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THURSDAY, 18 JUNE 2009

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. John Mickel, Logan) read prayers and took the chair.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Photographs in Chamber

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise the House that I have given permission for photography to take place during the Leader of the Opposition's reply to the budget.

Register of Members' Interests

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I table the 22nd report on the Register of Members' Interests.

Tabled paper: Twenty-Second Report on the Register of Members' Interests [\[430\]](#).

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Nambour Connection Road

Mr Wellington, from 405 petitioners, requesting the House to ease congestion around the Woombye State School by not upgrading Pine Grove Road to become a major access road; and to reduce the speed limit, install traffic lights and fixed speed cameras at the intersection of Blackhall Street and Nambour Connection Road [\[431\]](#).

Abortion Law

Ms Darling, from 61 petitioners, requesting the House to never pass legislation, as the Victorian Parliament has recently done, compelling doctors or nurses to be directly or indirectly involved in performing an abortion [\[432\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK—

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade (Mr Robertson)—

[\[433\]](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade (Mr Robertson) to a paper petition (1209-09) presented by Mr Wellington from 132 petitioners regarding the proposed Powerlink Woolooga to Cooroy South Transmission Line and Substation

Minister for Transport (Ms Nolan)—

[\[434\]](#) Select Committee on Travelsafe: Report No. 51—Report on the Inquiry into Automatic Number Plate Recognition Technology: Government response

Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport (Mr Reeves)—

[\[435\]](#) Mt Gravatt Showgrounds Trust—2007-08 Annual Report

[\[436\]](#) Mt Gravatt Showgrounds Trust—2007-08 Annual Report: Late tabling statement

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Construction Industry

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.32 am): As we have raised a number of times in this House, these are dark times for economies across the world and that means that they are challenging times for the Queensland economy. In tough times such as these we need to face reality, but it is also important to look for the signs that show that recovery is on the way. That is why the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics data for building approvals across the country are good news for Queensland. The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units and houses approved in Queensland rose two per cent in April—the first rise in 18 months. In the same time, the trend estimate for the number of private sector houses rose 0.8 per cent. These figures show that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and if government continues to do the right things with our current policy settings Queensland can emerge even stronger than before.

The reasons for these green shoots are not yet clear, but the figures do show that confidence is returning to the Queensland construction market, and part of the reason for that must lie with our continued population growth. New ABS data, which I referred to earlier this week, shows that Queensland's population grew by more than 2,000 people a week last year for the first time. There is no other state growing at this pace today, and this is another sign of the confidence in the underlying strength of our economy. Commentators may want to make comparisons about Queensland and other states. What these figures show us is that people are voting with their feet, and that is the strongest vote you can get.

Our job as a government is to make sure that we do everything possible to encourage the growth of green shoots as we see them emerge. That is why this year major reforms to Queensland's planning approval system will see building developments get off the ground within weeks rather than months in cases where it is appropriate to do so. This will create and sustain construction industry jobs as the state experiences the brunt of the global economic crisis. The Sustainable Planning Bill 2009 will result in the biggest reform to planning approvals in over a decade. It will mean massive reductions in red tape and unnecessary delays. It will mean developments get off the ground sooner, reducing costs, streamlining plan making and improving assessment times. It is measures such as these that will help the Queensland economy weather the economic crisis.

1 Million Women Campaign

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.35 am): Later today I will join around 250 other women, including the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, to launch a very special campaign in Queensland. The 1 Million Women campaign aims to enlist a million Australian women to do their bit to tackle climate change and reduce Australia's carbon footprint. Every woman who joins the campaign accepts the challenge to each cut one tonne of CO₂ in one year—a combined total of one million tonnes of CO₂ across Australia.

Women have a key role in the global challenge against climate change, for it is women who make approximately 70 per cent of consumer decisions within households, thereby affecting household carbon footprints. What I will be doing today is urging Queensland to punch above its weight nationally, as we always do, and account for a quarter of the national target of one million women. This is a major campaign which my government is sponsoring which has been launched for women to step up to the climate change challenge and collectively cut our carbon footprints. The Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability will have more to say on this later, and I thank her for her enthusiastic support of this campaign. It has real grassroots appeal and we will see many Australian women join the campaign.

Emerging Leaders

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): Yesterday the Prime Minister announced 10 young Australians as emerging leaders of the future. These 10 young people were selected from several fields as part of the *Australian's* awards designed to celebrate the next generation of leaders. I am very pleased this morning to acknowledge and praise two Queenslanders who were recognised in this award. The first recipient was Alissa Phillips, a young woman from Kenmore State School who developed a passion for supporting and assisting young people with disabilities. This drive propelled her to create SPACE in late 2007. SPACE offers services such as physiotherapy, music and speech therapy for young people with a disability in a caring and accessible environment that aims to empower young people with a disability through education.

Dr Flegg: Hear, hear!

Ms BLIGH: I look forward to seeing more of this bright young Queenslander. I note the member for Moggill supporting me in that. This young woman is at a school in his electorate and he may well know of some of her work, but it is young people like her who are an inspiration to all of us. I thank him for his acknowledgement of her achievements.

The second recipient was Professor Paul Hodges from the University of Queensland. Professor Hodges heads the University of Queensland's Centre of Clinical Research Excellence in Spinal Pain, Injury and Health. Under the stewardship of Professor Hodges, a great many advances have been made in this area of research such as how the brain interacts with the spine, how to use this knowledge to minimise pain to those with spinal injuries as well as further research into early intervention to prevent people who suffer from chronic spinal pain transitioning into the late stage of chronic pain. Although Dr Hodges was Victorian born, he was educated here in Queensland and we welcome him to the fold and wish to recognise his enormous contribution to our state.

These young Queenslanders were selected from over 100 very talented and outstanding Australians, some of whom were also from Queensland, and I wish to acknowledge all of those candidates for their achievements. It is a testament to the innovation and drive that young Queenslanders display on a daily basis—some of them here in this parliament were doing so just this week—that Ms Phillips and Professor Hodges are acknowledged by the leader of our country, and I wish to commend their achievements to the House.

Gordon, Mr R

Hon. AM BЛИGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.38 am): In 15 days time the Queensland media—indeed, the national newspaper landscape—will change forever as we say goodbye to one man who can truly lay claim to the title 'living legend'. It is not a term to be taken lightly, but I am sure many in this House would agree that in the case of Mr Bob Gordon it could not be more applicable. For those members not acquainted with the name—and I am sure there are very few—Bob has been the editor-in-chief of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* for the past 13 years, and what a ride—a tumultuous, bumpy, entertaining ride—it has been during that time.

Bob Gordon is one of the last remaining old-school newspaper men in the country. He is one of those newspaper people who was trained to get inside a story and who was not afraid to tell it like it is. He has never backed away from giving his readers the sometimes inconvenient truth. In his more than four decades in newspapers, Bob has been at the helm of a host of mastheads, including the *Sunday Mail* here in Brisbane, but without doubt he found his true calling on his much beloved Gold Coast, where he is firmly entrenched as one of the local colourful personalities, both feared and favoured by the city's personalities and movers and shakers—and with good reason.

For the past 13 years, Bob Gordon has guided the newspaper through hundreds of equally colourful adventures. He has an uncanny knack for mixing it up: combining the hard with the light-hearted, investigative news with columns devoted to locals and their vibrant Gold Coast lifestyle. That is because Bob Gordon knows his product, he knows his market and he knows his readers. Bob has also never been afraid to give us all, on both sides of politics—in federal, state and local government—a touch-up, as many members of this House can no doubt attest.

Mr Lawlor: Hear, hear!

Ms BЛИGH: I take that interjection from the member for Southport. I think it is fair to say that Bob Gordon embodies the irreverent spirit that Australians bring to political debate, routinely depicting political leaders in cartoon form or computer graphics in skimpy swimwear, in wrestling outfits, in historical costume and sporting poses all to illustrate his point. But perhaps more importantly, Mr Gordon has also been a mentor to the new generations of journalists under his command over many years. Such is his generosity with passing on his particular brand of old-school journalism, I understand there is an army, a breed of Bobs now working in the media in one capacity or another throughout the country and, frankly, that is a sobering thought.

I am sure others will join with me this morning as I wish Bob, his wife, Maggie, and their three children the best for the future. I know I will have a chance to work with him again in his ongoing role as chairman of the Gold Coast bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Bob Gordon's last day at the bulletin's Molendinar office will be on 3 July. Although the 'Bully' will continue on its merry way, I know Bob will be sadly missed by many, me among them.

Gordon, Mr R; Swine Flu

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (9.41 am): I wish to associate myself with the comments of the Premier. Bob Gordon is an outstanding editor of a newspaper and the *Gold Coast Bulletin* is an outstanding newspaper. Many others only aspire to have its quality and its understanding of its market.

As I am sure members of the House would be aware, Queensland will join the Commonwealth and all the other states and territories in moving to a new phase in the fight against swine flu. From next Monday, Queensland will move to the protect phase of human swine influenza preparedness, focusing on protecting those most at risk from the disease. Importantly, however, our policy of school exclusions and school closures will remain in place until the end of term, which is next Friday. We know flu spreads faster among children, which is why we have isolated students and closed schools where necessary. Keeping those measures in place next week until the two-week school break starts provides an extra buffer for Queensland.

The decision to move to the protect phase means health authorities across the nation will focus efforts on those people who are most vulnerable, such as pregnant women, the Indigenous and those with respiratory illnesses or chronic disease. While this is still a new disease, the expert clinicians have advised the Commonwealth and the states that the virus will be mild for most people. However, there is still a significant number of people who have been identified at greatest risk of complications and our focus will be on them. Across Australia, health authorities will pull back on measures, such as border nurses, and focus on protecting those most at risk from the disease. This is particularly important as we get into our normal influenza season.

Our approach is consistent with the message from the World Health Organisation, when it lifted its pandemic alert to 6, that countries will need to adjust their responses to accommodate the knowledge we now have that this disease is mild in most cases, severe in some and moderate overall. In total, 23 school and child-care centre closures have occurred since the outbreak began. Flu clinics have been operating at Cairns, Gold Coast, Mackay, Maroochydore and Toowoomba. A flu clinic will open at Kingaroy Hospital today following cases at Kingaroy schools. Clinics were opened at Palm Island, Robina and Warwick but closed when demand declined and will reopen if required.

Our testing regime remains strong. Between 27 April and 16 June, Queensland Health tested 7,549 samples and our largest private pathology provider, Sullivan Nicolaides, tested 2,777 samples in the last week alone. In total, 194 Queenslanders have tested positive to human swine influenza, with 66 of those cases occurring in the past three days. Our testing has been strong right across the state. In Cairns, for example, our dedicated flu clinic there has seen almost 1,000 people and tested 200 of them, of whom 28 have tested positive.

All Queenslanders can do their bit by remembering the basics in following normal flu season hygiene procedures, such as regular handwashing, covering nose and mouth if sneezing or coughing, and staying home if they are sick. Queensland has sensible and appropriate measures in place and we will continue to update the public on the progress of the disease.

Watson, Mr DG

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.44 am): The state will today lodge an appeal against the sentence handed down in the case of David Gabriel Watson. I have noted the significant community interest in this case and for this reason I am outlining this decision to the House this morning.

Mr Watson was this month convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 4½ years imprisonment to be suspended after 12 months. I have formed the view that this sentence is manifestly inadequate and the state will therefore lodge an appeal against the sentence in the Queensland Court of Appeal.

The Queensland Solicitor-General, Mr Walter Sofronoff QC, will now be briefed to represent the state in this matter, which will be heard before the Court of Appeal on a date to be fixed. The authority of the state to appeal criminal sentences is a significant power. It is a power that should be exercised after careful consideration and due deliberation. As this case will now be before the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to make any further comment.

Bellos, Mr J; Racism

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (9.46 am): I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Sergeant Jim Bellos, who was recently announced 2009 Queenslanders of the Year for his commitment to multiculturalism. Sergeant Bellos, a police officer with the Metropolitan South region, has been recognised for establishing community consultative groups, multifaith dinners, information sessions and a multicultural sporting program for 6,000 youths. Jim's efforts go a long way to discouraging racism in the community through sport.

The Bligh government is committed to taking a stand against any form of racism in Queensland. Yesterday, I convened a ministerial round table with representatives from the Indian community to ensure that Indian students studying in Queensland do not experience alleged racially motivated incidents like those occurring in other states. As a result of this round table, Minister Wilson and I have convened a group to meet again in early July to work with the police and the Indian community. We will then report back to the round table in six months to reassure Indian families and students that Queensland is a safe and secure place to study. Yesterday, I also announced that a designated cultural liaison officer within Multicultural Affairs Queensland will work with the Indian community and students over the next six months to ensure ongoing relationships.

Next month, the Brisbane Roar will take on Scottish giants Glasgow Celtic in the annual Roars Against Racism match. The Queensland government first introduced Roars Against Racism three years ago to challenge racist attitudes, to stamp out racial intolerance and to reinforce that there is no room for racism in Queensland. I thank the Department of Communities, Stadiums Queensland and the Brisbane Roar Football Club for their joint efforts in raising the profile of racism through football. Celtic has been an active participant in the Show Racism the Red Card campaign in the United Kingdom for the past 13 years—a campaign that uses footballers to educate against racism. The football game has the ability to bridge racial and ethnic divides and I am pleased that our Brisbane Roar players are such ambassadors for multiculturalism. I am confident that the football match at Suncorp Stadium on 12 July will be a great game for football fans. I would like to say to members that there are still tickets on sale if they want to attend.

There is a serious message behind the game and that is that no form of racism will be tolerated. I would urge the community to get behind the campaign and support these two great football teams as they 'red card' racism and send positive messages to football players, to schoolchildren and to the wider community.

Gordon, Mr R; Gold Coast Tourism

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (9.48 am): I, too, would like to associate myself with the remarks of the Premier in relation to the Editor-in-Chief of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, Bob Gordon. We did not always see eye to eye on issues but we remain good friends. I wish Bob, Maggie and the children all the best in the next stage of Bob's life.

As a member from the Gold Coast and the tourism minister, I know the importance of major events like the Gold Coast marathon to tourism. Major events can be significant domestic and international tourism drivers. That is why the Bligh government has not backed away from its commitment to leverage investment in key tourism events.

Whilst the LNP promised at the last election to cut services, jobs and funding, the Bligh government committed to more tourism funding, more tourism infrastructure and more tourism job opportunities. Specifically, the Bligh government promised an additional \$2 million a year to leverage tourism opportunities from major events.

Despite a tough tourism market and a massive decline in international travel by the Asian market, Gold Coast Marathon numbers have stood strong. I am pleased to say that as of Sunday nearly 19,500 entries have been received, up 30 per cent from the same time last year.

Mr Reeves: You're one of those, aren't you?

Mr LAWLOR: Well, I will be walking; I will not be running, I can guarantee. Most importantly, we have received entries from 33 countries including new ones like Denmark, Hungary, Bermuda and Venezuela. Domestic entries are up 30 per cent from Queensland, 19 per cent from New South Wales and 37 per cent from Victoria.

Japan and New Zealand are still our two major international markets with some good growth from South-East Asia. Japan will have more than 1,200 runners, which is down from 1,882 in 2008. However, considering Japan is deep in recession and reducing travel due to swine flu it is not such a bad result. Additionally, there will be 323 runners from New Zealand, 27 from Taiwan, 57 from Singapore and 41 from Hong Kong—all on par with or up on last year. While team entries have closed, single registrations are open until the day before the event so we can expect these numbers to grow further over the coming weeks.

Many of the runners from overseas will also travel with friends, family and supporters so the total tourism benefit is expected to be significantly greater. Despite the global financial crisis, the Bligh government is keeping events like the Gold Coast Marathon going to ensure our tourism industry and those employed in it have a future.

Asbestos in Public Buildings, QBuild

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (9.51 am): For 15 years the Department of Public Works has been charged with the removal and management in situ of asbestos-containing material in government buildings. During this time more than \$130 million has been spent making schools, hospitals and office buildings safe for children, teachers, doctors and all government employees and visitors. However, recent events at Caningeraba State School brought the program sharply into focus and warranted my close attention.

I can advise that air monitoring testing conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff at the school on 5 and 9 June twice returned results that indicated normal ambient air levels. Nevertheless, I have requested the department of workplace health and safety to investigate all processes employed by QBuild during the removal of asbestos material from the school and report the findings to me. I am still waiting for evidence promised by Mr Simon Smith from 5 June and I will ensure any such evidence is delivered to Workplace Health and Safety.

I demand that QBuild maintains the highest possible standard in every instance where it is called upon to remove this deadly substance. The director-general of the Department of Public Works has reinforced this position to all employees. It is timely to remind the House of QBuild's procedures for removing asbestos. At all times QBuild is required to comply with statutory obligations. I am advised that the Built Environment Materials Information Register is checked for the presence of asbestos. Clients are to be advised of the procedures to be followed, including whether air monitoring will be required and all safety precautions necessary. A work method statement is then to be prepared which outlines a step-by-step process for the removal of the asbestos and specifies if personal protective equipment is required to undertake the removal process. I am further advised that an exclusion zone must be identified around the site and appropriate barricading and signage erected. The project should be undertaken out of hours, the site decontaminated and all materials securely wrapped. It is then removed in a vehicle registered to transport hazardous waste and disposed of appropriately at a registered waste facility.

I am informed that QBuild provides a program of asbestos management training for staff. In conjunction with air monitoring hygienist Parsons Brinckerhoff, QBuild developed a comprehensive training module specifically tailored to the tradespeople of QBuild. This practical asbestos training module is state-wide.

As someone whose family has been exposed to the insidious effects of asbestos and has been personally exposed to the material, I will not leave any stone unturned to get the message to the Department of Public Works to reinforce the message to its workers that the treatment of asbestos is to be observed according to the letter of the law so that there is no danger to themselves or anyone else. I will not settle for anything less.

China, Trade

Hon. S ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (9.54 am): Queensland enjoys an important and prosperous trading relationship with China. In the last five years alone, Queensland's merchandise exports to Greater China have grown from \$2.7 billion in 2003-04 to \$5.1 billion in 2007-08, an increase of some 88 per cent. Greater China is Queensland's second largest overseas destination of merchandise goods, with export sales worth 14.5 per cent of Queensland's total merchandise exports in 2007-08.

In light of the New South Wales government's recently announced state budget, which included new procurement rules where preference is given to New South Wales and Australian companies bidding to provide \$4 billion worth of goods and services, it is important to state that Queensland has no intention of following this path. Yesterday I met with the Chinese Consul-General, Mr Ren Gongping. It was an occasion to assure Mr Ren, indeed the government of China, that China remains a vital market for Queensland and we believe that protectionist policies such as these are not in Queensland's or China's interest and could potentially risk \$5.1 billion a year of merchandise exports for Queensland companies. Not only would the adoption of such policies risk our valuable trading relationship with China; it could affect our international reputation as an open, progressive free-trading state.

Let no-one be under any misapprehension that access to the Chinese domestic market means jobs for Queenslanders. Over the past decade, the maintenance and nurturing of free and open markets has brought significant benefits to Queensland's economy. The latest report from the Centre for International Economics concluded that more than one in five Australian jobs is in trade related activities. That represents roughly 450,000 Queenslanders who are employed as a result of our access to export and trade markets.

For example, Queensland companies currently export a range of products to the Chinese market, including mining equipment, technology and services, marine and aviation products, architecture and design services and biotechnology. We also export education and training services, tourism services, beauty and lifestyle products and services, creative industries, environmental management and urban planning products. Significant opportunities also exist in agribusiness and food, targeting China's massive consumer markets. These are industries that we cannot afford to have impacted by the adoption of inward-looking, populist, protectionist policies.

During these tough economic times, the Bligh government will not become inward looking but will continue to encourage our exporting companies to explore and build markets in China and in other parts of the world. That is where our future lies, where some of our best opportunities to maintain economic growth are and where wealth, prosperity and jobs will be found.

Skills Formation Strategy

Hon. GJ WILSON (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training) (9.57 am): The Bligh government is committed to protecting and creating Queensland jobs. We are working closely with local government and industry to ensure we maximise job opportunities during these tough economic times. That is why I am pleased that the Local Government Association of Queensland recently launched the Local Government skills formation strategy report that was developed with my department and other key stakeholders along with the Local Government Association of Queensland and local businesses. I am delighted that my department was actively involved in this very important project and I congratulate all of those involved, especially the LGAQ.

This document details the work we have been doing as part of the \$1 billion Queensland Skills Plan to identify areas of skills shortage throughout the state and find workable solutions. This work has been ongoing, but the report's release is timely as more and more Queenslanders seek to upgrade their skills or change career direction to maximise their employability. Councils throughout the state studied their workforce needs and found shortages over a range of areas, particularly town planning, building certification and environmental health. A series of projects are now underway to help provide short- and long-term solutions to the shortages.

Recognition of prior learning is being examined to fast-track the transition of, for example, builders to building surveyors, and the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE has agreed to deliver face-to-face training through the Diploma of Building Surveying. Further work is underway to help stem the tide of environmental health officers leaving the profession. As a result of the skills formation strategy, the plan is to have paraprofessionals in environmental health taking on more responsibility to free up officers at the professional level to deal with more complex matters. Councils are also being encouraged to 'grow their own' by actively promoting cadetship arrangements for environmental health officers. These skills formation strategies are part of the Bligh government's commitment to creating and supporting jobs in Queensland.

We are working with local government and industries to find out where vacancies exist and what training is needed to match people with jobs. Investing in Queenslanders and skilling them for the future is one of the ways we are creating and supporting jobs for the future. We will continue to provide training

and apprenticeship places so that Queensland has a skilled workforce, allowing us to take full advantage when economic conditions improve. These are not short-term solutions; these are strategies that look well beyond the horizon. They are a great example of how state and local governments are working closely with industry to get Queensland through these tough times and be well placed to boost economic growth, especially in regional Queensland, when conditions improve, as they undoubtedly will.

Bundaberg Ring Road; Road Projects

Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads) (10.00 am): Today is an exciting day for the Bundaberg community and the Bligh government. Stage 1 of the \$100 million Bundaberg Ring Road project is complete, and motorists in Bundaberg from today have a quicker way of driving from the south to the east of the city. The 7.4 kilometre section between Goodwood Road and Barga Road is now open to traffic. The Bundaberg Ring Road project has generated over 700 jobs throughout construction and is part of the Bligh government's commitment to preparing for growth in the region.

It is the biggest single road investment a state government has ever made in Bundaberg. By providing the infrastructure needed to enable heavy vehicles to bypass Bundaberg's central business district, local congestion and connectivity will improve, along with noise and air quality for the local community. Construction on the ring-road began in 2007 and the opening of stage 1 signifies the end is near. Motorists can look forward to driving the full length of the new road in the next few months.

There has been some cost increase since the project was originally announced from \$92 million to \$100 million. This is largely due to increased costs in land acquisition. Across the state there have been increases in land costs, and it is our policy to pay fair market value for land. I make no apology for paying mums and dads a fair price for their land, and if that means we have to pay more than that is fair. I believe the people of Bundaberg will agree with me that it is a small price to pay for a new ring-road that will ease congestion and make driving easier and safer.

This project is another example of the Bligh government delivering for Queenslanders, despite the global financial crisis. About 28,000 jobs have been sustained or created over the past year through our record levels of investment in road infrastructure. This government has continued to increase road funding each and every year. To put our level of expenditure in context, we invested about \$812 million in roads in 2004-05, while in 2008-09 our expenditure was \$3.2 billion. This equates to a 335 per cent increase in funding.

