why it took some time to work through the process. This is why the committee made 21 recommendations for reform and referred 10 allegations to the Crime and Corruption Commission for investigation. Let me be clear: it is not the role, and it was not the role, of this committee to determine whether those allegations were substantiated—that is a matter for the CCC—but it is our responsibility to ask how we got here. The answer in part lies in the fundamentally flawed governance model established under the former Labor government during their decade of decline. This model was approved under Labor and presided over by four Labor ministers, including the former minister responsible for establishing the model who is now the Leader of the Opposition. Under that model, the scheme was administered by a not-for-profit company owned by two of Australia's largest beverage bottlers. Those same interests dominated the board, and the principal service agreement was awarded to a joint venture that they themselves owned. In return for loans, they received additional board representation and maintained significant influence long after those loans could have been repaid.

This is not a governance model appropriate for a scheme of this size or importance, and that is why the Crisafulli government is acting. This is not about dismantling the container refund scheme; it is about protecting it, strengthening it and restoring confidence in a scheme funded ultimately by everyday Queenslanders. The money ultimately comes from mums and dads, families, and businesses through the price of the beverages they buy. Queenslanders have every right to expect that the scheme is properly governed and that decisions are made in the public interest and there is accountability for how those funds are properly managed.

This is just the beginning. This is the first tranche of laws the Crisafulli government will introduce to strengthen the scheme, to ensure it is sustainable into the future and to put appropriate governance arrangements in place.

At the heart of this bill is a simple principle: if an organisation administers a scheme of significant public importance there must be proper oversight, transparency and accountability. The bill provides that the product responsibility organisation, the PRO, is a unit of public administration for the purposes of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 when performing its functions, an important point. The committee recommended this be clarified to provide that the PRO is, and has always been, a unit of public administration for those purposes. The Crisafulli government has accepted that recommendation.

The bill also strengthens the governance of the organisation. The board will comprise nine directors, with at least five independent of the beverage industry. Independent directors must collectively bring expertise in waste and recycling, local government, community and social enterprise, as well as legal or financial experience. The chair must also be independent. That matters because this scheme does not exist for the benefit of any particular manufacturer or industry participant; it exists for Queenslanders—to reduce litter, increase recycling and deliver environmental and community benefits.

This bill also introduces stronger ministerial oversight. The organisation will be required to maintain key corporate documents, including strategic and operational plans, a governance and investment plan, a network plan for container refund points and a complaints management framework. The minister will be able to issue statements of expectations and directions, and those directions must be reported. There will also be stronger independent scrutiny. The board will be subject to independent audit, including compliance with the legislation and the ongoing suitability of directors. The minister will also have the power to require further audits where necessary. Good governance is about having

checks and balances and making sure the rules are followed. Transparency is equally important. The organisation will be required to publish key information, including corporate documents, annual and quarterly reports, ministerial directions and board remuneration. Public confidence requires public accountability.

The bill also makes sure the scheme continues to work for Queensland communities. The organisation will be responsible for maintaining a network of container refund points that gives communities across Queensland access to the scheme while considering the economic viability of existing operators. We want convenient access to refund points, but we also need the small businesses and operators who form the backbone of this scheme to remain viable. The bill also broadens the organisation's responsibilities to support recycling infrastructure and environmental and community programs, including initiatives to reduce litter and illegal dumping, encourage innovation and social enterprise, and benefit community organisations.

The committee carefully considered this bill and received 27 submissions from stakeholders. There was broad support for stronger governance, transparency and accountability, while stakeholders also raised matters concerning accessibility, complaints processes and aspects of the proposed reforms. The committee ultimately made two recommendations: that the bill be passed and that the provision relating to the PRO's status under the Crime and Corruption Act be clarified. The Crisafulli government has accepted both.

This parliament and the committee system is doing exactly what Queenslanders expect us to do. We listened, we investigated, we identified serious problems and now the Crisafulli government is acting to fix them. The difference is clear: the Crisafulli government is putting independence, transparency and accountability back at the centre of the scheme. We want Queenslanders recycling more. We want less litter in our streets, parks, beaches and waterways. We want stronger recycling infrastructure and greater opportunities for community organisations and social enterprises.

Queenslanders must also have confidence that the organisation administering this scheme is properly governed and accountable. They deserve to know that conflicts are properly managed, decisions are transparent and there are consequences when proper standards are not met. This bill delivers stronger governance, stronger oversight and greater transparency and begins the work of putting Queensland communities back at the heart of the container refund scheme.

I thank the members of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, who endured hours and hours, if not days and days, of in camera hearings with whistleblowers from a range of stakeholders. Some pretty disturbing evidence was put forward and many disturbing allegations were made, and I believe the committee has acted well and in good faith.

(Time expired)

Mr J KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.40 pm): It is a pleasure to be one of the very few opposition members to speak on this bill and this much truncated debate. I am not sure why they do not want to debate it. Perhaps we should review the member for Callide's first speech to the House where he outlined the LNP's view of the Containers for Change program. He said that we did not have a litter problem but we did have a people problem, and he noted his opposition to this scheme. Every member on this side of the House is proud of this scheme.

By any measure, the container recycling scheme introduced by the former Labor government during its decade of caring for the environment, acting on climate change and protecting the Great Barrier Reef is a massive success: a billion dollars has been returned to the pockets of Queenslanders; over 12½ billion containers have been returned; Queensland's drink container recovery rate has increased from 18 per cent prior to the Containers for Change scheme to around 67 per cent today, and it is increasing; beverage container litter has decreased 60 per cent since the scheme was launched; $17.9 million has been donated to charities and community groups; more than 1,500 jobs have been created; and it is massively supported by the people of Queensland. Anybody who paints this as a failure is deluded.

The question is: could we have achieved a greater recycling rate? That is the question the committee was supposed to answer, and that is the question this bill should be answering. Submitter after submitter made many suggestions on how to increase recycling rates such as: developing strategies for multi-unit developments; developing strategies for large government departments, including hospitals and prisons; working with community groups, particularly P&Cs and P&Fs, to increase recycling; focusing on increasing scheme participation in the hospitality industry; and rolling

out reverse vending machines in areas of high container use away from home such as food courts, sporting stadiums and public transport stops. Does this bill address any of the issues that were in the report? Sadly, no. It is a massive missed opportunity to increase recycling rates, which apparently is what this inquiry was all about.

The committee did find evidence of poor governance at the Coex board level, and this had devastating impacts on people in the recycling industry. The committee found Coex acting without regard for the financial viability of the scheme operators. The committee found Coex engaging in very questionable investigative processes with zero regard for natural justice for those being investigated. The committee found poor or non-existent conflict-of-interest policies at the board level. The committee found arguably poor financial management practices. The committee found that the board did not truly reflect the full extent of the industry. All of this led to loss of businesses, loss of recycling in many communities, loss of employment and, in extreme cases, significant damage to the mental health of the owners and employees of the scheme operators. I have to say I was worried about some of the people who came before our committee.

After seven months of inquiry, the committee found out that all of this had been investigated previously and reported to the minister when Clayton Utz were engaged to do a governance review, which was handed to the minister in December 2024, or thereabouts. While this bill addresses governance issues, this could have been done a long time ago without the farce of a committee process to find answers that the minister had sitting on his desk. While the inquiry was useful, I wonder how much faster we could have completed it if we had been furnished with this information in a timely manner. Instead of acting quickly to resolve these governance issues, the minister and the LNP have delayed and the people who have suffered are the people who own the businesses, the employees and the community groups that rely on these schemes for fundraising, and the environment has suffered.

While addressing these governance issues is important, the evidence overwhelmingly pointed to the other issues I have noted previously, and these are not even touched by this bill. We should address the governance issues that are covered by this bill, but the majority of them will not in and of themselves increase recycling rates.

In my view, there is one key provision in this bill that would increase recycling rates. It is the one that requires the PRO to have regard to the economic viability of proposed refund points and their impact on the network and proximity to existing refund points. We heard a lot about this in the inquiry. Business after business came in extremely stressed because Coex had ignored the impact on their business when establishing new points. We found during the inquiry that when they set up a new container refund point with blatant disregard to the impact on existing operators the number of containers recycled did not increase; they were just spread amongst more operators. Ultimately, this led to operators going bust and ceasing operations, which then reduced recycling in those communities.

I particularly welcome these provisions, and they cannot come soon enough. I have been contacted by a number of scheme operators who have been advised by Coex as little as a month ago that they are planning to set up a new scheme operation in their area that will damage their business. This is outrageous behaviour. After this inquiry and a damning committee report, Coex continues to demonstrate extremely poor behaviour that completely disregards the small businesses that participate in this scheme. The board of Coex and their CEO must know what is in this bill because they made submissions to it, yet they continue to act in this manner. If the minister had acted sooner, these businesses would not be under this stress. They would not continue to be threatened by this arrogant and out-of-touch board. What a disgrace! I call on Coex to do the right thing before this legislation forces them to do it.

I am not surprised that Coex continues to act in this manner, given there were no consequences or attempts by the minister or the LNP to hold the board to account for the findings of the committee around extremely poor governance. It seems the only thing that happened was a CEO who had nothing to do with these issues was replaced by an LNP stooge. Clearly, this demonstrates that the LNP are all about big business and do not care about small business.

Of course we support this bill, but it could have been done a lot sooner. It could have protected existing businesses from the poor behaviour of Coex, but they continue to endure to this day. Labor supports the scheme operators, their employees, the community groups and the public who back this scheme. We thank all of the stakeholders for helping to reduce litter, tackle climate change, raise money for charity and create jobs. Sadly, this bill shows that the LNP are not serious about any of these things.

Ms DOOLEY (Redcliffe—LNP) (3.47 pm): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026 and the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee's report No. 24. I begin by acknowledging the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation, the Hon. Andrew Powell MP, for introducing legislation focused on practical improvements to the governance, transparency and accountability of Queensland's container refund scheme.

I also thank my fellow members on the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, the department and the many organisations and individuals who contributed to the inquiry process. As the member for Southport mentioned, we heard many disturbing submissions in both public and private hearings, and as we know there have been matters referred to the CCC. This committee considered substantial evidence, including 27 submissions and evidence from stakeholders at public hearings. This work matters because Queenslanders deserve a recycling system that is trusted, accessible and effective.

The committee's overarching conclusion is clear. The report states that the bill should be passed. Recommendation 1 expressly recommends that the bill be passed. Recommendation 2 further recommends that the legislation clarify that the product responsibility organisation, PRO, has been and is a unit of public administration under the Crime and Corruption Act 2001. These recommendations are about strengthening confidence in the scheme.

For Queenslanders, this is not simply a question of governance structures. It is about what happens when an empty bottle is taken out of the waste stream and returned for recycling. It is about whether people can easily access a refund point. It is about whether recycling infrastructure is financially sustainable. It is also about whether scheme funds are managed transparently and in the public interest. This bill delivers important reforms in each of these areas.

It strengthens the oversight of the PRO, including requiring independent auditing, establishing fixed terms for the PRO, strengthening ministerial oversight and requiring a majority of the PRO board to be independent of the beverage industry. Importantly, the board must collectively bring expertise in waste and recycling, local government and community and social enterprise. That broader expertise is particularly important because recycling is not just an industry issue; it is a community issue. This bill requires a governance and investment plan covering the allocation of surplus and retained scheme funds. It expands the functions of the PRO to support environmental and community programs and the infrastructure required to recycle or transport waste in Queensland. This has the potential to deliver real benefits locally in Redcliffe and right across the City of Moreton Bay.

In my electorate of Redcliffe, where our community values a beautiful coastline, pristine waters, parks, beaches and public spaces, reducing litter and increasing recycling is something people see and experience every day. A stronger scheme means more opportunities to keep eligible beverage containers out of our environment and waterways and in productive recycling streams.

The report records that 12 billion containers had been returned by 2026, contributing to a 60 per cent reduction in beverage container litter. It also records that the scheme has returned more than $1 billion to Queenslanders and almost $16 million to charities. These are significant achievements and they demonstrate that Queenslanders are willing to participate when the system is convenient and works well, but we must not stop there.

The committee's inquiry identified that accessibility remains a critical issue. The report notes evidence that Queensland has approximately one return point for every 14,000 residents. For Redcliffe, this reinforces a simple principle: recycling needs to be convenient. At this point I want to give a shout-out to Express Recycling in my electorate who recently were recognised by Coex as the 2026 Change Maker of the Year. Express Recycling, with owner James, has seven sites not just in the City of Moreton Bay but right across Queensland.

This bill requires a network of container refund points plan. The plan must consider the number, type and location of refund points, accessibility and equity, consultation and procedural transparency for operators. It also recommends the economic viability of existing refund points. This was something that came out very loud and clear in the evidence that was given in our public hearings. Many providers were given a site and then a few months later a new operator was opened in close proximity, causing a lot of distress. With the changes we hope that there will be clearer transparency and accountability in the contracts.

I particularly welcome the committee's continued focus on the recommendations from the earlier report No. 14. Recommendation 12 called for strategies to increase participation in corporate and government workplaces. Just last sitting week we welcomed Coex here to have Queensland parliament nominated as a collection site. They have also nominated their charity of choice to receive those funds. These are highly practical measures.

In Redcliffe we have growing residential areas, apartments, workplaces, schools and community organisations, and busy precincts. We should be looking for opportunities to make recycling a part of life. Nearly every sporting group and community group in my electorate of Redcliffe has a recycling program.

The committee has acknowledged that some of those measures are not directly contained in this bill. This is an important point and the reform process must not end here. The committee has encouraged the government to continue to work on expanding participation, and I strongly support that approach. We all as members in this House have a responsibility to encourage our communities to do that.

We should also examine opportunities to use container refund points for other recyclable materials including soft plastics and batteries, as recommended in recommendation 16. I also acknowledge the provisions supporting small beverage manufacturers. This bill provides a head of power for an exemption through regulation, with the draft regulation proposing relief on scheme contributions for the first 20,000 containers produced.

Ultimately, this legislation is about making sure the container refund scheme works for everybody. It is about stronger accountability. It is about transparent investment. It is about sustainable refund points. It is about better access. It is about turning more containers that Queenslanders use every day into valuable resources rather than litter or landfill.

As the member for Redcliffe, I want to see my community continue to lead by example in protecting our local environment. Our beaches, our waterways, our parks and our streets belong to all of us, and we all have a role to play in keeping them clean. The Crisafulli government is committed to practical environmental outcomes. This bill is an important step in strengthening one of Queensland's most visible recycling programs.

I support recommendation 1, that the bill be passed, and recommendation 2, which provides important clarification around the PRO status. Most importantly, I look forward to seeing the next stage of this work deliver greater accessibility and participation including in Redcliffe and across the Moreton Bay region. A recycling system works best when it is trusted, convenient and designed around the people who use it. This bill takes an important step towards achieving that. I commend the bill to the House.



Dr O'SHEA (South Brisbane—ALP) (3.57 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026. In addressing this bill I would like to first acknowledge the work of my colleagues on the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, the many stakeholders who provided contributions and the hard work of the Parliamentary Service staff in supporting the committee in its review of this proposed legislation.

This bill amends the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 in response to recommendations from the parliamentary inquiry last year into improving Queensland's container refund scheme. The former Labor government introduced this 10-cent beverage container refund scheme in 2018 to protect our environment through increasing recycling and reducing landfill and litter, and it has been a resounding success, with recycling of beverage containers increasing from 18 per cent to over 67 per cent in that time. That is over 12 billion containers recycled in Queensland since the start of the scheme. These were water, soft drink and beer containers that otherwise would have gone to landfill or been left lying around in our streets and nature areas. In fact, there has been a 60 per cent decrease in beverage container litter since the scheme launched. In 2023 Queensland was the first Australian state or territory to expand the type of container collected to include wine and glass spirit bottles as well.

In addition to the scheme helping to protect our environment, the refunds provided on returned containers have also helped Queenslanders with cost-of-living pressures. The scheme has returned $1 billion directly to Queenslanders and almost $16 million to charities as well as creating over 1,500 local jobs. In my electorate of South Brisbane we are very lucky to have a Containers for Change recycling centre on Montague Road in West End. For many members of my community who are homeless or on very low incomes, collecting and returning containers to receive a refund has become

a valuable source of income to help them survive in the current cost-of-living crisis. I thank the operators and staff of container refund centres across Queensland who work so hard to make the scheme a success. They should be justifiably proud of what they have achieved.

This bill introduces measures to improve the governance of the scheme, ensure the scheme organisation's board has directors with expertise in waste recycling and local government, and stipulates that the organisation must not act unfairly or unreasonably discriminate against scheme participants. I welcome these amendments; however, despite the government supporting 20 of the 21 recommendations from last year's parliamentary inquiry into the scheme, there are a number of important recommendations this bill fails to address.

The inquiry into improving the scheme found that the percentage of beverage containers recovered in Queensland was equivalent to that recovered by comparable schemes across Australia. However, the inquiry report recommended ways to increase container recovery rates further through increasing participation by large workplaces and multi-unit dwellings, improving public access to refund points, and looking at any barriers to opening additional refund points such as local government planning processes. These recommendations were supported by stakeholders, with Australian Beverages Council Ltd submitting—

To increase the recovery of material, government must implement policies that address the gaps in collection in workplaces, government facilities, outdoor settings and retail.

The council went on to state—

Without addressing these concerns, there would be no demonstrable change to—

the scheme's—

performance.

Last year the scheme coordinator, Coex, commissioned Deloitte to undertake an assessment of recovery uplift opportunities for Queensland. The report stated—

... the modelling shows that the largest single uplift opportunities arise from improving collection systems in workplaces, government buildings, and multi-unit dwellings.

Unfortunately, this bill fails to address this key recommendation from the inquiry, and I would ask the government to remedy this by introducing legislation to improve participation in the scheme in government owned and operated workplaces and multi-unit dwellings.

In response to issues raised during the inquiry, the inquiry report also recommended establishing an independent external complaints body. This recommendation was supported by a number of stakeholders. At a public hearing into the bill the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia stated—

A scheme of this scale requires formal, independent and enforced complaint mechanisms with clear operator protections that must also be included in the bill to ensure fair conduct.

Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland noted that such a body had been included in a draft version of the bill and in their submission asked the government to—

Amend the bill to formally recognise and require an independent dispute resolution body for the container refund scheme ...

They warned that if this is not embedded in the bill—

... the scheme risks returning to the same disputes and uncertainty that have previously undermined confidence across the sector.

However, once again this bill fails to legislate for this crucial external complaints body.

The parliamentary inquiry report also made recommendations regarding expanding the eligibility of containers recycled in the scheme as well as the collection of soft plastics and batteries for recycling, yet the bill again fails to implement either of these recommendations.

This bill also introduces new powers for the minister to withdraw approval of a scheme director's appointment at any time and for any reason or none without any stated removal criteria or the ability for the individual to appeal. In addition, amendments in the bill allow the minister to appoint a special manager to monitor the affairs of the scheme coordinator. Stakeholders raised concerns about the introduction of both of these new powers, particularly with regard to the lack of detail in the bill concerning when a special manager may be appointed.

The Battery Stewardship Council recommended in their submission that the bill be amended, stating—

... so that the triggers for conditions, suspension, cancellation and appointment of a special manager are more clearly confined to serious non-compliance, governance failure, financial distress, or material risk to scheme integrity.

I would encourage the minister and department to take into account stakeholders' concerns about these new powers and in particular address the lack of detail around the appointment of a special manager.

I would also call the minister's attention to stakeholders' feedback that, for small beverage manufacturers, the proposed exemption threshold of the first 20,000 containers manufactured would be too low to provide adequate financial relief to these businesses to participate in the scheme, and I ask the minister to ensure small beverage manufacturers are consulted in determining an alternative threshold figure.

In closing, I thank Queenslanders for making the scheme so successful and for protecting our precious environment. I commend the bill to the House, but I would ask the government to address outstanding recommendations in the inquiry report not included in this legislation, in particular those related to improving the container recovery rate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): There is a bit too much conversation in the House. Could everyone please keep their chatter down.

Mr LEE (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.07 pm): I rise to speak to the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026. In Hervey Bay we understand the importance of reducing waste, increasing recycling and protecting our environment for future generations. Any scheme responsible for managing billions of dollars must also be supported by strong governance, effective oversights and genuine accountability. This brings me to the findings of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee's inquiry into Queensland's container refund scheme.

On 16 October 2025 the committee tabled report No. 14, 58th Parliament, *Improving Queensland's container refund scheme*. The report made 21 recommendations and referred 10 matters involving Coex Ltd to the Crime and Corruption Commission. The inquiry identified serious concerns about governance, including, but not limited to, board composition, governance practices, relationships with container refund point operators, retained surpluses, transparency and accountability. Questions were raised about whether the scheme was operating in a manner consistent with public expectations. These were not minor issues. They exposed significant weaknesses in the governance framework supporting a multibillion dollar scheme.

To understand how we arrived here, it is important to examine the legislative history. Coex was established as the product responsibility organisation under Labor's waste reduction and recycling amendment legislation in 2017. The member for Murrumba, Steven Miles, said—

The bill also ensures there is strong governance and oversight to ensure the container refund scheme is transparent and accountable in all parts of its operation.

Nearly a decade later, the shortcomings of that framework have been conspicuously exposed through a comprehensive parliamentary inquiry. When introducing this bill, the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation observed that the scheme has been allowed to operate without the governance, oversight, transparency and accountability that Queenslanders rightly expect from a program of this scale. As Bjorn Lomborg once said, 'Wishful thinking is not sound public policy.' That observation is highly relevant to this debate. Good intentions are not enough.

The Liberal National Party has always supported the container refund scheme. We support reducing litter, increasing recycling rates and delivering practical environmental outcomes. However, supporting the scheme does not mean ignoring governance failures. If we genuinely value a program, we should be prepared to strengthen it when deficiencies become apparent. That is why Labor's Machiavellian attempt to claim credit for the reforms contained in this bill lacks credibility. As Marcellus said to Horatio in *Hamlet*, 'Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.' If Labor had addressed these deficiencies effectively, there would not have been 21 recommendations for reform. If proper oversight had been established, there would not have been 10 referrals to the Crime and Corruption Commission. If transparency and accountability measures had been adequate, this legislation would not be necessary today. The reality is simple: Labor created the framework, ignored warning signs and failed to act when concerns emerged. Queenslanders are now relying on the Crisafulli government to correct those governance deficiencies. That is the purpose of this bill.

The bill amends the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 to strengthen oversight, improve transparency, increase accountability and ensure Queensland's container refund scheme operates in the interests of the community. One of the most significant reforms concerns the status of the product responsibility organisation, PRO, under the Crime and Corruption Act. A new section 102AO in the bill clarifies beyond doubt that the PRO is a unit of public administration, confirming the Crime and Corruption Commission's jurisdiction to investigate Coex in its role as the PRO. This amendment is both necessary and appropriate. Organisations entrusted with substantial public responsibilities must be subject to appropriate scrutiny.

Clause 11 of the bill introduces a fixed-term framework for the appointment of the PRO. Under the amendments, a PRO may be appointed for a maximum of seven years, with a formal renewal process established. This reform prevents any perception of permanent incumbency and aligns the scheme more closely with accepted governance practices. Transitional provisions will continue Coex's appointment for three years following commencement of the legislation.