The government has further demonstrated its pledge to maintaining both employment and infrastructure delivery throughout the state, with more than \$10 billion in state and federal funding already committed to roads over the next four years through our Roads Implementation Program. This allocation will support the continued delivery of projects aimed at directly tackling the impact of urban growth. Projects such as the Bundaberg Ring Road are ensuring we are prepared for future population and traffic growth, and once again demonstrates our government's commitment to making sure we are meeting the social and economic development needs of our great state.

Blueprint for the Bush

Hon. TS MULHERIN (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland) (10.03 am): This government is committed to rural and regional Queensland, and I am pleased to announce that 48 organisations will share in more than \$1 million in the latest round of Blueprint for the Bush funding. This is allocated from the current budget. The Bligh government's Blueprint for the Bush Our Place, Our Future initiative gives a kick-start to a range of community projects. We all know how resourceful and hardworking bush communities are, and I am sure they will get real bang for their buck from this funding.

The money is going to practical projects designed to strengthen these communities and help attract and retain skilled workers. Some of the projects to be funded in round 4 of the Our Place, Our Future initiative include: \$116,000 to the Paroo Shire Council to implement a community brokerage service to develop and support business, training and employment opportunities in Cunnamulla; more than \$77,000 to the Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation to establish permaculture gardens within 16 rural school communities as part of the Community Garden Cooperative in Kingaroy; more than \$38,000 to the Rotary Club of Mirani to engage an event coordinator for the River Rock to Mountain Top Community Festival in 2010; \$24,300 to Gympie and District Community Centreplace to publish a comprehensive information services resource for families at Cooloola; \$19,900 to Mission Beach Artists Inc. to develop a community arts centre strategic planning program at Mission Beach; and \$7,000 to the Southern Downs Regional Council to attend the 2009 Country and Regional Living Expo in Brisbane, which will be an opportunity for the council to attract skilled workers and families interested in a lifestyle change.

A major goal of Blueprint for the Bush is for rural and regional communities to be viable and strong. The Bligh government will continue to support the development of practical solutions for rural and regional Queensland aimed at protecting jobs and developing industry. Currently there are more than 150 Blueprint for the Bush initiatives across the state. They are an investment in the future of rural and regional Queensland.

Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements

Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.05 am): These are tough economic times, and the Bligh government is charting the responsible course forward. The global economic slowdown is being felt by all levels of government but also by businesses and every Queensland family, coming on top of a tumultuous year for this state. I say that because in the past year we have been hit by some of the most severe storms in recorded history. They hit communities far and wide, from Brisbane to Birdsville, Cooktown to Coolangatta, and many in between.

The Bligh government recognises the heavy burden these disasters place on local communities, which is why we work in partnership with the Rudd government and local councils to support the long and daunting recovery and rebuilding process. The jointly funded Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements program is the critical backbone. Today I can announce more than \$11.5 million in funding to help offset the costs of emergency works and post-disaster repairs. This funding comprises \$878,000 for Moreton Bay Regional Council; \$14,700 for Roma Regional Council; \$634,000 for Cairns Regional Council; \$3.74 million for Brisbane City Council; \$179,000 for Central Highlands Regional Council; \$200,000 for Diamantina Shire Council; \$1.2 million for Gladstone Regional Council; \$2.09 million for Somerset Regional Council; \$68,000 for Mackay Regional Council; \$1.57 million for Whitsunday Regional Council; and more than \$919,000 to repair local road networks in Wujal Wujal and Mapoon Aboriginal shire councils.

This funding is helping communities devastated by extensive flash flooding, monsoonal rains and severe storms. It helps meet costs for repairs to damaged roads, bridges, parklands and other public amenities.

In this financial year alone, the Queensland government, in partnership with the federal government, has distributed more than \$144 million in natural disaster funds to councils across Queensland. Since 2004 over half a billion has been provided to help communities cope with the cost of repairs and clean-up work caused by natural disasters. These are tough economic times, but councils can be assured the Bligh government will continue to meet its responsibilities and help Queenslanders get back on their feet in the aftermath of natural disasters.

South East Queensland Regional Plan

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.08 am): I would like to thank the many South-East Queensland residents who have made the effort to provide submissions on the draft SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031. The draft regional plan was released for public consultation on 7 December 2008, as many members would be aware. This was the first review of the plan since 2005. I am happy to report that more than 3,400 submissions were received. In fact, I extended the original consultation period by one month to 1 May 2009 following requests from local government and the community.

Of the submissions received, over 82 per cent were from private individuals and a further 14 per cent were from community and business organisations. It is very pleasing to see this level of community interest in planning for the future of the South-East Queensland region. We are now hard at work analysing these submissions and developing the final plan which will shape South-East Queensland over the next 20 years and preserve our enviable way of life.

I want to thank the Chairman of the Council of Mayors SEQ, Lord Mayor Campbell Newman, for his strong support of the fundamentals of this plan. I look forward to working with him on the final plan to reflect the feedback from the 12 councils across the region. I have also had a number of further meetings with a range of councillors from across the region on the basis of their submissions.

The draft plan locks 84 per cent of the south-east away from urban development and protects our vital green space. The focus on growth remains the western corridor, where the population will expand twice as fast as in Brisbane and the coastal areas. But, as the Lord Mayor has highlighted, without question we will see higher density living in the right places across the region unless we choose to start eating into our green space instead of protecting it. Let me make it clear: we will not allow wall-to-wall skyscrapers across the region despite what some developers might like.

This is all about giving people a choice: there will always be room for a home on a good-sized block with a traditional backyard, just as other people will opt for the convenience of living in higher density areas which are well serviced by infrastructure. Councils will play a vital role as the local planning authority to shape their region to best service their communities within the overarching guide of this regional plan. I will pay close attention to their feedback before releasing the final plan in the coming months.

Noosa River Marine Zone

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.11 am): The Bligh government's Q2 targets for a green and fair Queensland are very clear: we want to protect our lifestyle and environment and we want to support a safe and caring community. I am pleased to inform the House that the Bligh government and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council are working together to better manage maritime activities on the environmentally sensitive Noosa River.

The Noosa River Marine Zone will be introduced from 1 July 2009 to better regulate specific vessel activities to help protect this sensitive area and make sure it can continue to be enjoyed by the whole community. This new marine zone will control personal watercraft freestyling, surfing and wave jumping, the use of hovercraft and the take-off and landing of aircraft. Waterskiing will also be limited to designated areas of the river between 8 am and 5 pm. Personal watercraft can continue to be operated in transit in the lower reaches of the Noosa River, downstream of Noosa Waters to the river mouth. There will also be an exemption for the operation of commercial personal watercraft in the gazetted Noosa River commercial personal watercraft area.

We will work with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to implement this new marine zone, educate the community about the changes and ensure it is managed and enforced appropriately. The river will remain accessible for a variety of recreational activities but the new regulations will ensure it is user-friendly for everyone. The legislation to establish the Noosa River Marine Zone came into effect in May this year and allows a three-month transitional period to inform the community and users of the Noosa River of the changes.

This new marine zone is about balancing the needs of maritime users with local community concerns about the natural environment of the Noosa River. The implementation of the Noosa River Marine Zone is a great example of how the Bligh government and local governments are working together to address the management of our waterways at a local level.

Conservation Agreements

Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (10.13 am): The Bligh government has made a commitment to deliver 20 million hectares of protected area across Queensland by 2020. It is about protecting our abundant natural heritage, our unique ecosystems and the vulnerable native wildlife which depends on them. I am happy to announce that we have secured more land to reach this target. The Bligh government has already made significant increases to our national park estate, which now stands at nearly eight million hectares. Today I advise that I have signed off on 31 new conservation agreements with graziers and landholders under the Nature Refuge Program, bringing Queensland's total number of refuges to 338. These agreements are a significant part of our protection measures. They join the dots between our national parks, they provide wildlife corridors and they help give our native species a vital lifeline to combat the effects of climate change.

The latest agreements cover 20,000 new hectares and protect a number of vulnerable and endangered species, including the Fleay's barred frog, the glossy black cockatoo and the Albert's lyrebird. Nature refuges now cover more than three-quarters of a million hectares of Queensland and form a significant part of our protected area estate. They include a nationally important wetland and springs in the Great Artesian Basin, Australia's great hidden resource which extends across much of eastern Australia. They include important corridors such as the Barrine Park Nature Refuge, which connects the Atherton Tablelands' iconic Lake Barrine rainforest to the expansive World Heritage area to the east.

The nature refuge's owner, Philip and Carolyn Emms, have planted around 10,000 trees in the corridor and aim to fully restore this area over time. I congratulate the Emms, graziers and all other landholders who have made a contribution to these 31 new nature refuges. I would also like to acknowledge the natural resource management groups across the state and AgForce, who have worked with us to make this strategy such a success.

Cyclone Ellie, Recovery Assistance

Hon. PG REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (10.15 am): As members would no doubt recall, Cyclone Ellie wreaked havoc across large parts of North Queensland in January and February this year. There was widespread damage to residential and community infrastructure, but sporting and recreation clubs across the region were also hit hard. We immediately activated the Bligh government's Sport and Recreation Disaster Assistance Program to help these clubs get back on their feet as quickly as possible.

Today I am pleased to announce that the Queensland government has provided more than \$1 million to 69 organisations under round 2 of the program. Despite these tough economic times, the Bligh government continues to provide vital funding to initiatives like this. Under the program, clubs were eligible to apply for grants of up to \$5,000 to repair damaged sporting equipment or for replacement of operational items, such as sport and recreation equipment, whitegoods and canteen items. Up to \$20,000 was available to repair damaged sporting infrastructure.

These are some of the projects being funded through this program. In the electorate of Mount Isa, \$20,000 is going to the Normanton Bowls Club to repair the base and replace the existing synthetic surface of the lawn bowls green. In the electorate of Cairns, \$25,000 will be provided to the North Cairns Australian Football and Sporting Club to replace damaged whitegoods, install subsurface drainage and refertilise and top-dress the playing surface of the oval. In one of the hardest hit areas, in the electorate of Hinchinbrook, \$25,000 will be provided to Ingham's mighty Brothers Sports and Community Club to repair two multisport fields and replace their tractor mower.

The funding is being provided upfront to clubs so work can begin immediately on restoration efforts. Helping clubs get back on their feet will help encourage people of all ages and abilities to become involved in sport and recreation. As part of our commitment to Toward Q2, we want to make Queenslanders Australia's healthiest people, and this program will help us achieve this goal at the grassroots level.

Despite the global financial crisis, the Bligh government remains committed to supporting our grassroots community organisations. Those opposite would have needed to slash programs such as this one in order to meet their so-called three per cent efficiency dividend.

Community Service Workers

Hon. KL STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (10.17 am): In recent weeks, we have come together to celebrate our volunteers, domestic violence prevention and Queensland Day, and on Monday it was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. At the front line of all of these events and issues are our community service workers. They look after Queenslanders, who will always have a lifeline as long as Labor leads this state. Even in the face of the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression, Labor will never turn its back on the battlers. We will continue to maintain funding for vital community service providers so that they can continue to reach out to people in need, and in these tough and challenging economic times their need is even greater than ever before.

I am sure all members would join me in commending the great work that community service providers do. Tough times have called for tough measures, but when it comes to women and children escaping domestic violence, old people, young people, homeless people—indeed our most vulnerable people—some things are simply not negotiable. That is why we will continue to maintain our support for these vital organisations.

Last year we funded 1,340 services right across the state. I am talking about Mission Australia, Anglicare, Volunteering Queensland, domestic violence centres, older men's groups, neighbourhood and community centres, youth justice services, community legal services, safe havens in Indigenous communities and many more. Many non-government organisations simply would not survive without government funding.

There has been a 40 per cent growth in funding to community services over the last four years. We are hard at work right now looking at innovative ways to deliver even better services. Among other things, we want to cut through red tape, streamline funding agreements and free up resources so that we can focus our energy on what works best: early intervention and prevention activities.

Home Warranty Insurance

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (10.19 am): The Building Services Authority home warranty insurance scheme is leading the charge of protecting consumers and contractors during these challenging times. The BSA so far this financial year has received 5,135 complaints from consumers regarding defective and non-compliant building work. The BSA receives on average 5,500 complaints annually. Of these complaints, 1,230 requests to rectify have been put to contractors and 730 formal directions to rectify have been issued.

However, when things do not go right consumers are thankful that here in Queensland we run the best home warranty insurance scheme in the country—something which was saved from the opposition's plans for privatisation by the now Leader of the Opposition. The Queensland scheme is truly unique. It is the only home warranty insurance product that offers first resort insurance. Homeowners are able to claim for non-completed work or defective work without the builder having to be insolvent. In every other state, consumers must fend for themselves in the private arena as claims are only accepted as a last resort where the contractor is either dead, has disappeared or is insolvent.

To date this financial year the BSA has paid out \$27.8 million under the scheme, and this includes \$11.7 million in non-completion claims, \$8 million in defective work and \$8.1 million in subsidence claims. From 1 July, the Queensland Home Warranty Insurance Scheme will provide additional cover when a homeowner has lawfully terminated a contract for residential construction work following default by the building contractor and suffers loss as a result of the work being damaged or destroyed because of fire, storm, forcible removal or vandalism. I thank the member for Mermaid Beach for his input into that.

The Queensland building industry regulator is no toothless tiger. This financial year the BSA has excluded 35 individuals for life, plus 82 individuals and 61 companies for five years for financial mismanagement. Nowhere else in the world, as far as I am aware, could any government claim to have done that. The BSA has also banned one individual this financial year for tier 1 grossly defective building work which could lead to death or serious injury.

These results show the BSA is working hard to achieve positive results in the building industry, ensuring \$12.5 billion worth of work under the home warranty scheme each year. There is no other state in Australia where the insurance scheme is working so well for consumers and contractors, and that is why the Queensland system is the envy of every other state in Australia.

Aurukun; Reclaiming the Night

Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.22 am): In the face of the global financial crisis, the Bligh government will continue to work across all levels of government with communities and individuals to close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. We are actively supporting initiatives in many communities in the areas of health, education and employment generation as well as building family and community capacity to make a difference in the long term. As well as the \$100 million Cape York welfare reform trial, we are delivering \$66 million in alcohol reforms including investments in prevention, alcohol diversion and other initiatives geared up to keep kids away from booze and out of trouble.

Is this necessary? Well, you bet it is. In some communities young people—mostly young fellows—are out and about in the evenings drinking, hooning and causing trouble. Very many of their parents who are older adults have in the past stayed late drinking at the canteen and elsewhere. In the meantime the grandmothers and the 'grey grandmothers', as they are called, have been left in charge of the children. What is more, good people in the community have been scared to go out after dark, scared to walk their own streets to go to a park to enjoy the cooler hours of the evening with their families.

As a former women's minister and now the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships minister, I am very pleased to report that the community of Aurukun is taking a stand. Next week, on 23 June, Aurukun is planning a special series of events to highlight that families, especially women and children, can reclaim the night. Since the introduction of alcohol restrictions in Aurukun in December 2002, residents have been working with the Queensland government to reduce the level of harm. The closure of Aurukun's Three Rivers Tavern in late November 2008 was a turning point. The community is starting to see evidence of increasing school attendance and greater involvement of family members in their children's schooling. Significantly, local residents can look forward to enjoying their community in the evenings when the temperatures are cooler. They can feel safe from alcohol fuelled violence on the streets.

Aurukun's Celebrating the Night activities include a community barbecue at Bicentennial Park, a touch football competition with police and a fishing competition to coincide with the Barra Festival. I congratulate the residents of Aurukun and hope that Celebrating the Night will begin a new chapter for the good people of Aurukun.

Fire Ants

Hon. TS MULHERIN (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland) (10.25 am): Despite these tough economic times, we have not relented in the fight against fire ants. In fact, Biosecurity Queensland is making major inroads. We believe we have eradicated this serious pest in the port of Brisbane and Gladstone. Monitoring at these locations will still be required for some time, but it is looking good. This is very much due to the efforts of the community and Biosecurity Queensland.

Our scientists have been using genetic analysis to learn more about these dangerous insects. By analysing fire ant DNA, we are developing a genetic map of all known infestations which shows if nests are related. This mapping shows three distinct genetic groups representing three separate introductions into Queensland and Gladstone, the Port of Brisbane and the greater Brisbane area. We can see how different colonies are genetically connected and track the precise spread of fire ants from point A to point B. This is useful in taking steps to prevent such movements and confirming how effective our control methods have been.

We have found and exterminated most infestations which is limiting their physical spread and their genetic diversity. In fact, fire ants in southern Queensland are stuck in what is known as a genetic bottleneck. Armed with this knowledge, Biosecurity Queensland is confident it can eventually eradicate fire ants, but we cannot be complacent. If fire ants take hold here, they will undoubtedly spread throughout Australia, so complete eradication is in the interests of all states not just Queensland. Therefore, we will continue to talk to the Commonwealth and other states about their financial contribution to the fight.

PIMIC agreed to contribute up to \$13.6 million subject to agreement from the respective treasuries. We will also be developing remote sensing technology to detect nests in the more difficult semirural areas. In the meantime, the genetic techniques we have developed can now be applied to a range of pests and diseases. We will apply the same processes to electric ants, Asian honey bees, yellow crazy ants and red-eared slider turtles.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.28 am): I advise honourable members that the House can continue to meet past 6.30 pm this day. The House can break for dinner at 6.30 pm and resume its sitting at 7.30 pm. The order of business shall then be government business followed by a 30-minute adjournment debate.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER FOR POLICE, CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Ms SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.29 am): I also advise the House that the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services will be absent from parliament today and tomorrow. He is attending a ministerial council in Perth.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, throughout the day the following schools will be visiting Parliament House: the Woodridge State School in the electorate of Woodridge, the Suncoast Christian College in the electorate of Nicklin and the Nanango State High School in the electorate of Nanango.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Unemployment

Mr LANGBROEK (10.29 am): My question without notice is to the Premier. Given Queensland unemployment was at 110,600 when the Premier made her phoney jobs promise, will the Premier confirm that unemployment reducing to 10,600 would fulfil her 100,000 new full-time jobs guarantee?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question. I thank him for the opportunity to talk again in this House about my commitment to job creation here in Queensland. I think our economic strategy is very clear. It is No. 1, No. 2, No. 3—create, protect and secure Queensland jobs. Yes, I made a commitment to the people of Queensland that I would set a target if I were elected. That target would be to create 100,000 jobs.

I do not resilé one inch from that commitment just because the going gets tough. Is it tough? Yes, it is. That is exactly why you need to have a target. That is exactly why you set yourself a goal and then you work every single day to reach that goal. What are we doing to reach that goal? We have a record Capital Works Program. We will have an opportunity today to find out whether those in the opposition will commit to that record Capital Works Program. If they do not commit to it, they have an obligation to list every project that they would cut. If they will not commit to the borrowing program, they need to tell people what they will not be building because every one of those projects is creating jobs.

Secondly, we will invest in apprenticeships and trades. We will not only require them on government building sites; we will also provide a rebate to employers to support them and put a record investment into new trades and apprenticeships that are delivering. Thirdly, we will be building, facilitating and bringing new industry and new opportunities here—whether it is in the film industry, like the announcement yesterday in relation to *Narnia*, or whether it is the liquefied natural gas industry or the renewable energy industry, as outlined by the Treasurer earlier this week. Fourthly, we will be putting in place new job creation programs like the Green Army. We will be putting scores of young people who would otherwise be without a job to work building infrastructure in our national parks and recreational areas.

They are the four planks of our jobs strategy. We are committed to it. We are delivering on it. I look forward to hearing this afternoon what the jobs target is of those opposite. If you do not believe 100,000 jobs should be delivered in Queensland, what is your target? What is your goal? What do you want to create for the people of Queensland? I unashamedly seek to create 100,000 jobs. What is your target? What do you stand for? What jobs do you want to create for Queenslanders?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, I would remind ministers to direct their comments through the chair. Can I acknowledge in the public gallery today a former Deputy Premier, the Hon. Jim Elder.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! It is disorderly to refer to people in the public gallery.

Jobs

Mr LANGBROEK: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. Can the Premier reconcile her phoney '100,000 breadwinners for 100,000 families' promise with her comments on radio yesterday that it does not matter whether they are full time or part time? What is the Premier's definition of 'breadwinner'?

Ms BLIGH: All around the developed world economies are facing the toughest of circumstances. It is tougher across the world than it has been for three-quarters of a century. What happened three-quarters of a century ago? Three-quarters of a century ago major economies, including Australia, the United States and Europe, suffered a global depression. What was the lasting hallmark of that depression? The worst unemployment the world had ever seen.

There are people still alive today who will tell you painful horror stories of what it meant for families in this country when unemployment got to unsustainably high levels. These are the stories that are captured in the folklore of our country. They are captured in the songs, poems and myths that make this country what it is.

We should never forget the lessons of the 1930s. What are those lessons? The biggest lesson of all is that governments should never take a step back when the economy starts to downturn. As the economy collapses, as the private sector meets the point where it cannot sustain investment—as we see now—when the private sector is unable to grow, unable to invest, that is when governments are needed more than ever. That is the lesson of the beginning of the last century. This government is not about to repeat the mistakes of governments in the 1930s.

What we are doing is investing in jobs. What we are doing is setting ourselves a jobs target of 100,000 jobs. Job creation is in the DNA of the Australian Labor Party. There are 127,000 jobs in our building program.

I note the continual derision by those opposite of part-time jobs. There are thousands of women across this country who care for young children who do not want or seek a full-time job but the money they contribute to the household is every bit as important as that of the male breadwinner. I do not for one minute deny those women a job or those families the opportunity to earn money.

I look forward this afternoon to hearing what the jobs target is of the Queensland opposition. When it comes to a jobs program and a jobs target, where will the Liberal National Party be? Will it support the infrastructure program and the borrowings that support it? Will it support the debt or will it support the asset sales? We are committed to jobs. We stand for jobs. We will create jobs. We will protect jobs.

(Time expired)

LNG Project, Jobs

Mrs KIERNAN: My question is to the Premier. One of the four planks in the government's jobs plan for Queensland is developing new industries. Can the Premier update the House on the developments this morning in the LNG industry?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for her question. She is someone who fully understands what opportunities can be created when we exploit our natural resources. As I have outlined already this morning, courtesy of the Leader of the Opposition, we have a jobs strategy that is based on four planks. One of those is to actively support, facilitate and accelerate the development of new industries like the liquefied natural gas industry. We are working with a number of proponents, all of whom are working to create whole new industries here in Queensland.

I am pleased to advise the House that just a little time ago Santos and its Malaysian joint venture partners Petronas announced a binding sales contract for Queensland liquefied natural gas. Today's announcement is the largest ever bilateral trade deal between Australia and Malaysia. The announcement is a significant step in the development of a project that will inject up to 6,000 jobs into regional Queensland between Central Queensland—around the Gladstone area—and the south-west area of our state. They will begin those jobs as early as 2011, a time when we will see unemployment at its worst. This is a significant international vote of confidence in the development of this industry here in Queensland.

These are the sorts of industries that this government will continue to work with. We will bring them forward wherever we reasonably can. We will do everything in our power to bring these jobs to Queensland.

Those on the other side do not believe that you can do things. They do not believe that governments should act. They do not believe that governments should step in and work with companies like this to deliver jobs when we need them most. Despite the global recession, I am very proud to say that of all the parts of Australia that you would want to be when you are surviving an economic recession, Queensland is the place that you would want to be.

This is how you meet a 100,000 jobs target. You do it job by job, company by company, industry by industry, town by town, region by region. There are 6,000 jobs in this one contract. That is what job creation is. That is what securing jobs means. That is what delivering for families who would otherwise be unemployed means. We will do it every day, every week, every month between now and the next election.

This is a tough time in the economy, but today's announcement shows that there is light at the end of the tunnel and we are going to do everything in our power to bring these projects to reality.

Department Merger, Jobs

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport. Has the minister been informed by her cabinet colleagues of how many jobs will be lost as a result of the merging of the department of transport with the department of main roads?

Ms NOLAN: The merging of the departments of transport and main roads will lead to better services for Queenslanders. That is the point of this exercise. This is not an exercise that is about cutting jobs. It is an exercise that is about improving coordination across government. It is an exercise about delivering better services for Queenslanders. There was only one party that went to the last election with a very clear proposal to cut jobs across the Queensland public sector. It was not this party; it was not the party that won. There was one party that went to this election with a proposal to cut jobs, and a three per cent cut in the department of transport would have meant 250 job cuts out of transport. It would have meant three per cent fewer call centre staff when you ring up with a query about your licence. It would have meant three per cent fewer lollipop ladies who keep our kids safe as they walk to school. It would have meant three per cent fewer bus drivers driving three per cent fewer buses. It would have meant three per cent fewer passenger train services in the morning. Job cuts of three per cent would have meant across-the-board cuts to Queenslanders.

There was one party that went to the most recent election with a clear-cut proposal to cut jobs in the public sector, and I can tell you that it was not us, because a three per cent cut in the department of transport would have meant 250 jobs and it would have meant a significant decline in services for Queenslanders. That is not our proposal. It was the proposal of the old National Party, and it was a proposal that the people of Queensland quite rightly rejected.

Construction Industry

Mr WENDT: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. The monthly building approvals across Queensland for April signal a welcome pattern. Can the Premier outline what this means for the construction industry?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question. As I outlined this morning, in a time when we are seeing a lot of gloom and doom in the world economy and the economic news is often very negative, it is pleasing to see some activity starting to return, particularly in the very hard-hit construction sector. As I outlined this morning, there has been a two per cent increase in dwelling approvals in April. What this means in absolute terms in Queensland is 2,034 dwellings—more than 2,000 dwellings approved in the month of April. That is 2,000 dwellings on which we will see tradespeople employed, on which we will see apprentices trained and on which we will see jobs being created. Why is that happening? There are a number of factors, but without a doubt our decision in last year's budget to abolish stamp duty for new homebuyers under \$500,000—the only state in Australia to do so—is having an effect in that important part of the market, complemented by the federal government's stimulus activities.

It is worth commenting on another pattern. The pattern has a name. It is called the Yelarbon barn dance and it is a progressive barn dance and it has a very clear pattern. First you lose an election. And then for the good of the party you put aside ambition. Then you turn and you head back to the farm. There you sulk under the tank stand for a while and then it is time to dance alone—dance alone and reflect while the ambition eats away. But then the dance really begins. The dance begins as the plot is hatched. And don't be under any illusions: how does the plot start? Well, you start to see a lot of press releases and the whirring of the fax machine is the background music to the barn dance. Then you start to host and attend a number of dinners like the one we saw here in the Strangers Dining Room last night that was like a virtual role call of the old Nats. Everybody except the member for Surfers Paradise was there. Then you roll out the soft profile piece—a little life down on the farm—

Mr RICKUSS: Mr Speaker—

Mr HORAN: Mr Speaker—

Ms BLIGH: Oh, they were not there, Mr Speaker! They were not there either!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Stop the clock. I saw the member for Lockyer first. Did you have a point of order?

Mr HORAN: I have a point of order; thank you, Mr Speaker.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: On a point of order.

Mr HORAN: Mr Speaker, there is a wonderful parliamentary secretary on level 10 who is retiring in a few weeks time—

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr HORAN:—who has given decades of service.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry.

Mr HORAN: That was the point of the dinner—to say thankyou and to give her a gift—

Mr SPEAKER: You can do that under a—

Mr HORAN:—from all those who worked on the floor.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Horan: A wonderful servant.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Hobbs: Apologise! Tell the truth for once! Apologise! Go on!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Hobbs: Apologise! That's a lie! Apologise!

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Hobbs: Apologise!

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego, I was on my feet. I call the Premier. Resume the clock.

Ms BLIGH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. And the next thing we will see is the soft profile piece—the Akubra and then there will be the shuffle down to the shed to check out the Christmas turkeys. The knives will sharpen. As the member for Toowoomba South and the member for Callide know, it is not sharpening for the turkeys; it is sharpening for the traditional January coup. But this year I think we are heading for Christmas in July! I think he is down in the shed checking out the knives, working up the steel. It will be Christmas in July for the Yelarbon barn dance this year!

Mr SPEAKER: The House will come to order.

Tilt Train Accident, Report

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Minister for Transport with regard to the report into November's tilt train accident due to be finalised by 31 March this year. In light of the debacle and uncertainty surrounding the recent suspension in tilt train services, will the minister release the report?

Ms NOLAN: The shadow minister should pay more attention in that the director-general of my department in his capacity as the rail safety regulator made a clear and unequivocal statement earlier in the year with regard to this report into the tragic accident in late November in which two tilt train drivers were killed when a truck crossed at a level crossing, and that was that the independent investigation being conducted by the ATSB was ongoing and would be released later in the year. Our priority here is safety, as it should be. The way that safety is ensured is by allowing this investigation to continue professionally and independently without some kind of old National Party style political interference.

It is absolutely my position that this investigation will continue without some kind of political interference. That is how it should be. This is a very serious matter. A truck crossed into the path of a tilt train and two Queensland Rail drivers were tragically killed. This is a very serious matter. It is absolutely appropriate that the investigation should continue in a way that allows everybody to provide their information fully and openly without some kind of interference from me or indeed from anyone else. That is what I have ensured will take place. The public record is up to date in that, as I said, my director-general in his independent capacity as the rail safety regulator made a public statement—which I would have expected the member for Maroochydore to have read, frankly—that the results of this investigation would be released later in the year.

That is absolutely appropriate and that is absolutely proper. It is absolutely right and for quite a long time now it has been on the public record. My view is that that is absolutely as it should be and it is a position that I will continue to support.

Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation

Mrs ATTWOOD: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health. Could the Deputy Premier inform the House of the importance of funding alcohol and drug rehabilitation? Is the minister aware of any other approaches?

Mr LUCAS: I appreciate the honourable member's question. Drug and alcohol rehabilitation is an important issue in our community. I spoke yesterday about men's health. Of course, drug and alcohol rehabilitation is an issue for men and women in the community. That is why in 2008-09 Queensland Health provided \$15 million in funding to NGOs.

I would have thought that the opposition also supported the work of NGOs in that area. I was very surprised, because he is reportedly one of the bright shining lights of the LNP, to see the new member for Beaudesert stand up in parliament last sitting week and attack plans by the Salvation Army to relocate a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre to his electorate. What was the member's main reason for criticising that decision? Because there are five wineries and two pubs in the region at Mount Tamborine. I have to say that I have not noticed that people with drinking addictions duck down to a winery. This drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre is moving from suburban Gold Coast, where there are a lot more than wineries—a few odd nightclubs and hotels that can stay open all night. We need to be very serious about these issues. Do we prefer to have a US style society where there are people living on the streets and there is crime and social dislocation?

Recently, I received a letter from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—the former leader. He is taking the issue of funding for Mirikai on the Gold Coast quite seriously. He is advocating, as has the member for Burleigh, that the state government should look at its ability to provide some further funding for Mirikai. Remembering that Mirikai on a number of occasions has exceeded its budget and the state has bailed them out, we will look at that. The problem is that there is a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre on the Gold Coast. Their argument is like their argument in relation to the Gold Coast stadium. They say one thing in one place and say another thing elsewhere. They advocate for drug and alcohol rehabilitation in one place and then do not do that somewhere else.

But the Leader of the Opposition deserves a response. It is a very serious matter. I have his letter here. There is a very nice letterhead—shiny things—and then 'Lawrence Springborg, Deputy Leader of the Opposition'. So I have to respond to the correct place. I had a look at the email address to respond to and it was 'leader@opposition.qld.gov.au'. All I can say is that the opposition members are very much like *Hogan's Heroes*. Colonel Klink's name might be on the door, but we know who is really running the place.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 9 June 2009, from Mr Springborg MP to Hon. Paul Lucas relating to Mirikai drug rehabilitation centre [437].

Electricity Prices

Mr SEENEY: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade. I refer to a press release of 9 June concerning the government's latest electricity price rises, which modelled those electricity increases on a quarterly bill of \$350, when similar releases for similar power price rises last year used a quarterly bill of \$400. I ask: is the minister so out of touch that he thinks that Queenslanders' power bills have actually gone down in the last 12 months?

Mr ROBERTSON: If that is the best they can do, then they are a long way away from ever looking at coming over to this side of the House and running this state.

Mr Messenger: So are you.

Mr ROBERTSON: I can only let that one go through to the keeper to save any further embarrassment for whoever put forward that nonsense. The simple fact is that we have in Queensland now a transparent system of determining the true cost of energy—the true cost of delivering electricity to households and industry. That will ensure that Queensland does not go back to those days when we had an unreliable electricity supply and unacceptable levels of interruption. That is an important component of running a mature, stable economy.

Ms Bligh: But still among the cheapest in the country.

Mr ROBERTSON: Despite that, as the Premier duly reminds me, we still maintain some of the lowest rates of electricity in Australia, ensuring that Queensland remains a very competitive place in which to invest and do business despite the fact that we run one of the largest electricity networks in the world. That says a lot for how far we have come, particularly since I commissioned the Somerville report five or so years ago. That we can point to a significant investment in improving our electricity network and increasing rates of reliability and certainty sends a very powerful message to the business community to come and invest here in Queensland because, of course, one of the major inputs to any business is electricity.

Nobody likes seeing the increases in electricity rates that we have seen, but when we compare that with what we have seen in the policy that was announced by the opposition—that electricity prices should only increase by increases in the CPI—what would that mean? Mr Somerville did some further work for the Queensland government earlier this year. He found that if a CPI increase was the only thing to be applied to electricity prices in this state over the next three years, that would mean that there would be \$900 million less being invested in increasing the reliability of and expanding our electricity network in this state—\$900 million less.

That would mean that we would be back to the days of the National Party when they were last in office in the mid-nineties of blackouts and brownouts. The LNP has learned nothing in terms of the importance of a reliable electricity supply to this state. Reimposing a CPI-only increase to electricity prices will condemn Queensland back to the days of the mid-nineties when we saw blackout after blackout after blackout as a result of a lack of investment in our electricity network. I will not allow that to occur.

Green Army

Mr HOOLIHAN: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development. Could the Treasurer inform the House of progress in implementing the Queensland Green Army initiative?

Mr FRASER: I thank the member for Keppel for his question and for his interest in local projects that produce jobs in his community. This government took a clear plan to the electorate of protecting jobs and generating new jobs. A key element of that plan was the Green Army initiative: 3,000 places around the state of Queensland to provide opportunities for young people and the recently unemployed.

As I mentioned earlier in the week, 160 organisations have signed up. There is a lot of interest in this project. I can announce that a number of projects will be proceeding and getting on with the job, even before the 1 July commencement date that we have in place for the Green Army. Chief among those projects is a project for the Rockhampton Regional Council, which will see the Moore's Creek recreation area at Mount Archer upgraded. That is one of the first cabs off the rank. Also out towards Ipswich, the Rosewood Showgrounds will be upgraded in a project with the Ipswich City Council. We will also see two separate projects near Wyaralong and at Veresdale in Beaudesert. We will see important projects for regional ecosystems undertaken in that part of the world, with recently employed people working on those projects, getting a chance to be a part of working, gaining skills, gaining a connection, making sure that they build up those skills that will be so vital as we prepare for the future.

There is, of course, a key element in all of this and that is that a significant part of what we are doing is building brick by brick our commitment to job creation. Earlier the Leader of the Opposition derided that commitment to job creation. He has no job target of his own. It is clear that he has no policy of his own. In fact, if you go to the LNP website at the moment and you click on the section titled 'Positive solutions', remembering that the Leader of the Opposition says that it is not up to him to come up with any ideas, he has certainly declared that, because we find 'Error 404: Article not found'.

That is the extent of the positive solutions of the LNP. Perhaps he needs to consult with the heroes more about what he needs to do, because the issue about how jobs are classified has, in fact, been a matter of public debate in the past. In a parliament at another time and another place, say 1980, this matter was debated and there was an answer provided. The answer was—

On the issue of classification of work, the definitions used in the labour force survey conform closely to International Labour Organisation recommendations. The government does not, however, intend to instruct the statistician to depart from the internationally accepted definitions of 'employment' and 'unemployment'.

Ms Bligh: Who said that?

Mr FRASER: Who might have said that in 1980? John Howard.

Ms Bligh: Hero!

Mr FRASER: The hero has a view about this, so we can only ask that the Leader of the Opposition seeks some more positive feedback from all of his heroes.

Swine Flu

Mr McARDLE: My question is to the Minister for Health. Given there were 128 very sick patients queued in our emergency departments yesterday waiting for a bed, with both QEII and Redcliffe hospitals on bypass, how will our already overloaded hospitals cope with the huge number of patients expected when swine flu spreads further, particularly as doctors and nurses fall victim to it?

Mr LUCAS: I thank the honourable member for the question. His attempts yesterday to beat up in the media the issue that two hospitals were on bypass were not picked up. From time to time that does occur. This government has a record capital works building program in Queensland Health. This government will continue that program. It will be very interesting to see what the Leader of the Opposition says in his contribution in relation to capital works.

The nature of winter is that it always puts extra pressure on hospital emergency areas. Anyone who had read the pandemic plan would know what one does when faced with a pandemic. If one has the need to have a large number of hospitalisations then standard practice is that one has a look at elective surgery on those occasions to give priority to treating people as part of a pandemic. That is the case. That is how these things are done worldwide. Queensland Health is no different.

Our continued investment in providing more beds throughout Queensland has shown positive results already in terms of reduction of waiting lists and reduction of unacceptable waiting times in emergency departments. That is the nature of how we will proceed. One knows as well when one has a pandemic that flu clinics are not necessarily set up as part of emergency areas. In fact often they are not—for very good reasons. We have seen a number of clinics open and close as the case may be.

I have made it very clear that we expect, under this swine influenza pandemic—and the federal minister outlined some of the numbers yesterday—that we will have deaths in this country as a result of it. That is a very serious matter. We have deaths every year as a result of influenza in this country. It is a matter that needs to be taken seriously. The Queensland government has taken very strong steps in terms of schools, child-care facilities and the like to reduce the spread of swine influenza. It is now increasing at such a rate that the position has been taken at a Commonwealth level to go to the next phase, which is, of course, protect.

I say to the honourable member that inevitably winter puts extra pressure on hospitals and we will deal with that. A pandemic, particularly one of the nature of swine flu, which is novel, is something that is always difficult for a health system to deal with but health systems are designed to do that. Depending on the nature and severity, we will respond appropriately. The honourable member has shown no interest in swine flu or understanding the issues with respect to it. We will take appropriate, well-balanced action in relation to swine flu based on the best available evidence.

Department of Public Works, Capital Works

Ms van LITSENBURG: My question is for the Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology. Could the minister please advise what effects a shutdown of the Department of Public Works capital works expenditure would have on Queensland?

Mr SCHWARTEN: I thank the honourable member for her commitment to jobs for workers. She is an example of how our DNA is ingrained with workers. When one looks at those opposite, one knows what they are ingrained with. One just has to go back in history to 1929 when we were last faced with circumstances such as this. What did the Tories do? They cancelled all capital works programs. People were walking the streets in poverty looking for handouts. That is what is in their DNA. Do members want a more recent example? When the deputy leader was a minister in the Borbidge government—I note now he is in a job-sharing role with the leader; it is a unique job-sharing role because he wants to convert it to full time later this year at the expense of the Leader of the Opposition—it imposed a capital works freeze of \$500 million. Does it have form? Yes, it does.

Mr Robertson: Is it in their DNA?

Mr SCHWARTEN: My very jolly word. Let us pick my electorate, for example, and the Rockhampton Base Hospital—a capital works project that is much needed, much supported by the Minister for Health and much supported by the federal government as well. It involved \$150 million worth of work. How many jobs were handed out? There were 2,000 jobs handed out. Contrast that to when the member for Toowoomba—whatever part of Toowoomba it is that he represents—was the health minister. He took money out of Rockhampton. He took money out of the Capital Works Program. He put it into Toowoomba, but he took jobs out of Rockhampton. That is also in its DNA. Its DNA is to attack workers, to take jobs off workers whenever it can.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Listen to them squeal. You always know the dog that has been hit by the stone because it barks the loudest. The reality is that we have a capital works project fix for unemployment in this state to take us forward.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Muttering away like the ancient, demented relative yet again, squawking his irrelevance, the uninvited guest in the house, yelling and screaming and no-one taking any notice of him.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: And again apologising—not—for taking money away from Rockhampton. The reality is that we have a Capital Works Program in Queensland to support the 280,000 construction workers in this state and we are going to stick to it.

Mr FOLEY: I rise to a point of order. I could not hear a single thing being said. If everyone could take a cold shower that would be good.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Would you like to take the point of order again? I could not hear it for the noise.

Mr FOLEY: My point of order is that I just could not hear anything that was going on. I request that everyone take a chill pill so that we can actually hear the debate.

Mr SPEAKER: My sentiments exactly. That is why we will wait for order in the House before I call the member for Gregory.

Mr JOHNSON: Can you hear me now, Mr Speaker?

An opposition member: Turn your mic on.

Mr JOHNSON: Can you hear me now, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: The marvels of technology.

Mr Lucas: Put clutch in, turn ignition.

Mr Springborg: Go through red light.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think that is touche on both sides. Now we will call the member for Gregory.

Townsville Correctional Centre

Mr JOHNSON: My question is to the honourable the police minister. In his absence I will direct this question to the honourable the Premier. Can the Premier confirm that a Townsville correctional officer, who was found by police with 200 ecstasy and steroid tablets, was allowed to quietly resign by the centre's general manager to avoid any embarrassment to the department?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question. As the member is aware, the minister is attending a police ministers council in Perth representing the state and is not able to be here in question time. I do not think the member would reasonably expect me to have that level of detail, but I am happy to provide him with further details as soon as possible. If I can do so by the end of today, I will.

1 Million Women Campaign

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability. Households are responsible for significant amounts of greenhouse gas emissions. As women are traditionally the major decision makers in running a household, can the minister update the House on any initiatives that engage women to reduce Queensland's carbon footprint?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. As we have heard this morning, the Premier has announced that today we will be joining with some magnificent women from all across Australia in launching the Queensland chapter of the national 1 Million Women campaign. This was set up as a not-for-profit campaign to engage bold women from right across Australia who want to play their part in addressing the climate change challenge. Today I would like to encourage all women in the House to get involved in this campaign. What we are asking is for each of these one million women to cut their carbon emissions by one tonne.

An opposition member: What about the blokes?

Ms JONES: The reason why we are targeting women, for those opposite, is that 70 per cent of the decisions made in the home regarding purchasing are made by women. That is why we think it is really important that as women we come together and do that. Some of the things we are asking women to do is look at the way in which they buy groceries, to be smarter about their energy use et cetera.

An opposition member: That's sexist. What about men?

Ms JONES: I will take the interjections from the members opposite because once again they highlight the LNP's position when it comes to climate change. This week we have seen the White House release a report titled *Global climate change impacts in the United States*. For the benefit of members opposite because I am sure they have not read it, I will read what it says. The lead author of the report said—

It is clear that climate change is happening now. The observed climate change we report are not opinions to be debated. They are facts to be dealt with.

What did the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration say about this report? It said—

... this report demonstrates, provides the concrete scientific information, that says unequivocally that climate change is happening now.

Let us have a look at the position of the LNP. I happened to come across an email from the State Party Secretary of the LNP, Mary Carroll, encouraging party members—all the LNP members in Queensland—to attend a book launch about climate change. Who do you think this book was from? Was it Professor Ian Lowe, an esteemed person in this field? No. Let us have a guess who it was. I quote from her email—normally this would come from you, Mr Speaker—

For those of you who live in Brisbane, we highly recommend you attend the attached book launch ... Professor Ian Plimer's "Heaven + Earth: Global Warming: The Mission Science"—he puts forward a very strong alternate view regarding the 'populist' opinions about Global warming!

What did Professor Ian Lowe say about this wonderful book? He said—

This book will be applauded by those who are desperate to find some pseudo-scientific justification for their unthinking rejection of the reality of climate change, but it is not a serious contribution to the debate.

The LNP position says that the one million women who are getting involved in this campaign and the 53,000 Queensland homes that have signed up to the ClimateSmart Home Service—

(Time expired)

Teacher Accommodation

Dr FLEGG: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education and Training. With regard to teacher accommodation which does not meet workplace health and safety standards, will the minister table details of which teacher accommodation is still not complying with basic workplace health and safety standards?

Mr WILSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. This government stands shoulder to shoulder with anyone who wants to build jobs in Queensland. We build jobs in Queensland by expenditure on capital improvements to schools and by expenditure on maintenance not just of schools but also of teacher accommodation. We have record capital expenditure of \$532 million in 2008-09 and record expenditure of \$141 million on maintenance of school properties and of teacher accommodation. That includes addressing in a proper way all issues to do with workplace health and safety across schools and teacher accommodation. What would those opposite do with this capital expenditure on teacher housing and schools?

Ms Bligh: They'd cut it.

Mr WILSON: They would cut it because that is what their program is. The capital expenditure and the maintenance expenditure on teacher housing and on schools is part of the \$850 million State Schools of Tomorrow program, which creates 6,000 jobs in Queensland regional communities. That is what they would slash.

What is the contribution of the opposition to education policy, whether it be on teacher accommodation, on capital works in schools or education in Queensland? You would ask: where would you go to look for the opposition's policy on education? You might go to the LNP website. I know members were astounded when they heard what the Treasurer said a moment ago about trying to find a particular policy on the LNP website. I tried to do that too because I was very keen to know what the LNP's education policy is. I checked the website. What did it show? If you go to 'policy' on the front page, it shows up 'Error 404: Article not found.' There is no policy on education, no policy on training, no policy on accommodation for teachers, no policy on capital works for our education sector. The policy of the shadow minister for education and training is to raise a lot of furrphies in this House. When examined on a factual, objective and dispassionate basis, there is no basis to the allegation that he makes.

Home and Garden WaterWise Rebate Schemes

Mr WETTENHALL: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Can the minister please outline to the House the results of the government's Home and Garden WaterWise Rebate schemes?

Mr ROBERTSON: I thank the member for the question. Before I provide him with an answer, can I just say that in the almost 10 years I have been a minister in this government the one thing I have always learnt to do is that when a member of the opposition tries to quote me I always go back and check as to whether they got it right. This morning my shadow rose in this House and suggested that I put out a press release on 6 June saying that average electricity prices were \$350 per quarter. I actually have a copy of that press release. What I said was—

For consumers with an electricity bill of around \$350 a quarter, they will pay an additional \$55 on their bill, assuming the electricity use has remained the same.