Importantly, the bill strengthens board governance. The minister, under clause 11, will approve all board appointments, with five of the nine directors required to be independent of the beverage industry. The chairperson must also be independent of the beverage industry, and the board must collectively possess expertise in waste and recycling, local government and community engagement and have legal and financial qualifications.

The bill also grants the minister power to appoint a special manager where intervention is warranted, pursuant to sections 102CL to 102CR. This provides a safeguard against future governance failures and establishes a mechanism for corrective action where serious concerns arise. Further reforms place limits on board tenure. Directors will serve fixed terms and may not hold office for more than 10 years in total. This encourages renewal, brings fresh perspectives and strengthens long-term accountability.

The bill also broadens the functions of the PRO. In addition to administering the scheme, the PRO must be able to support environmental programs, community initiatives and infrastructure projects that assist the transportation and recycling of waste across Queensland. These amendments recognise that successful recycling systems require ongoing investment in both infrastructure and community participation.

Another important reform relates to fairness within the scheme. The bill introduces safeguards under a new section 102BI preventing the PRO from acting unfairly or engaging in unreasonable discrimination when dealing with participants. Given the significant market influence exercised by the PRO, these protections are essential to ensure that operators and stakeholders are treated fairly and transparently.

The committee inquiry also recommended stronger oversight arrangements. In response, the bill requires the PRO to establish a performance management framework supported by publicly available corporate documents. These documents will include a governance and investment plan covering the management and allocation of retained scheme funds. This level of transparency is vital. The inquiry found that approximately $2.5 billion in revenue had been generated through the scheme since its inception, yet less than 40 per cent had been returned to Queenslanders through refunds and less than two per cent had been directed to charitable organisations. Queenslanders have every right to expect transparency in the management and distribution of funds on that scale.

Clause 11 also strengthens requirements relating to the network of container refund points across Queensland. The PRO must establish and maintain a network that enables communities throughout the state to access a place of return. In doing so, it must consider accessibility as well as the economic viability of existing operators. This balanced approach supports future growth while recognising the realities facing businesses within the network. Finally, the bill provides relief for small beverage manufacturers by enabling exemptions from scheme contributions on the first 20,000 containers produced annually. This supports small businesses while maintaining the integrity of the scheme.

In closing, the committee's inquiry conspicuously exposed significant weaknesses in governance, accountability and transparency. Something indeed was rotten in the state of Denmark. These outcomes were inevitable. They were the result of a legislative framework that failed to provide appropriate and adequate oversight. This bill addresses those shortcomings. The Crisafulli government remains committed to increasing recycling rates and improving environmental outcomes across Queensland. However, unlike Labor's approach, we recognise that good environmental policy and good governance must go hand in hand. Queenslanders deserve nothing less. I commend the bill to the House.

Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (4.16 pm): I rise to contribute to the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026. It feels good to be finally speaking about the container refund scheme, given the external review we commissioned into this scheme was originally handed to the Crisafulli government all the way back in November 2024. It would feel even better if I was rising to speak on a bill that sought to support the scheme in a meaningful way.

We were so proud to initiate the Containers for Change refund scheme in 2018 and we continue to take pride in its many successes. The importance of reducing plastic waste in our parks and waterways is something every member in this House can agree on. While I make that general statement, I sneak in an acknowledgement of the EcoMarines Foundation, which is an amazing organisation that starts with young students to ensure we all have the right habits about keeping our waterways and parks clear. One of the very first schools they started the program in was Bulimba State School, and Morningside State School came not long after that. I was so proud of them. There are now 450 schools and 200 early learning centres involved. It was a great privilege to work alongside them, particularly in those early years, to help influence even more of our young people to make permanent change.

Back to the bill: in addition to encouraging recycling, this scheme has had amazing benefits in other areas. It has created jobs, it has put money back in the pockets of people and it has become a valuable source of fundraising for schools, clubs and community groups. In my own electorate, one of our local Uniting churches, Faith Works Queensland, supports its community through operating a container depot. They are one of three collection points my constituents have benefited from, with a fourth due to come online soon. These locations are part of a network of 427 collection points operating across Queensland which last year alone recovered 2.2 billion containers. The popularity of the scheme demonstrates that people care about recycling and will respond when the government makes it accessible to them. I note that the Containers for Change refund people were here in the last sitting week because Parliament House will now have a receptacle. It is great to see that has happened.

In 2024 we initiated an independent governance review to ensure we were getting the best out of this scheme. After being handed the final report from that external review, the LNP government then initiated a lengthy committee process, resulting in several recommendations to increase uptake and accessibility. Given those protracted efforts and the importance of this scheme, you would expect the government to make every effort to ensure the scheme can continue to grow. Instead, it is our concern that this bill has little to offer in response to those recommendations. It does offer some reforms to the governance of the scheme through providing a performance management framework for the product responsibility organisation. We support those measures because we support any efforts aimed to improve the reliability of the scheme. However, governance reform on its own will not increase uptake or support people, workplaces and organisations in accessing the scheme, which was the purpose of reviewing the scheme in the first place.

To this end, it is concerning that several of the recommendations of the committee go unanswered by this bill. For example, recommendation 12 asks the government to consider opportunities to increase scheme participation across corporate and government workplaces. Encouraging uptake in these locations could further embed recycling practices in Queensland and divert more container waste from landfill. Who could argue with that? The same recommendation also asked the government to expand access to the scheme through providing more reverse vending machines and reviewing the impact of local government planning processes on scheme expansion. Such measures could allow more households to access the scheme. Who could argue with that?

Meanwhile, recommendations 14 and 16 ask the minister to expand the eligibility of containers and explore options for incorporating soft plastics and batteries, acknowledging the potential of this scheme to grow. Who could argue with that? These are all practical measures that would increase rates of recycling, something that we all want, but this bill is silent on all of them. They reflect the expertise of the committee—and I would like to thank the members of the committee and the 119 submitters for their contributions to the bill. If only the government had been more willing to listen. As we know, that is not a skill set of this government.

After ample time to get this legislation right, one would hope the government would take every opportunity to strengthen such an important scheme, that they would be proud to do so knowing that they had Queensland behind them. Instead, they have once again taken an opportunity and turned it into a political pointscoring exercise which, unfortunately, is what we have come to expect from this all talk; no action government. Unfortunately, the opportunity for Queensland to be even better at waste recycling through this bill has been lost because this government just does not care.

I was looking at the minister's own views on this and he talks a lot about tourism in his portfolio. I found this terrible quote from him in 2012, which probably explains why they do not really care very much about this bill making the changes they could. He said in 2012—

As I said yesterday, is the climate changing? Yes it is, ...

Am I 100 per cent convinced of the human population's role in that? No I'm not.

I rest my case.

Mrs KIRKLAND (Rockhampton—LNP) (4.22 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026. The container refund scheme has become a familiar part of daily life for many Queenslanders. Families collect containers, sporting clubs conduct fundraising drives, schools support environmental programs and community organisations generate much needed revenue by participating in the scheme. It has delivered genuine environmental benefits and also created social and economic opportunities across our state. However, after multiple referrals to the Crime and Corruption Commission under the previous Labor government, the Crisafulli government established an inquiry into the fund. The parliamentary inquiry found that there were serious concerns about how the scheme was being governed and whether its administration was sufficiently transparent and accountable.

This piece of legislation is in direct response to that inquiry and seeks to restore confidence, strengthen governance, improve transparency and ensure the scheme delivers greater benefits to Queensland communities. The original inquiry undertaken by the improving Queensland containers refund scheme committee process identified weaknesses in governance and oversight arrangements, concerns regarding the composition of the scheme coordinator's board, a lack of transparency in decision-making processes, concerns about relationships between the scheme coordinator and refund point operators, a lack of an independent complaints process and significant accumulated surpluses that were being used to offset industry costs rather than being reinvested to improve community outcomes. These findings were not just minor administrative concerns but, rather, revealed serious failings across a number of issues with 10 allegations being referred to the CCC for investigation.

It is shameful that those opposite made no attempt to step in and correct the wrongs that were flagged during their term of office and were exposed through this inquiry. Queenslanders expect accountability whenever public outcomes are being delivered. They expect transparency whenever significant funds are being managed. They expect fairness whenever businesses, charities and community organisations participate in government regulated schemes. For our communities, that is what this bill achieves.

The committee also identified the need for greater local government, community and social enterprise representation in governance arrangements. These are groups at the coalface working at the grassroots level in making the scheme successful every day. As the member for Rockhampton, I know that these reforms are particularly relevant. Our region of Rockhampton has a strong record of embracing practical recycling initiatives and demonstrating how environmental outcomes can actually support regional economic growth. Our schools and not-for-profit organisations are leading the way. I would like to take the opportunity to give a special shout-out to our Rockhampton Sustainability Champion schools, in particular, St Peter's school and The Hall State School which have really taken recycling, including the container exchange program, to new levels, embedding across generations the importance of reducing landfill through consistent application of proven simple processes that achieve the desired outcomes including significant financial benefits.

During my time as a councillor at Rockhampton Regional Council we adopted ambitious resource recovery objectives and now the council continues to invest in waste diversion and recycling programs. Through its community recycling centre, residents access a broad range of opportunities including Containers for Change collection points as a part of the wider strategy aimed at reducing that landfill reliance and increasing the resource recovery across the region. One of the strongest examples is the recycled glass processing facility established in 2022. The facility was specifically designed to process glass collected through local Containers for Change refund points with an expected diversion of approximately 6,800 tonnes of waste away from landfill every year, supporting local jobs and creating valuable construction products for our local roads and infrastructure projects. A container used in Rocky can be returned to Rockhampton, processed in Rockhampton and ultimately reused in Rockhampton infrastructure projects. For regional Queensland, that is jobs and investment. It has reduced transport costs and means less landfill and a stronger local economy built on practical environmental outcomes. The local benefits do not end there.

Rockhampton has become a recognised example of how major events can successfully integrate container exchange programs. At Rockynats this year more than 38,000 containers were collected and recycled across a single weekend through a coordinated partnership involving Rockhampton Regional Council and local container refund operators. The event attracted more than 65,000 attendees and demonstrated how councils can successfully embed resource recovery initiatives into large-scale community events. That outcome represents tens of thousands of containers diverted from landfill into Queensland's recycling system with our community now enjoying the likes of new seating throughout our region and new bollards around our parks, all made from recycled containers. These examples illustrate why governance matters. When communities participate in the scheme, they need confidence that every dollar collected through the scheme is being managed responsibly. When local councils invest in collection infrastructure, they need confidence that planning decisions are transparent and fair.

This inquiry found concerns regarding surplus funds held within the scheme and questioned whether those resources were being directed to maximise public benefit. The reforms in the bill address those concerns by requiring greater transparency around that governance and investment planning whilst expanding the ability of the scheme to support environmental, community and recycling infrastructure initiatives. This is particularly significant for regional Queensland, where waste and recycling initiatives are significantly more cost burdened due to the tyrannies of distance.

The bill provides clearer pathways to support future recycling infrastructure, transport solutions and community programs throughout all of Queensland, including in regional communities like Rockhampton. Where there are programs and opportunities available for a community to benefit, such as the container collection baskets across public community areas and reverse vending machines, we need confidence that there is good governance and oversight in place to prevent the same maladministration that we saw under the previous Labor government. The parliamentary inquiry highlighted the importance of improving refund-point accessibility and ensuring capacity for the network to grow in a strategic and sustainable manner. In the regions, accessibility remains one of the key factors influencing participation rates, particularly across large rural and regional areas. The bill responds by requiring a dedicated refund-point network plan to guide future expansion while at the same time balancing accessibility and viability considerations.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Under the provisions of the order agreed to by the House and it being 4.30 pm, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (4.30 pm), in reply: I thank those members who had an opportunity to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026 this afternoon. I thank all of the members who have contributed, but I must say that listening to those opposite today has been quite astounding. To quote one of my favourite lines out of the children's movie *Inside Out*, pick a plot line! One after another, Labor members have stood up and patted themselves on the back. They have told us how proud they are of the container refund scheme, how proud they are that they established it and how proud they are of their record, and then almost in the same breath they have criticised this government for not moving quickly enough to fix it. Which one is it? Which plot line are we sticking to here, Labor MPs?

There is one thing missing from Labor's version of history today: why are we debating this bill in the first place? The parliamentary inquiry exposed serious failures in governance, transparency, accountability and oversight. It found that significant surplus funds accumulated and that the scheme repeatedly failed to achieve its legislated 85 per cent recovery target—those are the facts—yet Labor wants all the credit for establishing the scheme and none of the responsibility for what happened under its watch. It just does not work like that. If you want to own the legacy, own all of the legacy.

Then we heard the extraordinary suggestion that this government somehow delayed reform by holding the parliamentary inquiry in the first place. Think about it: Labor had years in government—

Mrs Kirkland: Years—10 years!

Mr POWELL:—almost 10 years; I take that interjection from the member for Rockhampton—to ask the hard questions, years to address the lack of transparency and accountability, and it did not, so we did, yet now it criticises us for having the inquiry that exposed what it failed to deal with. That tells us everything. The inquiry was not the delay; Labor's years of inaction were the delay.

What the inquiry uncovered matters to Queenslanders, because Queenslanders embraced Containers for Change. We have embraced Containers for Change. By holding the inquiry and looking at the recommendations—we have accepted the overwhelming majority of those recommendations—we are literally fixing up what Labor left behind. It is one of many examples across a range of portfolios,

I might add, so I will not accept lectures from those opposite about urgency and I certainly will not accept criticism for having the courage to ask the questions those opposite would not and did not ask. Queenslanders deserve more than Labor patting itself on the back.

This bill represents a critical step forward in ensuring the scheme delivers on its promise to boost recycling rates, reduce litter and deliver tangible benefits to Queenslanders. It strengthens the governance, transparency, accountability and oversight of the scheme. It directly responds to the findings by the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee in its report on the inquiry into improving Queensland's container refund scheme, and the committee received substantial evidence of serious governance and accountability failures by the product responsibility organisation, PRO. This bill delivers substantial reforms to the operation of the scheme, delivering on 13 recommendations from the inquiry report. These important amendments strengthen the governance of the scheme and ensure the PRO is subject to strengthened transparency obligations and enhanced accountability mechanisms. This was a significant concern identified by the committee.

I want to turn to some of the issues raised by opposition members during this debate and the concerns they have expressed about the bill. Again, to be frank, it is difficult to understand where the opposition members stand on this, particularly after the contributions by the members for Nudgee, Greenslopes, South Brisbane and Bulimba. The bill was introduced on 26 March, with the final committee report tabled on 15 May—seven weeks apart—yet those opposite claim that this was not sufficient. Go figure! It is a standard reporting arrangement for a bill before a committee and, might I add specifically to the member for Bulimba, followed her so-called lengthy inquiry. It is not like stakeholders did not have plenty of opportunity to input into the inquiry and its recommendations and then comment on how this bill implements the findings of that inquiry.

I note that the member for Nudgee made an oblique reference to the appointment of the Coex CEO. I want to make the position clear: as minister I have no role in and was not involved in the appointment of the CEO. Coex is a not-for-profit company. It is not a statutory body or a government owned corporation. The minister has no powers in relation to CEO employment decisions under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act. Any questions about the appointment process should be directed to the Coex board.

In relation to concerns raised by members about the appointment of board members, let us not forget how we got to this point. The Health, Environment and Innovation Committee handed down a damning report detailing the extent of the problems within Coex. The report highlighted allegations of standover tactics, cronyism and even corrupt conduct, with matters subsequently referred to the Crime and Corruption Commission. The opposition claims this is political, but it simply reflects the evidence and issues put before the committee during its inquiry—a committee inquiry it could have called for but never did.

A key recommendation of the inquiry was for a stronger role for the minister, including in relation to board appointments, fixed terms and the regular renewal of board composition. Currently, the minister does not appoint the Coex board. The minister's role is limited to approving the chair and at least one community representative. If I can remind members opposite, especially when throwing barbs about the Coex CEO, it was under those very powers that a former Labor candidate was approved as chair of Coex by the former Labor government.

Government members interjected.

Mr POWELL: I take those interjections. The former government also failed to act on recommendations from its own committee about the composition of the board and representation of the waste industry. As the member for Nudgee mentioned in her contribution, the former government commissioned a review of the scheme's governance in 2024, presumably because it knew there were problems—a review, mind you, that it failed to act on. It was an internal review. Those opposite did not tell the public, they did not tell the industry and they did not tell operators. They hid it. They tried to cover it and bury it. The member for Nudgee, along with a long line of former Labor environment ministers, kept these problems hidden from Queenslanders and then had the hide to have a crack at me when we tabled their review. The member for Nudgee also wanted me to just act upon that review—that internal review that no-one in the public got to see—and then criticised me because we held an inquiry that allowed stakeholders to have feedback into what this legislation should look for. Again, pick a plot line. Which one is it?

If those opposite had opened the review to Queenslanders like we did, it would have exposed what they already knew—the scheme had serious problems. They failed to act so our government did. We established that parliamentary inquiry, we exposed the problems and now we are acting on the

committee's recommendations. The bill strengthens oversight by requiring all board appointments to receive ministerial approval. The bill ensures the majority of the board will be independent of the beverage industry, with at least five of the nine directors of the board being required to be independent. The composition of the board will also be broadened to require directors with expertise in waste and recycling, local government and community and social enterprise alongside small and large size beverage manufacturers. This will enable a broader range of expertise, operational perspectives and community interests represented on the board.

The bill introduces fixed terms of appointment for all directors of the board for not more than three years. While a director's appointment may be renewed, the maximum time a director can serve on the board will be 10 years in total. These amendments provide for regular renewal and refreshment of the board to ensure its effective operation. They are in direct response to the parliamentary inquiry and, to be frank, anyone who has done the company's directors course would know this is standard practice for good board governance and should have been there in the first place. Again, had Labor done this when they introduced the scheme, we would not be in this situation.

Members, including the member for Nudgee, have raised concerns that there may be too much ministerial oversight. We also heard this concern from some stakeholders during the committee's examination of the bill. To be blunt, I respectfully disagree. This bill is about appropriate accountability for a scheme that provides the authorisation and social licence for relevant beverage manufacturers to sell their product in Queensland. The scheme generates funds from manufacturers and uses them to deliver community and environmental benefits. The PRO oversees more than half a billion dollars a year in scheme funds. For this reason there must be clear lines of accountability to the government and, more importantly, to all Queenslanders. A number of contributions focused on the governance arrangement. This bill introduces a robust governance framework for the PRO that is consistent with the regulatory approach applied to other organisations that are appointed under legislation to exclusively deliver services or functions with enhanced integrity safeguards that reflect the scale and public significance of the scheme.

Members also discussed the need for transparency. I am proud to say that this bill provides the transparency Queenslanders deserve, addressing concerns from the members and the committee's findings. Transparency is at the heart of this bill. The existing requirements for an operational and strategic plan by the PRO have been broadened. They will now be required to develop additional documents each year including: a governance and investment plan; a document setting out scheme payments and contribution methodology; a network of container refund points plan; an employment and industrial relations plan; and a document setting out a complaints management framework. Some of these will also require ministerial agreement. The PRO will be required to publish these documents on their website. This ensures Queenslanders have access to these documents and ensures the PRO remains accountable to the community for the commitments it has made. These measures will ensure Queenslanders have access to the information they need to have confidence in the scheme's operation and improve visibility of decision-making, financial management and service delivery outcomes.

The member for Nudgee raised the issue of the refund value. As the government made clear in its response to the committee's recommendations, increasing the refund risks increasing costs for Queenslanders. This government will not support higher costs at the check-out. We ruled it out before the committee reported. We rule it out again now.

Members have raised the power to appoint a special manager. I believe the member for South Brisbane voiced this concern. The statement of reservation from members opposite asked for greater clarity and safeguards around the appointment process. The bill delivers certainty around the circumstances of appointment by limiting it to situations where there are grounds for taking action under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act. I believe the member for Nudgee expressed some frustration that there were limited powers for the minister or the government to act when she was aware that the PRO was not operating according to what was intended. The powers are broadly consistent with those in the Casino Control Act 1982. The appointment of a special manager will provide an additional oversight mechanism where there is a need to monitor the affairs of the PRO.

When it comes to cost recovery, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act already requires beverage manufacturers to make contributions to meet the cost of administering the scheme. To date, the costs of administering the scheme have not been passed on. However, as governance and oversight are strengthened, government costs are expected to increase. It is no longer considered appropriate for all Queenslanders to fund a scheme that is currently limited to one sector. The likely

costs to be recovered are proposed to be modest, and the annual process to recover estimated costs will ensure any over or under recovery across years is corrected. This approach broadly aligns with other jurisdictions which cover actual government costs in relation to container refund schemes.

The member for Nudgee and a couple of others raised matters relating to recommendation 12 which pertains to opportunities to increase sustainable participation in the scheme. As noted in the government's response, the Queensland government is committed to exploring opportunities to increase sustainable participation in the container refund scheme, but increased participation cannot be legislated. The bill deals with the legislative framework required to develop a stronger and more transparent governance framework that is consistent with the approach taken to statutory bodies that are responsible for government funds. Regarding the planning scheme—again, which is flagged in the government response; I am questioning whether anyone on the other side of the chamber actually took the time to read—

Ms Linard: I read everything. Don't you worry about that!

Mr POWELL: Clearly not, member for Nudgee. The Queensland government clearly acknowledges that development approvals are currently required for some container refund points, including reverse vending machines. These approvals are generally the responsibility of the relevant local council. As previously discussed with the committee during the inquiry, exchange locations have the potential for negative impacts from intensified use such as an increase in vehicular traffic, increased noise and a loss of visual amenity, so consideration is needed on the appropriate level of planning assessment. Consultation with local government will also be required to understand any impacts of existing shopfronts and RPMs and any learnings—for example, the extent of any complaints, traffic and truck movement challenges or other planning matters. As such, the government considers discussions regarding specific RVM locations to be matters for local councils and Coex to progress collaboratively.

Ms Linard: They will do nothing.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection. The member for Nudgee believes that local governments will do nothing. That is interesting, given she is sitting next to the shadow minister for local government. Wow, why do those opposite hate local government?

A number of members raised concerns around the issue of a complaints body. I addressed this in my second reading speech, but I assure members that we are currently considering options in this space. The Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland and Coex as the PRO are in well-advanced discussions to develop a dispute resolution service. We have committed to investigating options for a complaints body in relation to the scheme, and this will be informed by how the PRO and other affected organisations respond to the enhanced governance and oversight afforded by the reforms in this bill. It is not a case of it not being done; it will be done sequentially. We want to see the impact of this legislation before determining the best external complaints mechanism. The framework will improve transparency and accountability by setting out the complaints management process, avenues for complaint, the process to resolve matters and the PRO will be required to report on their complaints resolution and outcomes.

The bill will establish governance processes to support the government's oversight of the scheme's approach towards the question of convenience and accessibility of refund points. The two key elements are the network of container refund points plan and the performance management plan—both of which will come to the minister for agreement before being implemented by the product responsibility organisation. This will address the kinds of concerns raised by the members for Nudgee, Greenslopes, Redcliffe and others who have concerns that container refund points are opening up in competition to existing operations. The performance management plan will ensure we have greater oversight of that and prevent that from occurring.

The bill delivers tangible benefits for Queenslanders. It ensures the scheme can provide the environmental, social and economic benefits that Queenslanders expect. It supports fairness for all Queensland container refund point operators, many of whom are small business owners. It mitigates the structural power imbalances that exist between the PRO and industry participants that rely upon it to be a fair and impartial coordinator of the scheme and it reinforces the community's expectations around fair and non-discriminatory conduct.

A well-governed scheme is also better positioned to continue reducing container litter, increase recycling and support Queensland's broader waste reduction and environmental goals. This bill delivers on the government's commitment to restore integrity to the scheme and improve performance. These changes strengthen governance and oversight, ensuring the PRO operates with integrity and

transparency. It means every Queenslander who uses the scheme can have the confidence that the decisions are made in the public interest. By improving access to the scheme and focusing on local recycling, we are making it easier for Queenslanders to participate, which supports Queensland's broader waste reduction and environmental goals.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge and thank the staff from DETSI for their work in progressing this bill, in particular Kris Campbell, Naomi McPherson, Anuja Sharma, Mitchell Gardner and Claire Anderson, ably led by Kahil Lloyd. I also thank all of the stakeholders who took the time to provide evidence to the committee during the inquiry last year and also during the committee's consideration of the bill. In concluding, I also thank the members of the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee for their work both with the initial inquiry and with this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 13, as read, agreed to.

Clause 14—

Mr POWELL (4.51 pm): I move amendment No. 1 circulated in my name—

1 Clause 14 (Insertion of new ch 16, pt 7)

Page 63, after line 5—

insert—

339A Status of Organisation as unit of public administration

(1) To remove any doubt, it is declared that the current Organisation has always been a unit of public administration under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*, to the extent the current Organisation was performing a function of the Product Responsibility Organisation.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), anything done or omitted to be done by the Crime and Corruption Commission or any other entity that would have been valid and lawful had new section 102AO been in force from when former section 99J commenced is taken to be, and always to have been, valid and lawful for all purposes, including, for example, an investigation or proceeding started before or after the commencement.

(3) In this section—

former section 99J means section 99J as in force from time to time before the commencement.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendment and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026, explanatory notes to Hon. Andrew Powell's amendment [1616].

Tabled paper: Waste Reduction and Recycling (Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Bill 2026, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Andrew Powell's amendment [1617].

I want to spend a bit of time discussing this amendment. In the committee's consideration of this bill there was significant discussion around the construction of the product responsibility organisation, PRO, as a unit of public administration. Report No. 14 identified that, because of the somewhat novel statutory construction of the PRO under the act that we are debating amendments to tonight, it was not immediately evident whether Coex was a unit of public administration for the purposes of the Crime and Corruption Act. Coex indicated its support for the bill's inclusion of such clarification but submitted that many of the functions of the PRO are not functions that would be deemed suitable to be covered under a blanket clause such as to the extent the organisation is performing a function of the organisation as contained in what was then the new section 102AO. Coex raised a number of matters at the committee hearing. The department responded, and I would like to note this—

As noted in new section 102AC, a reference to the functions of the PRO is a reference to the functions of the PRO under the Act or another Act. On this basis, the department considers that the wording of new section 102AO which declares the PRO as a unit of public administration under the Crime and Corruption Act is sufficient to enable effective operation of the provision and cover the broad functions of the PRO.

It is interesting that a number of other stakeholders disagreed with the department's input on this or suggested that further clarification could be necessary. The CCC itself supported the provision but noted the bill did not allow for its transitional period or retrospective application. It was actually the CCC

itself that recommended to the committee that, to remove any ambiguity and ensure the CCC could appropriately assess and investigate any suspected corrupt conduct prior to the commencement date of these new provisions, the bill should declare that the PRO has always been a unit of public administration for the purposes of the CC Act. As we have heard from the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee chair, I understand through their lengthy parliamentary inquiry there were a number of matters they referred to the CCC for consideration. I do not know any further details, but, given that the CCC was seeking some clarification, it is important that we ensure there is no ambiguity in the legislation. The committee actually came up with the following comment in their committee report—

The committee heard from various stakeholders in respect of the declaration included in the Bill that the PRO is a UPA for the purposes of the CC Act. This matter is of particular interest to the committee in light of various allegations referred by it to the CCC which came to light in its previous Scheme Inquiry. Accordingly, the Bill aims to address any potential ambiguity in respect of the CCC's jurisdiction to investigate allegations of corrupt conduct as they relate to the current PRO, COEX. The committee notes the advice provided by DETSI that, in its view, the declaration provided in the Bill will put this issue 'beyond doubt'. However, it is also conscious of the concerns raised by the CCC itself.

To that end, the committee made only its second recommendation other than that the bill be passed in saying that the committee recommends that new section 102AO proposed in the bill is amended to clarify that the product responsibility organisation is declared to be and always has been a unit of public administration under the Crime and Corruption Act. The amendment that I have literally just tabled states—

Status of Organisation as unit of public administration

(1) To remove any doubt, it is declared that the current Organisation has always been a unit of public administration under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*, to the extent the current Organisation was performing a function of the Product Responsibility Organisation.

It goes on to make sure that the transitional arrangements are also put in place. In particular for the member for Southport, this should give the clarity that the committee was seeking—that the PRO is and always has been a unit of public administration as defined under the Crime and Corruption Act and therefore the CCC has the powers to investigate any matters referred to it.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (4.56 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (4.57 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

YOUTH JUSTICE (CIRCUIT BREAKER) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 25 June (see p. 2075).

Second Reading

Hon. LJ GERBER (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.57 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Crisafulli government was elected with a clear commitment to restore safety where Queenslanders live and deliver fewer victims of crime, and that is exactly what the Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill is delivering. When a youth offender goes on to commit another crime, another Queenslander becomes their victim, another home is broken into, car stolen, business targeted, Queenslander assaulted or family left dealing with the consequences. Circuit Breaker is about stopping that cycle—intervening before a youth offender commits their next offence, becomes entrenched in the youth justice system and creates another victim.

This bill gives courts a new tool to remove youth offenders from the communities they have harmed and place them into an intensive, structured residential program designed to break the cycle of offending. For between three and six months, Circuit Breaker will remove the youth offenders from the negative influences contributing to their offending and place them in an environment surrounded by structure and discipline, with strict conditions, electronic monitoring and consequences for actions. During that time, youth will undertake intensive rehabilitation alongside education, training, mentoring and practical skills development designed to address the causes of their offending and give them a genuine pathway out of crime.

Circuit Breaker is the last stop before detention. It is an intensive intervention designed to break the cycle of offending, because for too long under Labor youth offenders cycled through the youth justice system only to reoffend. For a decade, Labor loudly and proudly weakened Queensland's youth crime laws. They prioritised the rights of offenders over the rights of victims, closed the Childrens Court to victims and their families and removed consequences for serious offending. They made detention a last resort, stating that a detention order could only be imposed as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate period. They abolished the Childrens Court trigger, removing the ability for the Family Responsibilities Commissioner to work with families and intervene early. They made youth criminal histories inadmissible when sentencing offenders and adults, and they removed breach of bail as an offence, allowing more youth offenders to be released back into the community. The decisions Labor made had real-world consequences.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Gerber, adjourned.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING (VARIATION OF WASTE LEVY) AMENDMENT REGULATION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

Hon. LM LINARD (Nudgee—ALP) (5.01 pm): I move—

That clauses 4 and 7 of the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Variation of Waste Levy) Amendment Regulation 2026, subordinate legislation No. 87 of 2026, tabled in the House on 25 August 2026, be disallowed.

Let me be clear from the outset: the Labor opposition supports the waste levy. It is an important price signal that encourages recycling and resource recovery. It prevented Queensland being the dumping ground for interstate waste after the LNP government recklessly scrapped it in 2012, which did nothing other than make Queensland a cheap place to dump. That takes me back. Who was the environment minister in 2012 when it was scrapped? It was the member for Glass House, Andrew Powell, who in 2012 labelled the waste levy 'a business destroying tax on the population of Queensland'. Now those opposite are practically rubbing their hands together with glee, counting the levy as it rolls in to fill their budget black hole. The LNP government's own budget papers project a $569.7 million windfall to government over the next four years from the levy, not that that will even come close to preventing their budget downgrade.

While the current and past environment minister has had a dramatic change of heart and a total about-face on the waste levy, the Labor opposition has not. In 2018 when the levy was reinstituted following the investigation led by Justice Peter Lyons QC into the transfer of interstate waste into Queensland, Labor said that we would stem the tide of that incoming interstate waste, and we did. We also said that it would not be at a cost to Queensland households. That is what this disallowance motion is about. The Labor opposition does not support increasing taxes on Queensland households when they can afford it least. We definitely do not support the efforts made by this LNP government to hide the fact when they do.

Since the budget when their windfall from the levy was printed in black and white, the environment minister has said repeatedly that this LNP government is simply using the Labor trajectory on waste levy rates, but that is not true. It is not true if you compare previous published rates and the rates trajectory in schedule 1 of the waste levy regulation. It is not true if you compare previous published rates on the DETSI website. It just is not true.

Before the minister gets to his feet and potentially attempts to use a sporting analogy, as he has recent form for in this House when explaining something uncomfortable, let me lay it out for Queensland taxpayers. They do not need an analogy to understand when someone is taking them for a ride. Queenslanders are much too smart for that. Our former Labor government had fixed an annual increase of $10 per tonne until 2025-26, with the levy rate to increase by the annual indexation rate thereafter. For reference, the Queensland Treasury government indexation rate for 2026-27 is 3.4 per cent. I table a summary of the regulation during our time in government because we must have some factual basis upon which we have this conversation.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Previous Labor waste levy legislation' [1618].

We legislated a known and transparent levy trajectory with a transition to indexation from 2026-27. The department of environment website contained the details of that transparent pathway. We are so grateful that, even though our new government can remove those references, we have this wonderful thing called Wayback Machine, and I table the former website page supporting our pathway.

Tabled paper: Webpage titled 'The Wayback Machine—Levy rates' [1619].

The Crisafulli LNP government has changed that trajectory. It has extended the fixed $10 per tonne increases for another four years through to 2029-30 and deferred indexation until 2030-31. This LNP government, which publicly claimed in a media statement published on 21 June this year titled 'No new or increased taxes' that there would be no new or increased taxes, has changed the waste levy settings to increase at an annual rate double that projected under our former Labor government. This LNP government has seen Queensland's credit rating downgraded because of its wrong priorities and its inability to manage the state budget. This government and this Premier promised to spend more, tax less and reduce debt. However, by increasing this levy above indexation, they have delivered another broken promise from a Premier who discards his promises like they are nothing but rubbish for the tip.

At a time when costs are rising and pressure on household budgets is at breaking point, this LNP government has made the decision, calmly and methodically, to increase costs on Queensland families even further. The LGAQ said this of the LNP's decision—

> The State Budget is putting more waste levy pressures on ratepayers—while delivering a projected revenue windfall to the government of $569.7 million over four years.

Half a billion dollars is a lot of money.

The minister sought to treat Queenslanders like mugs by being anything but honest with them about it. In response to questioning during the estimates hearing, the minister said—

> ... a $10 increase each and every year and that is regulation that Labor put in place in 2023. We are just continuing the trajectory that Labor put in place.

I believe the minister even waved around a page of our 2023 regulation during the hearing. The minister further stated—

> The increase is consistent with the regulation that was put in place by the previous government—$10 a year every year. I cannot be clearer than that.

Of course, not a month later the minister walked in here and tabled their regulation—this regulation—with a new higher levy pathway. Again, I have the two tables here and one does not look like the other. This government knew exactly what it was doing. It knew it was almost doubling the projected annual increase from the previous levy pathway and it was not up-front about it. They knew it would not be popular but they thought they could get away with it. That is more arrogance from this LNP government. Shame on you for not being honest with the people of Queensland. The minister cannot simultaneously say that the government is continuing Labor's policy and introduce a regulation that changes it. This is not simply a technical change to a regulation. This LNP government is asking Queenslanders, councils and businesses to pay more while refusing to be up-front about the fact that it has changed the policy settings.

Where is the half-a-billion dollar windfall actually going? I can see no corresponding commitment to invest those additional funds in cost-of-living measures to help struggling Queensland households. I can see no corresponding commitment to invest those additional funds in the infrastructure needed to reduce waste going to landfill and increase recycling. Queensland, like the rest of Australia, still has relatively cheap landfill capacity. That cheap landfill can undermine investment in recycling because if

it is cheaper and easier simply to bury waste there is less incentive to recover the material and build the infrastructure needed to process it. The levy provides that price signal, but this is two-pronged. If a government is to impose a levy to drive better environmental outcomes, it should be investing the proceeds into achieving those outcomes. This means investment into recycling infrastructure, supporting resource recovery and supporting councils to provide increasingly better waste services.

A government member: That is what we are doing!

Ms LINARD: I will get to that. Importantly, this looks like building capacity that Queensland needs to divert more material from landfill. The former Labor government did just that: 70 per cent of all revenue generated from the levy was reinvested into the sector.

A government member: Where?

Ms LINARD: Here it is right here. It was a policy of ours. I would be so happy to table it. It had to come from the Wayback Machine because it has gone from the website, so I table that.

Tabled paper: Webpage titled 'The Wayback Machine—About Queensland's waste levy' [1620].

What I do note, though, is that we do have a commitment from the current government—$975 million over five years committed, I think. If we calculate that on the basis of the revenue windfall they are receiving, I think they are at a mighty 32 per cent. It does not quite add up, does it? What we already have is an increased levy, more projected waste to landfill, a new waste strategy that has more pictures than substance, a discarded single-use plastics phase-out program and silence on the successful trial of reusable products at stadiums—and I hear from industry that progress on the solar panel recycling trial has stalled and battery recycling in Queensland has apparently stepped back. We do not know where all of this money is going. Simply collecting more money without building the capacity to recover more material is not a serious waste strategy.

It is clear that this LNP government do not have a waste reduction strategy; they have a tax strategy. If the minister believes that increasing the levy is the right answer then he should explain why and be up-front about it and, while he is at it, explain where the additional $569.7 million windfall is going. If he believes that industry and councils support the change, he should explain why he apparently did not consult them before making the decision and announcing it in the budget papers.

This is not a continuation of Labor's policy. It is at least four additional years of fixed increases that this government has chosen to impose. The minister can call it Labor's trajectory all he likes, but the regulation tells a different story. Labor set the trajectory. This government changed it, and now it wants Queenslanders to pay for that change while pretending it never made one. Queenslanders deserve better. I urge this House to support the disallowance motion.

Ms DOOLEY (Redcliffe—LNP) (5.11 pm): I rise today to speak on the disallowance motion relating to the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Variation of Waste Levy) Amendment Regulation 2026. At its heart, this motion is about whether we should support practical action to reduce the amount of waste Queensland sends to landfill and increase recycling across our state. After a decade of Labor, Queensland is second last in the nation for recycling, while sending more waste to landfill than ever before. That is the record of those opposite. That is the mess that the Crisafulli government inherited and we are getting on with the job of fixing it.

We do not want councils paying the waste levy in the first place. We want councils recycling more, sending less waste to landfill and having the infrastructure they need to make it possible. That is why this government is investing almost $1 billion over five years to reduce landfill, boost recycling and build the infrastructure needed to turn waste into valuable new products.

In this year's budget, the Resource Recovery Boost Fund has increased from $130 million to $170 million. The first round is already backing 26 projects that are expected to divert around 150,000 tonnes of waste from landfill every year and save councils an estimated $17 million annually in waste levy costs. This matters to my electorate of Redcliffe and to the wider City of Moreton Bay community.

The report before the House also shows that almost $290 million of the $488 million in council payments over the next four years is going to councils in the South-East Queensland region. The COMSEQ region has also received more than $20.8 million through the first round of the Resource Recovery Boost Fund, which identified funding across the region supporting better waste management and resource recovery.

The regulation gives effect to changes to Queensland's waste levy settings following the legislative review of the levy and the release of Less Landfill, More Recycling 2035: Queensland Waste Strategy. It continues the metropolitan waste levy on its existing trajectory, increasing by $10 per tonne each year, while providing annual payments to councils to help offset the impact of the levy on households.

The concern with the member's disallowance motion is very straightforward. It relates specifically to clauses 4 and 7. If the motion succeeds, the annual payments already made to councils would remain unchanged despite a lower levy rate, with no mechanisms for councils to return any resulting overpayment. Councils have already received $488 million for the next four years which has been provided up-front this year to give them certainty. In total, $1.6 billion has been provided through the council payments since 2019-20. We should be asking what delivers the best outcome for Queensland ratepayers, councils and the environment.

This government is not simply collecting a levy; we are investing in the infrastructure and the programs that can reduce the levy burden over time by reducing the amount of waste going into landfill. That includes $12.5 million for residual waste and energy-from-waste initiatives; $11 million for regional recycling transport; $18.5 million for recycling education and awareness; $11.7 million for waste technology and innovation; $55 million for kerbside bin activation; and $17.7 million for the Fighting Illegal Dumping Partnership Program. This is a practical approach: invest, build capacity, divert waste and improve Queensland's resource recovery system. For the people in my electorate of Redcliffe, that means a government focused on getting the fundamentals right—supporting councils, investing in infrastructure and delivering a cleaner and more sustainable Queensland.

I, therefore, do not support the disallowance motion and ask that members vote it down. We inherited a waste and recycling system that was not delivering for Queenslanders. We, the Crisafulli government, have a clear plan to strengthen our foundations and build for the future, and we should allow these reforms and investments to continue. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms BOYD (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.16 pm): This action from the LNP government demonstrates one thing: this government do not have a waste strategy; they have a tax strategy. It was pretty clear from the outset that this bumbling minister was never going in a direction other than one that left local governments worse off. This action from the LNP lumbers local government with more expense, lumbers ratepayers with higher rates, and sees the LNP laughing all the way to the bank.

When the LNP allowed Queensland to become the dumping ground of other states in this first bad iteration of this environment minister, Labor legislated to create a strategy to put a stop to it, and it did. That strategy has been in place for years under the previous Labor government and not one council was financially worse off because of it. Not one single council paid one brass razoo under that strategy for the duration that Labor was in government.

All of that changed when the LNP came to government, and the failed environment minister was a surprise resurrection to us all. It became clear in last year's budget that this was an avenue for the LNP to charge more and for Queenslanders to pay the price for this government.

What adds insults to local government injury is that now they have done some shifty, back-end suppression to make out that their bad model is the strategy designed from the outset. It never was. Council rates will be directly increased because of this LNP policy. I hear from local government leaders every single day about how they are working hard to try to keep rates as low as possible, but under this government this change will shift costs onto councils. This regulation fundamentally changes the system—the system design and the system intent.

The LNP love to trot out talking points about how they are a government that are cutting taxes, not creating new ones. Everyone should tune in to this debate because this regulation reinforces the LNP tax they have created. It has even been named by the local government sector as 'the bin tax'. The bin tax has only ever been charged to local governments by the LNP government in Queensland. With this indexation proposal, the LNP are jacking it right up for metro councils. To make matters worse, back-end tinkering has led to essential information, facts and future arrangements being deleted from the department's websites. Sneaky, sneaky.

Of course, this means that the LNP are trying to suppress the original framework and rewrite the policy and its intentions. The facts are this: Labor in government had a fixed annual increase of $10 per tonne until 2025-26, with the levy rate to increase by the annual indexation rate thereafter. The former Labor government legislated a known and transparent levy trajectory, with a transition to indexation from 2026-27. Labor does not support this LNP regulation we are debating today, and the reason is simple: it replaces the indexed approach with a fixed annual increase of $10 per tonne from 2026-27 through to 2029-30. Annual indexation is being deferred from 2026-27 until 2030-31.

The metropolitan levy rates will continue to increase by $10 a year, while the regional levy rates will increase by government indexation each year. An increase of $10 per year represents a levy increase of a whopping six to seven per cent year on year. Right now, indexation is at 3.4 per cent,

which means this regulation that the LNP are bringing in will lock in an annual increase of six to seven per cent rather than the current 3.5 per cent. That will double the expense for local government. Let's be clear and call this for what it is: it is a cash grab from this LNP government.

What was more off than usual was seeing this minister in the estimates hearing portraying the change we are debating here as a continuation of Labor's policy. I personally preferred an agonisingly long football analogy from the minister. In a case of either misleading this place or, to coin a footy term, having 'one too many knocks to the head', the minister reconceptualised reality when he said—

... a $10 increase each and every year and that is regulation that Labor put in place in 2023. We are just continuing the trajectory that Labor put in place.

No, bro, you are not. This minister either has no idea what he is doing or lives by creative narratives. This position is simply inconsistent with the facts of the matter. That was never Labor's position. The time for indexation is now for everyone, both regional and metro councils.

The way this minister is trying to spin this matter should alarm every single Queenslander. It speaks to the culture of this LNP state government. Councils tell me that they are working as hard as they ever have before to deliver services and keep rates down for their residents. That is becoming increasingly difficult under this government that gaslights them by claiming to be equal partners in government while simultaneously slugging them with a bin tax. This LNP minister oversaw Queensland becoming an interstate dumping ground, and now he is dumping all over local government.

Labor supports the waste levy. Labor does not support a bin tax on households, and that is what the LNP are doing here. You can bet your bottom dollar that we will call out the deceptive way this minister has tinkered with public information to remove essential details from webpages and the like to hide what Labor's framework was and the course the LNP are careering down now.

In 2026, in a national cost-of-living crisis, this minister is yanking $5.697 million out of local governments. These LNP measures will see a windfall to government over the next four years—a windfall of over half a billion dollars directly from council rates. Where is that money going to? Nobody knows. Most likely it will go to Adani's tax holiday.

One of the fundamental pillars of Labor's strategy was to reinvest 70 per cent of the waste levy into the waste and recycling sector and reduce waste going to landfill. Where is the update on this? All we hear from this minister about waste, recycling infrastructure and jobs is crickets. The minister is busted: he did not even consult with industry on this regulation before he tabled it in this place. These are important measures. They used to be on the department's website until, you guessed it, a little case of suppression got a hold of them and now they are nowhere to be found. This minister is flying blind on this policy and ticking off every stakeholder in the process.

The government could be up-front. This disallowance motion gives them an opportunity to do that. This government could be up-front and simply say, 'It's been proven by rating agencies that we're bad at managing the economy and we need to claw back some money. To do that, we aren't going to make an investment in recycling infrastructure, resource recovery or better waste services, which is where the fund determined that 70 per cent of the indexation would go. Instead, we'll do a cash grab and double the originally prescribed amount for metro councils and lock it in for a longer period of time and give nothing back.' At least they could be up-front about that. There needs to be an ounce of credibility in what this government is doing, rather than have them create dumpster fires with every stakeholder imaginable. I support the member for Nudgee's disallowance motion.

Mr LEE (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.25 pm): I rise to speak to the disallowance motion on the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Variation of Waste Levy) Amendment Regulation 2026. This debate is about whether Queensland communities like Hervey Bay can continue to build a sustainable future or whether we create uncertainty by undermining measures designed to improve recycling measures, reduce waste and lessen our reliance on landfill. This regulation forms part of the Crisafulli government's broader commitment to modernising Queensland's waste management framework and delivering greater certainty for councils, industry and communities.