I table that statement.

Tabled paper: Copy of media release, dated 9 June 2009, by Hon. Stephen Robertson relating to electricity price rises [\[438\]](#).

At no time did I say it was an average cost. You should either—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, direct your comments through the chair.

Mr ROBERTSON: The member should either question his advisers before he rises in this place to quote me or he should stand in this place and apologise for misleading this parliament.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Obviously I have struck a raw nerve with the minister. I, too, will table his press release.

Tabled paper: Copy of first page of a media release, dated 30 May 2008, by Hon. Geoff Wilson MP relating to electricity price rises and copy of media release, dated 9 June 2009, by Hon. Stephen Robertson relating to electricity price rises [\[439\]](#) [\[440\]](#).

It is actually dated Tuesday, 9 June 2009. For the enlightenment of the minister, the one that provides the most exact comparison is Friday, 30 May 2008—almost 12 months previously—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Callide, there is no point of order.

Mr ROBERTSON: He is caught out again.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable the minister.

Mr ROBERTSON: In answer to the member for Barron River, one of the successful programs that has been run by the Bligh government was in relation to providing subsidies for the installation of water tanks and other water-saving devices in households right throughout South-East Queensland. Not only did we embark on an ambitious plan back in 2006 to drought proof the south-east with a \$9 billion water grid; we also began to address the community's somewhat lax attitude to water usage.

From humble beginnings in June 2006, the Bligh government's Home and Garden WaterWise Rebate schemes rapidly became Australia's most successful schemes. More than \$320 million has been spent and distributed to Queensland households over the past three years. That is \$320 million worth of water-saving devices now being used in homes across Queensland. Around 257,000 rebates have been paid forward to assist Queenslanders in installing rainwater tanks. That means more than 234,000 applicants took advantage of the rebate for a four-star water-rated washing machine. In total, more than 568,000 rebate applications were processed. Even though the schemes ended in December last year, we are still processing the final 53,000 payments which will be completed by the end of this month.

The simple fact is this has been an enormously successful scheme—one of the most, if not the most, successful schemes in terms of water conservation in Australia. Despite the fact that rains have returned to South-East Queensland and our dams are back in a healthy condition, water consumption remains at very low levels. That, I suggest, speaks volumes for the behavioural and cultural change we have engendered amongst the population of Queensland in that Queenslanders truly value water.

(Time expired)

Hinterland Connect Bus Service

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Has the Minister for Transport's department finished its investigation into the operation of the Hinterland Connect bus service linking Nambour, Mapleton and Maleny, as I understand this current bus service is scheduled to expire at the end of this month?

Ms NOLAN: I am pleased to advise the member for Nicklin that this service will now be continued. That investigation has been completed and the state government, in conjunction with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, has agreed to extend the trial of the Hinterland Connect bus service for another 12-month period from 1 July this year. Funding for the service—

Mr Dickson: Who's paying?

Ms NOLAN: Who's paying? Funding for the service will be provided on a fifty-fifty basis by the state government, through TransLink, and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council at an estimated cost of \$90,000, not including its revenue. During this period, TransLink will continue to monitor the service's performance.

There are three very positive elements to this. The first, obviously—and the member for Nicklin is interested in this—is that the service will continue. During this time, we will try to increase patronage so that it can become a sustainable service in the longer term. The second real positive is that this is another example of the Bligh government rolling out first-class public transport to the people of Queensland.

Ms Bligh: Wherever they live.

Ms NOLAN: That is right. We invest about \$1.2 billion a year in public transport services around the south-east. We provide a first-class bus and rail service to people right around South-East Queensland. For instance, despite the fact that Queensland has the world's second fastest-growing urban rail network, with growth of seven per cent in the last year, we have managed to reduce congestion on TransLink trains by 10 per cent in the morning peak during the last year. So we are providing a first-class rail service that is getting less crowded in the face of increasing usage. We are fundamentally committed to public transport, unlike members opposite who are still weighing up the philosophical merits of it and indeed prefer to refer to it as middle-class welfare. That is the second element: it is another example of our fundamental commitment to public transport.

The third thing that I really welcome is the Sunshine Coast Regional Council's contribution to this service. The contribution from councils across the south-east is, frankly, mixed. The BCC puts in some money—some \$47 million—to Brisbane Transport buses, while every year we put in \$74 million. The Gold Coast makes some contribution. The Sunshine Coast has recently commenced a contribution, which is being borne out here. Ipswich is considering it, and the Moreton Bay Regional Council is also taking some steps in this direction. Councils should contribute to public transport for their constituents.

(Time expired)

Education

Ms O'NEILL: My question is for the Minister for Education and Training. Can the minister please outline for the House how the Bligh government has invested in education to cater for growth in Queensland schools?

Mr WILSON: Yes. As I was saying, in the year 2008-09, the Bligh government has invested a record amount in capital expenditure and a record amount in maintenance—\$532 million in capital expenditure and \$141 million in maintenance across the sector. That is record expenditure, building for capacity.

Not only have we done that, but we have built four new schools. This is dealing with the growth in population, particularly in the south-east corner. We have planned for an additional 270 teacher appointments. On top of that, we have appointed another 150 to deal with the exploding population increase, particularly here in the south-east corner. That is building for capacity because that is what we want to do to look after kids in schools here in Queensland.

I was speaking about matters raised by the shadow minister for education and training a moment ago, so this gives me the opportunity to address a number of other related matters. The shadow minister has made a number of claims that really at the end of the day are furrphies. One of the claims he made is that Queensland's schools are overcrowded. He identified what he thought was the most overcrowded school in Queensland, but the truth is that that school is actually under the targeted enrolment. There are 1,251 schools in Queensland. Of these, 26 have enrolments above the targeted enrolment. In more than half of those 26, the targeted enrolment is exceeded by fewer than 10 students, and all of those 26 schools have made arrangements to ensure that the children are properly accommodated through demountables and other arrangements. So that is furrphy No. 1.

The next furrphy was that there were asbestos problems at Macleay Island. When the independent experts investigated this, they said there was no problem with asbestos dust on schoolchildren at Macleay Island. The third furrphy involved the teachers strike, when the shadow minister said that we could not guarantee that schools would stay open. Again, he was wrong. Schools stayed open and we had adequate supervision for all the students there.

The shadow minister has claimed that we are ripping fees out of the Building the Education Revolution program. The truth is that all the money allocated to the schools is being spent at the schools. He has claimed that that money is being spent on workplace health and safety. Wrong. The state government continues to look after workplace health and safety. He has said that schools that are closing are getting funds out of BER. Wrong. The funds are allocated to amalgamated schools and new schools. He has also said that schools are being ripped off through the BER program. Wrong. The funding is tested against market rates. Instead of the shadow minister coming up with all of these furrphies time and time again, he should go to the opposition's website and fill in the blank page relating to its education and training policy.

(Time expired)

Kurilpa Bridge

Mr EMERSON: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. Will the minister guarantee that the North Quay entry to the Riverside Expressway will not be closed as a result of the Kurilpa Bridge debacle?

Mr SPEAKER: The Minister for Main Roads has two minutes.

Mr WALLACE: I am pleased to again speak on this point, as I did a number of times yesterday.

An opposition member: Give it another go.

Mr WALLACE: Listen to them yabbering, Mr Speaker. Obviously they do not respect this particular project, which is a great win for the people of Brisbane. This gives me a chance to clarify some of the misinformation that has been propagated about this particular issue.

A report prepared by the Department of Public Works has suggested that some measures may need to be taken to minimise the possibility of any freak accident involving an illegal incident and the Kurilpa Bridge, including possible closure of the North Quay access point to the expressway. No consideration is being given to closing the Ann Street on-ramp or access to the Riverside Expressway from Coronation Drive. The only closure that has been considered—and I stress again that no decision has been made—is closure of a single slip lane from North Quay. The access point from North Quay was opened in 1999 and was intended to be for a temporary period to cope with disruption to traffic flow caused by sewerage works being undertaken by the Brisbane City Council. However, it was kept open after the works finished and motorists have utilised it since. Consideration was already being given to a possible need to close the North Quay access point because of safety concerns about traffic merging at this point.

As I told the House yesterday, there have been 17 reported crashes in this area since 2001, with 14 having been rear-end collisions involving merging traffic. With regard to the Kurilpa Bridge, the chances of an overheight vehicle coming into contact with the bridge are very remote. The lowest clearance for vehicles passing under the Kurilpa Bridge is 5.51 metres, which is almost a metre higher than the 4.6 metres maximum vehicle height allowed on Queensland roads. But I make no apologies for standing up for the safety of motorists and people on our roads.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question; Townsville Correctional Centre

Hon. AM BLYTH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (11.29 am), by leave: In relation to a question asked by the member for Gregory, I am able to confirm that a correctional officer from Townsville Correctional Centre resigned after being found with drugs. This issue was not quietly swept under the carpet. In fact, the officer concerned has been charged with drug offences. I am advised that the officer will face court tomorrow on those charges. As the matter is before the court, it would be inappropriate to make further comment on that other than to say, again, that not only was the officer charged but also Queensland Corrective Services advised the Townsville media that the former officer had resigned after being charged—again, not swept under the carpet.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT (ASSET RESTRUCTURING AND DISPOSAL) BILL

FUEL SUBSIDY REPEAL AND REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill resumed from 16 June (see p. 919), Appropriation Bill resumed from 16 June (see p. 928), Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill resumed from 16 June (see p. 929) and Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 16 June (see p. 931), on motion of Mr Fraser—

That the bills be now read a second time.

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): Less than three months ago Queenslanders were told they could trust and count on this Premier. The only thing that Queensland can count on from this Labor government is a continuation of Labor's 11-year record of mismanagement, failure and neglect. The Premier and her Treasurer keep saying that this is a tough budget, and it certainly is a budget that is tough on all Queenslanders, who will be paying more every time they turn on a tap, flick on the lights, fill up their car or go to the supermarket. Queenslanders will be paying for Labor's debt for decades.

The days of Queensland being the low-tax lifestyle capital of Australia are now under serious threat by Labor. The 2009-10 budget represents the end of an era of prosperity, as Labor's mismanagement, failures and neglect come home to roost. The cuts, tax increases and fire sale of profitable public assets contained in this budget would not have been necessary if Labor had worked hard to reduce waste, improve efficiency and manage Queensland's assets properly.

This job-destroying budget is the result of every poor, short-sighted decision Labor has made over the last 11 years, and it is a burden that comes at a time when Queenslanders can least afford it. The Bligh government is asking Queenslanders to pick up the pieces and to make sacrifices where none should have been necessary but for this government's mismanagement and addiction to debt. Despite the Premier's and Treasurer's specious justifications for delivering debt and despair to Queensland families, this budget is not the by-product of the global financial crisis.

This budget sets out in tragic detail Queensland's economic decline under 11 years of Labor. The Bligh government will run deficits over the next four years of \$13.36 billion, with no plan to restore Queensland's AAA credit rating. The coming financial year's deficit of almost \$2 billion is more than double that of the New South Wales state budget. While Queensland was once the nation's economic powerhouse, today the Sunshine State is being eclipsed by a budget black hole that condemns Queensland to a decade of debt.

In the past 10 years, Queensland has had the best-performing economy in the country. The mining boom brought unprecedented economic stability, income and opportunities for business and families at a time when Queensland was receiving record GST revenue from the Commonwealth. Queensland was one of the greatest beneficiaries of the strong economic management of the former federal coalition government. Low interest rates, low unemployment and low inflation combined with a strong national economy and an extraordinary resources boom delivered unprecedented revenue to the state Treasury coffers.

The state's revenue base over the past decade has been extraordinarily strong. We have seen record GST payments and windfall revenue from the Commonwealth, substantial increases in specific-purpose payments from Canberra to fund schools, hospitals and aged-care services, record investment returns from the Queensland Investment Corporation exceeding forecasts by up to \$2 billion in 2005-06, record payroll taxes and mining royalties which more than doubled between 2007 and 2009, and record taxes derived from gambling. This was the biggest boom decade in Queensland's 150-year history. Times were never this good.

Queensland had a unique opportunity to use this boom and wealth to invest in our future. The government had the chance to boost Queensland's productive capacity, to drive economic growth well into the future and beyond the inevitable downturn. It had the chance to invest in hospitals and get really serious about tackling the problems in our health system. It had a chance to make our schools the best in Australia, but it did not because it lazily and foolishly thought the good economic times would last forever.

Instead of capitalising on our extraordinary wealth to sensibly build tomorrow's Queensland, there is nothing to show for a decade of boom other than a looming decade of debt and deficits—debt that every Queenslanders will be paying for every day through higher taxes, higher prices and a worsening quality of life. Where has all the money gone? That is the story this budget tells. This budget is a tale of a decade of squandered opportunity.

If we cannot trust them to manage things in the good times, are they up to the job of steering us through the tough times? Only the habitual deceit of Labor explains why Premier Bligh, her Treasurer and every Labor member were so silent before the last election about the massive financial problem they created. They were too weak, too dishonest and too afraid to tell Queenslanders about the mess they had made. That is why the Premier cunningly went to the polls six months early rather than delivering this budget and then going to the people of Queensland and letting them decide.

This incompetent Treasurer has dealt Queensland \$85.5 billion worth of debt, three-quarters of which was incurred before mid-2008—before the global financial crisis. So this debt is not because of the global financial crisis; it is because Labor lacked discipline and is heading in the wrong direction, deeper and deeper into a black hole of debt. It will cost Queensland taxpayers \$14 million a day every day to just pay the interest bill on this \$85.5 billion of debt. That is \$14 million a day. Put into context, Queensland's \$85.5 billion of debt represents 40 per cent of the total debt of all the states. That is the Labor way.

Long-term Labor governments have always been addicted to debt. They live beyond their means, increase spending exponentially and inevitably fall into the trap of borrowing excessively, expecting taxpayers to pick up the bill. We all know the consequences of negligent financial management. We watched as Victoria and South Australia went broke under the Cain and Bannon Labor governments. The difference is that they did not go broke during a boom. It is an extraordinary feat of ineptitude that this Premier and this Treasurer have gone bust in a boom.

There will be deficits not for the next one or two years but eight years of consecutive deficits, and that is if everything goes according to Labor's forecasts, which of course never happens. There is so much smoke and mirrors in this budget it has become a raging bonfire. The Premier must take responsibility for the pain in this budget and Queensland's alarming debt levels. Throughout the 1990s Queensland's balance sheet was the strongest in the country. Then under Treasurer Bligh the rot began to set in as she led the charge in borrowing excessively and losing control of expenditure.

Systematically over the past five years Labor's economic vandals have undermined and dismantled one of the strongest economies in the country, once the envy of other states, and turned it into the weakest. They dismantled our fully funded superannuation funds. Labor stripped unsustainable dividends out of government owned corporations like Energex and Ergon, destroying their ability to invest properly in maintaining their infrastructure and keeping consumer prices down.

Queensland's structural deficit was instituted by this Premier. In her first budget Queensland recorded a significant spike in expenditure which continued over the next three budgets despite the fact that investment returns and transfer duty were drying up. All this economic vandalism occurred at the same time as revenue was swelling to record levels and no provision was made for the future.

Between them the Premier and Treasurer racked up \$64 billion worth of debt before the global financial crisis was even heard of. Because of this Queensland was completely unprepared for the crisis. Our weakened balance sheet meant that when the global financial storm hit, Queensland was hit for a six. That is why Queensland is in this position today.

The Premier told Queenslanders we could count on her. This government's promise to turn around the economy and return the budget to surplus is as worthless as its election promise to retain the fuel subsidy. Similarly, given this government's record of spending excess there is a real question as to whether it will even come close to delivering on its savings commitments.

This budget comes with a high personal cost to every Queenslander. Of all of the states, only Queensland has been given a big F by the independent rating agencies and stripped of its AAA credit rating. The loss of the AAA credit rating has meant higher interest costs on the \$85.5 billion debt. To put Queensland's \$85.5 billion debt into context, that is \$78,000 of debt for every Queensland family. This debt will require every Queenslander to contribute some \$2,000 every year for the next decade just to pay off the current level of debt. That is assuming interest rates remain at around five per cent. That is assuming Queensland's credit rating does not deteriorate further, which the Treasurer cannot guarantee as he has not guaranteed that the Bligh government will not go even further into debt.

This week the Treasurer has said that restoring Queensland's AAA credit rating is not even a priority for the Bligh government and may take 10 years to get back. This is in stark contrast to the former Premier, Peter Beattie, who said that a strong credit rating was an important vote of confidence in a government's ability to balance the books. It also contradicts comments made this week by the head of Queensland's Treasury Corporation, Sir Leo Hielscher, who said that the loss of Queensland's AAA credit rating would cost Queenslanders an extra \$1.2 billion in interest repayments per annum, enough to build a new children's hospital once a year, every year instead of just once in a lifetime. That is \$1.2 billion in interest on top of the current \$5.2 billion interest bill. Instead of spending \$6.4 billion on delivering essential services like hospitals and schools, the Bligh government will now squander literally billions to pay for its incompetence.

It is crucial that we work towards restoring confidence in Queensland's economy. A AAA credit rating is crucial to funding new infrastructure, attracting investors and maintaining business confidence. We have already seen the impact that a lack of investor confidence has on Queensland's building program. That is why the Gold Coast will not be getting rapid transit any time soon. We know that a lack of business confidence can cost jobs, yet apparently this is not important to the Treasurer or the Premier, whose reckless spending and lack of a long-term strategy to rebuild Queensland's economy cost us our AAA credit rating.

No other state has lost its AAA credit rating. So it is not the global financial crisis that is to blame. If the Treasurer wants proof of this I would advise him to read the statement released by Moody's Investor Services on 20 May which states—

Queensland had been forecasting a deficit position well before the current downturn due to the rapid growth in current spending.

Now the government is asking us to pay for it. This budget will force Queenslanders to make even more sacrifices as the cost of living increases due to Labor's economic failures. For decades Queensland has been known as the low-tax state. Our low-tax status has been more than just an idle boast to our interstate friends; it has been an integral part of our way of life and underpins the Queensland lifestyle. Despite this, the Bligh Labor government has walked away from any commitment to the low-tax state. The Premier has started to build her master plan ever since becoming Premier of transforming Queensland into a high-tax state. The Treasurer explicitly stated that the Bligh government would move towards a high-tax state. It is in the budget papers.

The Treasurer stood in this House on Tuesday quoting from the budget speeches of his mentor William Forgan Smith, who was Premier of Queensland between 1932 and 1942.

Government members interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: His deceased mentor. It is no wonder the Treasurer thinks so highly of him. They have so much in common. Each and every one of William Forgan Smith's six budgets delivered deficits to Queensland. William Forgan Smith raised taxes at a time when Queenslanders could least afford it, just like this Treasurer. William Forgan Smith made Queensland Australia's highest-tax state during the Great Depression, ensuring that Queenslanders were left worse off.

There is only one side of politics in this state committed to delivering low taxes and easing the burden on families and businesses and that is the Liberal National Party. My party is proud of Queensland's historically low-tax status, determined to fight for it and actually instigated it in the first place. It is a badge we wear with pride because it is one of the many reasons 2,000 new residents flock to our great state every week.

The Bligh government has completely disregarded the dramatic impact tax increases have on family budgets and business costs. With a new regressive fuel tax and vehicle registration on the rise, Queensland is now the most expensive state in which to register and run a car. Thanks to Labor, every day Queenslanders will have to pay a \$14 million interest bill before paying for any police officers, teachers, nurses or ambulance officers. The sad fact is that if the Premier and Treasurer had managed the state's finances according to the basic principles of every household budget—don't spend more than you earn—Queenslanders would not be paying for Labor's failures.

The new fuel tax that this budget introduces punishes Queensland families at the petrol bowser and at the checkout. In addition to adding an extra \$300 to the average fuel bill, Queenslanders will have to pay more for basic goods and services as suppliers pass on the costs to consumers. The introduction of a fuel tax comes at a time when Queensland can least afford it. This shows just how out of touch the Premier and Treasurer are.

A former Leader of the Opposition estimated that the abolition of the fuel subsidy would drive up inflation by at least 1.2 per cent. That was Peter Beattie in 1997. What did our good friend the former Premier say? He said,—

The massive hit of an 8c a litre increase would send the Queensland economy reeling.

The Premier and Treasurer just do not get it.

Unlike those of us who have run businesses and filled in our business activity statement forms, those opposite simply do not understand how business works. At a time when consumer spending is down, business is not in a position where it can absorb the extra costs associated with higher fuel prices. Businesses will pass on the cost, which will make basic goods and services more expensive for everyone. Effectively, ordinary Queenslanders will be slugged twice with the fuel tax—once at the bowser and again at the checkout. The price of fruit and vegetables will be the first to go up and regional Queensland will undoubtedly be hit particularly hard by rising fuel prices.

Every Queenslanders will be paying for the Premier's and Treasurer's incompetence. Sadly, the Bligh government squandered the opportunity presented by this budget to move Queensland closer towards economic recovery, just like it squandered the revenue from the biggest resources boom in Queensland's history. We will be opposing the fuel tax.

Nothing is sacred in this budget. This budget puts the 'For Sale' sign up on the Port of Brisbane, Queensland Motorways, Queensland Rail's coal haulage business and Forestry Plantations Queensland. This unnecessary fire sale of profitable public assets is driven not by good economic policy but by economic desperation.

Let us be clear: the only reason Labor is selling these profitable public assets is to fill the massive black hole it has put in the state balance sheet. It is a ploy, not one driven by sound public policy settings or an understanding of economics, to create a facade that the government has a meaningful plan to pay down debt. These sales do not represent good value for Queenslanders. My party is not against privatisation, but we are against selling off profitable public assets when it is not in the best interests of Queenslanders.

As the trustees of public assets, the government has a duty to act in Queensland's best interests. Selling the profitable public assets at the worst time—when you will get the worst price, at the bottom of the market—simply does not make sense. It is like selling your house at the bottom of the property market to pay off your maxed-out credit card. The five government owned corporations this Labor government is getting rid of carry over \$9.8 billion of debt and borrowings. As such, even if one believes the government's marketing puffery, we will not see a complete return on these assets because the government has completely stripped them of the value they once had. Even if the Premier's optimistic valuations are achieved, the net yield will be less than \$5.2 billion after payment of this existing debt. Therefore, subtracting \$5.2 billion from \$85.5 billion in debt still leaves an \$80.3 billion black hole in the budget—hardly a startling budgetary turnaround! This government is only selling these profitable public assets because it is spinning out of control and it does not know what else to do. We know that it does not have a plan to pay down debt and, according to Moody's, the lack of a medium-term strategy to restore budgetary performance and financial flexibility is part of what cost Queensland its AAA credit rating.

What is next on the government's agenda as it trawls for revenue to pay for its rapacious attitude to debt? Co-payments for public hospital patients? Forcing pensioners to pay the ambulance levy? We know that Labor has never seen a tax it did not want to increase. I challenge the Premier or the Treasurer to table the business case for the sale of Queensland's assets. I suspect they will not present the business case for the asset sale because it simply does not exist. There is no business case for fire sales, just as there was no business case for the expansion of the Townsville Hospital, as the Auditor-General noted in his report condemning health service planning by the Labor Party.

The Premier is selling off assets because she has no long-term strategy to address the important challenges Queensland is facing. I note last week the Queensland government placed an advertisement seeking tenders for lead and commercial advisers to oversee the massive sell-off of state assets. The deadline for tenders is Monday, 22 June. After the Premier announced the biggest sale of public assets

in Queensland's history, it wants to commit to a high-priced, five-year tendering contract in just 20 days. Given the bungle Labor made of electricity deregulation, which has seen power prices soar, why should Queenslanders have any confidence in Labor's ability to manage anything as complex as these asset sales? The real losers of this half-baked panic sell-off will ultimately be the taxpayers of Queensland.

A government member: Just leave it to you to sell the lot.

Mr LANGBROEK: We did not sell them off between 1996 and 1998. We did not tell the people of Queensland that we were not going to sell them off in the most recent election campaign, as we had no intention to do so. The worst thing is that those opposite went to the people of Queensland and did not tell them of their intentions and suddenly said that the day after the election was the day they found out about our parlous economic situation. It is just unbelievable!

The Liberal National Party's policy on the privatisation of public infrastructure requires Queensland taxpayers to realise maximum value. The proceeds of asset sales should also be quarantined to fund new social or economic infrastructure, not simply recurrent expenditure. By contrast, the Bligh government intends to fritter the proceeds on paying off debt and filling gaps in recurrent expenditure. We believe that there must be a proven need and a clearly identifiable community benefit. The sale of profitable public assets should certainly not be undertaken simply for the sake of doing it and simply to raise a few dollars. We do not support these Labor fire sales when the market is depressed to cover up the government's poor economic management. I said that we would come in here united, and I can tell the House that there was no dissension in our room like there was from the member for Waterford and the member for Bundamba on the government's proposal when it was put before caucus.

This is a budget of broken promises. In bringing these appropriation bills before the House, the Bligh government has backflipped on the Premier's repeated promise not to introduce a fuel tax. The Premier said that she would not scrap the fuel subsidy because she is not prepared to kick Queenslanders when they are down. What has changed in the three months since the election that the Premier is now prepared to kick Queenslanders when they are down? What this budget says clearly is that Queenslanders cannot trust the Premier. The Premier went to the election promising that Queenslanders could count on her, yet there was not one mention of asset sales, a new fuel tax or the \$85.5 billion worth of debt during the election campaign.

The Premier defends her actions by throwing her hands in the air and saying that she did not know how bad the state's finances were when she went to the election. The Treasurer, hand on heart, maintains that he had no idea about his government's plans to sell off assets. If the Bligh government did not know the real state of the economy in December last year, or February this year, or May this year, or even at the start of this month, or even last week, how can we place any credibility on the financial statements or the four-year projections on which this budget is based? The Premier is exploiting the global financial crisis and using it as an excuse for broken election promises. It is increasingly clear that the Premier never intended to create 100,000 breadwinning jobs for 100,000 families. If she did, she would not be introducing inflationary tax increases in this budget that will have the effect of destroying jobs.

The Treasurer claims that the government's federally funded infrastructure spend will create jobs, but let us look at what it did not spend last year. The Eastern Busway from Buranda to Coorparoo was underspent by \$80 million. The Centenary Highway upgrade from Springfield to Darra was underspent by \$40 million. The Gateway Motorway upgrade was underspent by \$20 million. The Robina Hospital expansion was underspent by \$36 million. The Sunshine Coast health service district bed expansion was underspent by \$36 million. The fact that these five key projects in transport and health were not delivered on time means jobs lost.

In 2008-09 nearly \$900 million worth of projects were underspent. On the government's own figures, this would have created around 6,300 new jobs. It could not even deliver its core promise of the infrastructure plan! Essentially, when unemployment was on the rise, the Bligh government had the chance to create thousands of new jobs just by upholding its promises. Instead, it did nothing.

It is notable that Labor's budget delivers unemployment of 7¼ per cent through until 2011. Some 175,000 Queenslanders will be out of work and facing enormous financial stress within the next two years. The Treasurer's own electorate of Mount Coot-tha has been one of the areas worst hit by unemployment. I am deeply concerned that often the people who suffer the most during times of economic downturn are young people. During the recession of the early nineties, youth unemployment in Queensland was unacceptably high, rising by almost 20 per cent. Sadly, in the current downturn a high proportion of the unemployed will be young people aged between 15 and 25 years. At the start of their working lives, today's young people may struggle to find a job and they may struggle to keep a job.

Apart from the obvious financial difficulties, youth unemployment has a far wider impact on society. Research suggests that an entire generation can become disaffected by poor employment prospects and a lack of job security. The research also suggests that there may be a link between long-term youth unemployment and mental health, crime and suicide. That is the real cost—the human cost—of the Treasurer's 7¼ per cent unemployment. Yet when one looks at what is in the budget for

Communities, we see nothing in the way of real assistance for community groups and charities helping Queenslanders get through tough times. This government would rather create communities dependent on welfare and government handouts than give communities the strength and resources to allow them to help themselves.

My goal as a parent has always been to give my children the same opportunities I have had. It worries me that my 19-year-old daughter, who is halfway through her university degree, may not be able to find a job at the end of study. I always told my kids that if they worked hard at school and if they got a good trade or tertiary education they could achieve anything they wanted. This budget may make a liar of me and every other parent who has ever wanted a better future for their children. We owe it to the next generation of Queenslanders to give them not just the best opportunities in life but also the vision and the motivation to contribute to the growth of their state. We can only do this if we address unemployment through greater investment in education and training and through ongoing responsible financial management.

Our children will shoulder the unfair burden of the financial cost of Labor's neglect and mismanagement with higher taxes and costs of living from Labor's debt. Having graduated from Sunnybank State High School at a time when Queensland's public education system was the best in the country, I am appalled at the declining state of our education system today. The government has a duty to children and their families to provide an education system that allows our kids to achieve academically and to develop socially in a safe learning environment. The Bligh government has failed on both counts.

Queensland trails behind every other state in literacy, numeracy, science and technology. We have the highest rates of school bullying. We have one of the lowest rates of teacher retention. Our kids are being taught in crumbling classrooms as the government stalls on fixing the long overdue \$100 million backlog in school maintenance. In 2009, there are still some Queensland schools riven with deadly asbestos.

The Queensland education performance review by Professor Geoff Masters warned that the long-term effect on children of poor literacy and numeracy in primary school was poorer outcomes as adults in areas such as employment, lifetime earnings, health and crime. If children receive a good education, our state's economy, service delivery and quality of life improves significantly.

Education is the cornerstone of our economy. I want a Queensland where my children thrive in a school system where they are taught by the best teachers in safe classrooms. I do not believe this budget goes far enough in addressing the serious challenges that teachers and students are facing. A Liberal National Party government would put restoring confidence in our schools at the front and centre of our plan to rebuild Queensland. Education is something that if we get it right today, will improve society long into the future.

The Premier and Treasurer have lauded their \$18.2 billion infrastructure program, yet what Labor does not like to talk about is its record. Labor's record on infrastructure is a long litany of delays, drop-offs, cost blow-outs and complete white elephants, like the \$9 billion water grid. This Labor government has failed to plan ahead and deliver the economic infrastructure that is crucial to support the added demand for services caused by Queensland's fast-growing population. Labor sat back and did nothing as hospitals ran out of beds and classrooms became overcrowded. After a decade of neglect and mismanagement, it is now trying to play a game of catch-up, but its record of debt and deficits is, in turn, catching up with it.

Between 1998 and 2007, annual infrastructure spending was on average \$5.1 billion. When the penny finally dropped that some of these new Queenslanders might want to use the roads, or send their children to school, the Bligh government was forced to suddenly increase infrastructure spending significantly. That was the cost of almost a decade of neglect. Two years ago I asked the member for Stretton the reason for the billion dollar blow-out in the government's health capital works program. Quite simply, his reason that the health system is in such a mess was, 'a lack of proper and robust planning'. Too often decisions are made by this government without the robust assumptions or research that are necessary to build projects that are meant to secure Queensland's future.

This problem was confirmed by the Auditor-General last week. The Auditor-General's report on the state of Queensland Health was just the latest example of a government that wastes taxpayers' money on ill-conceived and badly scoped schemes that fail to deliver anything but debt. That is why we have a health system where sick Queenslanders cannot get treatment on time. That is why we have an education system where children are not taught to read and write properly. For the past decade, the only real improvement we have seen in service delivery is when the government has tried to put out political spot fires with unplanned, uncosted announcements.

I suspect we would not be in this position had this government ever looked beyond the next election, or the next cynical media headline. In 11 years it has never come up with a long-term blueprint for building Queensland without resorting to burdening families with higher taxes and debt. I suspect we would not be in this position where Canberra has to bail us out and spend money on maintaining our neglected schools if only the Bligh government had the commitment to delivering and managing projects and getting it right the first time instead of project costs blowing out every 12 months.

That is why almost every building project in this budget has had a cost blow-out, some by billions of dollars. This government cannot manage projects competently and takes no responsibility when things go wrong. In this budget the Gold Coast University Hospital has blown out by another \$200 million to \$1.762 billion in 2009-2010. The project was originally expected to cost \$1.23 billion, which puts the total cost of the budget blow-out at \$532 million. The Queensland Children's Hospital has blown out by \$240 million, along with a \$360 million blow-out on the shelved Sunshine Coast University Hospital. The fact that the Bligh government underestimated the costs of these projects by billions of dollars raises serious questions about its ability to manage the state's finances and to plan for the future, or to deliver on the forecast and savings measures in this budget.

Something that this government obviously looks like it will never get right is fixing Queensland's public hospital system. Labor's ad hoc approach to health service planning has resulted in a system where Queensland has fewer real hospital beds than it did a decade ago, despite a massive spike in population and increasing demand. Despite substantial increases to funding—over \$700 million this year—bringing the total health budget to over \$9 billion, there has been no corresponding improvement in waiting lists: 33,993 sick Queenslanders are still languishing on waiting lists across the state because of fundamental weaknesses in the Bligh government's approach to health services. That does not even take into account the 180,582 Queenslanders who are waiting to get on the waiting list. Unless the Bligh government addresses the issues raised by the Auditor-General, this budget is condemned to the same fate as previous Health budgets.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this budget is this government's approach to regional health services. The Bligh government still has not addressed the issue of unsafe staff accommodation, despite the fact that a young nurse was raped in government-supplied housing in the Torres Strait last year. The health minister stood in this House and promised that he would personally ensure that the problems were fixed and that such a tragedy would never happen again. Yet we see in the budget papers that the Queensland Health regional accommodation program was underspent by \$4.8 million, while not one cent of the \$1.3 million Cape York staff accommodation project at Kowanyama was spent this financial year. This is completely unacceptable.

Regional Queensland is the economic backbone of this state. Natural resources, mines and energy and primary industries are central to our economic future. The agricultural sector of our community has been one of the few sectors propping up our state's economy through these difficult times. Queensland's prosperity lies in the cane fields of Mackay, the beef herds of Diamantina and the vegie patches of the Lockyer. The Bligh government says that it has a plan to boost primary industries and fisheries to contribute more than \$34 billion to the state economy by 2020. I find that a somewhat cynical target, given that this government knows as much about primary industries as it does about small business.

No government has done more to demonise agriculture and farmers than this Labor government. No government has burdened farmers with red tape, regulation and taxes more than this government. What the Bligh government does not understand is that farmers are businessmen. Through their farms, these businessmen provide economic prosperity and employment to entire towns and their communities.

This budget shamefully delivers even more cuts to primary industries and fisheries. Service delivery will be cut significantly as a result of the Bligh government's smash-and-grab approach to agriculture. The primary industries budget has been slashed by 23 per cent, which equates to \$25 million. As a result, front-line services will be wound back, withdrawn or axed next year. That will mean fewer stock inspectors and agronomists, which will compromise the department's ability to deliver services to Queenslanders living on the land. The Bligh government has bitten the hand that feeds them. Farming sustains Queensland gastronomically and economically. At a time when business and industry activity is down, agriculture continues to bring in a steady revenue stream.

The fundamental problem with this government is that it has its priorities wrong. Queensland's debt-ridden balance sheet is the by-product of a Premier and Treasurer who are focused on fixing elections rather than fixing the problems we face. Nowhere is this more evident than in the police budget. It is interesting to note where the additional \$200 million for police will be spent.

The 203 extra police the Bligh government announced this week were already budgeted for in forward estimates. The only new investment for policing in this budget goes towards revenue raisers such as speed cameras. I will support any measure that will assist police in tackling crime. However, I question the motivation behind the police spending in this budget given that the Bligh government has already gone to great lengths to increase revenue from camera detected offences by raising penalty units. This money would have been far better spent on boosting police numbers, especially in areas such as the Gold Coast where the police to population ratio is well below the state average. Instead, the Bligh government is more interested in pickpocketing Queenslanders.

This budget will not only cost Queenslanders at a time when they can least afford it; this budget also threatens Queensland's ability to claw its way out of the quagmire the Premier and Treasurer have put us in. The Bligh government has ripped more than \$5.5 million worth of funding out of Tourism Queensland's budget. This is despite the fact that tourism employs 123,000 Queenslanders. After a

decade of long-term Labor government, tourism has stagnated in regions like the Gold Coast, Cairns and the Sunshine Coast with a 7.8 per cent drop in tourist numbers last year alone. If the Bligh government had the discipline to keep its spending in line with revenue, this budget could easily have seen more money invested in bringing tourists back to Queensland. This would have injected much needed tourism dollars into local economies like the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and Cairns which rely so heavily on tourism.

Over the past few weeks we have listened to the false reasons and excuses for the bad state of the budget. The Premier and Treasurer have blamed the global financial crisis for delivering debt and despair to Queensland families. They have even blamed the weather for stripping millions from Treasury reserves. Queensland is Australia's most disaster-prone state. Every year we have cyclones, floods and bushfires. These natural events have occurred every year for the past 200 years. If Queensland was unprepared when the North Queensland floods hit, when storms ravaged The Gap and when rain poured down on South-East Queensland recently, it was because the Bligh government did not bother making contingencies for the outcomes. I will say it again: this budget is not the by-product of the global financial crisis or Queensland's flooding rains; this budget is the result of Labor's decade of incompetent financial management.

This year Queensland celebrates its 150th birthday, but many Queenslanders are feeling shortchanged when after a decade of boom times they see their government and therefore the taxpayers paying \$14 million a day in interest to pay for over \$85 billion of debt. In 1859 Queensland Treasury had 9d in the bank, which in this day and age is equivalent to about 15c. Nine pence was modest even by colonial standards. Today we can only hope for and dream of a 15c surplus under the Bligh-Fraser government. In the words of Mr Micawber in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*—

Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery.

This budget tells the tale of Labor's 11-year record of mismanagement, failure and squandered opportunity. When it comes to Queensland's future I am always an optimist. With the responsible financial management that can only come with a Liberal National government, it is crucial to work towards being able to restore confidence in Queensland.

Yesterday the Premier stated that the debt was more like a mortgage than a credit card. I am heartened that the Premier has grasped that the size of Queensland's debt is more akin to the most significant investment families will make in their lifetime. The trouble with the analogy is that, with the loss of the AAA credit rating, we are paying off our mortgage at credit card interest rates. Unlike with a mortgage, this government has borrowed well beyond its means. No bank manager would approve of this level of borrowing, especially when the Treasurer says, 'We will pay it back, maybe, when things get better.' If any family managed its finances as this government has it would be on the streets. This government is a burden to Queensland. It is time to stop mortgaging Queensland's future. It is time to put away the credit card. It is time to turn the page on Labor's neglect and failure and stop it from doing any further damage.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The House will come to order.

Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (12.15 pm): Just nine days ago Queensland celebrated its 150th anniversary. One hundred and fifty years ago, letters patent arrived at Newstead House proclaiming Queensland's independence from the colony of New South Wales. Democracy had come at last to Queensland and Queensland was to chart its own course for the future. Yesterday one would have thought democracy had come to an end in Queensland as Labor shamelessly gagged debate on two important pieces of legislation that are as much about our future now as those letters patent of 150 years ago were then.

Today and tomorrow the majority of members in this place will spend a maximum of 20 minutes each discussing the Appropriation Bill, with total government sector expenses of \$39.1 billion, a total debt expected to reach \$85.5 billion and deficits projected to total \$13.367 billion; the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill, which funds the operations of this place; a bill to effectively introduce a fuel tax that will add 9.2c per litre to the cost of fuel for every motorist in this state; and an infrastructure bill for the fire sale of what is optimistically hoped to be \$15 billion worth of state assets. This is on top of the fact that the Appropriation Bill also seeks to authorise, some two years after it was originally passed, unforeseen expenditure—expenditure this government did not know and had no idea it was going to spend—of \$2.1 billion.

All of this comes from a government that is committed to so-called openness and transparency. All of this comes from a Premier who not once told the people of Queensland that she was going to indulge in a fire sale of assets when she sought re-election less than three months ago; a Treasurer who promised not to introduce a fuel tax only one month before the election contest; a Premier who said that she would create 100,000 new jobs for breadwinners but has failed to say how she will do it; a government that reaped the rewards of the rivers of gold from the minerals and property boom but took

on \$65 billion in debt before the global financial crisis reached our shores; a government that had a \$1.56 billion deficit in the last full year before the global financial crisis; a government that lost Queensland's AAA credit rating for the first time in its 150-year history and then acted as if it was not important. This is truly a government that went bust in a boom.

The truth is that this Premier and this government have run out of our money. By the end of the forward estimates, every household in Queensland will be burdened with a \$78,000 debt and Queensland will be paying \$14 million in interest each day as a result. Each household will be paying thousands of dollars before we put a police officer on the beat, before we put fuel in an ambulance and before we put a teacher in a classroom. The people of Queensland will be paying through the nose because of this government's mismanagement.

It is not that Queensland has not been affected by the global financial crisis. It has. Queensland's problem is that the ship of state finances has been steered by its captain and first mate into the storm with leaky seams, ripped sails, no rudder and no lifeboats. In other words, instead of paying off debt from the good times, this government used them to raise borrowing and to play catch-up. Instead of being prudent and preparing for stormy weather, Labor in Queensland kept on spending. As each political emergency arose—and, by crikey, there were many of those; let us just think of a couple of them: child safety, health, water supply, transport and infrastructure, to name just a few—Labor just flung open the doors to the Treasury and let it rip, with no thought to prudence or accountability. They let it rip and they spent like sailors on a spree.

So Tuesday, 16 June this year was the day that the final damning indictment of Labor's mismanagement of the economy was delivered. Last Tuesday was the day the Treasurer handed down Queensland's worst ever state budget. After 150 years of predominantly prudent growth, we got the results of Labor's 10 years of mismanagement last Tuesday. What are the main points of the budget? A massive debt expected to balloon out to \$85.5 billion. How does that compare with that of other states? Let us compare it to New South Wales—\$67.24 billion, the acknowledged basket case of the Australian economies; Victoria, \$39.2 billion; Western Australia, \$27.7 billion; South Australia, \$7.8 billion; and Tasmania, \$230 million. Those figures say it all. For years we have laughed at those states—at South Australia and Victoria, the rust belt states, driven into the depths of despondency by misplaced Labor governments who had no idea about how to control their debts and how to control their spending, and New South Wales was the basket case of them all. How does Queensland compare in debt terms? We are worse.

On this side of the House, we have been pointing out for years that Labor's reckless borrowing and misguided spending habits would end like this. We said it in 2006 when debt started going up, we said it in 2007 when debt went up even further and we said it last year when debt started blooming at \$65 billion. The Treasurer shrugged off the warnings. The Svengali of the Treasury stood there and said that we were wrong and that we had no idea what we were talking about. He said, 'They will try to tell the people of Queensland there is a problem when there is not.' If ever there was a false statement, that was it. He proclaimed in October last year, just days before it occurred, 'Now is not the time to risk our AAA credit rating. Now is not the time to trust someone who makes it up as they go along.' If anyone was making it up as they went along, it was this Premier and this Treasurer—the Premier and the Treasurer who had no idea that their reckless spending was leading this state into the perils that we now face.

There was a time when Queensland had a reputation for having one of the strongest balance sheets of any Australian state. It was a matter of pride that the Queensland Treasury was able to balance its books and it was a matter of pride that it stayed that way for many, many years. But now Queensland under Labor is the laughing stock of the country and it is the laughing stock of the financial institutions. It has got so bad that Queensland's chief banker, the man who borrows money for the state, has had to come out and tell the people of Queensland how bad it is. Not only do we have a massive state debt; we have a decade of deficits by this government's own reckoning—deficits totalling \$13.3 billion, a daily interest bill of \$14.2 million, a botched health system and record high taxes and all to be paid for by Queenslanders and Queensland families.

What about the core promise to create 100,000 new jobs for 100,000 new breadwinners? I note that it has changed into a target now. The revisionism of the Labor Party has been applied and what was a promise—with her hands out openly to the conference, the Premier promised to deliver 100,000 new jobs for 100,000 new breadwinners—has become a target for someone who works as little as one hour a week. The last time I checked, working one hour a week was not going to put bread on the table for a family, working one hour a week was not going to pay the mortgage, working one hour a week was not going to pay the increase in the cost of electricity, working one hour a week was not going to pay the taxes that this government is increasingly going to rip out of the pockets of Queenslanders. Working one hour a week would be a challenge for some on the back bench of this government, but it is not a job that is a breadwinner's job and it is not a job that can seriously be counted as part of the Premier's promise—her increasingly phoney and false promise.

Let us have a look at how the promise is going. What do the budget papers say about it? The budget papers say that unemployment is expected to peak at 7¼ per cent. So it is going up. What about employment growth? It is only 1¼ per cent, or just 26,000 people by 2010-11. That is a long way short of 100,000 new jobs for breadwinners over three years. How is the government travelling? Since the March election, the number of unemployed has risen to 5.2 per cent, with another 9,000 people out of work, and the number of full-time employed has dropped by 1,700. So the number of people looking for work has gone up and the number of people in full-time work has gone down. That is what this Labor government is delivering. These are not numbers. These are not the numbers that the Premier and the Treasurer like to throw around and bandy around like they do not matter. These are real people. They are the people that we on this side care about but those on that side throw on the scrap heap in their forlorn efforts to get re-elected.

What about the hit to revenue that the Treasurer has been talking about? He has been telling us about how bad the revenue has been as a result of the financial global crisis. We have already pointed out that the government was in deficit to the tune of \$1.56 billion before the global financial crisis. Over the past few months Premier Bligh and Treasurer Fraser have been trying to point out that the GFC wave was in fact a revenue hit. While it is true that revenue went backwards last financial year and some revenue such as stamp duties and royalties will decline once again, the budget figures actually show a rebound in revenues this financial year, coming off \$35.8 billion to \$37.2 billion. Revenue is not going backwards; revenue is increasing. Most of this increase is due to the bailout from Labor in Canberra. Federal bailouts in this budget are now expected to total \$5.8 billion. So if their friends in Canberra had not been prepared to bail them out, how much worse would the situation have been?

Yesterday the Treasurer referred to the Institute of Public Affairs. He referred to it with some approval in response to the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. So let us see what the Treasurer's favourite think tank says today about the state of the Queensland budget. It says—

The past twelve months have been a period of budget pain for Queenslanders—
that is certainly true enough—

and the 200910 budget released this week continues the bad fiscal run.

It goes on to say—

The reality is that the current fiscal trouble afflicting the government is the product of many years of excess spending. About the beginning of this decade, spending grew at a moderate three per cent. However, as the years wore on, the scale of spending growth increased to an unsustainable 12 per cent.