Earlier this year the Environmental and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2026 removed the strict 30 June 2026 review deadline for residue waste discounts, providing certainty for recyclers and reinforcing confidence in the sector. Importantly, the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Variation of Waste Levy) Amendment Regulation 2026 maintains that same focus on certainty. It updates the waste levy rates, adjusts levy zones and schedules annual offset payments to local governments through to 2029-30. If clauses 4 and 7 were disallowed, these carefully planned arrangements would be disrupted, creating long-term budget and infrastructure planning uncertainty for councils and industry operators.

This regulation engenders practical cost-of-living outcomes, like moving Toowoomba into a regional waste levy zone to reduce financial pressures on regional households. Blocking this regulation will undermine practical cost-of-living measures. This regulation also sits within the broader Less Landfill, More Recycling 2035: Queensland Waste Strategy, which aims to achieve a 65 per cent recycling rate and reduce waste sent to landfill by 2.6 million tonnes by 2035. The strategy focuses on making recycling easier, investing in modern infrastructure, strengthening markets for recycled products and addressing priority waste streams. The waste levy remains a key foundation of that strategy.

Introduced in 2019, it is intended to encourage less waste disposal and create greater resource recovery by placing a price signal on landfill. Every Australian state and territory operates a waste levy because it is widely recognised as an important tool in improving recycling performance. Unfortunately, Queensland's recycling performance remains a challenge. After a decade of decline under Labor, Queensland ranks the second lowest in the nation for recycling, while landfill volumes continue to grow. That is Labor's legacy to Queenslanders.

Nevertheless, the Crisafulli government is tackling those challenges through significant investment in resource recovery and recycling infrastructure. Nearly $1 billion is being invested over five years to reduce landfill, increase recycling and support the facilities required to turn waste into valuable products. A key component of this commitment is the expansion of the Resource Recovery Boost Fund from $130 million to $170 million. The first funding round is supporting 26 projects expected to divert approximately 150,000 tonnes of waste from landfill each year while reducing levy costs for councils by an estimated $17 million annually. These investments are important for regional councils like the Fraser Coast Regional Council, which understands the significant pressures associated with landfill management, population growth and the delivery of essential waste services.

The practical consequences of this disallowance motion should not be overlooked. Queensland councils have already received $488 million in offset payments over the next four years, contributing to a total of $1.6 billion in support since the levy was first introduced. This government is not simply collecting revenue. Through programs such as the $487 million Waste Reduction and Recycling Activation Fund, funds are being reinvested into infrastructure, transport programs, education initiatives, innovation projects, kerbside recycling services and measures to combat illegal dumping.

Ultimately, Labor's disallowance motion creates uncertainty while offering no substantive improvement in Queensland's recycling performance or waste reduction objectives. Queenslanders expect us to tackle the waste challenges we inherited and reduce landfill, improve recycling outcomes and invest in the infrastructure needed for future generations. This is exactly what the Crisafulli government is doing. For that reason, I oppose this disallowance motion.

Ms ASIF (Sandgate—ALP) (5.31 pm): I rise to support the disallowance motion moved by the member for Nudgee. In other words, I rise to speak against the LNP's bin tax. The LNP government has once again demonstrated a familiar pattern: they say one thing publicly and then come in here and do the exact opposite. That is to say that they said there will be 'no new taxes' and then they introduced a bin tax on Queenslanders. They have consistently broken this promise. That is exactly what happened in August when they introduced these amendments.

The amendments proposed a regulation change which alters the waste levy trajectory established by the former Labor government. It imposes a bin tax on Queenslanders. It is going to increase the amount that councils will now point to and say, 'This is a state government charge and we must increase your rates'—that is, the rates of those households whose budgets are tightening as they are already paying far more for groceries, rent and electricity bills. These are the households whose hip pockets are going to be impacted and the government does not seem to care.

In Queensland, operators tend to pay for this waste levy. For households in our community that means the council pays for it. Brisbane City Council pays the state for every tonne of general waste it buries. The state then makes annual payments to councils to offset the levy on household waste. When those payments do not cover the cost of the levy, it is no surprise that council will then have to increase rates. Where else are they going to get the money? Brisbane City Council, the Schrinner LNP council, has already done that. That is simply going to increase bills for our households.

The LNP is always looking to make excuses to increase rates. For households in our community, that money is probably going to go towards covering the cost of the glossy flyers of Adrian Schrinner. This year our community has faced rate increases of 7.3 per cent. In Deagon, some home owners are wearing a 13 per cent increase already. What will happen next year now that this state LNP government has imposed a bin tax on those same ratepayers?

Mr Powell: It's your tax.

Ms ASIF: One can confidently assume that this will lead to rate increases. The minister says to this House that this is our legislation. This is not what we regulated.

Mr Powell: It is.

Ms ASIF: If it is then why are you voting against this? If the LNP minister is so adamant that nothing is changing, why are you not supporting this disallowance motion—because you want to put a bin tax on Queenslanders! It is nice and simple.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Order, members. Member for Sandgate, direct your comments through the chair, please.

Ms ASIF: The minister is now collecting the bin tax. He is going to raise it and then tell Queenslanders that it is not a tax increase. Sandgate is in a metro zone, which means under this regulation the cost will go up significantly, up to seven per cent a year—well over Treasury's indexation rate. In regional Queensland the cost will be indexed, so why not in metro areas? South-East Queensland households will be paying far more and those costs will be covered by households in our electorate. The Local Government Association of Queensland said as much after the budget. They said—

The State Budget is putting more waste levy pressures on ratepayers—while delivering a projected revenue windfall to the government of $569.7 million over four years.

It is just another way that this LNP government is looking to cover their budget black hole. They have now received a credit downgrade, for the first time in 17 years in Queensland. This is happening under an LNP government. Year on year we are going backwards. The LNP are bad at managing the economy. They are bad economic managers. That is why we have seen this credit downgrade, which means that Queensland will now have to pay more in interest. It means that money is not going towards vital services in our community—towards health care, towards school upgrades in my local community—

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

Ms ASIF: It is absolutely relevant!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, you will wait for my ruling. Thank you. You can take your seat, please. Member for Sandgate, please remain relevant to the disallowance motion. Continue.

Ms ASIF: I am very happy to, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am talking about the revenue that the government will be raising through this bin tax. This is money they are raising to fill their budget black hole, but the government does not have the right priorities—the priority to invest in our community, to invest in things that are going to make a difference in people's lives and to help our hip-pocket expenses.

While the government are happy to collect more revenue, they have been remarkably quiet about what they intend to do with that money. That is exactly why we are raising concerns about this. The government are going to use this revenue to fill their budget black hole and not reinvest into our community where it is so needed—in communities like mine where we have Dowse Lagoon and Third Lagoon. It is a beautiful part of our ecosystem. We need to ensure we are investing in our ecosystems and the environment so we can protect the species that exist there. That is where this money should be going. The department's website has now changed to say that this money is not going to be reinvested in those programs. They have removed any reference to that to say maybe some of it will be invested in those programs.

Ms Pease: The minister thinks that is funny.

Ms ASIF: I take that interjection: the minister thinks that is funny.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the statement made by the member for Sandgate and ask that she withdraw.

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

Ms ASIF: I withdraw.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! The member for Sandgate has the call.

Ms ASIF: I doubt very much that any of this money is going to go back into our community to preserve the environment and ecosystem on the north side. Like I said, Dowse Lagoon at Sandgate and Third Lagoon at Brighton are both listed as part of the Moreton Bay Ramsar site. They are wetlands of significant importance in our ecosystem. Those sites support more than 50,000 waterbirds and at least 43 species of shorebirds. The site is registered on the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Birds land on our mudflats having flown from as far as Alaska. One of them is the eastern curlew, which is critically endangered. This is why it is so important to reinvest this money into programs that will look after those endangered species.

The government is taking more and building less. This goes to why these clauses were written in. In June the Treasurer handed down the budget and very quickly the department's website was changed to remove any reference to the 70 per cent that would be put back into those programs. We know that the credit downgrade has also come after reading this same budget. That goes to show how badly the government has managed Queensland's economy and our future trajectory. When the minister continues to tell this House that nothing is changing and that this was Labor's plan, that this was Labor's trajectory, it could not be further from the truth. Labor did not have a bin tax. This is a government that has record debt, which is going to go up to over $200 billion. It is record debt—higher than any other state.

This government has done nothing for our community. They are looking to the government. They say they are struggling and they want help, but all this government can do is think of more taxes to put on the people of Queensland. If the minister is right and nothing has changed, he loses nothing by supporting this motion—so support it then. If you vote against this you are telling Queensland households that you have changed it and you are imposing a bin tax on Queensland, so every one of them can open their next rates notice and say thank you to the LNP government for the new bin tax.

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (5.39 pm): You have to have a hide. Referring to the member's last statement, Mr Deputy Speaker McDonald, I am seriously thinking of writing to the Speaker on the grounds that the member for Sandgate has deliberately misled this House.

I believe the member for Sandgate just said that Labor did not have a bin tax. Labor introduced the waste levy in 2019. The levy is a Labor bin tax. Labor designed the system. Labor set it all in motion. They claimed that the whole reason they were doing it was to ensure we could improve recycling rates and reuse rates in this state, but it went backwards as well. It went from 32 per cent back to 28 per cent. The infrastructure that Queensland needed to keep more waste out of landfill simply did not keep pace. That is their record.

Now those opposite come into this House seeking to disallow clauses 4 and 7—the provisions that set out future metropolitan waste levy rates. Let's have the debate, but let's have it on the facts. For the past two years we have been working very hard to clean up the mess we inherited. Unlike those opposite, we are not looking at one part of the waste system—a waste system they implemented, by the way—in isolation. We are reforming the settings. We are backing councils. We are investing in infrastructure. Those opposite did not. They can wave around a policy, but the only infrastructure those opposite invested in was the weighbridges councils used to calculate the tonnage of waste going to landfill so they could pay the then Labor government the waste levy. The only other thing those opposite invested in were regional waste management plans. They did not actually change anything. They are documents sitting on most regional councils' shelves. We are instead backing councils. We are investing in infrastructure and—

Ms Linard: Like what?

Mr POWELL: I will take the member's interjection. I will get to that; give me a moment. We are giving industry the certainty to invest. This motion is targeted. It seeks to disallow clauses 4 and 7, which provide for the level 1 metropolitan levy rate to be prescribed for the four years from 2026-27 through to 2029-30. Clause 7 sets those levy rates. This is not some new waste levy. As I said, Labor introduced it back in 2019. Nor did the $10-a-year trajectory suddenly appear under this government. That trajectory has been in place since 2022. We have provided certainty for the next four years for councils, waste operators, recyclers and businesses considering investing in Queensland's resource recovery industry.

The purpose of the levy is straightforward. If waste goes to landfill the levy applies; if it is recycled it does not. It is meant to make recycling more competitive with landfill. It did not under Labor; it went backwards. We became the second worst recycler in the country. Weakening the signal is not the answer. Those opposite will say the metropolitan rate was supposed to return to indexation. We heard that argument at estimates. They pointed to an old government website, but there is a very simple problem with that argument: they were the government. Governments do not legislate through websites; they legislate through legislation. Their regulation only prescribed levy rates through to 2025-26. There was no legislated metropolitan rate for 2026-27 or beyond. There was no legislated return to indexation from 2028-29. They can point to an old website all they like, but show me the regulation. They had the pen. They could have put it in; they did not. Our evidence is what they legislated. The $10-a-year metropolitan trajectory has applied since 2022, and we will continue giving everyone certainty for another four years.

We heard a lot from those opposite about councils, so let's deal with that too because the levy rate is only one side of the equation. The government has separately set annual payment arrangements to help councils offset levy costs associated with household waste. Across the next four years councils are being provided $488 million in annual payments. In fact, they have been provided that either side of the end of the last financial year. We have adjusted those payments to align with the targets in our new waste strategy. We have upped something, and it is the targets. For metropolitan councils, Labor would have had them reducing progressively to 20 per cent. We are reducing it to 30 per cent. For major regional councils—they were on the same trajectory as the metropolitan councils—we made a deliberate decision to set a higher end point of 50 per cent. Other eligible regional councils retain their 100 per cent cover. That change means that regional councils are around $8.6 million better off than they would have been under the former Labor government. Importantly, let me be clear, that is not what clauses 4 and 7 do. Those payment arrangements are not—

Ms Linard interjected.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): One moment, member for Glass House. Member for Nudgee and member for Pine Rivers, you have both had your say. Your interjections are not being taken. If you continue to disrupt the House I will warn you.

Mr POWELL: As I said, those payment arrangements are not what this motion seeks to disallow, but they matter to this debate because they expose just how selective Labor's argument is. They want to talk about the levy in isolation whereas we look at the whole system. When it comes to giving major regional councils greater ongoing cover, those opposite had the opportunity when they were in government. They did not do it; we did.

Even then, annual payments are not the long-term solution. Our objective is to not have councils sending the same amount of waste to landfill forever and governments endlessly compensating them for it. We want councils paying less levy because they are sending less waste to landfill. That is the change Queensland needs. To the member for Nudgee's point, that requires infrastructure—something the previous government did not invest in. You cannot simply tell people to recycle more if there is nowhere for the material to go. You need sorting infrastructure, you need processing capacity, you need organics facilities, you need markets for recycled materials, and in regional Queensland you also need to overcome distance.

That is why our new waste strategy is backed by almost $1 billion over five years. This is not another plan without delivery—this is real investment, real projects and real infrastructure. As a number of members on this side have mentioned, the Resource Recovery Boost Fund, something those opposite did not have, is now worth $170 million. We initially committed $130 million. In this year's budget we added another $40 million because councils came forward with practical projects and we wanted to get more of them moving.

The member for Nudgee asked what we have invested in. The first round backed in 26 council projects right across this state: on the Gold Coast we have expanded organics processing; better resource recovery in Nudgee, the member's own electorate; new infrastructure at Logan Village; increased processing and recovery facilities in Townsville; and projects in Gympie, Noosa, Barcaldine, metro councils and regional councils. There are different projects but one goal: to keep material out of landfill.

Mr Nicholls: Anything in Clayfield?

Mr POWELL: It is next to Nudgee, member for Clayfield. Importantly, those first-round projects are expected to divert more than 150,000 tonnes a year and save councils around $17 million each and every year in levy costs once operational. That is particularly relevant to this motion because in the metropolitan zone, first-round Resource Recovery Boost Fund projects are expected to deliver around $27 million in levy savings across the 2028-29 and 2029-30 financial years. That is more than the estimated $18 million impact of the levy over those two years. That is the part of this debate those opposite conveniently leave out. We are not just setting the price signal; we are investing to help councils respond to it.

Then there is organic waste. Through GROW FOGO we are investing $45 million to help councils introduce or expand green-lid bin services. Those projects are expected to divert more than 100,000 tonnes of organic waste from landfill each year and save councils around $30 million a year in levy costs. If you put that alongside the first round of the Resource Recover Boost Fund, we are talking about around $30 million each and every year in avoided levy costs for councils.

That is exactly the outcome we want—not more landfill, like those opposite, but more recycling. Our approach recognises that regional Queensland needs different solutions. That is why we have given major regional councils greater ongoing cover. It is why Toowoomba and Somerset have moved from the metro levy zone to the regional levy zone. It is why Mount Isa will move to the non-levy zone from 1 July 2027. It is why I think the return of a regional waste and recycling transport assistance program presents such an opportunity—because distance changes the economy. A regional council can have recyclable material ready to go, but if the closest processor is hundreds of kilometres away then moving it can cost more than recycling it is worth. We want to tackle that. In the short term, transport assistance can help get material to existing processing facilities, but there is a longer term opportunity as well—identify the material, aggregate the volumes, demonstrate the demand and start making the business case for new processing capacity in regional Queensland: more material processed closer to home, more investment, more regional jobs and stronger regional recycling industries.

This really comes down to a choice. Those opposite want to look at the levy rate and pretend the rest of the system does not exist. We do not have that luxury. We inherited one of the worst recycling performances in the country so we are working through the whole system: levy settings that make recycling competitive, annual payments to support councils, a better level of ongoing cover for regional councils, resource recovery infrastructure, organics investment, regional transport support, a statewide infrastructure plan and reforms to other parts of the waste system that were allowed to deteriorate under the former Labor government.

We have spent today dealing with one of them: Containers for Change. Queenslanders support that scheme; we support that scheme, which is precisely why we have acted to strengthen its governance, transparency and oversight. That is how we govern. When there is a problem, we do the work. When something needs fixing, we fix it. That is what we are doing with Queensland's broader waste system. Clauses 4 and 7 do something very specific. They provide certainty over the future metropolitan waste levy rates and continue Labor's $10-a-year trajectory that has existed since 2022.

Let me end where I began. Labor introduced the levy, member for Sandgate. Labor's own regulation only prescribed the rates to 2025-26. There was no legislated return to indexation in 2028-29. We are taking a different approach. We are helping councils through annual payments. We are investing in the infrastructure that Labor did not that lets them avoid the levy. It gets Queensland recycling again. Less landfill and more recycling: that is the objective. Those opposite had a decade. Recycling went backwards. We have spent the last two years working methodically to turn it around and we will keep getting on with the job. Clauses 4 and 7 should remain, and this motion should be rejected.

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

AYES, 31:

ALP, 31—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Farmer, Furner, Grace, Howard, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richmond, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

NOES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Hatcher, Head, Hutton, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Vorster, Young.

Pair: Camm, Enoch.

Resolved in the negative.

YOUTH JUSTICE (CIRCUIT BREAKER) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2808, on motion of Mrs Gerber—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Hon. LJ GERBER (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (5.57 pm), continuing: While Labor weakened the laws, the consequences were being felt in homes, businesses and communities right across Queensland. Under Labor, the number of victims of crime increased 193 per cent, proven offences committed by a youth increased 98 per cent, serious repeat offences increased 64 per cent and, by September 2024, 94 per cent of youth leaving detention went on to reoffend. At Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, it was 96 per cent of youth who went on to reoffend. That is not a system breaking the cycle of crime; that is a revolving door, and Queenslanders were paying the price.

Labor had 10 years to intervene. Instead, they weakened the laws, crime got worse and victim numbers soared. That is the legacy the Crisafulli government inherited, and we are working every single day to turn it around. After a decade of decline under Labor, in December 2024 the Crisafulli government introduced the Making Queensland Safer Laws to restore consequences for actions and put victims back at the centre of the justice system, and we now have the next phase of Adult Crime, Adult Time currently before this parliament.

We have always said that restoring consequences for actions is only one part of turning the tide on Labor's youth crime crisis. If we want to continue delivering fewer victims of crime then we must stop young people from entering the youth justice system in the first place and intervene before they become serious repeat offenders. That is why the Crisafulli government is delivering the largest investment in early intervention, crime prevention and rehabilitation programs in Queensland's history. We have $560 million to intervene early, break the cycle of offending and stop the next generation of serious repeat offenders, and our new Circuit Breaker initiative is part of that investment.

Mr Nicholls: Sounds like a gold standard.

Mrs GERBER: I will take that interjection, and thank you, health minister.

We are starting to see the results of our strong laws and investment in early intervention and rehabilitation. Police data shows that victim numbers are down 9.6 per cent when compared with Labor's last full financial year. This is backed up by other independent data, including from the Insurance Council of Australia as well as the ABS. We know there is a long way to go, but the early signs show that we are heading in the right direction and we will keep working every single day to restore safety where Queenslanders live and ensure there are fewer victims of crime.

Circuit Breaker is a critical part of that response. We took Circuit Breaker to the election because we recognised there was a gap in the youth justice system: youth who needed more than another community-based intervention, whose offending was escalating, whose environments and peer groups were contributing to their behaviour and who needed to be removed from those influences before their offending became further entrenched. Circuit Breaker fills that gap between detention and community-based orders. We committed $80 million over four years to establish Circuit Breaker programs in remote locations with a capacity to take up to 60 youth offenders. Importantly, we promised Queenslanders that Circuit Breaker would not simply be another voluntary program that a youth offender could choose to engage with; it would be court ordered and it would have strict conditions. It would remove youth offenders from the communities they had harmed and it would provide them with the support they needed to get back on the right track.

This bill delivers on that commitment. It establishes Circuit Breaker as both a standalone sentencing order and a condition of bail. There are clear eligibility requirements that must be satisfied before a court can make an order. First, a youth cannot have previously been sentenced to a Circuit Breaker order; there are not endless chances here. Circuit Breaker is the last stop before detention. Second, the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support must prepare a suitability report advising the court that the youth is suitable to participate in a Circuit Breaker program and that there is an appropriate place available for them. Ultimately, the decision remains with the court. A finding that a youth is suitable for a Circuit Breaker program does not mean that the court must send them there. The court retains its discretion to determine the appropriate response to the offending before it and where detention is the appropriate response, detention should be ordered.

If a court does order a youth offender to Circuit Breaker, that order comes with strict requirements. The youth must reside at the Circuit Breaker site and cannot leave without prior approval. They must wear an electronic monitoring device. They must satisfactorily participate in activities directed by the department and comply with the Circuit Breaker program. They must comply with reasonable directions and they must obey the law. These are not optional conditions and there are serious consequences for failing to comply with them. The precise consequences will differ depending on whether Circuit Breaker has been imposed as a sentence or as a condition of bail, but in either case continued noncompliance can ultimately result in that youth being detained.

The first pathway established by this bill is the new standalone Circuit Breaker Sentencing order. Where a youth has been convicted of an offence that meets the eligibility requirements I have just outlined, a court will be able to sentence them to Circuit Breaker for a period of three to six months. This gives courts a new sentencing option for youth offenders who require a significant intervention to break the cycle of offending as an alternative to detention. Importantly, if a youth contravenes their Circuit Breaker order, they can be brought back before the court and that can result in the youth being sent to detention.

Secondly, this bill also allows Circuit Breaker to be imposed as a condition of bail. A court will only be able to impose a Circuit Breaker bail condition where it would otherwise have remanded that youth in custody. It means Circuit Breaker can be used to intervene with youth at the point where their offending has become serious enough that the court would otherwise remove them from the community altogether. Rather than returning that youth to the same environment and the same influences that contributed to their offending, they will be required to reside at a Circuit Breaker site subject to the strict conditions and electronic monitoring requirements. If a youth fails to comply with their bail conditions, their bail can be revoked and they can be remanded in custody. This gives us an opportunity to use that period to actually intervene, address the offending behaviour, impose structure and discipline, and start the work of breaking the cycle before that youth progresses further through the justice system.

Circuit Breaker is designed deliberately to be different from the environments that these youths are coming from. The programs will operate in remote locations, removing youth from the peer groups, influences and environments that have contributed to their offending and replace them with structure, routine and accountability. Youth will undertake education and training, mentoring, practical and hands-on learning, and activities designed to build the skills they need to return to being productive members of the community. That was a strong theme throughout the committee's consideration of this bill.

I would like to thank the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of this bill as well as all the stakeholders, submitters and witnesses who contributed to the committee process. The committee tabled its report on 14 August 2026 and made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I particularly want to acknowledge and thank the victims of crime who contributed to the committee's consideration of this bill. As the committee heard, victims continue to live with the consequences of youth crime long after an offender has left the courtroom, and their evidence was a powerful reminder of exactly why breaking the cycle of offending matters.