It goes on to say—

But, unable to scratch its spending itch, the Bligh government then decided to create a debt bubble of the likes never before seen. The state's rich fiscal inheritance of no general government debt is set to be overturned by 2011-12. Total nonfinancial public sector net debt will expand from \$14 billion in 2008-09 to \$51 billion by 2012-13.

Putting such a massive mortgage on the future, of course, led to a downgrade of the state credit rating earlier this year leading to higher interest costs on the debt.

So there we have it—from the Treasurer's preferred think tank, the Institute of Public Affairs—a damning indictment of the way this government has managed its economy over the past 10 years. And this is when we have a Treasurer who had the cheek and was sufficiently barefaced to deceive the people in the *Courier-Mail* on 9 January this year when he said—

Make no mistake about it; we'll be delivering a fuel subsidy scheme. It will stay in place.

Let us turn to the Fuel Subsidy Scheme, which is the subject of one of the bills we are debating in the time available to us. We just heard the promise, but the Premier and the Treasurer say to us, 'What were you going to do?' We told the people what we were going to do. We put out a 25-page booklet telling the people what we were going to do, but did the Premier and the Treasurer ever come forward and say, 'We are going to rip the heart out of the Queensland economy by whacking a 9.2c a litre fuel tax on them,' or, 'We are going to rip the heart out of Queensland communities by flogging off the assets at a fire sale'? When did they ever do that? Not once. The Treasurer said, 'Make no mistake about it: we'll be delivering a fuel subsidy scheme. It will stay in place.' The mistake was all on the part of the Treasurer.

It is my view that the Treasurer knew he was going to break his promise because I think he really did know how bad the finances were. He knew he would have to increase taxes because he said on a number of occasions—and these are the words he used—'No Treasurer worth his salt will rule out tax rises.' It was only during the pressure of the election campaign that he was forced to recant. I blame the Premier. I think she led him astray.

Mr Gibson: Careful, Tim.

Mr NICHOLLS: I give him more credit. The Premier has been talking about *Narnia*. Let us talk about *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and the wicked witch—the White Witch—who led poor Edmund astray and caused him to turn his back on his family and his principles. I think the Premier has led the Treasurer astray. I think poor 'Edmund' will want to come back to the fold at some stage because I think that deep inside him there is an honest man just waiting to burst out from the 'whatever it takes'—

Mr Gibson: Come on!

Mr NICHOLLS: This is a long argument, but I am going to stick up for him in this case. He is just waiting to burst out from the 'whatever it takes' apparatchik facade and eventually be honest.

But let us be real. Slugging motorists with a fuel tax has been on Labor's books almost since it was elected in 1998. Peter Beattie attempted to impose the tax by offering up a swap on registration fees. In May last year, the dodgy scheme to have everyone get a bar code on their licence in order not to pay the tax was being floated around. We suspected then that it was all part of an evil plot by the ALP and its Green mates to get rid of something it has never really supported anyway.

What will the cost be to business and employment? The government has so far failed to explain how adding a new tax to the cost of fuel in Australia's most decentralised state is going to help unemployment. The reality is that it will not. In fact, it will do quite the opposite. Raising taxes in the middle of a downturn is the wrong thing to do.

And it is going to get worse. The Queensland Trucking Association has warned that the new tax will increase the price of fuel by 9.2c a litre and amount to an extra \$12,000 to \$15,000 of additional fuel costs for truckers every year.

Government members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: We hear the economic geniuses over there. They think the truckers will be able to bear that cost and not pass it on to consumers. They think we will not be paying the increased costs in freight charges for the fruit and vegetables we need, for the groceries in our supermarkets and for the goods and products we consume every day. This is another whack in the guts for Queenslanders from this non-caring, non-compassionate, deceitful Labor government. They are kicking Queenslanders while they are down.

It gets worse still, because we also have a 17 to 22 per cent increase in car registration fees from 1 July. It is now official. Queensland is the most expensive state in Australia in which to own and run a car. They hate cars on that side. They want to build roads so that no-one can use them. That is the entire way they are going about it. They hate cars.

As Queenslanders face increased electricity costs, increased fuel costs and increased registration costs, we also have this fire sale of assets. In a desperate bid to cover up the failures of this government and to plug the hole in its operating expenses, we are going to be selling some of Queensland's best assets at the bottom of the market in a fire sale. So we have 'Bargain Basement' Bligh and 'Fire Sale' Fraser selling off the assets at the bottom of the market.

It is important that we make it clear that we support clearly considered asset sales in the right circumstances when it is to the taxpayers' advantage, but we do not support Labor fire sales when the market is depressed to cover up economic mismanagement. Critically, asset sales should not be undertaken simply for the sake of a few extra dollars and they should not be seen as a short-term fix for long-term problems. These are not new principles. I outlined these principles in my speech on the airport asset sales last year. On these principles, the proposed sale of the infrastructure assets announced in a hasty rush two weeks ago does not stack up. The government is wasting the value in these assets that have been built up over the generations. This government wants to make this side of the House accessories to its crime. We will not be complicit in the commission of this crime. We do not support Labor's fire sale proposal.

In this budget, the government seeks to borrow its way out of debt and burden future generations with the problem of repayment. It condemns us to a lower standard of living and loads up future generations with debt. We should heed the words of Polonius, the wise old man of Denmark in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, who said—

Neither a borrower nor a lender be;

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,

And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.

That is a lesson this government would do well to heed. After 150 years, in this our sesquicentenary, the state of Queensland deserves better.

(Time expired)

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.35 pm): In the lead-up to Tuesday's much heralded budget, introduced by Treasurer Fraser, there was much anticipation, there was much fanfare and indeed there was much spin permeating the community at large. It got to such an extent that Channel 7 committed themselves to doing a live broadcast of the Treasurer's budget speech, but after 20 minutes they chopped it off because they could find nothing live. Most people thought they were turning up to a B-grade poetry recital. Indeed, since then, the budget speech is proving more popular than Mogadon as a sedative.

Is it any wonder that the Treasurer is the most unpopular member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly? Is it any wonder that he is less popular than 40 candidates who did not win their seats in this House at the last election? Is it any wonder that he got a lower primary vote than 40 losing candidates at the last state election? We saw that here the other day.

The best way to draw a comparison is to say that going with the Treasurer is like being in a car with a hoon driving recklessly. You start out with a pristine new vehicle; well, it was a bit battered around the edges courtesy of former Treasurer Bligh and some of her predecessors, but for all intents and purposes it was not in bad shape. So you get in the car with them and you are going along on the journey. You know that they have got reckless habits; you know that they have got quite a malicious approach on the road. You warn them not to go a certain way and you warn them not to go at a certain speed. Then they crash into a tree and total the vehicle and they jump out and say, 'What are you going to do about it?' So your starting point is completely different when you have totalled the Queensland economy—just like the man in that analogy has totalled the vehicle of Queensland. That is the reality and that is what we actually have.

This document, which is the budget speech, is not a written budget speech; this is a written confession. This is a written confession by the Treasurer of Queensland—a written confession of betrayal, a written confession of deceit, a written confession of dishonesty, a written confession of Labor's incompetence, a written confession of all of those things which are so inherently ingrained in Labor's DNA, a written confession that this government has taxed the people of Queensland beyond what they are capable of sustaining, a written confession that the government went to the last election and deliberately hid from the people of Queensland the fact that Queensland was in a very bad state—indeed a worse state than what the government owned up to at the state election. What the government tried to do—

Mr Fraser: We put out a full update three days before calling the election, you fool.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Treasurer, that is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr FRASER: I withdraw.

Mr SPRINGBORG: A plea for redemption and a plea for absolution from the Treasurer. Indeed, I remind the House of a former local government minister in Queensland, not very much removed from this man in fact, who at a public meeting in my electorate in May two years ago responded to a question about whether there would be regional councils under the government's amalgamation proposal by saying, 'No.' I just wonder if this is the same person who is today's Treasurer—the man who went to the last election completely constraining and manipulating the facts, knowing full well what the government intended to do.

The Premier talks about narratives. We know what this government's narrative is. It is very, very clear. It seeks—as Labor always does—to blame somebody else or some external circumstance for its own incompetence. What this government does not tell us about in these budget papers, or in any of the budget documents, is the \$34½ billion of windfall revenues that this government raked in from 2000 to 2008, \$17 billion of which came from the Commonwealth government. As it is now attempting to blame external factors on its having a diminished revenue inflow—which you can in recent times—the government chooses to overlook the fact that there is the \$20 billion worth of windfall revenues somewhere in there, if you discount the \$14½ billion it has taken out that has gone somewhere, that has disappeared into the ether, and which it does not want to know about while it tells us it wants to go forward without looking backwards. Is it any wonder that we have such economic incompetence on the other side of this House?

This government has been running a structural deficit. This government has run a structural deficit ever since Peter Beattie's days. Inherently that means that, despite the warnings which came from a whole range of people, including those on this side, respected economists and Standard & Poor's as early as March last year to the Senate Standing Committee on Economics, this government did absolutely nothing. A structural deficit is something which was always going to be a diabolical formula for future generations of Queenslanders.

Each and every year this government spent beyond its means just because it could. We have already heard from the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer a number of very prophetic and very salient sayings as to why we need to be very careful about that. If we look at revenues versus expenditure in what is proposed in this year's budget in the forward estimates, the government will be spending more than the revenues that it will receive. The government is now talking about fire sales, which I will address in a little while.

This government has also tried to create, as its predecessor did, a narrative that seeks to equate maximum expenditure with maximum service delivery and maximum outcomes for the people of Queensland. Nothing could be further from the truth. As we all know, you can have two households getting exactly the same amount of money, living in the same circumstances, spending their money differently—one not being as diligent as the other, one not putting money away for the future, one on the verge of declaring itself bankrupt; and the other which is quite capably living within its means. That is what we have had here in Queensland.

Despite this big spending in all of the areas that this government alleges, are people any safer in their homes? Are people better off in our hospital system? Despite this so-called record spending in education, are our educational standards and our educational outcomes better than they were 10 years ago? The answer is overwhelmingly and resoundingly no, and national benchmark reports are actually proving it. This government is spending money in many cases for the sake of spending money. The Auditor-General recently reported on this in his review of the way the government was running expenditure and administering the health system in Queensland. Where is the fundamental evidence that the people of Queensland are better off as a consequence of better spending? Bigger spending is not necessarily better spending, and that is the point that we are making here.

Let me put this into context. The Gateway Bridge duplication project will cost about \$1.8 billion. If we are now looking at \$85 billion worth of borrowings plus the dissipation into the ether of \$34 billion worth of windfall revenues, where is their multitude of gateway bridges around Queensland? Ipswich Road is predominantly funded by the Commonwealth. Where are these gateway bridges which are being replicated around Queensland? They are certainly not being replicated in the regional areas of Queensland. By and large if you look at the area of state responsibility, they are not being replicated in the city of Brisbane or in the large cities surrounding Brisbane. Let us not accept this nonsense that the more you spend, the better the services.

Let us look at the South East Queensland Regional Plan. On the day the government announced it, it said that this was a \$55 billion spending plan for the future. What happened? Two years later the government revalued it to \$106 billion. There were no more projects; it simply revalued the plan. Again, there were no more projects, just spending more money. We have to stop being mesmerised by the amount that government spends and start concentrating on what government actually delivers for the people of Queensland.

There has been an ultimate betrayal of the people of Queensland by this government. There has been deceit which has been unheard of and is without comparison in the history of public administration in Queensland. We have a government that went broke in a boom. We have a government that planned for \$65 billion worth of borrowings and a structural deficit prior to anyone inventing the term 'global financial crisis'.

Queenslanders are asking this: how can we be worse off than New South Wales, the basket case of Morris Iemma's New South Wales, assisted by the Premier's chief of staff, who is now the chief of staff here, Mr Kaiser? People are asking this question: for all of the problems that exist in New South Wales, the incompetence of the Labor government and considering that it is almost a rust-belt state due to maladministration, how can New South Wales keep a AAA credit rating? How can it be projecting \$67 billion worth of borrowings when Queensland is projecting \$85 billion worth of borrowings?

That \$85 billion does not stop there, because when we consider what the government is going to have to borrow just to run the ship of Queensland it is likely to add at least another \$13 billion over the next three to four years. It will be very close to \$100 billion in the not-too-distant future. So how did it come to this? Victoria is able to run a surplus. Victoria is able to keep its AAA credit rating. Even Tasmania, which was running a AA credit rating before the global financial crisis, did not manage to get itself downgraded while this government, arguably in the greatest boom state in Australia, with everything going right for it, did. Let us look at the lie that was told by certain people during—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Member for Southern Downs, the word 'lie' is unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I withdraw. The deliberate untruth was proffered by members opposite that Queensland and Australia were in a recession. We have had Kevin Rudd, the Prime Minister, in the last week running around saying how great it is that we did not fall into a recession in Australia. He is their great hero. Even their own budget paper predicts that we might get into a recession next year—not this year but next year. It is interesting to look at the budget highlights to see mention of the times when we were in deep recession, like the 1980s and again in the 1990s. I pose this simple question for people to consider: were the railways of Queensland sold when Queensland was last in a recession in the 1980s or the 1990s? Was the fuel subsidy scheme abolished or a fuel tax introduced in the 1980s or the 1990s when we were in a recession? No.

What happened after the 1974 floods which devastated a lot of South-East Queensland as well as the rest of Queensland? Did the government have to go and sell the railways of Queensland to actually top up the coffers? No, it did not. Sir Joh actually built the Wivenhoe Dam. Sir Joh had money tucked away in hollow logs everywhere. This was exploited by the Labor Party under Kevin Rudd and Wayne Goss when they came to power in 1989. Let us put to bed this nonsense about blaming external factors.

There is another thing that this government does not want its new members to actually hear. That is that governments in Queensland historically ran a contingency fund where money was set aside to guard against costs associated with storms and tempest and other unforeseen expenditure. Some \$200 million from the previous coalition government days was frittered away—is gone, is kaput under

the Labor Party. It does not have contingencies for the future. Let us stop blaming the storms. Let us stop blaming everything else. The majority of the problem this government has is due to its own absolute fiscal ineptitude.

A global financial crisis never forced anyone to be dishonest. A global financial crisis never forced anyone to conceal. A global financial crisis never forced anyone to be deceitful. Those opposite cannot blame an economic downturn on Queensland's credit rating being slashed when no other state has had its credit rating slashed in this current so-called global financial crisis. They cannot blame a world economic downturn for record debt levels when Queensland under Bligh Labor already had \$65 billion in debt. It goes on and on and on.

In the motion yesterday on whether these bills should be debated cognately we heard that there are so many things that this government is seeking to hide. The fundamental reason those opposite want to debate these bills cognately is that they could not get anyone on their side to stand up and debate the bills separately. There is no-one on the other side who wants to take the challenge and stand up and justify the introduction of a fuel tax in Queensland. There is no-one on the other side who wants to stand up and actually justify the fire sale of assets.

Now those opposite can get up and talk about the basket weaving and knitting classes and the other things that are facilitated in the budget but not talk about the substantial fiscal, economic and structural changes that this abomination is going to bring about in Queensland in the future.

There is no mandate for this government to abolish the Fuel Subsidy Scheme. There is no mandate to introduce a fuel tax in Queensland. This government concealed it from the people of this state. There is no mandate. If those honourable members opposite doubt what I am saying, go out there, walk down the street and ask those people they come across, 'Do we have a mandate to introduce a fuel tax?' I will indicate that resoundingly and down to a person they will say, 'No, you don't.'

Mr Horan: That is why they didn't take it to the election.

Mr SPRINGBORG: That is why they didn't take it to the election. Similarly, if they ask people whether the government has a mandate to sell Queensland Rail, whether the government has a mandate to sell Queensland Motorways Ltd, whether the government has a mandate to sell our ports, they will say that the government does not have a mandate to do that. It did not seek a mandate. It sought to conceal its intentions from the people of Queensland. That is what is wrong.

This government proposes to sell these assets which have been built up by generations of Queenslanders. Rail was the thing that opened up Queensland. If it was not for rail Queensland would not be what it is today. We have a government that is attempting to sell those assets at the bottom of the market—hocked with as much debt as it possibly can. It has shifted its debt into rail, the ports and a whole range of government entities and hopes to sell them as some sort of lucrative opportunity.

The thing that is not being considered by honourable members opposite is that the maintenance of some government assets guarantees a revenue source. If those opposite cut off our most lucrative revenue sources and sell them at the bottom of the market, what are the other implications for the budget? It is the wrong time to sell them even if there is an ideological bent to privatise in Queensland.

One of the hallmarks, one of the defining legacies, of this side of politics is that we have always supported—the LNP and its predecessor—the retention of Queensland's historical no fuel tax. Queensland has the tyranny of distance that no other state has. The fuel subsidy gives us a competitive advantage that no other Australian state could even hope for. It keeps down the price of food, it enhances the capacity of people in regional and far-flung areas to afford to travel great distances to access health care and to even have social interaction. It keeps down transport costs. Importantly, it helps the tourism situation in Queensland. This was admitted last year by the former tourism minister who told this parliament in answer to a question that it is one of the fundamental advantages that we have in the drive tourism market. This budget is an abomination. The other pieces of legislation that hang off it as some sort of cancerous appendages are as well and do not deserve support.

(Time expired)

Mr MOORHEAD (Waterford—ALP) (12.55 pm): I rise to support the 2009-10 state budget presented by the Treasurer. This is a tough budget but it is a great budget for steering Queensland through these tough economic times. Even though times are tough we have been able to secure funding for much needed local projects and services in the Waterford electorate and, most importantly at this time, the jobs they create.

When it comes to Logan and Beenleigh, our growing community will benefit from upgrades to sections of the Pacific Motorway and major roads in Beenleigh, Waterford West and Kingston. These improvements are our share of a massive \$3.53 billion package of road infrastructure in this year's state budget.

These projects include the completion of the bridge and road construction on Boundary Street, Beenleigh. Some \$4.7 billion will be spent completing the construction of this new bridge and connecting roads between Kokoda Street and Chris Green Park, Beenleigh. The new higher bridge will mean better visibility for motorists and pedestrians, particularly students travelling to and from Trinity Lutheran College, and better protection from localised flooding.

This budget will also deliver on Labor's commitment to upgrade the intersection of Loganlea Road and Kingston Road, Waterford West. At the centre of this \$1.5 million project is the construction of a congestion-busting second right-hand turn lane from Kingston Road to Loganlea Road. Once completed, this project will reduce waiting times for turning vehicles.

Following last year's electoral redistribution I have been able to add my voice to the years of advocacy from the member for Albert for upgrades to Beenleigh-Beaudesert Road. I am delighted to see that the upgrade of the Tallagandra Road and Beenleigh-Beaudesert Road intersection will be brought forward this year with \$500,000 to be spent to commence intersection improvements. This improvement will fight local traffic congestion at this intersection, particularly around school times.

The state government is also planning for the future with planning underway for improvements to the Logan Motorway and the Beenleigh outer ring-road. Some \$2.98 million has been allocated for further planning and property acquisition on the Daisy Hill to Logan River section of the Pacific Motorway project.

A good Labor budget is one that invests in education and this one is no different. This budget will see better services and facilities for Logan TAFE, early childhood education and local schools in the Waterford electorate. Early childhood education will receive a boost of \$1.79 million to complete the establishment of the Beenleigh Early Childhood Education Centre. This centre will play a vital role in giving local children access to high-quality early education before starting school—an important investment in our children's development.

Logan schools provide a strong education in what can be challenging circumstances. The challenges facing our local schools have been met with a massive \$8.7 million commitment over three years to the Every Child Counts initiative for Logan schools. This program will support innovative measures to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes at local schools, including helping parents to improve their parenting skills and their own literacy and numeracy skills. Every parent wants the best for their child's education. This initiative will provide practical assistance for parents to support their child's development.

These funds are made available from the Prevention and Early Intervention Incentives Pool—money put aside for a rainy day. That rainy day has come around. There is no better initiative that these moneys could support. Beenleigh State High School, Edens Landing State School, Loganlea State High School and Waterford West State School will also receive a total funding package of nearly \$192,000 for increased maintenance work.

As well as early childhood education in schools, vocational education also wins from this year's budget with \$4.1 million being injected into the redevelopment of the Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE Loganlea campus. The Loganlea TAFE is the job opportunity generator for our community, particularly for young people wanting to enter the workforce and parents who want to return to the workforce.

Less than three months after the state election the Bligh government is delivering on its commitment for better health services in the Logan area. This budget provides \$20 million of the total project cost of \$44 million for the expansion of the Logan Hospital emergency department. This expansion will ease the pressure on our emergency department with 18 new treatment bays and a dedicated children's waiting area.

The Logan and Beenleigh area will receive millions of dollars to support community services for the most vulnerable in our community. Some \$1.7 million has been granted to the Home and Community Care program for local agencies to provide services such as respite care, domiciliary nursing, transport, home care, domestic assistance and personal care to the frail aged, younger people with a disability and their carers. At the same time \$681,000 will be allocated from phase 2 of the Community Renewal program in the Gold Coast north renewal zone to help strengthen our local communities. Community services providing counselling and support for young people at risk of homelessness will be supported with funding of \$433,818.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

Debate, on motion of Mr Moorhead, adjourned.

BODY CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997. I present the explanatory notes, and 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.

Tabled paper: Body Corporate and Community Management Amendment Bill [\[441\]](#).

Tabled paper: Body Corporate and Community Management Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [\[442\]](#).

Second Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (2.30 pm): I move—
That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill makes an amendment to the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 as a result of recent decisions of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal. The purpose of the bill is to clarify the intention of section 212 of the act.

On 12 November 2008 the Supreme Court gave judgement in *Bossichix Pty Ltd v Martinek Holdings Pty Ltd*, finding that the applicant had validly cancelled, pursuant to section 212 of the Body Corporate and Community Management Act, the contract between the applicant and the respondent. The respondent, Martinek Holdings Pty Ltd, appealed the Supreme Court decision and on 5 June 2009 the Court of Appeal ordered the appeal dismissed. Section 212 provides that a buyer can cancel a contract for the purchase of a proposed lot in a community titles scheme if the contract does not provide that settlement must not take place earlier than 14 days after the seller gives notice to the buyer that the scheme has been established or changed.

The Supreme Court and Court of Appeal decisions found that the contract between Bossichix Pty Ltd and Martinek Holdings Pty Ltd was deficient because a key clause omits any reference to the community management statement, the recording of which is an essential element of establishing a new community titles scheme. A community titles scheme is established by the registration under the Land Title Act 1994 of a plan of subdivision for identifying the land for the scheme and, secondly, the recording by the Registrar of Titles of the first community management statement for the scheme. Typically this occurs simultaneously, although a scheme is not established until the community management statement is recorded. It is not possible to record a first community management statement in the absence of a survey plan that creates or identifies at least two lots and common property.

However, the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal stated that the registration of a plan and the establishment of a community titles scheme are not the same thing and that the contract did not adequately convey to the buyer that more than registering a survey plan is necessary to establish the scheme. The respective decisions of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal revealed that the wording of section 212 of the Body Corporate and Community Management Act does not clarify the policy intent which seeks to balance the interests of consumers and developers/vendors. Consequently, these decisions have highlighted the potential for hundreds, if not thousands, of off-the-plan contracts to be at risk. This is because the provisions of the contract subject to legal action have potentially been replicated in contracts industry-wide.