Bradley Neven told the committee about the morning five armed youth offenders entered his family home while they were inside. He and his wife were downstairs. Their son was asleep in his bed and his fiancee was in the shower. He spoke about how that offending changed the way his family felt in their own home. He told the committee—

I have thought a lot about why these five kids felt they could walk into an occupied home at first light with that level of confidence. My conclusion is pretty simple. They were brazen because they knew there were almost no consequences or nothing waiting for them on the other side of it.

He refuses to accept that that is normal because that is not the Central Queensland that Bradley Neven grew up in. Mr Neven told the committee that what victims want is for the cycle of offending to be broken. He said—

... a lot of victims of crime just want to see a change. They want to see something meaningful being done to interrupt the path that these kids are on.

He supported Circuit Breaker as an intervention that removes youth offenders from the influences and environments contributing to their behaviour and gives them an opportunity to break that cycle. His message about consequences was clear—

All I want to know, as a victim of crime, is that there will be consequences ...

That is exactly what the Crisafulli government has been working to restore to Queensland's youth justice system.

Natalie Merlehan, the Director of Voice for Victims, knows better than most what happens when serious youth offending is not stopped. Ms Merlehan told the committee about the lifelong injuries she lives with after becoming a victim of the same repeat offender who took the lives of Matthew Field, Kate Leadbetter and their unborn son, Miles. She lives with chronic pain. She has electrical leads and a battery implant in her spine. She carries a medical card and has to undergo additional security procedures because of that medical device. She has to accept the fact that being patted down in a government building, in airports, at theme parks and at concerts is part of her routine life now. Ms Merlehan told the committee—

> That was not a decision I made; that was made for me by a child who decided that their free will and supposed freedom meant more than mine, and that now means I no longer lead an ordinary life.

Despite everything she has endured, Ms Merlehan strongly supported effective rehabilitation as a means of preventing further offending and further victimisation because in her words—

> ... effective rehabilitation is one of the strongest tools for preventing future crime. With strong implementation, Circuit Breaker has the potential to reduce reoffending, reduce victimisation and deliver safer communities across Queensland.

This was also reflected in the evidence from Queensland's Victims' Commissioner, Kate Connors, who spoke about the fear created by repeated victimisation and the importance of interventions that remove youth offenders from their offending cohort and give them access to education and support to turn their lives around. She told the committee—

> A recurring theme of my conversations with victims of youth crime is frustration that opportunities to break the cycle of crime are not being seized. I believe that most victims of crime will support the broad objectives of the circuit breaker orders ...

Commissioner Connors went on to say—

> One thing victims often say to me is that, when they are in court around the offence that happened to them, they are often shocked that the offender has been on bail. They are shocked by the number of offences that young offender has on their record.

She said—

> I think something like ... circuit breaker ... would give a community the confidence that the young person was no longer with the cohort they were offending with. The idea is that you are away from that. It will show that the young person is participating in education and that they are engaged in therapeutic supports. A bail program like that is likely to give victims confidence that the time on bail is ... being usefully served and that there is a chance for the young person to commence rehabilitative activities while they are on bail.

The evidence from victims was powerful, but they were not alone in recognising the potential of Circuit Breaker to break the cycle of offending. The committee also heard strong support from people with extensive experience working with youth and within the youth justice system. Paul Mitchell, who has extensive experience running youth justice programs, was unequivocal in his assessment of Circuit Breaker. He said—

> This is a great bill. I think it is fantastic what you are going to do.

Mr Mitchell went on to identify one of the central reasons the Circuit Breaker program can make a difference: removing youth offenders from the environment in which their offending is occurring. He went on to say that one of biggest hurdles is getting young people away from the negativity, family circumstances and environments that can be driving their behaviour and showing them that there is a different life available to them. That is precisely what the Circuit Breaker bill is designed to do.

Karla from The Real Group, who has 15 years experience as a school principal and guidance officer, was similarly supportive, describing Circuit Breaker as a great program and an exceptional initiative. She said—

> This program strongly supports whether we are ... proactively intervening at a critical point in time where we can change the course of their lives. That is exceptional.

Lyn Harland, the Principal of Carinity Education Rockhampton, brought eight years of experience leading a special assistance school to the committee and expressed her support for the Circuit Breaker approach. The Queensland Family and Child Commission's Principal Commissioner, Luke Twyford, told the committee—

> I do support the concept of an intensive circuit breaker ...

He also said—

> It has the potential to become an important addition to Queensland's youth justice system.

He went on to speak about the opportunity Circuit Breaker provides to expose youths to new experiences, skills and learning that they may not otherwise have and, importantly, to place trusted adults around them who can support them to change their behaviour. He also emphasised that what happens after Circuit Breaker will be critical. Commissioner Twyford told the committee—

... it matters even more so how you follow them post program completion. These programs do not work if there is a sharp cliff and drop off—that one day you are in the program and the next day you are out.

We agree. Breaking the cycle of offending cannot end the day a youth walks out of a Circuit Breaker site. That is why reintegration is built into the Circuit Breaker model. The bill expressly requires Circuit Breaker programs to provide activities and programs that support young people to reintegrate into the community, and our investment does not stop there. Young people leaving Circuit Breaker will also be eligible for our Staying on Track program, which provides up to 12 months of support to help young offenders transition back into the community and stay away from crime.

The committee process also raised a number of important questions around the operation of Circuit Breaker and I want to address those matters directly. The first issue I want to address relates to the reporting of harm or suspected harm to youths participating in the program, and allow me to be absolutely unequivocal here: Circuit Breaker service providers will be required to report harm to a child—no ifs, no buts. The bill makes it very clear that Circuit Breaker providers are reporting entities under the Child Safe Organisations Act, meaning they will be subject to the Reportable Conduct Scheme administered by the Queensland Family and Child Commission. That means that reportable conduct allegations or concerns about sexual abuse or exploitation, physical abuse, significant neglect, or emotional or psychological harm that causes significant harm to a child must be reported, in accordance with that scheme. Those obligations apply to Circuit Breaker providers as reporting entities.

On top of that, this bill creates an additional separate reporting obligation. Proposed section 282X requires Circuit Breaker providers, their employees and contractors to also report harm or suspected harm to the chief executive of the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support. Failure to do so without reasonable excuse is an offence carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units. So there are two separate reporting pathways operating here: there are obligations that apply to Circuit Breaker providers under the Child Safe Organisations Act and the Reportable Conduct Scheme and then there is the additional obligation under proposed section 282X to report harm or suspected harm to the chief executive of Youth Justice.

Some submitters raised concerns about the reasonable excuse for self-incrimination contained in the additional reporting pathway in proposed section 282X. That section merely codifies the longstanding common law principle against self-incrimination—a legal protection that has existed under common law since the 17th century. It does not provide immunity from investigation, it does not provide immunity from prosecution and, most importantly, it does not mean harm to a child goes unreported. The purpose of proposed section 282X is to create an additional obligation on those around a child to report harm or suspected harm to the department to make sure that a person who witnesses harm cannot simply look the other way, and that sits alongside a much broader framework of safeguards and independent oversight.

Circuit Breaker providers will be subject to the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, but Circuit Breaker sites will also be visitable sites under the Public Guardian Act, bringing them within the Community Visitor Program and providing independent oversight. Youths and their parents or guardians will be able to make complaints directly to the department, and the department will monitor Circuit Breaker programs and sites and will have powers to enter sites for monitoring purposes. The bill provides for recordings, including CCTV, to be subject to appropriate safeguards. There should be no confusion about the government's position here: harm must be reported, there will be oversight, and where wrongdoings occur there will be serious consequences.

I also want to respond directly to claims made by those opposite about what Circuit Breaker means for capacity and security in the youth justice system. Labor's statement of reservation criticises Circuit Breaker for not being comparable to detention. Yes, that is the point. We are building something Queensland has been missing—rehabilitation capacity. A justice system adding a new court ordered intervention is not secretly adding detention beds; it is increasing the options available to courts. Circuit Breaker fills the gap between community-based orders and detention, giving courts another tool to remove youth offenders from the environments contributing to their offending, imposing structure and accountability, and intensively addressing the behaviour that is driving their offending.

Labor's argument against Circuit Breaker becomes even harder to reconcile when it comes to security. Having first said that Circuit Breaker sites are not comparable to detention, Labor then criticises them because they do not have the security infrastructure of a youth detention centre. Make your minds up, guys. Circuit Breaker is not a youth detention centre—it is not intended to be—but that does not mean that it is without security. Circuit Breaker will operate 24 hours a day and youths will be supervised at all times. They will be electronically monitored. They must reside at the site and cannot leave without prior approval. They must comply with the program, participate satisfactorily in dedicated activities and follow reasonable directions and obey the law. Providers will be responsible for the security and management of the sites and the safety and wellbeing of the youths participating in the program. The department will monitor the programs and sites and will have powers to enter sites for monitoring purposes.

Labor's criticism of Circuit Breaker is completely incoherent. One minute it says that it is detention by another name; the next minute it says that it is not secure enough like detention. It says it restricts youth offenders too much and then in the next breath it says that it does not restrict them enough. The only consistent position Labor has managed to find is to oppose our laws that make Queensland safer and prevent youth offenders from becoming entrenched in a life of crime. Labor is searching for reasons not to try something new because it is defending the system it left behind.

Labor cannot have it both ways. It cannot accuse the government of counting Circuit Breaker as detention while simultaneously acknowledging that it is not detention and then criticise Circuit Breaker because it does not operate like detention. Circuit Breaker adds capacity to the youth justice system precisely because it gives courts another option. For youths who would otherwise be remanded in custody, it removes them from the community with 24 hours supervision, strict conditions and electronic monitoring while using that period to intensively address the behaviour driving their offending. That is building rehabilitation capacity in Queensland's youth justice system that had been missing for a very long time under the previous Labor government.

Labor's statement of reservation also tries to tie our new Circuit Breaker initiative to previous youth boot camp programs in Queensland. Labor is absolutely clutching at straws here. As I have outlined, Circuit Breaker is a new initiative and the first of its kind. It has its own legislative framework, eligibility criteria, safeguards, oversight and reintegration supports, all of which have not been done before in this state. It should be considered on the model established by this bill and the outcomes it has been designed to deliver.

The committee also considered the stability assessment that must occur before a youth can be ordered to participate in Circuit Breaker. Some submitters suggested the legislation should expressly prescribe the particular matters that must be considered when assessing suitability. The bill deliberately provides the department with sufficient flexibility to assess the individual circumstances of each youth. Before a court can make a Circuit Breaker order, the department must provide a suitability report stating that the youth is suitable to participate in the program and that an appropriate place is available. That assessment can take into account the youth's age, offending behaviour, individual needs, safety considerations, the services available at the particular site and whether they can safely and appropriately participate alongside other youth already ordered in that program. Importantly, the ultimate decision remains with the court. The court must still be satisfied that Circuit Breaker is the appropriate response, having regard to all the circumstances before it. Some submitters also raised concerns that a youth is not required to consent before a Circuit Breaker sentencing order can be imposed. Circuit Breaker is a sentence imposed by a court as a consequence of offending. A youth offender cannot simply choose whether or not they wish to comply with a sentence of the court; that would fundamentally undermine the purpose of the order.

The committee also heard concerns about the rural and remote location of Circuit Breaker sites, including access to family, legal representatives and other supports. The remoteness of Circuit Breaker is deliberate. One of the essential features of the model is removing youth offenders from peer groups, influences and environments that have contributed to their offending. This was repeatedly identified in the committee process by victims and experienced practitioners as one of the reasons Circuit Breaker has the potential to work. Removing youth from negative influences does not mean we are removing them from appropriate supports. Circuit Breaker providers will be required to facilitate appropriate engagement with family and supports, youths will continue to have access to their legal representatives and the individual needs and circumstances of each youth will form part of determining their suitability for the program. The purpose of locating Circuit Breaker remotely is to disrupt the environment in which

their offending has been occurring and replace it with structure, discipline, education, training and support. If we are serious about breaking the cycle of offending, then we have to remove youth from the very environment that is helping to perpetuate it.

Labor has sought to raise concerns about the process for appointing Circuit Breaker providers. As the director-general told the committee, the department is undertaking 'an independent and rigorous procurement process' in accordance with the Queensland Procurement Policy. An independent panel will evaluate responses, an independent probity adviser will assist with the process and the director-general will then make a recommendation. Allegations that providers will simply be handpicked are fundamentally untrue and misguided and ignore both the evidence provided by the director-general and the requirements of the bill.

The Crisafulli government was elected with a commitment to restore safety where you live and deliver fewer victims of crime. That not only requires strong laws and consequences for actions but also requires us to break the cycle of offending before another youth becomes entrenched in the youth justice system and another Queenslander becomes a victim of crime. Circuit Breaker gives our courts a new tool to do exactly that. It removes youth offenders from the environments and influences that are contributing to their offending. It imposes structure, discipline and accountability and delivers the intensive rehabilitation, education and support needed to address the offending behaviour of that youth. For youth on bail, it provides an intensive intervention where they would otherwise be remanded in custody. For sentenced youth, it provides courts with a new sentencing option where a significant intervention is required. In both cases there are strict conditions—electronic monitoring and consequences for failing to comply.

Queenslanders have seen what happens when the cycle of youth offending is allowed to continue. Queenslanders have seen what happened over the last decade under the previous Labor government. Victim numbers rose 193 per cent and serious repeat offenders rose 64 per cent. Queenslanders felt that damage in their homes, in their communities and in their businesses. They lived with the consequences for a decade. We will not accept Labor's revolving door of youth crime. We will continue restoring consequences for actions. We will continue investing in early intervention and rehabilitation and we will continue doing everything we can to stop offending before there is another victim.

That is what Circuit Breaker is all about—providing a sentenced alternative to detention and another tool for courts to intervene in the criminal trajectory of a youth offender. It is an important part of our Making Queensland Safer plan. We have done strong laws with Adult Crime, Adult Time. The next tranche of Adult Crime, Adult Time with Breach Bail, Go to Jail is currently before this House. We restored consequences for actions by opening the Childrens Court to victims and their families, ensuring the full criminal history of youth offenders can be considered, and made sure there were adequate consequences with Adult Crime, Adult Time.

On top of that, we are delivering the early intervention and rehabilitation necessary to turn young lives around, and Circuit Breaker is a vital component of that strategy. We are investing $560 million into early intervention and rehabilitation—the largest investment Queensland has ever seen—and Circuit Breaker is part of that initiative. It is a new tool in the toolkit to deal with Labor's youth crime crisis, giving courts the option to sentence or order a youth to a Circuit Breaker site for three to six months. This ensures youths can receive the rehabilitation and support they need to turn their lives around. It is an important part of our Making Queensland Safer plan and another election commitment that the Crisafulli government made to the people of Queensland. I am proud to say that this bill delivers on that commitment. I commend the bill to the House.

Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (6.25 pm): I rise to speak to the youth justice Circuit Breaker legislation. I state at the outset that the Labor opposition will not be supporting this bill. This bill is another con job from the LNP government—just like every single other one of their slogans on crime has been a con job. They are conning Queenslanders and victims in particular. They are giving us slogans without substance that do not reduce crime the way this government promised Queenslanders—particularly victims—they would.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Order, members. Your interjections are not being taken.

Ms FARMER: They made very big promises. This legislation is really a desperate attempt by the LNP to try to find some quick and easy places to put all of the young people they failed to plan for when they introduced their Adult Crime, Adult Time laws. It is about to become an even bigger problem when

they put their breach-of-bail legislation through parliament. They are going to great lengths not to call this so-called Circuit Breaker 'detention'. There continues to be a very confusing explanation about that from the minister, but as the director-general said during the estimates hearing—

... Circuit Breaker Sentencing adds an additional 60 beds, so combined Woodford and Circuit Breaker Sentencing is an additional 30 per cent increase in capacity in the youth justice system.

The director-general said the quiet part out loud. This is indeed not detention; it is a shortcut, a bandaid. It is not an alternative to detention; it is the overflow from detention. They need it only because of the bad Crisafulli LNP government's inability to plan and deliver real detention capacity. It is detention capacity that keeps both detainees and, importantly, the community safe. Worse still, they are not even bothering to make it a very new or innovative initiative. They are literally recycling the Deputy Premier's old failed boot camps without too much change—the very boot camps where up to 86 per cent of participants reoffended. There we have it: failed boot camps 2.0 and a quickie way of recreating capacity because they forgot to do it before. That is what Circuit Breaker is about. It is not fair to Queenslanders—

Government members interjected.

Ms LINARD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister was heard in silence and the shadow minister has been heckled for her entire speech.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Ms LINARD: I ask that the member be heard without the constant interjections.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nudgee. I will look after the order of the House.

Ms FARMER: That is what Circuit Breaker is about. It is not fair to Queenslanders and victims, in particular. There is another important reason we will not support this bill. This bill will purposefully place young people at extreme risk of harm. Queensland has just had the Child Safety Commission of Inquiry. We have had the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We have seen the *In plain sight* report from the QFCC. Stretching back to the 1980s, Australia also had the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which included the deaths of children. The issues are the same.

What is the message from all of these processes? It is that young people can come to egregious, inexcusable harm when in the care of the government if the right safeguards are not put in place. The government is supposed to be the one body any human being, especially any child, can rely on for safety. Despite the lessons learned from those and similar processes, with this bill we see a government that is purposefully placing children at risk. It is purposefully excusing a provider from reporting harm if it incriminates them; purposefully placing children in a remote location with limited oversight and access to family and cultural connections; and purposefully failing to require a provider to design their facility to reduce the risk of self-harm—despite assurances from the director-general—of young people who will enter that facility already at risk of self-harm.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

Ms FARMER: Sue-Ann Hunter, National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People, described the scenario exactly on the ABC recently—

We know what happens to children in closed institutions a long way from anywhere, where the child depends entirely on adults controlling their day and nobody independent is walking through the door unannounced.

…

What we're saying is ... you can do whatever you want to these children that are hundreds of miles away from anybody, anywhere.

They don't have access to family, community, kin and culture—and they're there for six months.

That is what this bill does. These sites do not come under the jurisdiction of the Inspector of Detention Services even though they will be used as a quasi but unsafe version of detention, so the inspector will not have access to them. The young people will be denied access to their families and to cultural connection. They will be allowed access to the Public Guardian, but the Public Guardian has already said that they simply do not have the resources to monitor young people in remote locations. I notice that the minister completely glossed over that and insisted that the Public Guardian would be out there every second minute. Most worryingly, the bill contains a clause called the reasonable excuse clause, which states—

It is a reasonable excuse for the reporting entity not to report a matter that reporting the matter might tend to incriminate the reporting entity.

That is a clause which no-one has ever seen or heard before. The minister can try all she might to explain that away, as she has done in multiple media interviews when this was raised, which nobody understood, and just now, in fact, when she was delivering her speech, which nobody understood. Stakeholder after stakeholder has expressed their extreme concern over this clause. The minister has continued to wave their concerns away, saying often that this provider will have to report under the Reportable Conduct Scheme so everything will be okay. Well, Minister, why have this clause in the legislation if it is not going to be relevant? Take it out! There is no reasonable excuse for an organisation or provider to not report harm that occurs to children in their care.

On another aspect of this issue, we know that it is a big ask for victims to have any sympathy for the young people who have caused so much trauma to them. It is a big ask for Queenslanders in general to have any sympathy for those young people, and I can understand that. Many Queenslanders just want those young people to pay for what they have done. If you have been a victim, I do not think the trauma ever goes away. It is all very well for the Deputy Premier to play to those feelings when he talks about those young people being juvenile grubs—'So, if you're thinking you are going to find sympathy from me for a youth offender in our youth justice system, you ain't gonna get it from me', he said; it is quite another matter altogether for this minister and this government to deliberately put those children at risk of harm.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Members, the member is not taking interjections.

Ms FARMER: I do not think any Queenslander would be okay with a child coming to harm, with possibly there being a death in custody, when in the care of the very people who are supposed to guarantee their safety.

Let us look at some of the other elements of this bill. I have already referred to this as being a desperate attempt by this government to somehow find beds for all of the young people coming into the system as a result of the government's poor planning. Over-capacity detention centres will ultimately put frontline workers at risk, and this is unacceptable. By all reports we are about to see this get worse, with numbers likely to increase dramatically due to further poorly planned and seemingly unmodelled changes.

I say 'desperate' because they simply have done no planning for these increased numbers. When they are pressed on this, I often hear the Premier, the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police talking about how they have already increased capacity by 25 per cent. The problem is that the capacity they are talking about is in relation to the Wacol Youth Remand Centre and the new Woodford Youth Detention Centre to be opened next year, and they are both facilities planned by the Labor government. We know that Woodford is at least six months late—another stuff-up by this government—and it is going to open with only 56 beds rather than the 80 beds we funded. With a typical youth detention centre taking three to four years to plan and build, they have simply left their run too late. We do not even know if they have done any modelling around what they need.

This government is desperate because, according to the tender documents, those 60 beds they are planning for Circuit Breaker are not going to be available in full until the end of next year. Everyone is asking where they are going to put these kids. I know: Circuit Breaker! Easy, quick and they will not even have to call it detention. That way they will not need any of those inconvenient things like adequate safety features in the built environment, oversight mechanisms like the Inspector of Detention Services and properly trained staff. Easy-peasy!

Going back to that eerie similarity to the LNP's failed boot camps—that famous initiative which was a special project of the now Deputy Premier—these failed boot camps were allegedly going to reduce the pool of young people at risk of entering the youth justice system—just like Circuit Breaker, according to the media release, is going to offer one final chance for those young people to turn their lives around, according to the government. Is that not the same? The failed boot camps did not reduce that pool and they had to be scrapped because up to 86 per cent of the people who took part in the boot camps initiative reoffended. Two separate evaluations, from KPMG and the Auditor-General, were scathing about the reasons for that. The KPMG evaluation of Queensland's youth boot camps concluded that the programs completely failed to reduce repeat offending and highlighted extreme daily costs per participant compared to traditional youth detention facilities. The Queensland Audit Office report levelled its most severe criticisms against political interference, severe cost blowouts and awarding contracts to unsuitable providers. Both made a number of recommendations about what would need to be done in the future if such a program was to be implemented.

If the LNP had learned its lesson from its failed boot camps one might have some hope for the Circuit Breaker sites, but it was clear from a number of stakeholders that they were very concerned that few, if any, of the recommendations made by KPMG or QAO on boot camps actually seemed to have been factored into Circuit Breaker. Stakeholders, including the Bar Association of Queensland, PeakCare, the Justice Reform Initiative and QFCC, drew direct comparisons between the bill and the boot camps. PeakCare said—

> How has the proposed Circuit Breaker Program been designed differently to address the lessons identified through Queensland's previous experience?
>
> We encourage the Committee to ensure that Queensland's previous experience informs both the legislative framework and the operational design of the Circuit Breaker Program so that the same shortcomings are not repeated.

The Bar Association said—

> It is acknowledged that the current Bill does not describe Circuit Breaker programs as "boot camps" and does not propose a "militaristic" model in the way that term is commonly understood. However, the program's mandatory statutory features (structured activities, strict routines, remote location etc) share significant common ground with the discipline-focussed model. Comparable evidence-based research consistently associates these models with poor outcomes.

The Voice for Victims Foundation provided a total of 12 recommendations intended to give practical effect to the Auditor-General's findings and to ensure the bill is implemented with the governance, data, evaluation and service delivery safeguards necessary to reduce serious repeat offending. In the public hearing the director-general kept telling us that all of the answers to stakeholder concerns could be found in the publicly available tender document—which was not actually publicly available as you had to be a registered provider to access it, and I thank the registered provider who gave me a copy—but there were slim pickings on this in that tender document. In fact, I do not know if the minister has read that tender document because if she had she would not have said some of the things that she said in her speech.

I have touched on the issue of security and safety for the communities in those places where they will put these young people. A few weeks back on radio station B105 I heard the Premier say that obviously they will be secure. Doesn't that sound good for a community that might have a Circuit Breaker site near them? They might be a bit nervous, especially if they found out that the kids at one of the Deputy Premier's boot camps—in fact, the one he personally chose the provider for—escaped to a nearby town pretty soon after they arrived at the boot camp and caused a security breach near a residential area. However, obviously these places will be secure and coming from the Premier himself that sounds good, doesn't it? The only thing is that when you read the tender document for the providers the only security requirement for a facility is a fence with a lockable gate. This is for young people who would otherwise be in a high-security detention centre with highly trained staff supervising them. That does not sound that secure to me. People who live in the communities near these locations have a right to feel safe in their homes. The overflow from this government's overcrowded youth detention centres being housed behind a fence does not provide the security that communities deserve.

Another significant factor with the boot camps that, as I have said, drew scathing attention from KPMG and the Auditor-General was the level of political interference from the now Deputy Premier in the procurement process and many other aspects of the failed boot camp operations, which were seen as a direct cause of the failure of the boot camps. From the overriding of procurement processes—he actually overrode the successful applicant from the department's procurement process to choose one that was not even on the recommended list but, in fact, was No. 10 in the order of preference—to creating a new super boot camp from two original tenders that had not been part of a proper process and that he chose on his own review of tenders—

Mrs GERBER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is referencing a report that has absolutely nothing to do with the bill. The bill does not talk about boot camps nor does it reference boot camps.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your point of order is on relevance?

Mrs GERBER: The point of order is on relevance. It is absolutely not relevant to the bill.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member had previously given evidence that many submitters had leaked this to the previous—

Mrs Gerber: That doesn't make it relevant.

Mr Power: I don't think that the submitters are irrelevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Take your seat, member. I will not have this debated.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will have some quiet, please. Member for Bulimba, I was thinking you have been a straying a little bit. There is a point of order on relevance. I ask you to bring your delivery back to the bill before the House.

Ms FARMER: I draw the attention of the House to the many comments from stakeholders about the fact that, with Circuit Breaker, the LNP government has not learnt any lessons from the evaluations of the boot camps. In fact, the Queensland Audit Office described the Deputy Premier's choices as prime facie—

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. Submitters being irrelevant to the bill does not give licence to the member to refer to points irrelevant to the bill. The point of order is on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will get some advice. Member for Bulimba, in my previous ruling I asked you to come back to the bill and you went straight back to boot camps. I will accept this as an ancillary part of your main delivery, but I ask you to come back to the bill.

Ms FARMER: Thank you for your guidance, Deputy Speaker. This legislation does not even pretend that the minister 'might' get a say on whom the final providers are. We know that with the boot camps the Deputy Premier had his say without authority. This legislation actually gives the minister the right to choose the provider. In her speech, the minister told us that, in fact, it was ridiculous for the opposition to suggest that this was not the case because the minister would have a say. However, the explanatory notes state—

Circuit Breaker providers will be prescribed in regulation, subject to the Minister being satisfied of the entity's experience or expertise, abilities and other relevant criteria.

That is a direct quote. The director-general was clearly very uncomfortable when I asked him about this in the committee hearing. He went to great lengths to describe the government's formal procurement process, which, of course, he was going to follow. Then he said—

It is a matter for government about its appointment of providers and prescribing those providers in regulation.

This minister already has under her belt one sacked provider, one provider she referred to the CCC and other agencies and several providers with very close links to the LNP. Since the last election she has been promising multiple services that are still not up and running. She opened the tenders for Circuit Breaker providers last year and then closed them and nothing happened—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, I caution you not to continue to interject. The member is not taking interjections.

Ms FARMER:—presumably because she realised she could not make young people go there or stay there if she did not have legislation behind her. Again this year she opened and closed the tenders before legislation had been introduced so providers could not be sure of what they were tendering for. She has a reputation amongst the providers and in her department for being very hands on about what they do and I do not know if they mean that in a good way. After seeing the damage done the last time a minister was directly involved in these programs, this minister is going to choose the providers who will divide the spoils of the $80 million contract—that is, $80 million—for two sites for Circuit Breaker.

'Circuit Breaker'—it sounds so good, doesn't it? Queenslanders want a circuit breaker on crime. They deserve that. They deserve not only to be safe but also to feel safe. However, just like every other slogan or clever set of words the LNP has thrown at Queenslanders since before the election, there is simply no substance to it. The minister can talk all she wants about this being evidence based. She claimed in her introductory speech—

The Crisafulli government is delivering real solutions and evidence-based reform to deliver long-term change ...

However, the fact is that this is an $80 million shambles from the LNP. It is $80 million for 60 young people and there is no evidence whatsoever to support it. That fact is backed up, over and again, by stakeholders. The minister literally made up the bit about evidence. Queensland victims deserve better than that. Victims just want whatever the government is doing to actually work.

This government went to the election with big slogans like 'Adult Crime, Adult Time'. It seems like such a long time ago that they passed their first Adult Crime, Adult Time legislation because this is the fifth piece of ACAT legislation and the sixth one is already on the table.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Theodore, you will interject from your own seat.

Ms FARMER: When they first introduced it, they said that youth crime was going to be fixed by Christmas. They said that youth crime was going to be fixed two months after they introduced the legislation. The police minister even said that we would see decreases by the end of the first week that the legislation was introduced. When crime rates did not go down month after month and it was all starting to be a bit of a worry for them, Queenslanders were noticing that their big promises were not amounting to anything. Crime rates actually went up, as we saw all over Facebook community pages. We saw it in the leaked QPS community sentiment survey that gave them 2.1 out of 10. In response, they just kept introducing more and more legislation.

They stopped talking about crime going down to zero and started talking about green shoots, and when there were not any green shoots they started saying, 'Well, it must be Labor's fault.' Meanwhile, they started fudging figures, and they have kept on fudging them. Their latest claim last week was that crime had gone down dramatically. We have seen that plastered through every medium imaginable with their multimillion dollar advertising campaign. Do members know what the facts are? Even while doing their best to fudge the figures, the latest 2026 QPS figures show that the number of offences committed in Queensland has increased by 6.15 per cent for the year to date—in 2026. They are the cold, hard facts.

This government wants to talk about Labor's youth crime crisis. Do members know who owns the youth crime crisis? It is the LNP government. They promised Queenslanders that they were going to fix it. They are desperate. They are introducing legislation after legislation to make themselves look good, to make it look and sound like they are doing something, but there is one disaster after another and Queenslanders—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Members! There is too much noise. I have really tried to quieten it down. I will start warning people if this persists. The member is not taking interjections. Be warned.

Ms FARMER: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Queenslanders are awake to them. In community after community we see the desperate LNP MPs, particularly in Far North Queensland, North Queensland and Wide Bay. They are desperate to find a reason to explain the increase in crime, despite the promises they made. Those opposite can attack Labor all they want, but, in the end, their biggest problem is themselves. Their biggest problem is introducing legislation after legislation that simply is based on no evidence. That does not work. Queenslanders and victims in Queensland deserve better.

Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (7.51 pm): Thank you to the captain, coach and sole selector of the youth crime crisis, the member for Bulimba. If ever we needed it writ large why Queensland found itself in a youth crime crisis, we found it in that 15 to 20 minutes right there.

'Go out there, sort yourself out and come back.' Those were the words of respected Darumbal elder Uncle George James when the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee travelled to Mount Morgan to hear directly from Queenslanders about this bill. It is probably good advice for the Labor Party, actually: go out there, sort yourself out and come back. Uncle George was talking about young people who have gone off track and whether sometimes getting away from their usual environment can be part of getting them back on track. I asked him directly whether sending a young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person away from family for a period of rehabilitation was, in his view, culturally appropriate. His answer was equally direct. 'In my view, yes,' he said.

That evidence goes to the very heart of the Circuit Breaker bill because sometimes to change a young person's behaviour we first have to change their environment. Sometimes we need to get them away from the peer group, the offending, the drugs, the disengagement and the influences that have become a normal part of their lives and give them the space, the structure and the right people around them to discover that their life can actually look different. This is what Circuit Breaker is meant to do.

The bill creates a highly structured residential rehabilitation program as an alternative to detention. The program can operate as a condition of bail where a young person would otherwise be remanded in custody or as a sentencing order. It provides structured activities, strict routines, education, training, mentoring and practical, hands-on learning in a rural or remote environment. That word 'environment' is important. In 33 years as a police officer, including considerable time working in youth

crime prevention, I saw young people whose lives were being shaped by what surrounded them. Sometimes it was their peer group, sometimes it was disengagement from school, sometimes it was a dysfunctional home environment and sometimes it was simply a complete absence of boundaries, expectations and positive adult role models.

I had the privilege of seeing what could happen when we changed that environment. I took young people into challenging programs—walking the Kokoda Track, travelling to Cambodia to help build community housing and participating in other activities that pushed them physically and mentally, well beyond what they thought they were capable of. I saw young people thrive. Young people who struggled in a classroom discovered leadership on the track. Young people who had rarely experienced achievement discovered the satisfaction of completing the building of a small house for a grateful family in extreme poverty. Change the environment. Set expectations. Give them responsibility. Surround them with good people. Then watch what some of these young people are capable of. That experience is one of the reasons I see great potential in this bill, but changing the location alone will never be enough.

Uncle George made another observation at Mount Morgan that, to me, is every bit as important as the first. He said, 'We need to have the right people in the right spot,' and that is absolutely right. Uncle George spoke about taking young people out bush, not simply letting them sit in a room and repeatedly telling them they have done the wrong thing. He spoke about fishing, camping, fencing and practical work. Later he described getting young people to use their hands, their minds and their eyes and then to begin to think differently. However, throughout his evidence he kept returning to the people involved: the right mentors, the right elders, the right educators—people the young person can trust. That will be central to the implementation of the Circuit Breaker program.

We have the opportunity to select outstanding organisations and outstanding people to operate these programs—people who can combine discipline with encouragement, structure with rehabilitation, education with practical skills and accountability with genuine hope. The bill requires providers to have appropriate experience and expertise and places responsibility on them for supervision, safety, wellbeing, education and program delivery. This is not about sending a child away for three months and expecting the scenery to magically change them. It is about deliberately replacing negative influences with positive ones. It is about replacing chaos with routine, disengagement with purpose, self-doubt with confidence and the wrong role models with the right ones. That message came through repeatedly during our committee inquiry.

The committee received 57 submissions. We held hearings in Brisbane and travelled to Mount Morgan as part of our continuing commitment to take these important laws beyond Brisbane and hear directly from regional Queenslanders. I want to thank the regional members in Rockhampton, Keppel and Mirani for their assistance. When parliament is considering laws about community safety, youth crime and the protection of victims, it matters that we listen to the communities living with those issues every day. Uncle George himself told us that he did not want people in the 'big smoke', as he put it, simply telling regional communities what to do. He said, 'I want you to come here—like you did today—and sit down with us and we can tell you our issues.' That is exactly why those regional hearings matter.

We heard concerns and we heard criticism, but we also heard practical experience, lived experience, and strong support for giving courts something between releasing a young offender back into the same circumstances and sending them into detention. That matters to communities like in my own electorate of Nicklin. Whether I am talking to families in Nambour, Woombye, Cooroy, Kenilworth, Yandina or across our hinterland communities, people want to feel safe. They want consequences for offending. They want victims put back at the centre of our justice system. Those same families also understand that community safety is not only about responding after an offence has occurred but also about doing everything we reasonably can to stop a young person from offending again.

If a young person goes through Circuit Breaker, re-engages with education, learns practical skills, discovers self-worth, finds better role models and does not offend again, that is not only a success for that young person. If this program helps break a young person's cycle of offending, the result is simple: fewer victims of crime. We have seen fewer victims of crime. As uncomfortable as it is for those opposite, we are seeing fewer victims of crime. Accountability matters but so does reducing the chance that the same young person offends again.

The committee carefully considered the evidence and recommended this bill be passed. Labor's statement of reservation claims this bill will make no meaningful difference to community safety. It is hard to take seriously that criticism from a party that spent a decade presiding over the youth justice system this government was elected to change. We will not take lectures from those who had years to

break the cycle and failed to do so. This bill gives courts a genuine alternative to detention, with structure, rehabilitation, education and accountability. It is exactly the kind of change Queenslanders demanded.

The name of this program could not be more appropriate. Sometimes a circuit needs to be broken before it can be reset. For some Queenslanders this may be that break—a different environment, different influences, different expectations and, hopefully, a very different future. That is how we break the cycle. That is how we reduce reoffending. Most importantly, that is how we create fewer victims of crime.

Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (8.00 pm): Queenslanders are entitled to feel safe in their homes and communities. They expect that when a government promises a circuit breaker for youth crime it will deliver more than a slogan and a media release. The community wants action. Victims want to see fewer offences, fewer repeat offenders and fewer families experiencing the trauma of crime. Young people who are becoming entrenched in the justice system need interventions that genuinely change behaviour, but this bill does not provide the confidence, detail or safeguards required to achieve those outcomes.

The government calls this a circuit breaker. In reality, it looks more like a capacity measure dressed up as rehabilitation. The proposal is expected to accommodate up to 60 young people across two remote locations in North and South-East Queensland. During the estimates hearing, the director-general of youth justice described those places as 'another 60 beds' and said they would contribute to a 30 per cent increase in youth justice capacity when combined with Woodford. These places are being counted as capacity, but they are not detention beds and they will not have detention-level security.

The government has already worsened pressure in the system by scrapping additional youth detention capacity that was planned and funded by the former Labor government. Now the government appears to be using these facilities to inflate capacity numbers, while asking Queenslanders to accept a less secure model for young people who would otherwise be remanded in custody. The tender material requires, at a minimum, a fence with lockable gates. That may provide a boundary, but it is no substitute for the security of a purpose-built facility.

The bill makes clear that a Circuit Breaker bail condition can be imposed only where the court would otherwise have kept or remanded the child in custody. These are not young people who would simply have been returned to the community without restriction; they are a cohort the court has determined should otherwise be in secure custody. Queenslanders are right to ask whether these sites can keep participants onsite, protect surrounding communities, protect staff and keep young people safely engaged in the program. The government has not answered those questions with sufficient detail.

There is another reason for concern. This model bears a resemblance to the LNP's failed youth boot camps of the Newman era. Those camps were promoted as a way to reduce youth offending and give young people a brighter future.

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). You had made a ruling in relation to that.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the standing order the member refers to is in relation to answers to questions, but I take his point.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Sorry, what is your point of order?

Mr de BRENNI: I am responding to that point of order.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will deal with this. What is your point of order, please?

Mr de BRENNI: My point of order is that previous Speakers have long considered the issue of relevance in debate. Illuminating the issues that we see in a particular bill and the principles and its mechanisms with the principles and mechanisms of another bill that seeks to achieve similar objectives have long been held to be relevant—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could I have quiet, please? This seems to be a complex issue. I would like to hear it so I can make a proper ruling for the benefit of everybody. If anybody interjects, I will warn them.

Mr de BRENNI: In a nutshell, illuminating by way of comparison alternative and similar mechanisms in other provisions is entirely relevant to the consideration of this matter.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that, thank you. Member for Toohey, I did rule that some of that was ancillary to the main debate and I did ask the member to come back to the bill before the House. I ask you to do the same, thank you.

Mr RUSSO: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. More than a decade later, the government appears determined to repeat the same mistakes without demonstrating how this model has been redesigned to avoid them. PeakCare asked how the program would address the lessons of the previous experience. The Bar Association of Queensland identified significant common ground with discipline focused models associated with poor outcomes and pointed to the absence of features, including family involvement where appropriate. Even organisations supportive of stronger intervention called for evidence, governance, data, evaluation and service delivery safeguards.

Those are not objections from people indifferent to community safety; they are warnings from organisations that understand victims, children, rehabilitation and the justice system. A government serious about reducing reoffending would engage with those warnings. It would not dismiss them while rehashing an old policy under a new name.

There are also questions about procurement. The director-general described an independent panel, a rigorous process and a probity adviser. He also confirmed that recommendations would go to the minister and the appointment of providers would ultimately be a matter for government, with providers prescribed by regulation. Queenslanders have seen this movie before. The former boot camp program was scarred by controversy over ministerial interference in procurement. The government should have designed a process that removed any doubt. Instead, it has left open the very concern it should have closed.

The most alarming issue, however, is the safety of children placed in these remote facilities. The bill requires a provider, employee or contractor who becomes aware of, or reasonably suspects, harm to a child to report it to the chief executive, but it then provides a 'reasonable excuse' not to report where reporting may tend to incriminate the reporting entity. There is no reasonable excuse for failing to report harm to a child in the care of a funded provider. The exemption is particularly troubling because, as Legal Aid Queensland observed, harm suffered by a child in a provider's program will almost always be likely to incriminate the reporting entity in some way. If that is so, the exemption risks swallowing the obligation. The government should remove it.

Children in those facilities will be a long way away from family, community, kin and culture. They will depend on adults controlling their daily lives. That makes immediate reporting and independent oversight more important, not less. When concerns arise, every incident should be recorded and reported. The safety of a child cannot depend on whether the adult responsible fears legal consequences.

The lack of detailed standards is equally concerning. The bill does not set minimum standards for accommodation, food, recreation, health services, disability supports, family contact, cultural support or reintegration planning. The tender material offers broad assurances about safe and appropriate infrastructure, but it does not provide the specific harm minimisation requirements the community would expect, including clear design standards to reduce self-harm risks. These are not minor operational details; they are core protections for children living under around-the-clock supervision in restrictive residential environments.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, the gaps are even more serious. Connection to family, community, culture and country is fundamental to identity, wellbeing and development, and it can be a protective factor against further involvement in the justice system. Rehabilitation should strengthen those connections and not sever them, yet the legislation does not require culturally safe service delivery, continued cultural connection or First Nations governance.

The same lack of detail applies to disability, neurodivergence, cognitive impairment, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, communication needs, mental health concerns and undiagnosed health conditions. The bill relies on suitability reports, but it does not expressly require those reports to assess these needs. Placing a child in a restrictive remote environment without assessment and appropriate supports is a significant and dangerous omission. Then there is the question of what happens when a participant returns home. Stakeholders repeatedly raised the need for transition support.

(Time expired)

Mr FIELD (Capalaba—LNP) (8.12 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill 2026. This forms another key part of the Crisafulli government's plan to make Queensland safer. We took it to the election and Queenslanders backed it in resoundingly. They saw that Labor's soft-on-crime approach allowed a generation of untouchable repeat offenders to grow. We know that Labor's attitude has not changed either, because they voted against our nation-leading Adult Crime, Adult Time and their official party platform stated that they do not support mandatory minimum sentences for serious offending. Those opposite simply cannot be trusted when it comes to keeping Queenslanders safe.

This bill establishes another important element of rehabilitation for youth offenders, many of whom are trapped in a vicious cycle of crime that is fuelled by the very people they frequently interact with. It is harder for a young person to remove themselves from a lifestyle of crime or drugs if that kind of offending is still all around them. There is not much opportunity for education, there is no real chance for a different path in life to be taken and their actions end up causing lasting harm to innocent people across the state. We know that removing these offenders from the communities and environments in which they have been offending protects the broader public from further offending in the interim, but we also know that it provides greater opportunity for future reintegration with the community and positive ongoing outcomes.

Circuit Breaker at its core is an intensive intervention program imposed by the courts that places young offenders at a designated site in rural or remote Queensland with around-the-clock supervision. Offenders are put on a strict routine, with behavioural expectations that will teach them skills across many different facets of life to ensure they have the best possible chance of turning away from crime entirely. The legislation establishes two pathways into Circuit Breaker: either as a condition of bail or as a sentencing order following a conviction. Before a child can enter the program, the department of youth justice must provide a suitability report assessing whether they are appropriate for Circuit Breaker and whether a place is actually available.

For the bail pathway, the threshold is deliberately high. Circuit Breaker can only be imposed when the court would otherwise have refused bail and remanded the child in custody. It is therefore a genuine alternative to detention for young offenders requiring a much higher level of supervision and intervention. Once placed in the program, the young person must live at the designated site, wear an electronic monitoring device, participate in the program, comply with reasonable directions and not leave without approval.

The second pathway applies at sentencing. A Circuit Breaker order operates as a community-based order for a period of between three and six months, with the same intensive requirements around residence, monitoring and participation. There are consequences if a young offender refuses to comply. A breach may result in the court revoking the order and resentencing the child, including to detention where appropriate. This is not a light-touch community order; it is a highly structured, court imposed intervention designed to combine accountability with intensive rehabilitation.

This bill was given to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for scrutiny. As a member of the committee, I was pleased to participate in the proceedings. We received almost 60 written submissions from stakeholders and held public hearings in Brisbane and Mount Morgan to get a grasp of how Queenslanders were feeling about these proposed changes. There was strong support for the program from victim advocacy organisations such as the Victims' Commissioner and Victims 1st, who felt that a successful rehabilitation program away from the community would likely reduce repeat offending and future victimisation.

On a personal note, I recognise that if something like this were put in place six or seven years ago by the previous government I probably would not have run for parliament. If serial offenders were given genuine consequences and targeted rehabilitation then I would not be standing here now as a victim of crime and advocating for the rights of other victims across the state. However, I was let down. My family was let down. Countless other Queenslanders were let down by a weak Labor government that put the rights of offenders over the rights of victims. This initiative seeks to change that. It offers something different.

That is also what we heard from Voice for Victims including Director Natalie Merlehan, a constituent of mine who was seriously injured in the same accident that involved my family. Natalie was left with a lifelong disability in her spine because of the actions of a repeat youth offender. She told the committee that Voice for Victims supported the bill because they 'believe that effective rehabilitation is one of the strongest tools for preventing future crime'. She is absolutely correct because every offender who can turn away from a life of crime represents fewer Queenslanders becoming victims in the future.

With regard to support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in this program, the committee heard from Uncle George James. Uncle George is a Darumbal elder who supported the idea and believed that young offenders could benefit from engaging with structured activities in a remote location. Going further, Uncle George also stated that sending a young person temporarily away from their family for rehabilitation was culturally appropriate and even related to the way that discipline operated when he was growing up. One particular part of his witness statement that stood out to me was—

My idea for someone who is naughty is not to put them in a room and say, 'You're naughty.' My idea is out to the bush ... You can do a bit of fishing, a bit of camping, maybe a bit of fencing. They have to do work.

That is really the crux of this bill. Circuit Breaker offers an alternative for youth offenders who may feel stuck on the same path. It aims to provide skills and education to help get their lives back on track. It is not just about the offender and turning their life around. Critically, it is about ensuring fewer Queenslanders become victims of crime in the future.