It is estimated that up to 14,000 contracts on foot will be affected by the court decisions and, as off-the-plan contracts of sale provide a basis for property developers to obtain financing for many residential developments, the recent decisions could have serious implications for the property development sector and the wider Queensland economy if not remedied. Therefore, the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 will be amended to provide clarification to the requirements of a contract subject to section 212 of the act.

Contracts entered into before or after 5 June 2009, excluding contracts already settled, will be deemed to contain the term 'providing that settlement must not take place earlier than 14 days after the seller gives advice to the buyer that the scheme has been established or changed', even if the contract does not do so. This provision will ensure contracts cannot be cancelled based on a mere omission of a reference to the establishment of the community titles scheme on the condition that the building plan and community management statement have been lodged with the Register of Titles and settlement does not take place earlier than 14 days after the seller notifies the buyer that this process has been completed.

This amendment will clarify the intent of the legislation and ensure that there is no diminution of consumer protection. In effect, it will return both buyer and seller to the position they believed they were in—and both accepted—at the time of the signing of the contract. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Bill; Further Particulars

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (2.35 pm), by leave: During yesterday's consideration in detail debate on the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Bill and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Jurisdiction Provisions) Amendment Bill, I made two statements in response to questions asked that, out of an overabundance of caution, I wish to clarify for the parliamentary record.

In response to a question concerning the publication of deidentified decisions in child safety matters, I indicated that the government would not be changing the existing practice and that this practice was to not publish such decisions. I want to inform the House that the existing practice is to publish deidentified decisions and that there is no intention to change this existing practice under the amalgamated tribunal.

Second, in response to a question as to whether the proposed bill would impugn an individual's legal rights and access to justice I indicated that there would not be a restriction on judicial review. I want to clarify for the record that, while judicial review will be partially ousted in relation to decisions of the new tribunal, this will not restrict or confine the rights of citizens to justice in this state. The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal will provide for expanded appeal rights where previously no or more limited rights may have existed. As I noted yesterday, the judicial review process is a cumbersome one when compared to a more open and streamlined appeals process and, as such, the end result—ensuring the rights of citizens to an open and equitable justice system—is achieved.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT (ASSET RESTRUCTURING AND DISPOSAL) BILL

FUEL SUBSIDY REPEAL AND REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1061, on motion of Mr Fraser—

That the bills be now read a second time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Before calling the member for Waterford, I want to acknowledge in the gallery today students and teachers from the Nanango State High School in the electorate of Nanango, represented in this House by Dorothy Pratt.

Mr MOORHEAD (Waterford—ALP) (2.37 pm), continuing: The state government in this budget is also promoting healthy and active lifestyles in the Logan region, with \$474,000 of a \$1,474,000 allocation in funding for the construction of playing fields, clubhouse and ancillary facilities for rugby union and touch football at Griffith University at Meadowbrook. Strikers Football Club and the Meakin Park Junior Sporting Association have also received \$100,000 each to install lighting at the Meakin Park premises. The state government will also provide Logan City Council with \$39,000 for the construction of the walkway and cycleway path at Tygum Lagoon, a much loved park for the people of Waterford West. The scenic lagoon is the hidden treasure of Waterford West and I am sure the walkway will be well used by the residents from the nearby River Glen retirement community.

The state budget will also support safer communities, delivering on Labor's commitment for the \$2.92 million refurbishment of the Beenleigh Police Station—a station supporting more than 70 police officers, the Logan district traffic branch and the Logan district communications centre.

At these times, this government recognises the pressure on the budgets of pensioners. That is why the electricity rebate will increase by more than \$25 a year. This budget invests \$93.5 million all up in this financial year on pensioner electricity rebates and concessions for life support equipment. Currently, pensioners receive a \$165 a year concession. That will increase to \$190.85 a year in 2009-10, an increase of more than 15 per cent. At the same time, Queensland's electricity prices continue to be among the lowest in Australia.

I listened intently to the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply speech this morning. I listened very hard, but I did not hear one policy, nor one skerrick of an idea. Gough Whitlam once said that only the impotent are pure. What we heard this morning from the Leader of the Opposition was the purity that can only come from impotence and irrelevance—opposing asset sales as well as the debt that will be relieved by their sale, opposing the ending of the fuel tax subsidy, but not committing to restore the subsidy if they were elected to government. The Leader of the Opposition has been consistent in one view: that the LNP opposition has no role in bringing forward policy ideas for the people of Queensland. I think the people will see through the sham outrage that will be exhibited from the LNP today and tomorrow over the fuel tax. If the LNP was fair dinkum, it would have committed to reintroducing the subsidy. As it has not, the LNP position today is simply a cheap political sham.

This budget delivers on election commitments, getting on with the job of meeting our promises to the people of Queensland. Commencing on 1 July 2009 is the solar hot-water scheme, which will deliver 210,000 solar hot-water systems at a fraction of the retail price, the 125 per cent rebate for payroll tax on apprentice and trainee wages and the first wave of the 3,000 Green Army work placements and traineeships.

As many members would know, I am passionate about promoting Queensland's manufacturing industry. This state budget rolls out the first year of a \$6.4 million package over five years for the Queensland Made Means Queensland Jobs initiative. This program will be a massive boost for the Industry Capability Network in its work to maximise opportunities for local suppliers for major infrastructure, resource and government funded projects. ICN will be able to do even more to create new opportunities for Queensland businesses to support the retention and creation of employment and economic growth. Queensland leads the country in its manufacturing industry promotion policies. It is no surprise that the Commonwealth, the South Australian and the New South Wales governments have copied many of the programs that we have in Queensland in QMI Solutions, our Manufacturing Leaders Group and the Heavy Engineering Industry Reference Group.

The Queensland Made Means Queensland Jobs initiative will make sure Queensland's manufacturing employers will get every possible chance to build employment opportunities from the massive \$18.2 billion infrastructure program. I am proud to be part of a government that is fighting for every job when the tide of economic conditions is going out. Not only are we building Queensland with our own \$18.2 billion infrastructure stimulus, we are supporting our local manufacturing industry to drag out every single job there is from this massive investment. That is the story of this budget. It is a budget that is supporting jobs for Queenslanders in tough economic times. I commend the bills to the House.

Ms van LITSENBURG (Redcliffe—ALP) (2.42 pm): I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills. At the 21 March election, Queenslanders voted strongly for a Bligh Labor government to deliver jobs in these unprecedented times and that is what the 2009 budget is all about. Putting people before figures on a balance sheet is our top priority. This Labor government cannot justify putting thousands of people out of work so that it can keep its AAA credit rating. We cannot allow banks to take family homes when people cannot pay their mortgages just so that we can keep our balance sheets in the black. We cannot stop building vital infrastructure in Queensland, setting our state back many years, just so that we can show off and brag about how great we are at managing our economy. Every one of our Redcliffe and Queensland people is worth more than that.

This is a Labor government with a proud record of huge surpluses during the good times. But during those times we did not sit on our hands. We developed and diversified the Queensland economy and we embarked on record infrastructure spending. Both of those things will help to mitigate the effects of the current downturn.

In these times of global financial crisis, the Bligh Labor government has made the necessary tough decisions to ensure that we limit the deficits while we are stimulating the economy to the greatest extent that our budget allows. We are ensuring the greatest good for the most people not just for today, because many of the choices we have had to make have been very painful, but they were often the way of least pain in a variety of difficult choices. Despite the pain we are now feeling, the options the government has chosen in this budget are those that will minimise the current pain for many people but, more importantly, plant the seeds of growth for our state for the future. These options will ensure that Queensland will emerge from this recession strong and competitive as soon as our trading partners are buying again and that our deficits will return to surpluses again in the shortest possible time frame.

During the years of boom, Queensland led Australia with the highest growth rates and the lowest unemployment rates in the country. Our unemployment rate is still lower than the Australian rate and our growth rate is still higher. In this budget, the statistics show that our unemployment will remain lower and

our growth will continue to be above the national average. This is the result of careful planning and management of all aspects of the economy by this Labor government. This is our economic winter, but while we are waiting for the bloom of spring, the Bligh Labor government is applying the fertiliser the economy needs to ensure that the growth will be abundant when it comes. Our record infrastructure spending is about keeping Queenslanders working and ensuring we build the infrastructure we need to keep Queensland a modern, competitive economy that will still be the best place in Australia to live, work and play. I believe the current statistics that show 2,000 people per week are coming to Queensland prove that.

Despite the \$15 billion hole in the budget, Redcliffe has had more than its fair slice of the available money. I have fought hard for many items for a long period. Others may have already been announced but were always to be funded from this budget. Infrastructure spending in Redcliffe has continued to be high, which means that many jobs are being maintained and construction workers and tradies have continued working. I have it on good authority that some of those jobs have gone to local people.

These projects include \$125 million for the continuing construction of the Houghton Highway duplication, \$4.4 million at Scarborough to upgrade electricity transformers and switch gear, \$180,000 to complete construction of the new ambulance station and \$425,000 towards the Woody Point jetty and foreshore renewal project through Q150 funding. Transport and Main Roads issues have included two issues that I have advocated for over a long period. The upgrade of the Oxley Avenue and View Street area will provide a path through the median barrier so that elderly people and those with wheelchairs, prams and pushchairs can cross more safely, while the upgrade of the Boardman-Klingner Road intersection will allow freer movement and ensure that the fire service will be able to maintain its very short response times to call-outs.

Items funded in this part of the budget include \$99,000 to complete the asphalt resurfacing on Elizabeth Avenue between Duffield Road and Anzac Avenue, Clontarf; \$1 million to complete lighting on Elizabeth Avenue-Snook Street from Ewart Street to Miller Street; \$150,000 this year towards intersection improvements at the Klingner Road and Boardman Road intersection at Kippa-Ring; \$30,000 this year towards construction of a bikeway and footpaths on a section of MacDonnell Road between Snook Street and Margate Parade, Clontarf; \$178,000 to complete the provision of median barriers at Oxley Avenue and View Street, Woody Point, at a total cost of \$350,000, funded from the Queensland government Safer Roads Sooner program; \$150,000 this year towards asphalt passenger set-down facilities at Grace Lutheran Primary School, Clontarf; and \$110,500 this year towards asphalt resurfacing on Griffith Road between Oxley Avenue and Newport Drive, Scarborough.

The state and federal government partnership has ensured recording funding in schools to upgrade learning areas and resources, including \$1.29 million for Redcliffe Peninsula Laboratory Skills Trade Training Centre at Redcliffe State High School; \$80,780 for maintenance work at Clontarf Beach High School; \$66,970 for maintenance work at Clontarf Beach State School; \$97,730 for maintenance work at Humpybong State School; \$45,475 for maintenance work at Scarborough State School; \$3,500 for maintenance work at Redcliffe Special School; \$173,550 for maintenance work at Redcliffe State High School; \$80,373 for maintenance work at Woody Point Special School; and \$61,620 for maintenance work at Kippa-Ring State School.

I am very happy to see that the budget has included the continuation of the very successful job preparation programs, including \$613.71 million for vocational education and training activities to underpin the social and economic development of the greater Brisbane region and \$28.1 million across greater Brisbane for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, including Queensland's Green Army, to create 3,560 jobs for young people and those disadvantaged in the labour market. An additional \$7.1 million is to promote social inclusion through increasing economic participation in low socioeconomic urban fringe communities. These programs will ensure that Redcliffe people will continue to have the opportunity to gain skills to find the jobs they desperately want.

I am also happy about money that will facilitate the development of businesses in the Redcliffe area and will assist us to develop our business sector, giving us the opportunity to create more businesses and jobs so that Redcliffe people can find work locally. These include \$103,000 to Brisbane Marketing towards destination marketing and product development across the Brisbane area; \$120,000 for a Skills Formation Strategy to assist the Redcliffe-Dakabin corridor community to develop industry-community initiatives to support industry and community regional development; and \$200,000 towards the export of handling solutions for returnable plastic crates.

Homelessness and housing affordability is becoming a substantial issue across the region and an issue that is very close to my heart. The state government is supporting people in need by providing \$368,000 to the Home Assist Secure program to remove some of the practical housing related difficulties experienced by older people and people with a disability who wish to remain living in their homes; \$524,000 to commence construction of 12 social housing dwellings in the Redcliffe area; and \$2.49 million to complete construction of 10 social housing dwellings in the Redcliffe electorate.

The budget details increased funding for salaries for front-line workers in community care organisations such as those working with clients with social disadvantage and disabilities. It also supports the community sector, including \$336,849 to provide an accommodation and support service for women and children escaping domestic and family violence; \$379,324 to provide counselling and support for young people at risk of homelessness; and \$4.38 million to provide services such as respite care, domiciliary nursing, transport, home care and modifications, allied health, domestic assistance and personal care to the frail aged, younger people with moderate, severe or profound disabilities and their carers.

Our community sporting organisations have also been supported in the budget, including \$1.5 million towards the upgrade and extension of the Redcliffe Tennis Centre; \$200,000 of a total of \$1.5 million towards the construction of a fitness centre for gymnasium community exercise classes and aerobics at the leagues club; \$66,625 towards the construction of an amenities block consisting of two change rooms, showers and toilets, strapping room, referees' room and storage for rugby league at Kippa-Ring; \$66,444 towards the construction of an ancillary facility incorporating change rooms, amenities and a storeroom to support soccer at Redcliffe; \$66,965 towards the installation of lighting on one baseball diamond at Kippa-Ring; \$65,960 towards the installation of field lighting to one softball diamond at Kippa-Ring; \$25,000 to develop health and active lifestyle support for Redcliffe aged community carers through nutrition education and access to equipment at Redcliffe; and \$33,000 to deliver the Splash Into Life program providing physical activity opportunities for seniors and information on nutrition, general health and wellbeing at Redcliffe.

These are the main items from the budget that are directed into the Redcliffe electorate. They are not insignificant and they will go a long way to providing a more cohesive community that is supporting a wide range of its residents in a variety of ways to deliver a better lifestyle for everyone. They also show that the Bligh government values all the things in our communities that affirm people and provide community cohesion despite the tight 2009 budget. I commend the budget to the House.

Ms O'NEILL (Kallangur—ALP) (2.56 pm): It is an honour to speak in support of the Bligh government's appropriation bill which delivers real benefits to the people in the electorate of Kallangur. I am pleased to see investment in projects that will create hundreds of jobs for the local area in trades and construction. In particular, Queensland's Green Army initiative will provide 3,560 jobs for Queenslanders, great opportunities for young people and those disadvantaged in the labour market, with \$28.1 million across greater Brisbane which, of course, was promised in the recent election and is evidence of the Bligh government's commitment to jobs and sustaining Queensland through the tough economic times ahead.

There is welcome funding of \$3.51 million to purchase land associated with the proposed Narangba and Kholo Creek hardrock haulage roads corridor at a total cost of \$23.45 million to ensure that there is a dedicated route to provide certainty for the affected residents. There will be removal of a significant quantity of hardrock quarry from this area and hauling this material via existing roads has been controversial.

It gives me particular pleasure to see \$125,650 allocated to Dakabin State High School for much needed maintenance. I know that the principal and staff will be extremely grateful. In line with their excellent academic and other achievements they will now be able to have classrooms to match. Similarly, the allocation of \$66,000 to Dakabin State School, \$40,700 to Undurba State School and \$47,380 to Kallangur State School for maintenance will make a real difference. There has been another total of \$114,790 allocated to school maintenance for the other wonderful schools in Kallangur.

In an electorate like Kallangur with its tremendous growth, family support services are very much needed. Accordingly, \$6,000 provided in community self-care funding to assist self-help groups to provide information on a variety of existing and emerging health issues will assist greatly.

Traffic congestion and public transport improvements have been addressed as money has been set aside for concept planning for roads between Petrie and the Bruce Highway and Anzac Avenue between Mango Hill and Dohles Rocks Road. There is funding for the repair and replacement of bridges and Bruce Highway interchanges. City train stations will receive upgrades to comply with disability standards and the Petrie station upgrade will be completed. Those constituents who live close to the Bruce Highway will welcome the increased funding for additional noise barriers.

There is funding to ensure that the important work of Near North Housing will continue. This service provides information, advice and advocacy to tenants and residents, especially those experiencing difficulties with their tenancies or residential services. I am very aware of the work done by this organisation and the impact on the people of Kallangur.

I am pleased to see the allocation of \$662,632 to provide residential care for young men with extreme or complex support needs and over \$700,000 to provide counselling services for families, children and young people referred by the department of child safety to provide therapeutic assistance to work toward goals that will prevent further statutory intervention.

There is also a very welcome \$2.4 million for the Home and Community Care program for approved organisations to provide services such as respite care, domiciliary nursing, transport, home care and modifications, allied health and other care to the frail aged or younger people with disabilities and their carers, and a further \$69,000 to assist adults with disabilities to maintain the living arrangements of their choice.

As the electorate of Kallangur is rapidly developing, dependable electricity supply has been a major issue for many in the area, so I particularly appreciate the fact that there has been major funding announced in the budget of \$8.1 million to work on electricity transmission lines serving the community. A new substation will be established at Whiteside and a new high-voltage feeder at Narangba to increase capacity.

While these are difficult times, there has been much included in this budget that will benefit the constituents of Kallangur, such as a massive \$18 billion on infrastructure, increases to police numbers, \$1 billion extra to health, a commitment to climate change initiatives, increased teacher numbers, \$1.51 million towards the purchase of books for public libraries in the region and a recognition of the needs of pensioners by increasing the electricity rebate. This is a responsible budget, strong on infrastructure development and focused on our state now and in the future. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (3.01 pm): In speaking to the appropriation bills, the Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill and the Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I would like to express my disappointment in the 'bankcard budget' that has been handed down. It is a disgrace that the funding for Queensland is to be paid by credit, resulting in a massive \$85 billion debt and a massive \$14 million interest payment each and every day. Another disappointment is the sale of the state's assets—its ports and other infrastructure—to fund this mismanagement. The loss of the fuel subsidy only adds to the woes of everyday Queenslanders.

Mr Fraser: Did you buy your first house with cash?

Mr KNUTH: You have to agree with that: it will only add to the woes of every Queensland.

Mr Fraser: Did you buy your first house with cash?

Mr KNUTH: I will be opposing this and I am happy to let you know that. All of these measures add up to an increasingly desperate government which spends like there is no tomorrow, and now the government has the gall to blame the current financial crisis for the mess it finds itself in.

Mr O'Brien: You've got two mortgages.

Mr KNUTH: Queensland has lost its credit rating—once the boasting point of the government—and now faces the loss of assets which have taken years to establish and cost taxpayers dearly in the past.

Mr O'Brien: Two mortgages joint with spouse and a business loan. He's got three loans.

Mr KNUTH: You will be selling off Queensland Rail? You will be voting for it tonight?

In relation to the fuel subsidy, people from New South Wales may travel interstate to access cheaper fuel, but the money they spend when they come remains in the state anyway. The introduction of this tax disadvantages not only the southerners crossing the border for subsidised fuel but also every Queensland, including rural and regional Queenslanders who have to travel to access services that are no longer available in their communities because this government persists in removing them.

Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia, with poor public transport available to most. The introduction of the tax will have burdensome financial consequences for the average family budget. Queenslanders rely heavily on private transport in every facet of daily life, from dropping off their children at school to doing the weekly shopping to attending weekend sporting activities. The introduction of a fuel tax will impose significant costs for the transport of goods, resulting in higher prices for everyday groceries. Many struggling sporting associations will see a massive drop in registrations with the added burden of higher fuel costs. Every industry will suffer, from the flagging tourism industry to the already overburdened primary industry.

The fuel subsidy was introduced in 1997 by the Nationals' Rob Borbidge. It has ensured that Queenslanders and visitors to the state have paid significantly less for fuel than other states. This initiative has provided businesses with incentives for investing in and expansion into Queensland. It has given incentives for tourists and southerners to visit this state and given Queensland families opportunities that they would otherwise not have had.

All Queenslanders will have to bear these costs. I cannot believe that this government has the audacity to blame the global financial crisis. When the Goss government took over in 1989, Wayne Goss admitted that he could not believe what he inherited. He saw a state that had infrastructure, roads, power stations and dams being built. But when Wayne Goss got into power the first thing he did was introduce the 'no new dams' policy. Then Beattie introduced the 'no new dams' policy. But what happened? South-East Queensland ran out of water. So what did Premier Beattie do? He put his hand on his heart and said, 'I will provide water for South-East Queensland residents.' So what did he do? He goes over to Traveston—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! Will the member speak through the chair.

Mr KNUTH: So he goes and has a look at Traveston Crossing. SunWater would not entertain it. Goss would not entertain it. Borbidge would not entertain it. But Beattie said, 'I will build my dam there because I want to provide water to South-East Queensland residents.' He has spent \$500 million, and what has that resulted in? Nothing. We have an \$11 billion water grid. How much water has that produced? Absolutely none. We have an \$85 billion deficit, and \$9 billion of that is to help fund the health crisis. Then we had the energy crisis because the government did not upgrade the high-voltage network. And Labor wonders why it has got this state into deficit.

Over the years this government did not invest in infrastructure. All this government has done over the years is spend bucketloads of cash promoting what a good job it is doing without doing anything.

Ms Croft: What about the roads in Charters Towers?

Mr Shine: Don't you want the money spent up there?

Mr KNUTH: Well, I will—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the member speak through the chair.

Mr KNUTH: I am happy that in this budget we did get some crumbs. It was great to see that we did get some crumbs. We have been fighting for those crumbs.

Ms Croft: What sort of crumbs?

Mr KNUTH: This is something that may seem little to you, but the funding for midwifery in Charters Towers and the Tablelands is very pleasing. We have seen all of our maternity services closed down year in, year out. Mums have been forced to travel 700- and 800-kilometre round trips to give birth to their babies. That is one thing that I would like to say. We have also been crying out for the extra funding for the Gregory Development Road every year, year in and year out. We got \$16 million, even though the area produces \$35 million in royalties for the state government. But we are appreciative of the \$16 million. Another boost in the northern part of the electorate was \$5.5 million—

Mr Shine: More!

Ms Croft: Big crumb!

Mr KNUTH: Here we go. But it was Australian government funding; it was not state government funding. It was funding to establish a trade training centre at Atherton State High School. We can thank the taxpayers of Australia for that. It had nothing to do with the state government. There is also funding towards the replacement of the ambulance station at Ravenshoe. That has been going on for 10 years, so that funding is much appreciated. There is funding for the construction of the SES facility and the ambulance station in Moranbah. That has been going on for about 10 years, but we have finally got that funding so that is great. It is much appreciated.

Once again, we see the health and wellbeing of rural and regional residents ignored. There was no increase to the patient travel subsidy. Each patient will have to pay an extra 10c a litre for fuel. The travel subsidy of 15c a litre is a pittance. It has only increased 5c a litre, from 10c to 15c, in the last 15 years.

Mr Messenger: They'll agree to increase the patient travel subsidy now, won't they?

Mr KNUTH: That's right. Will you agree? I hope you will agree to increase the patient travel subsidy, seeing that the price of fuel will go up an extra 10c a litre.

I am disappointed that there was no funding for the Herberton to Irvinebank road. Serious accidents and dreadful injuries have occurred along this road, including the rollover of a minibus on Sunday, 24 May, in which children were injured. The road is a death trap. Virtually every time people use the road they risk life and limb. The road is used by locals and tourists alike, yet it is largely avoided by the tourists because of its dangerous condition. Rental cars using the road are unable to be insured.