It is important to note that there are safeguards built into the legislation. Circuit Breaker providers will be covered by Queensland's Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme, while Circuit Breaker sites will be visitable sites for the purposes of the Public Guardian. There are mandatory reporting obligations for harm or suspected harm, a formal complaints process for children and parents, access to legal assistance and ongoing oversight by the chief executive.

The Crisafulli government has committed $80 million over four years to deliver Circuit Breaker. We also heard that reintegration would continue after a young person leaves the site, with the Staying on Track program able to provide up to 12 months of support, including six months of intensive assistance.

This bill gives our courts another practical tool between the status quo and detention. It combines accountability, supervision, education and rehabilitation while keeping serious young offenders away from the negative influences that have too often helped drive their offending. Most importantly, it is focused on breaking the cycle before another Queenslander becomes a victim. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (8.20 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the youth justice bill before the House. We have been here before with slogans begetting bills. The idea that the complex problem of youth offending and recidivism can be solved with a slick slogan and photo-ops is a desperate one that fails to work every single time. That has not stopped this government from rehashing already failed ideas. They have put lipstick on this one and trotted it out as the Circuit Breaker program. We all know that it is actually boot camp 2.0 because that is what the sector is calling it. It was borne from the simplistic idea that we just need to get these kids out to the bush. That'll sort 'em out! That'll get 'em to straighten up and fly right! I get it. It comes from a really idealistic approach. All we need to do is get these kids away from bad influences, whoever they might be, and get them to appreciate the benefit of a hard day's work out in remote Queensland.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Members!

Ms McMAHON: Women also used to be stuck in the kitchen and they could not vote either. Those were the good old days! It represents a grave misunderstanding of youth offending on two fronts: that intervention without buy-in or consent has any long-term impact on behavioural change; and that removing a young person from their home and their community is the best way to break a cycle of poor decision-making. If only it were that easy. If it was, youth detention would break patterns of behaviour, but we know it does not. I can stand here and say this and obviously cop it all—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs!

Ms McMAHON: It is not the world according to me; it is the world according to the evidence, the experts. Do you remember this whopper: 'We will be a government that listens to the evidence,' they said. Well, that is a laugh.

We can look at the KPMG review into the LNP's last attempt at this type of boot camp program. It would have been good if the government could at least have done that before rehashing this effort. This one comes with fewer drill instructors and more muster dogs, but the KPMG report clearly stated that any program for youth offenders should: include strong family involvement; consider accessibility and connection to the family; tailor program duration and participation to participant cohorts; and strengthen transition and reintegration supports. Fail, fail, fail and fail.

Who is the youth offending cohort and how will this actually work? Evidence from the principal commissioner of the QFCC described this youth cohort to us at the hearing. He said that 63 identify as First Nations young people. Will these programs be culturally safe? The principal commissioner is asking this. He knows that you will exacerbate the disconnection between offenders and kin and country. Sixty per cent have a disability, including 23 with an intellectual disability, and 52 per cent had at least one mental health or behavioural disorder. Do these remote programs offer the specialised psychological support and available medical invention for when the inevitable crisis occurs, or do these kids fall into the too-hard basket and just get straight up youth detention? I know that those over there really do not care why kids become youth offenders, but failing to understand the drivers of behaviour will mean failure to change the behaviour. This bill finds itself in a tricky space, outsourcing youth detention to private providers. On one hand—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, are you aware of the standing orders? You just passed between the member and myself.

Mr Whiting: I crouched down.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not want an excuse. You are an experienced member. You just do not do that.

Ms McMAHON: This bill finds itself in a tricky space, outsourcing youth detention to private providers. On one hand, the director-general counts these 60 spots in the Circuit Breaker program as an increase in youth detention capacity—he said so in estimates—but it falls outside the scope of the Inspector of Detention Services. Is it detention or not? The policy objectives in the explanatory notes say that this is intended to provide offenders with a last stop before detention by providing a program that prioritises support, rehabilitation and reintegration. If this is the stop before detention then I guess it is not detention, but the director-general seems to think it is included in—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is way too much noise in here. If you want to talk, go outside. No interjections are being taken. I am going to start warning people.

Ms McMAHON: Maybe it is only technically a detention because it does not require the consent of the participant, so it is against their will. Their consent is not required. They are not allowed to leave, so it is against their will. They have to be there for at least three months. They will be monitored through ankle bracelets—that in all likelihood will actually have no connectivity—and video monitoring and they will be forced to follow all instructions. People cannot just come and visit them but, hey, it is not detention. But if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck?

Aside from the identity crisis this Circuit Breaker bill has and the fact there is little evidence this will work, how will this program deliver behavioural change and, most importantly, the behavioural change that is needed after exiting the program—a program they never consented to be part of? I spoke to stakeholders who work in the space at the hearing. When I asked them if behavioural intervention programs that are against the person's will work, the answer was no, they do not. How does mending the literal fences mend the metaphorical ones that are the drivers of youth offending? How does this program in the middle of remote Queensland offer meaningful skills that can be applied on the Gold Coast or Logan? What programs will these children be participating in? Who decides whether this is meaningful? Some of these kids are not going to be eligible for the Back on Track program. That came across in the hearings, so there is going to be a transition that is not part of it. It may be for some, but not all. It does not matter what you do out there, if there is no transition and reintegration when they get back to where they are going it has been a waste of time and money. How on earth does this transition work? Because where the rubber hits the road is where—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, I have cautioned you. This is my last caution. I will warn you if you interject again.

Ms McMAHON: When that young person goes back to their community that is where the rubber hits the road. Does all of that time work or does it not? Everything we have seen in this bill and every other program that fits into this type of bill has not worked to reduce recidivism. If we have a government that has not bothered to listen to the evidence on youth intervention programs in the first place, why should the winning tenderer? Where will this $80 million be spent and how will it be spent? The legislation outlines the requirement for the department to conduct an independent and rigorous

procurement process and then allows the minister to override any recommendation to the minister. How many LNP donors are going to find themselves on the receiving end of more government contracts? Remember the gold standard intervention slogan? The reality in front of us is far from it. I understand this government does not give two rats about youth offenders and that they are the by-product—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! How many people need to adjudicate on this? I am the only one. Member, that is unparliamentary. Withdraw that, please.

Ms McMAHON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You may proceed.

Ms McMAHON: For those opposite, this cohort is the by-product of the constant campaigning. It is clearly a winning strategy—the race to the bottom on an easy target—but do not dress this up as an intervention program when there is very little in this program that has any evidence in terms of behaviour change, let alone to a gold standard.

Last week was Child Protection Week. The stakeholders certainly had concerns about the next generation of institutionalised children being outsourced by the government to non-government agencies. We know how that story has ended over decades and decades. This is what the submitters who work in this space of youth offending are saying over and over again. It is in the submissions; it is in the hearings. Everyone loves the idea of an intervention program—something to stop the cycle of violence—and, yes, the victim stakeholder groups said that as well. They believed in effective rehabilitation and they wanted a successful rehabilitation program, but the government are kidding themselves that this is it. They are seriously misleading the people of Queensland that this $80 million spend on this program is going to have any impact on community safety in Queensland.

Ms MARR (Thuringowa—LNP) (8.30 pm): I am just trying to get my head together after what I heard from the member on the other side. I rise to speak in support of the Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill 2026 and to endorse the recommendation of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee that the bill be passed. I have heard directly from families, victims, small business owners and community members across Thuringowa and the broader Townsville region. For too long they lived with the consequences of serious and repeat youth offending while Labor was in government. This bill is a practical, structured response that delivers on the Crisafulli government's commitment under the Making Queensland Safer plan.

The Circuit Breaker program creates a highly structured rehabilitation option that courts can use either as a condition of bail or as a standalone sentence order of three to six months. It is deliberately positioned as a last stop before detention. Young people who would otherwise be remanded or sentenced to custody can instead be removed from negative peer influences and environments that enable offending. They receive around-the-clock supervision, intensive practical support, education, training, mentoring and programs designed to support reintegration into the community. It combines accountability with rehabilitation. It is what our community supports. Participants must wear a monitoring device, reside at the site, comply with directions, abstain from further offending and participate fully in the program. Noncompliance has clear consequences under existing community-based order provisions, with appropriate adjustments. This is also what our community expects.

The primary purpose is community safety through reduced offending. The secondary purpose is to give young people a genuine pathway out of the cycle of crime. As we promised, this is early intervention and rehabilitation. Safeguards include court oversight, suitability reports from the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support, Public Guardian visitation rights, child safe organisation requirements and harm-reporting obligations.

I turn now to the statement of reservation from Labor members and the dissenting report from the member for Maiwar. These documents recycle familiar criticisms and attempt to rewrite history. First, there is the claim that this is merely boot camps 2.0 or a slogan without substance. This program is different. It is court ordered, with strict eligibility criteria. It mandates intensive practical support, education, training and reintegration activities. It is delivered by regulated providers under departmental monitoring. It is an alternative to detention, not a military model. The department has made clear that suitability assessments, place availability and ongoing oversight are built in. Learning from the past means designing a program focused on structured rehabilitation and community safety.

Second, there are capacity and security concerns. The addition of up to 60 places across two sites is a genuine alternative to detention. It expands the range of options available to courts, rather than artificially inflating locked detention numbers. Providers are responsible for security and management of their sites. Mandatory electronic monitoring, 24/7 supervision and the ability to suspend or transfer participants provide practical safeguards. The bill makes Circuit Breaker sites visitable by the Public Guardian and brings providers under the Child Safe Organisations Act.

Third, there are concerns about the reporting of harm. The bill requires immediate reporting of harm or suspected harm, with a maximum penalty for failure to report. Critically, the Child Safe Organisations Act and the Reportable Conduct Scheme continue to apply. Children have access to complaints processes, legal help and independent visitors. The opposition's selective outrage ignores these layered safeguards and the fact that the program is designed to be less restrictive than detention while still removing high-risk offenders from our communities.

Fourth, there are concerns about cultural rights and over-representation. The bill does not ignore these issues, but let me be clear. In my community of Thuringowa, the voices of victims are very consistent: crime is crime, no matter who you are. They want consequences for action and a safer community. However, suitability reports, the possibility of approved leave and the overarching Charter of Youth Justice Principles remain. The program's controlled setting can itself protect young people from negative influences while providing structured opportunities. Importantly, we have listened to the voices of elders who have said we must continue to guide more responsible and different programs tailored for the youth. Claims that the government has purged First Nations voices or deliberately designed culturally unsafe programs are political rhetoric, not evidence.

The opposition talks about capacity constraints caused by this government. The reality is that this government is delivering the tools and the investment, including the $80 million committed over four years for Circuit Breaker that the former Labor government failed to provide. Queenslanders elected us to put victims and community safety first. That is exactly what this bill does.

For the people of Thuringowa, the benefits are direct and practical. Thuringowa, Townsville and surrounding suburbs have borne a disproportionate share of the impact of serious repeat youth offending. Removing high-risk people from the local environment into a structured residential program reduces immediate risk to homes, businesses and public places. It gives victims a measure of respite. It creates a genuine opportunity for those young people who are suitable to develop skills, discipline and support networks so they are less likely to reoffend upon return. Local families and community members have told me for years that they want both consequences and real pathways that will see action, not more excuses like they heard for 10 years.

This bill is one part of a broader suite of reforms—stronger bail laws, Adult Crime, Adult Time expansions, early intervention investment and victim support. Together they form a coherent response. It is evidence of a government prepared to act decisively while maintaining proper legislative safeguards and judicial oversight. I thank the chair, committee members, the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support and all who made submissions and appeared at hearings in Brisbane and Mount Morgan. Their contributions informed a thorough investigation.

I want to touch on a point the member for Bulimba made about accountable delivery of programs. We have a minister on this side of the House making the call for accountability for a provider who is not delivering on their commitment. Good on her for being open, accountable and diligent. We have said that we will keep working until Queenslanders feel safe. We will continue to do what has to be done to put victims first. This government will always put victims first—every time, no apology. The people of Thuringowa, and Queenslanders more broadly, deserve safer communities and a justice system that both holds young offenders to account and gives them a structured chance to change. This bill delivers that. I commend the bill to the House and urge members to support its passage.

Hon. GJ BUTCHER (Gladstone—ALP) (8.37 pm): Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their homes and in their communities. They were promised a circuit breaker by the Crisafulli LNP government, and they rightfully expect one. Queenslanders want a circuit breaker that actually makes their community safer. They want fewer victims, they want less offending and they want fewer people becoming trapped in a cycle of crime, which we see all too often. However, you cannot break a cycle by a slogan, and you certainly cannot disrupt offending with a bill that raises more questions than it answers. We hold serious concerns that this bill sells Queenslanders another slogan without any substance to back it up. This is not a true circuit breaker; it is a bandaid for youth justice under enormous pressure and a government that is struggling to deliver on its pre-election promise to make Queenslanders feel safer.

What concerns us most is that the government appears to be more interested in fixing the numbers than fixing the actual problem. One of our greatest concerns is the security of these proposed facilities. The Crisafulli government's youth justice system is facing serious capacity constraints. At the same time this government scrapped additional youth detention capacity that had been planned and funded under the former Labor government. Now we have increasing pressure on our watch houses and our detention centres and suddenly the government has found a new way to create what it calls additional capacity.

During estimates the director-general described Circuit Breaker Sentencing as providing an additional 60 beds and said that, combined with Woodford, it represented an additional 30 per cent increase in youth justice capacity. There is one significant problem: these beds that they are talking about are not secure youth detention beds. The bill makes it clear that a Circuit Breaker condition can be imposed where a child would otherwise be kept or remanded in custody. Think about what that actually means. These are young offenders who a court has determined would otherwise be held in secure custody. Instead, under this model by the LNP, they could be placed in a Circuit Breaker facility—

Mr Vorster interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): Member for Burleigh, the member speaking is not taking your interjections.

Mr BUTCHER: Instead, under this model they could be placed in a Circuit Breaker facility that simply does not have the same level of security as a youth detention centre, so what exactly is this government looking to achieve? Is it actually reducing the number of young offenders who require custody, or is it simply moving them from one column on a spreadsheet into another column? There is a very big difference between reducing offending and artificially increasing capacity.

When we sought assurances about the security of these facilities and the safety of our staff, our participants and the communities surrounding these facilities, we were referred to tender documents that provided very little detail beyond requiring appropriate security measures. That is simply not good enough for Labor. We specifically sought assurances about the built environment. We did not ask any unreasonable questions as part of this process. They were basic questions one would expect to have been answered before placing young people who would otherwise be remanded in secure custody into these facilities. Once again, we were pointed back towards tender documents that do not provide those answers. If the government wants Queenslanders to have confidence in these facilities, it needs to explain exactly how participants will be kept safe, how the staff will be kept safe and how the people in those communities around these facilities can be kept safe. A vague reference to 'appropriate security measures' does not cut it.

We are also concerned about the protections for children participating in these programs. Section 282X requires a Circuit Breaker provider, employee or contractor who becomes aware or reasonably suspects that a child has suffered harm while participating in this program to report that harm. That is what Queenslanders would expect. Then the bill provides a reasonable excuse for not reporting harm. One of these reasonable excuses is that reporting the matter might tend to incriminate the reporting entity. That is written in black and white in this bill. There is no acceptable reason for harm to a child in the care of a government contracted provider to go unreported. Whether that young person is in detention in a Circuit Breaker facility or anywhere else in the care and responsibility of the state, their safety matters. If harm occurs, it should be reported—full stop. Legal Aid Queensland explicitly called for that exemption to be removed and we agree with that.

Then we come to the elephant in the room. We have seen this movie before. The LNP can call them 'circuit breakers', they can rebrand them and rename them, but putting a shiny, new slogan on them does not help the cause of these young people. Queenslanders have every right to ask: are these simply LNP boot camps 2.0? The last time the LNP government went down this same road, it failed miserably. The Newman government introduced boot camps with the promise that they would tackle offending. An independent KPMG evaluation later found the sentenced youth boot camp had not achieved its intended outcome of reducing offending. It also found that it was more expensive than traditional detention. That is certainly not an option. That is what the independent evaluation found. More than a decade later, what lessons has this government actually learnt? Apparently nothing. This government is reheating an old idea, giving it a new name and asking Queenslanders to believe that somehow this time it is going to be different.

If they are going to resurrect one of their greatest youth justice policy failures, the very least they can do is explain what has actually changed. Where is the evidence and what were the lessons learnt from the past? Where are the guarantees that Queensland taxpayers are not about to fund another expensive experiment that has failed to reduce reoffending? Queenslanders need a circuit breaker, not another LNP marketing exercise. The government cannot simply pretend that history does not exist because it is politically inconvenient. If you repeat the same basic approach, you should expect Queenslanders to ask why they should expect a different result.

There are further questions about who will operate these programs. We certainly heard during the estimates process that the appointment of providers is ultimately a matter for this government. That should only increase the need for transparency and accountability. Queenslanders want to know who the providers will be and what experience they will be required to have to secure these contracts. The big question needs to be asked, and that is: what standards do they have to meet? It is also extremely important to know how they will demonstrate that their programs are actually reducing reoffending. There is still very little detail on how their performance will be measured and, even more importantly, what happens if they fail? If millions of taxpayers' dollars are going into private or non-government providers to supervise some of Queensland's most complex young offenders, Queenslanders deserve more than a simple promise. They deserve transparency, accountability and results.

Queensland does need a circuit breaker, a genuine circuit breaker that is not about finding somewhere else to put a young offender so the government can call it 'additional capacity'. It is about changing their behaviours, reducing their offending and making sure that when a young person leaves one of these programs, they are less likely to commit another offence. That is the measure that matters, not how many beds the government can announce and not how many press conferences the minister can hold. The measure of success is whether there are fewer victims of crime at the end of all of this. If this model is going to work, the government needs to listen to the people who understand these issues the most and it needs to learn from the mistakes of the past. Instead, there is certainly real concern that this government is steaming ahead because it needs something to demonstrate it has an answer to the pressure building in the youth justice system. This is not good policy and it is certainly not a genuine circuit breaker.

Ms JAMES (Barron River—LNP) (8.48 pm): Across Far North Queensland communities have been very clear about their expectations of the youth justice system. They want a system that protects the community, they want a system that supports victims and prevents crime in the first place and they want a system that puts the right of law-abiding Queenslanders ahead of the excuses of repeat offenders. They want a system that does more than process the same offenders through the courts time and time again only to see them released back and before the courts days and weeks later.

For a decade, Queenslanders were told to accept this as normal, that repeat offenders did not need consequences; they simply needed more chances and more excuses. For too long communities like mine were expected to tolerate a revolving door of offending, bail breaches and repeat victimisation. Far North Queensland has rightly had enough. In Far North Queensland we have a cohort of around 50 serious repeat youth offenders responsible for a disproportionate amount of offending, and that is down from around 85 when we first came to government.

These are not young people making a one-off mistake; they have repeatedly offended, repeatedly breached bail and repeatedly found themselves back before the courts. When these serious repeat offenders are locked up by police or sent to detention, we see offending drop significantly in our region. That tells us something. We know who many of these serious repeat offenders are and we know that when they are removed from our streets our communities are safer. However, the challenge is what happens next, because simply locking someone up and then releasing them back into the same circumstances without meaningful intervention does not necessarily break the cycle, and that is why this bill is so important.

The Circuit Breaker program is designed to intervene before a pattern of offending becomes a lifetime of offending. In Far North Queensland, offending can begin with a young person disengaging from school, falling in with the wrong crowd, becoming exposed to criminal behaviour and gradually accepting offending as normal. They may be influenced by older peers, siblings, cousins and adults already entrenched in criminal behaviour and rather than being encouraged towards education, employment and opportunity they are drawn into a cycle of offending from a very young age. They are taught to break into homes and to steal without any thought of the people they leave behind—people who have had their belongings stolen, their cars taken, their homes violated and their sense of safety shattered. That is what they have been taught to do, so for these youth criminals crime becomes normalised and, before long, it becomes a way of life.

Without intervention, that young person can become trapped in a cycle of offending, court appearances, bail breaches and further offending. The purpose of Circuit Breaker Sentencing is to break that cycle before it becomes entrenched. It is not only about changing the trajectory of a young person's life before they become the next generation of serious repeat offenders but also about protecting future victims by reducing the likelihood that a young offender becomes a lifelong offender. Intensive supervision, structure, rehabilitation and accountability: that is what these offenders need and this is what our community expects. While they are participating in the program, they are not out on the streets creating more victims, committing more offences and breaching bail.

Let us be clear: this is not a soft option. It involves strict supervision, clear expectations and consequences for noncompliance. It is not a holiday, it is not a reward and it is not a free pass; it is a court ordered circuit breaker designed to take serious repeat offenders off our streets, hold them to account and give them an opportunity to choose a different path, and this is something our community has been calling for. We have had enough of young people spending years repeatedly offending, breaching bail and victimising Queenslanders. If someone has spent years repeatedly causing harm they need to be stopped, but we also need to be smart about what happens next. If we keep putting young people through the same system and expecting a different outcome, we will continue to see the same cycle.

The committee received 57 submissions, including one from the Cairns Regional Council, supporting the Circuit Breaker program and its focus on structured rehabilitation while emphasising the importance of monitoring and evaluation. The council stated—

> The need for new approaches to sentencing and rehabilitating young offenders is clear and Cairns Regional Council commends the Queensland Government for investing in alternative rehabilitative custodial approaches, including the Circuit Breaker program.

The council also cited a statistic that matters here: 71 per cent of young people released from detention in Queensland reoffend within 12 months, so that is seven in 10. If that does not tell us that something needs to change, I do not know what will. Circuit Breaker seeks to change that and it places serious repeat offenders into a structured supervised environment, holds them to account and gives them the opportunity to develop skills and behaviours needed to choose a different path. Most importantly, it has the potential to prevent future victims and make communities across Far North Queensland safer.

This bill does not stand alone. Rather, it forms part of a broader commitment by this government to restore accountability to the youth justice system and put community safety back at the centre of decision-making. Unlike the former Labor government, which spent a decade weakening laws and making excuses for repeat offenders, this government has been consistent. We are strengthening the laws, never weakening them. We introduced Adult Crime, Adult Time because serious offences deserve serious consequences. We are strengthening bail laws so serious repeat offenders cannot simply move through a revolving door of bail, offending and reoffending.

Under our new bail reforms for certain serious offences, the court must have a high degree of confidence that that person will not commit another serious offence while on bail before bail can be granted. Under the Breach Bail, Go to Jail reforms, committing a serious offence while on bail will itself become a new offence, with a mandatory minimum 12-month term of imprisonment for offenders who meet the requirements. The message is simple: if you commit serious crime, there are serious consequences. If you are given bail and commit another serious crime, there are even stronger consequences.

We have also expanded electronic monitoring and continued reforms aimed at ensuring serious repeat offenders face real consequences. However, this government is not simply about stronger laws and tougher consequences. We are also investing in early intervention and rehabilitation because we want to see and prevent the next offenders from ever entering the cycle. That is where Circuit Breaker Sentencing comes in, because stronger laws alone are not enough. If we want to reduce victim numbers, we must also reduce reoffending. If we want safer communities, we must prevent the next offence before it occurs.

This bill pairs accountability with intervention and it pairs consequences with rehabilitation, because protecting the community and changing lives do not have to be competing objectives. In fact, they should be the same objective. If we can stop serious repeat offenders from becoming lifelong offenders, we create fewer victims, fewer crimes and safer communities. That is the approach of the LNP Crisafulli government. We want stronger laws; tougher consequences; early intervention where

appropriate; rehabilitation focused on results, not excuses; and, above all, community safety first. For the people of Far North Queensland, that is what they have been asking for and that is what this government is delivering. I fully support this bill. Well done to the minister and her team.

Ms McMILLAN (Mansfield—ALP) (8.55 pm): I rise to contribute to the Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill 2026. I will focus my contribution on aspects of the bill that relate to child safety. The Labor opposition supports keeping Queenslanders safe; however, when the state takes responsibility for a child, that responsibility must include keeping that child safe. As the shadow minister for child safety, I believe this bill raises serious concerns about whether that responsibility has been properly considered. What alarms me most is the potential risk of harm to children and the ignorance of this LNP government to listen to the concerns of stakeholders and experts.

Proposed section 282X of the bill states that if a provider becomes aware or reasonably suspects that a child has suffered harm they must report it. However, the bill then provides a reasonable excuse where reporting the matter might tend to incriminate the reporting entity. There is no reasonable excuse for harm to a child, nor is there a reasonable excuse for failing to report harm of a child and there should be no reasonable excuse for an organisation or provider failing to report harm that occurs to a child in their care.

Multiple stakeholders including the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People, the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and the Queensland Family and Child Commission have raised concerns and warned that there are children in closed institutions placed hundreds of miles from anyone who can independently check on their welfare, leaving them entirely dependent on the adults controlling their day-to-day lives, cut off from family, community, kin and culture. We have had decades of inquiries into the treatment of children in institutional care—from forgotten Australians, the *Bringing them home* report and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Those inquiries have shown repeatedly the devastating consequences when children are placed in closed environments without strong safeguards, independent oversight and accountability—lessons this government should not ignore.

We must also ask: what protections are in place for children inside these facilities? The bill does not establish standards of care in Circuit Breaker sites. The Public Guardian affirmed this as a significant concern, stating—

> The Bill does not include standards of care for children staying at circuit breaker sites, such as ... accommodation ... health services ... family contact, cultural support, or reintegration planning.

The tender documents are also light on detail when it comes to the physical safety of children. When the committee asked whether facilities would be designed to remove risks such as hanging points, fixed furniture, gaps and objects that could be used as weapons, the director-general referred the committee to the tender documents.

Keeping in mind that these children are incredibly vulnerable and are at high risk of not only hurting each other but also hurting themselves, those documents provide little more than a motherhood statement that infrastructure must safely accommodate residential, social and recreational needs. For children in a 24-hour residential environment, that is not enough. We should not be relying on assurances after the fact. The safety requirements should be clear and established before a single child is placed in these facilities. There is another significant child safety concern, and that is the connection of family, community, culture and country. Again, we have a history in this country of removing children from culture and family over many years and we continue to suffer the consequences of that. The National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People warned—

Debate, on motion of Ms McMillan, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.00 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move—

> That the House do now adjourn.

Liberal National Party, Performance

Mr MARTIN (Stretton—ALP) (9.01 pm): I have been asked by many locals: 'James, why are the LNP so mean and nasty? Why are they cutting support for domestic and family violence? Why are they leaving vulnerable children without proper care? Why are they breaking their promises on health in the

budget?' I have been putting a bit of thought into it, and I think it is psychological. The best way I can describe it is that the LNP is a little bit like a teenage boy suffering from repeated teenage heartbreak; it is so angsty.

You can see it when you look at those opposite. They are like a pimply 19-year-old boy waiting outside Hungry Jack's at the Queen Street Mall who has been stood up after waiting 45 minutes looking up and down Albert Street. It is so sad—being ghosted by his crush—working up the courage to ask someone to the formal, only to be told, 'Oh, she will be on a family holiday,' and then walking in on the day to see she has turned up with someone else. Ouch, it hurts.

You can tell the years in opposition have impacted those opposite. There are only so many times the people of Queensland can tell you, 'Let's just be friends.' That kind of repeated rejection does something to a person—it builds bitterness and resentment. When a party that has spent years being rejected by Queenslanders finally gets into power that resentment has to go somewhere, and we have seen it. Firstly, we have seen it because they have been caught lying on their dating profile. They made a whole bunch of claims and exaggerations. It is the political equivalent of claiming to be six-foot tall—

Mr HEAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to some unparliamentary language used by the member.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): There was not any unparliamentary language.

Mr MARTIN: I withdraw. They made promises they had no intention of keeping. They promised Queenslanders better services, lower debt and responsible government. Instead we are paying more, waiting longer and getting less. Just look at the budget. Before the election the Treasurer said he did not want a ratings downgrade on its watch, yet Queensland has just suffered its first credit downgrade in 17 years. S&P warned them three times and they ignored the warnings. While their budget was going down the gurgler, they blew almost $50 million on LNP blue-branded branding—on billboards, phone boxes and movie ads.

I do have to ask you: whose idea was the public toilet campaign? Who came up with that genius idea? I can see them now, 'I know, guys, we will get them at the urinal.' What other policies are you planning on launching in public toilets? Can I give you a suggestion? Why don't you do the next LNP stand-up at the Hungry Jack's toilet on Queen Street. At least you have been there. You will certainly know where it is.

Queenslanders did not vote for a government that is still processing teenage rejection. At some point the LNP has to stop taking its disappointments out on the people of Queensland. That Hungry Jack's no-show was a long time ago. It is time to keep your promises. It is time to stop the games. It is time to put people before politics. Queenslanders deserve better.

Mount Cotton

Mrs YOUNG (Redlands—LNP) (9.04 pm): There are some places that tell you a lot about a community simply by spending a little bit of time there. For Mount Cotton, one of those places is Mt Cotton Organic Farm. I recently visited Ash and Hannah and walked around their third-generation family farm, where they grow vegetables and raise cattle. Ash's dad still lives on the property. Ash and Hannah are raising their family there. Ash told me that he hopes his two children might one day choose to continue farming that land—three generations connected to the same patch of Mount Cotton and hopefully a fourth. That is something worth recognising and respecting.

As we walked around the farm we could see the changing face of the Redlands around it. We need more homes. We need places for our children and our grandchildren to live, greater housing choice and opportunities for people to build their future. Supporting more homes and protecting what makes our individual communities special are not competing objectives. Good planning has to do both, and that is why I have supported the Southern Thornlands Priority Development Area. It provides an opportunity to plan for new homes in a coordinated way alongside the roads, infrastructure, services and open space that growing communities need. Growth should be carefully planned in the right places while recognising that different communities have characteristics worth preserving. Mount Cotton has a particularly distinct character: productive farmland, large properties, bushland, wildlife and a strong rural identity.

Mount Cotton will become part of the Redlands electorate at the next state election. An electoral boundary change does not mean I automatically understand the community or what matters to the people who live there. That trust and understanding has to be earned so I will show up and I will listen. I will knock on doors, sit at kitchen tables and visit local businesses and farms just like Ash and Hannah's. I want to understand what people value, what they want protected and what they want for

Mount Cotton's future, because good planning is about more than drawing lines on a map; it is about people, livelihoods, families and history. When Ash talks about his children perhaps becoming the fourth generation to farm that land, that is a part of Mount Cotton's story. As the Redlands grows, stories like theirs deserve to be heard as we make decisions about what comes next.

Community Organisations, Funding

Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (9.06 pm): I rise tonight to speak about something that should concern every Queenslander: the fear among community organisations that speaking honestly could put their government funding at risk. These organisations are not political props; they support Queenslanders experiencing homelessness, domestic and family violence, child safety failures, health disadvantage and environmental harm. They see where systems are failing, often before anyone else, and when they speak up they are doing their job, yet frontline organisations reportedly fear being gagged because criticism could jeopardise their funding.

One provider believed the government was effectively silencing vulnerable Queenslanders by preventing experts from speaking freely. Another was reportedly told, 'You are a service delivery provider, not an activist.' That statement says everything. The government wants service without scrutiny and silence when its policies fail. Queensland has seen this before. Under Campbell Newman, funding agreements restricted some organisations from advocating for legislative change. The Queensland Association for Healthy Communities lost millions of dollars, while the Environmental Defenders Office lost state funding. Under this LNP government its state funding has again been reduced to zero.

The culture of silence is even more alarming during domestic and family violence and child safety crises. Vital domestic and family violence funding has reduced by almost $40 million this year, with a further $10.56 million reallocated from services to other initiatives. The government promotes $200 million for its response to the Child Safety Commission of Inquiry, yet Child Safety's operational budget has reportedly been reduced to almost $350 million. Meanwhile, thousands of children need protection. The number in residential care has risen by almost 20 per cent, including an almost 30 per cent increase among children under five. Estimates also revealed 8,140 assessments in progress, with 78 per cent not yet commenced. This means that about 6,000 children are waiting for assessments that could connect them with urgently needed help.

Biloela Hospital, Maternity Services

Mr HEAD (Callide—LNP) (9.09 pm): Birthing is back in Bilo and what an exciting week it has been thanks to the Crisafulli government. I am certainly proud that we have delivered this service for Callide. Of course, we are not just delivering for the people of Callide; we are now delivering in Callide thanks to the Crisafulli government. This is a fantastic time because not even 24 hours after the announcement of the service coming back online, the first baby was welcomed at the hospital. It is an incredibly exciting time thanks to the Crisafulli government and the local team. Congratulations to Bronwyn and Benn who welcomed to the world their little girl, Arlie Mae, at two o'clock this morning. Also exciting is the fact that they could drive straight home as it takes less than 15 minutes to drive there. If they had given birth in Rockhampton it would have taken over two hours to get home.

This is an incredibly exciting time. It is why we do this job and why we fight for such services. Within a couple of months of first being elected, the previous Labor government sent our last maternity service, which was in Biloela, offline. Fourteen hospitals across an electorate larger than the state of Tasmania were left without a birthing service because of the Palaszczuk and Miles Labor governments. Frankly, that was disgraceful. While they say great things about caring for women's services and so on, they turned their backs on and closed down one of the most fundamental and basic services provided to women in the bush.

Thanks go to the Crisafulli government. This has been a long journey. I also thank everyone who has been involved. Over the past four years, we have run a long campaign to get this important service back online. A huge thanks goes to Katie Craig who gave birth to her son Dougy only a couple of weeks before the hospital went on bypass. She has said publicly that it may have been a different outcome for her and Dougy if that service had not existed at that point in time because Dougy was born three months early. Because of that service, Dougy survived. Katie sponsored a petition that we tabled in the parliament. Coincidentally, the day that the service came back online was exactly three years after the date that she launched the petition to get birthing services back at Biloela, and I was happy to sponsor that petition.

Thanks also go to Lisa Blackler, a midwife and the CEO of the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. She has done a huge amount of work alongside Di, the midwifery unit manager, and the local team at the Biloela Hospital. Of course, thanks go to the health minister and the Premier who has backed in this service. The LNP opens and strengthens maternity services in the bush. Labor closed them and, frankly, that was disgraceful.

Domestic and Family Violence

Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (9.12 pm): When this Premier was trying to convince Queenslanders to vote for the LNP, he said, 'Let the sun shine in.' In the two nearly two years since they have been in government, we have seen that they are keeping the sun shine out. The tragedy is that that is now applying to some of the most fundamentally tragic of circumstances for Queenslanders, particularly women who are the victims of domestic and family violence. In Queensland, we are in the midst of a domestic violence crisis. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce made 355 recommendations about how that could be dealt with. We know that they sacked the independent overseer of all of those recommendations being implemented. Since then, we have been asking them: what is happening with those recommendations? Is there a progress report? Can we see some updates on what is happening? They say, 'It's coming, it's coming' and 'We'll tell you in our own good time.'

Domestic violence continues to get worse and worse. It is a tragedy for Queensland. We just found out that, 16 months on, there has not been a single progress report, briefing or memo to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Those victim-survivors who spoke to that taskforce bared their souls. They shared experiences which had never been shared with anyone else before and they have fallen into a chasm because this government do not want to admit that they do not care and they have not done a single thing about it.

We have seen that with maternal health at Toowoomba Hospital, for example. Our shadow minister for health at the time met with women from that area and they talked about appalling things that were happening in that maternity unit—flawed complaint handling, serious clinical incidents, leadership and culture turmoil, lack of transparency. We finally talked the health minister into doing an assurance review. There was going to be a big report. 'We are going to fix it. It is terrible—terrible what was happening to these women!' What has been released now is a five-dot-point, five-page report which says nothing, and we have no idea what they will do with those recommendations.

In respect of child safety, we still do not know how many kids there are in care. We ask the minister every single sitting week. The media asks her. Everybody asks her, 'What is happening? How many kids are there? When are you going to report?' There is no report. This government are not interested in transparency. They are finding out how hard government is and they simply will not tell us the failures that are accumulating in the systems.

Stroke Awareness

Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (9.15 pm): Every 11 minutes, someone in Australia experiences a stroke. Just over two years ago, I was one of those people. Since then, every day has involved physio and OT exercises, working to rebuild neural pathways and to regain strength and improved movement in my hand and my leg. Recovery does not simply end when you leave hospital; it is something you continue to work at day after day.

That personal experience is why I am so passionate about the work of the Stroke Foundation—Australia, and why my co-chair, the member for Greenslopes, Joe Kelly, and I were so pleased to host the Parliamentary Friends of Stroke Foundation event here at parliament today. This was not just any event. We had the privilege of hosting the exclusive world premiere of the short film *Code Stroke*, with our guests among the very first people to see this powerful and gripping clip. *Code Stroke* gives viewers an insight into what happens when someone experiences a stroke while sharing information that could one day help someone recognise the signs, act quickly and potentially save a life.

I want to especially thank former Victorian state minister, survivor of stroke and Stroke Foundation Government Relations Adviser Heidi Victoria, along with Stroke Foundation CEO Dr Lisa Murphy and the entire Stroke Foundation team, for bringing this important event to Queensland parliament.

I also want to acknowledge our lived-experience guests who joined us and shared their stories, including the incredibly candid account we heard from one young mum and stroke survivor, Letisha Living, about experiencing stroke at such a young age—in her 30s. Stories like this remind us that stroke can affect anyone at any stage of life. We were also fortunate to welcome Dr Hal Rice and

Dr Laetitia de Villiers from the Gold Coast who are doing extraordinary work pioneering robotic, minimally invasive approaches to brain surgery. It was wonderful to have them travel to Brisbane and share some of the remarkable advances being made in stroke treatment.

Of course, it would not be a movie premiere without popcorn and choc-tops. I give a special thankyou to our catering team for embracing the theme and putting together some fantastic movie snacks, and I should add there was fruit and a few healthier options available as well.

Today was about education, awareness, innovation and, above all, giving people the knowledge to act when every second counts. I encourage everyone to visit the Stroke Foundation website, learn the signs of stroke and share that information with your family and friends because one day that knowledge could save a life, and that life may very well be yours.

Play On! Sports Vouchers

Ms PUGH (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (9.18 pm): Last month I met with a cross-section of the amazing dance community from Queensland, and I thank each of them for the passion and knowledge they brought to the table in raising with me the issue of dance not being fully included in FairPlay vouchers. I thank: Rhonda from BPAC, Alex from the Academy of Dance Excellence, Tania from Premier Dance Academy, Nadine from Sayers Dance Centre, Melissa from Atmosphere Movement Dance Studio, Stephanie from Achieve Performing Arts Studio, Sam and Elke from Achieve Performing Arts Studio, Cheyene and Charlotte from Show Dance, Lisa from All That Dance studio and Kristin and Cheyenne from Centenary Dance Academy.

Each one of the attendees outlined the challenges that they and the families who dance with them face in not being able to use FairPlay vouchers, which is a matter I have previously outlined in this House. They spoke about how families were looking at alternative recreation activities so they can use the Play On! vouchers, meaning they are pulling their children out of dance and putting them into other activities. I have spoken before in parliament about the feedback I get from parents and dance studios in my community about how challenging it is for dance studios to sign on to take FairPlay vouchers.

We need a pipeline of dancers so that Queensland can remain a cultural hub, just as we need a pipeline of athletes. When kids cannot access these vouchers for dance and their parents are contending with the cost-of-living crunch, we need to be honest: they will look seriously at cheaper alternatives which will take their vouchers. Imagine not being able to take a single FairPlay voucher as a dance studio, even though dance is apparently included in the program. It is beyond frustrating for these dance schools and, more importantly, for the parents who have to pay full price when they think they can access the vouchers. As I have said before, many parents think that dance is included in the vouchers only to find out they are not. Finding this out would be a bit like getting an unexpected bill—again, we are in a cost-of-living crunch.

At the end of the meeting we resolved as a group, having previously written to the minister—and I acknowledge that he has responded and his response was very polite—to launch a petition calling on this LNP government to properly include dance in the FairPlay vouchers. It has only been up a few weeks. It already has over 6½ thousand signatures.

Mr Mander interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): Member for Everton!

Ms PUGH: Make no mistake: there is serious support for this initiative, and I suspect the member for Everton knows that. I am calling on every single Queenslander who cares about equality to join our campaign and sign the petition.

Woongoolba State School

Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (9.21 pm): On 28 August it was my absolute pleasure to attend the 150th anniversary dinner of the Woongoolba State School, which was fittingly held across the road at the Woongoolba Hall, which has its own history having been built in 1917. We heard lived experience stories about school life over the past half century or so, with Don Harris, the principal from 1988 until his retirement in 2008, sharing some insights as well.

We enjoyed a video from the previous year's Oktoberfest, which has been celebrated at the school for many years. I thank Paula Hay, who is also known as Frau Hay, who has been Woongoolba's German language teacher for many years, for working hard to ensure the video could be shown because German is such an important part of Woongoolba's heritage. It was a great night, but there

was more to come. The 150th anniversary school fete was held the following day. As you can imagine, there were plenty of activities: family friendly carnival rides, live music and entertainment, food and drink stalls, market and local community stalls and local history displays celebrating 150 years of education, and a fireworks finale closed out the evening.

Woongoolba State School is one of Queensland's oldest continuously operating state schools. The story of Woongoolba reflects the resilience of the early German settlers and the enduring value the local community placed on education. That story is contained in a 150-year commemorative book that has been widely distributed, and I table a copy of that book now.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Woongoolba State School 150 years 1876-2026' [1621].

The school was opened by Jacob Schindler on 17 April 1876 and was originally named the Pimpama Island Provisional School. Within six months there were 13 children enrolled. In the late 1800s the school was moved to a more central location, after which enrolment numbers increased. In 1930 the name of the school was changed to Woongoolba State School. Woongoolba is believed to be a First Nations word for the geebung tree. A comprehensive redevelopment plan began in 1990 to modernise this beautifully situated rural school. Improvements to the school are continuing to this day. Indeed, in support of the dedicated P&C that works tirelessly, I was pleased to sponsor—wait for it—a petition calling for new classroom furniture and a new playground gym structure that I am pleased to announce was fully completed a few months ago.

Today 203 students call Woongoolba State School their school. Congratulations to all those who worked so hard to put together what was a wonderful celebration and something that will be remembered for years to come. In closing, if anyone knows where Woongoolba State School's 50-year time capsule that was buried in the late 1970s is located in the school grounds, I would love to hear from them!

National Meals on Wheels Day

Mr KNUTH (Hill—KAP) (9.24 pm): On 26 August we celebrated National Meals on Wheels Day and recognised an organisation that has been serving Queensland communities for an incredible 70 years. A simple healthy meal can mean more than just food. For someone who is sick, frail, elderly or living with a disability, it can be one of the greatest gifts we can offer—a nutritious meal delivered with care and often a friendly face at the door.

Over the years I have had the privilege of dealing with many Meals on Wheels organisations in my former electorates of Charters Towers and Dalrymple. Some travelled up to 200-kilometre round trips to deliver meals. I also want to mention the Hill electorate and their amazing contribution over the years: the Atherton District Meals on Wheels, which has been operating since 1974; Innisfail Meals on Wheels since 1975; Tully Meals on Wheels since 1980; Babinda District Meals on Wheels since 1984; Mission Beach Meals on Wheels also since 1984; and Ravenshoe & District Meals on Wheels since 1992. Together, these six wonderful organisations support around 810 clients and deliver more than 84,000 meals every year. They are powered by 211 dedicated volunteers who give their time to make sure some of the most vulnerable people in our communities are cared for.

I want to take this opportunity to thank every volunteer, staff member, committee member and supporter who has contributed to Meals on Wheels over the past 70 years. Your work is invaluable. You do far more than deliver meals; you deliver care, connection and comfort to people who are most in need. I am proud to recognise National Meals on Wheels Day and applaud their incredible contribution.

Rockhampton, Fitzroy River

Mrs KIRKLAND (Rockhampton—LNP) (9.27 pm): As the member for Rockhampton, I rise tonight to speak out in support of regional, rural and remote Queenslanders who have for decades had no alternative but to travel south for all manner of sporting representations. We travel from Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Longreach and Biloela—from everywhere. We do it because we believe in our talented regional competitors, and in doing so we invest more—more for travel, more for accommodation and more time away from home.

Always there are bids to host state and national events in the regions to bring some level of equity and opportunity for regional families, friends and neighbours to enjoy attending their competitions, to cheer on their local teams. Since the release of our 2032 Delivery Plan announcing the decentralisation of the Olympic and Paralympic Games across regional Queensland to ensure that our games deliver for all of Queensland, there has been an overwhelming cheer of acceptance and celebration from those

who live in the regions. At last we have a government that supports the regions and is willing to include us in what will be a generational, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be part of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games events.

We know in the regions that this support will see much needed injections into legacy infrastructure for our roads, rail and air connections. It will deliver legacy infrastructure for our housing and our accommodation, along with permanent facility upgrades to our sporting precincts. We will not stand by and let negative propaganda, born out of envy, smear our reputations as regions that are more than capable of hosting incredible world-class events.

As the member for Rockhampton, I stand with my colleagues the members for Keppel and Mirani, as well as mayors and councillors of Rockhampton, executives from Regional Development Australia, business owners, our federal members, our sporting clubs and our communities from right across Central Queensland that are excited to finally feel included. We are ready, willing and able to deliver and showcase our amazing facilities and region.

The Rockhampton Fitzroy River is not simply a venue; it is one of our region's defining natural assets and a place that has supported rowing activities for generations—indeed, since the 1800s. Our community understands its conditions and its potential better than anyone. I will continue to defend the notion that this river is not suitable as a venue for the games event. GIICA are progressing with ongoing feasibility across all proposed host venues to ensure delivery of world-class events with fair competition for all Olympians and Paralympians.

On behalf of all regional host cities, I want to say thank you to our Premier, our Deputy Premier and ministers for their acknowledgement of the regional communities of Queensland through their inclusion of our regions and all current and future sporting Olympians and Paralympians.

(Time expired)

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Asif, Bailey, Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, Chiesa, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, de Brenni, Dick, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Farmer, Field, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Grace, Hatcher, Head, Howard, Hunt, Hutton, James B, James T, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly G, Kelly J, Kempton, 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, Richmond, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stoker, Vorster, Whiting, Young