The state government contracts the council to maintain the road. We should forget about paying hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to grade that road because after it rains the gravel just washes off. It is a catastrophe. The state government would be better off spending money sealing the road from Herberton to Irvinebank once and for all. That way money would not be wasted year in, year out grading the road. Once this road was sealed, the council could concentrate on the road from Irvinebank to Petford, which is also in desperate need of sealing.

The Herberton and Irvinebank areas are missing out on the tourist dollar that would otherwise be available if the road was sealed and made safe. Both Herberton and Irvinebank are towns of immense historical importance and are consequently attractive to domestic and overseas tourists and history buffs alike. Herberton is one of the oldest towns on the Tablelands and at one stage was the richest tin mining field in Australia. Herberton now offers numerous historical sites and places of interest, including Queensland's only tropical vineyard. When Vulcan lode was discovered in 1889, Irvinebank grew to be Australia's deepest and richest tin mine and is credited by historians with defining Australia's future in many ways. Irvinebank is also famous for being the only known locality of two rare and significant plant species: an orange-red flowering grevillea and the world's only purple-flowering wattle.

Another issue screaming for immediate attention is the construction of overtaking lanes between Charters Towers and Townsville. Concerned road users are intimidated by the number and size of the heavy vehicles on the road. Many Charters Towers road users are older residents on their way to medical appointments in Townsville or tourists who are not used to the size and length of road trains thundering along the highway. There is one westbound overtaking lane on this section of the road and no eastbound overtaking lane. In contrast, there are seven overtaking lanes between Townsville and Home Hill—four northbound lanes and three southbound lanes. This disparity is very difficult to comprehend, considering an estimated 60 road trains use the road every day servicing the mining, cattle and petroleum industries, with more road trains expected to use the road in the near future.

As well as grey nomads with their vans, other tourists and residents from every town between Townsville and Mount Isa are on the road daily. There have been numerous accidents along this part of the Flinders Highway and unfortunately many fatalities. While different factors contribute to serious accidents, one undeniable factor is the lack of overtaking lanes. Today's traffic is fast and heavy, but knowing an overtaking lane is not too far away provides a sense of relief and security to road users who may be stuck behind a line of vans or road trains.

I wish to bring to the attention of the House a potentially deadly traffic situation at the T-intersection of Wakefield Road and the Millaa Millaa-Malanda Road. The problem is that there is no turning lane for traffic turning off the main road into Wakefield Road. The intersection sits at the bottom of a gully and the road is too narrow for all but one car to squeeze past a turning vehicle, so all traffic behind a vehicle that has indicated its intention to turn must slow down and/or stop, otherwise they end up down an embankment into a tree or head-on into oncoming traffic.

Traffic on the highway is travelling at top speed, and stopping for a vehicle which is in the middle of the road and is intending to turn into Wakefield Road down the bottom of the hill is downright dangerous. To remind members, Wakefield Road is a one-lane road and many times cars wanting to turn into the road cannot, as vehicles coming out from Wakefield Road onto the main highway are in the way. This forces vehicles to stop in the middle of the highway, with trucks pounding down behind them and slamming on their brakes. Road users have been smashed from behind by loaded trucks, with many near-death experiences having occurred, because the trucks had limited space and time to see the turning vehicle, slow down and take evasive action. Trucks regularly zoom down one side of the hill so they will have enough speed to climb the next hill without changing gears, but the intersection sits at the gully at the bottom of the first hill. Vehicles attempting to turn into Wakefield Road will be in this gully. A turning lane is urgently needed.

I would also like to bring to the attention of the House the disappointing news about the sale of Queensland Rail. The Bligh government will sell off the coal component of Queensland Rail and the Abbot Point Coal Terminal and also target Queensland Rail's bulk retail and regional freight, which includes the Townsville to Mount Isa line. This sell-off is probably one of the greatest acts of betrayal by the Labor Party in Queensland's history.

I had the privilege of working for Queensland Rail for 20 years. When I first joined, a job in the railway was a job for life. We had a rail network that had a station in every town, a trucking yard every 30 kilometres and a freight service that reduced the traffic on our roads. Our small communities thrived on the back of the railways and could depend on a reliable freight service. Queensland Rail boasted up to 26,000 employees, and many of those workers were Aboriginals, South Sea Islanders and Torres Strait Islanders. This was Queensland Rail before 19 years of Labor government under Goss, Beattie and now the public asset seller, Premier Anna Bligh. We never thought we would see the day when a 144-year-old icon, built by the taxpayers of Queensland through their sweat and toil, would be sold.

I have spoken with rail employees who fear for their jobs. They are dismayed and have said that they cannot believe the Labor Party has betrayed their core principles and grassroots. Our Citytrain passenger service runs at a loss of a billion dollars each year—

Mr Shine: Will you stop the sale?

Mr KNUTH: We will be voting against it and we will be very proud to vote against it. We cannot believe that you are actually doing this. You are selling Queensland Rail. This is a public asset and I encourage the backbenchers to cross the floor and not support the sale of this public asset.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! Will the member for Dalrymple please speak through the chair.

Mr KNUTH: Our Citytrain and passenger service runs at a loss of \$1 billion each year and relies on the coal network to prop it up. Who is going to pay for it when these profitable networks are gone? These fire sales have nothing to do with the economic crisis. The \$75 million debt was racked up by Labor during the good years of the mining and housing boom and strong economic growth. The Bligh government promised 100,000 jobs during the election campaign, but all we have got is job losses and asset sales and the state has lost its credit rating. The sale of Queensland's assets will mean the state will have no income stream for our future generations—no income for our hospitals, our roads and our schools. This shows gross government mismanagement of a magnitude not seen before. I encourage government backbenchers to not support this sell-off and stick to their core principles.

I also want to mention a very important issue that was supported by the previous Minister for Main Roads and Local Government when he was the Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services Queensland, Warren Pitt. We did not receive any funding. In Charters Towers, we have been crying out for a specific dementia unit for the last decade. The previous minister had been through the facilities. Unfortunately, the Pandanus unit there had its beds removed in 2001 and it was closed down, so the unit is sitting vacant. This is probably one of the most emotional, compassionate issues in Charters Towers.

The elderly patients there are being forced into other care facilities which are hundreds of kilometres away, if not 500 to 600 kilometres away. Some of the families of these elderly patients—their husbands or their wives—are in their 70s or 80s and they cannot drive the seven or eight hours to see them. We have a wonderful facility that was built in 1929 which houses around 120 patients at this present moment. It provides that wonderful service for the elderly patients, but as they develop dementia they are forced to move on to other care facilities.

All that is needed as a start-up cost is \$1.5 million. That is all we are asking for. I have invited the Minister for Health to come to Charters Towers to speak to the aged-care action group. This was something that we committed to in the last election. There are three cases right now where the patients have been forced to move to other care facilities. Some of these people have lived in this area their entire lives and they have contributed greatly in the area. They have owned businesses, they have worked on the railways, they have worked on cattle stations. A lot of them have worked in the Eventide facility but their families have had to send them away.

We tabled a petition with over 2,000 signatures, and I encourage the minister to come to Charters Towers to speak to the Charters Towers residents and see what a compassionate and emotional issue this is. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House. When it comes to selling these assets, especially Queensland Rail, I vehemently oppose that.

Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—LNP) (3.20 pm): Before I commence my remarks, I want to return briefly to last night's debate on the 5.30 pm motion and to comments made by the member for Everton. He made some comment joining Third World countries with Queensland's health system. I am quite concerned that, for his own political purposes, he would deride people who reside in a country or countries that are not as well off as our own. It worries me enormously that he took that opportunity, but I am also concerned that the inference from his comments is that, because we live in Queensland, no-one in this state has the right to question the quality of the health service given to the people of the state. He clearly indicated that he believes people on this side of the House and people throughout Queensland do not have a right to question whether the health system being given to them is adequate, whether it serves their needs, that of their family and that of their friends.

I can tell honourable members on the government benches that that is exactly what we are going to do here today, tomorrow and during the estimates process. We are going to question the government on how it has spent money—or, more appropriately, how it has misspent money—and how it has failed to provide, at least in the health portfolio, for the needs of this great state.

I also want to make comment on the contribution of the member for Waterford, who mentioned the name Gough Whitlam in this House. When we have debt in Queensland of \$85 billion, the one name I would not have thought would be brought into the House by the Labor Party is Gough Whitlam, who pulled this nation into the greatest fiasco and debt we have ever seen. It took years and years of the federal coalition government to pull us out.

I turn to the health budget. There was one thing that amazed me about this budget, amongst other issues. There was one thing that stood out. Tomorrow night we are going to see government members scrap the fuel subsidy. They are going to put a tax of up to 10c on people throughout this state who drive vehicles. That also attracts people who travel from rural and country Queensland to Cairns, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! Will members, whether they are interjecting or speaking, remember to direct their comments through the chair.

Mr McARDLE: People right across the state will be paying more money in fuel, but there is nothing in the budget that increases the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme. Those people who travel hundreds of kilometres and who are paying 10c a litre more for their fuel are not going to get any relief from this government. So there is an extra slug. It stays at 15c a kilometre, \$30 a night, but there is no relief for those people who are seeking medical treatment because the government has gutted services to the bush and forced these people into even more perilous financial situations.

Let me go through some of the figures contained in the budget for health. The major problem facing Queensland Health continues to be insufficient real beds—not trolleys, not chairs; real beds. In 2008-09 the budget was \$654 million for new beds. We got 76 new beds in Queensland—real beds. We needed 200 beds last year alone to keep parity with the population increase.

There is no additional funding for oncology radiation services despite waiting times for the two non-critical categories exceeding maximum acceptable delays at all four centres. I do not believe that at this point in time we have the quarterly reports for December and March of what those waiting times were, despite the commitment of the health minister that he would release them.

Target triage times for the four most serious emergency categories again were not met—1, 2, 3 and 4 were not met. There has been no improvement in access block figures, with 35 per cent of emergency department patients still having to wait more than eight hours for a hospital bed. In 2008-09, \$75 million, including federal funding, was set aside to construct the Smart State Medical Research Centre. Only \$14.3 million was spent and the balance has not been allocated for 2009-10. It has been allocated past that date with a comment that reads, in essence, 'It is anticipated that the bulk of the grant funding will be expended in 2010-11.' Where has the money gone for the Smart State Medical Research Centre? At the same time I note that \$80 million has been set aside for the research block at the new Queensland Children's Hospital.

Let us look at some of the blow-outs in the figures for construction of infrastructure. The Gold Coast University Hospital has blown out to \$200 million. The Queensland Children's Hospital has blown out to \$240 million. The Sunshine Coast University Hospital has increased in cost by \$360 million—\$68 million of this was spent last year. The balance of that hospital is now in mothballs. I will return to that very shortly.

I turn to regional staff accommodation. There was nothing spent on Cape York staff accommodation last year, according to the budget papers. After the former minister made a commitment that he would deal with that issue forthwith and he would rectify the problem, not one cent was spent. The Caboolture health precinct is a \$21 million project. Only \$3 million has been spent. None of the \$9.8 million in the 2008-09 year was spent and less than \$900,000 is allocated in the 2009-10 year.

The whole of the \$6.7 million for the Indigenous alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program was to be spent in 2008-09. Only \$2 million was spent. This is the government that claimed it is going to tackle one of the most tragic and horrendous situations faced by our Indigenous people—alcohol treatment and rehabilitation. It cannot even stand by its own word. It is a significant underspend impacting on not just the Indigenous people who are living in the communities at the moment but also their children and grandchildren. In 2008-09 there is a \$3.3 million underspend on the Cairns Hospital emergency department. The list just goes on and on.

One of the most telling figures is that related to the health technology replacement program. In 2008-09 the budget was \$56 million. \$2.3 million was spent—a shortfall of somewhere around \$53½ million in a state that this government claims is the Smart State. Health technology replacement, which is so essential to deliver the services to the people of Queensland, was underspent by a massive amount.

The health minister rightly identified that there has been an increase in the budget this year, but that is not the end of the question. The real question is this: when you analyse the figures for last year and the year before that, how have those funds been spent? Have they delivered on the ground the services in the quantities that we require? In the last five years in acute in-patient settings we have seen spending increase by 72 per cent. Staffing has increased by 45 per cent but service levels have increased by less than 18 per cent.

Certainly increase staffing to provide the answers we need and certainly increase the budget. But when the budget is increased by 72 per cent and staffing is increased by 45 per cent and the outcome increases by only 18 per cent, something is wrong. The dollar is not being delivered in a manner that returns sick and injured people to the community.

There has been a consistent five-year decline in services for people with a mental disability in spite of a 76 per cent increase in funding and an almost 30 per cent increase in staff numbers. In fact, real service levels have gone backwards in the past five years.

Children's dental services have also gone backwards every year for the past five years. Those opposite cannot neglect children's dental services and then claim they are dealing with the issues at an early stage because that is where the problems develop and then not put sufficient money into it to arrest the problem.

Up to four per cent of Queensland's public hospital beds are being used by people who should be in nursing homes. That equates to 408 beds. If we used those beds for 250 days per year—that is, Monday to Friday for 50 weeks—that equates to 100,000 bed days. That would equate to some 30,000 to 40,000 additional elective surgery operations that we could undertake in this state.

Kevin Rudd has now been in power for close on 18 months. What is he doing and what is the Labor government doing to produce more nursing home licences and more nursing home beds in this state to get people out of the public hospital system so we can utilise those beds? This is the opportunity that those opposite cried out for over and over again in 2007. They said, 'If we had a Labor government in Canberra all these issues would go away.' That is one issue that is still very much alive and very much hurting the people of this state. This government is not prepared to take the hard decisions and go and front Kevin Rudd and say, 'Where's the money? Help us.'

There is an incredible amount of documentation lying around in relation to the lack of planning by this Queensland government. We all know about the recent report by the Auditor-General. I do not want to go back through that unless I am pushed into it. That document speaks for itself.

There is something else that I want to refer to. The Auditor-General refers to a book titled *An Introduction to health planning for developing health systems*, third edition, by Andrew Green, Oxford Press. I got a copy of that book from our library. It is all about health planning. It is not a bad book. I am just wondering whether it sits somewhere on the minister's desk or somewhere on the DG's desk. The opening paragraph headed 'What is planning and why plan?' is quite telling. It states—

For many healthcare professionals the term planning may be confusing as it is used by different people in different ways. The activity itself may be seen as mysterious, complex and possibly irrelevant to their daily lives either at work or at home. This introductory chapter explains the rationale for planning and its development, and discusses possible negative attitudes towards it in some quarters.

That paragraph fits perfectly with the report by the Auditor-General. That is exactly how Queensland Health plans. Planning to Queensland Health is indeed mysterious, complex and possibly irrelevant. That book is well worth reading. It goes right to the core of planning for this state's health system. It is a book that the minister, the DG and the relevant officers should read on a daily basis. Let us see what happens when we do not get—

Government members interjected.

Mr McARDLE: They need to. The damning comments in the report by the Auditor-General make it quite clear that they should be reading this book every day. Maybe then we would not have had 109 people waiting in EDs in Queensland on 15 June. Maybe we would not have had 118 people waiting in EDs on 16 June. Maybe we would not have had 128 people waiting in EDs on 17 June. Maybe if it had planned we would not have had those figures. Maybe yesterday we would not have had QEII and Redcliffe hospitals on bypass. When I arrived in the chamber at five minutes to three this afternoon the figures for 18 June were not yet available. One would have to wonder why.

Our hospitals and our EDs are gridlocked. When I asked the health minister this morning what we were going to do in relation to swine flu his answer was that we are going to cut elective surgery. That is it. That is all we are going to do. We are going to cut the elective surgery waiting list. The American College of Emergency Medicine, endorsed by the Australian college, said that simply doing one thing is not going to solve the gridlock. There has to be a whole-of-hospital approach. If we do not have that we will simply not solve the problem.

The minister also made much today of the quarterly public hospital performance report. He said that Queensland Health's planning had reduced elective surgery waiting list numbers. He did not go to the figures for what is called the waiting list to get on the waiting list. Let us make a comparison between those two figures. The waiting list to get on the waiting list as at March 2008 was 159,223. In March 2009 the figure was 180,582, an increase of 21,359. The number of patients on the elective surgery waiting list went from 36,030 in April 2008 to 33,993 in April 2009. That is a drop of 2,037. We had an increase of 21,000 on the waiting list to get on the waiting list and a drop of 2,000 on the elective surgery waiting list. Is that proper planning or are the figures being manipulated because we do not want to put the 21,000 people actually on the elective surgery waiting list because that would show the real situation in this state?

The Sunshine Coast Hospital has been torn out of the budget. We were promised 450 beds in 2014. We now face having 110 beds in 2014 with the new hospital on the never-never for 2016-17. I can guarantee that date will not be met. There is no way that will happen because this government could not commit, from 2006 to 2009, to build it by 2014. The history of this government in relation to this hospital is absolutely appalling. In the meantime, we do not have the modern facilities for oncology, cardiology, neonatal and paediatric services and the ED capacity of up to 54 bays that were promised with the new hospital. There is some sort of fufury being peddled by this government that the 110 beds in the private facility will cater for a growth in population from 325,000 to 434,000 by 2016 and to 472,000 by 2021.

The most shocking figure is this: this state is paying \$1.2 billion in additional interest because we have lost our AAA credit rating. That would have built the Sunshine Coast University Hospital every year for the next two, three, four years. I wonder where that money is going to go? I have a deep suspicion that it could be used by this government for political expediency in this city. In my opinion, it has forgone the needs of the people of the Sunshine Coast for a politically expedient reason situated right here—that is, the Queensland Children's Hospital.

The government was so devoid of funds it had to find some venue to take the money out of, and there is no doubt that that is where the money has gone. Let us look at the issue of rural health in this state. Have members ever seen a more appalling situation in terms of the number of maternity units ripped by this government from our country and regional brothers and sisters? There are people travelling hundreds of kilometres because this government has closed so many wards, has closed so many birthing centres and has closed so many people off from having a birth in their local area, and Beaudesert is the worst example. Beaudesert has had the capacity to have a birthing centre—a maternity centre—for some time, and still this government is not prepared to assist those men and women who provide so much into our economy on a daily basis. It does not care about the country or the regional and rural areas.

(Time expired)

Mrs STUCKEY (Currumbin—LNP) (3.40 pm): I rise to contribute to the Appropriation Bill 2009. Another year and another budget, but this one will be remembered as the sale of the century. Labor urges us to move on, with claims that the only reason we are in tough times is because of the world downturn, but in reality it gives the Premier and her Treasurer a smokescreen. But as the smoke clears, like it has on the hospital budget fiasco and election charade of betrayal by this couple, the true picture is revealed. 'You can count on me,' said the Premier less than three months ago, with all the theatrics of Cleopatra as she clasped an asp to her bosom. The Premier was being dishonest then, so why would we trust her now?

Mr McArdle: Poor asp!

Mrs STUCKEY: There is some pity for the asp I understand. I doubt there are too many Queenslanders today who do not believe they have been cheated, that the Premier knew more than she was telling before the election but that she was prepared to betray their trust in order to feed her own thirst for power. I have said in previous budget reply speeches, much to the chagrin of members opposite, that Labor's budgets are akin to the movie *The Truman Show*—where fiction and reality are blurred and where poor sods' lives are a complete fabrication being fed a daily stream of untruths. Labor would have us use any distractions so we would not turn our minds to why Queensland is suffering more than it should. We do not deserve this, and the good citizens of this state should not have to play victim to Labor's gross incompetence.

The fact we no longer have a AAA credit rating despite a boom decade in Queensland is not viewed as important by this Premier—a stance which highlights her government's ineptitude to manage our economy and her own failure to lead this state. Labor has committed heinous crimes with its handling of the state's purse strings over the years and should be punished. It really is criminal that Labor has squandered opportunities in boom times, and it has proven with this slash and burn budget that it cannot manage the bad times. This government has just cut and run, leaving behind the mess of its own arrogant making and has refused to accept any responsibility. Let us not forget this Premier was Treasurer only two budgets ago. History is a lesson. It serves us well to remember the mistakes so we can improve in times ahead.

I do not want my family and my constituents to think that I bowed to the appalling provisions contained in the bills before us that would impose a fuel tax that will increase the price of countless basic items, affect every household budget and see assets that belong to the taxpayers of this state sold off at bargain basement prices because this government failed to plan wisely in the past. That is why those of us on this side of the House—the LNP—will be opposing the scrapping of the fuel subsidy. The far-reaching ramifications will savage family budgets, budgets that will be king-hit twice by this new tax—once at the petrol bowser and again for basic food and sundry items.

The government is forecasting a debt of \$85 billion for 2011-12 based on, at best, optimistic forecasts of growth of 4½ per cent in 2012-13 and the hope that these latter years' growth rates are achieved—and I actually do hope that they are achieved—but, in the most charitable assessment, they should be viewed as optimistic. A reduction to 3½ per cent or four per cent growth rates would still reflect a reasonable level of growth but would have a significant adverse impact on debt. Surely the Treasury has done this sensitivity analysis and I ask the government to make public the impact of such an alternative growth rate. The government's financial plan seeks to do no more than break even on cash flow, even though depreciation, which it excludes from this unusual cost approach, will now have to be funded out of borrowings and not reserves.

The \$85 billion debt is a real burden for every Queenslander and it precludes Commonwealth grants, also funded from debt for which we Queenslanders are responsible. Every man, woman and child in Currumbin will be responsible for a Queensland overnight debt of \$85 billion for which the government has no payment plan. More than half of the projected debt of \$85 billion was incurred prior to the global financial crisis and was clearly a major problem, notwithstanding the growing revenue that came from royalties and GST. Labor still demonstrates the same incompetence and indifference to the public good that characterised its previous financial management. In successive replies to Labor budgets, I warned of a scenario where Labor would plunge us into severe debt and that opportunities were being wasted, and look at us now—drowning in a sea of debt with nothing in the piggy bank to show for the boom times and the credit card charged to the hilt.

The LNP does support the pull-ahead of major infrastructure programs during a period of reduced utilisation of existing plant and equipment and staff. If properly managed, it will impact favourably on employment and be competitive in cost. However, if all government investment stopped in 2013-14, the state would still owe \$85 billion with no greater capacity to realise the debt than it has today unless it were to take action on taxes, administrative costs and the sale of assets.

In dealing with the sale of government assets, it is important that three major conditions should be met. The first is that the asset should only be sold if it can be subject to competitive conditions. Private monopolies are no more attractive than public monopolies. The second point is that the cost and productive capacity of the asset to be sold must be in sound condition. Thirdly, the buyer must be able to demonstrate the ability to maintain price levels at the price offered for the assets.

Selling assets such as motorways, rail, forestry and coal haulage are indeed desperate measures. These assets all carry substantial debt, having been stripped of value by this reckless Labor government and therefore fail the above criteria. Unless the Treasurer can produce a business case for the sale of these assets—which I remind honourable members belong to all Queenslanders—the figures that the government claims are rubbery and its argument lame. At a glance, the privatisation of the Brisbane port fails to meet the first condition and should not proceed.

Turning to taxes and charges, the only sound principle is to ensure that the burden of new taxes is shared fairly throughout the community. The removal of the petrol subsidy falls most heavily on rural and regional Queensland while the residents of metropolitan Brisbane reap the benefit from the heavily subsidised public transport system. However, they, too, will be hard-hit, with price rises incurred on other items as a result of this new tax. As for costs in administration, the government has done nothing and costs have risen by \$2.6 billion or 7.4 per cent in 2009-10 of which salary and superannuation expenses account for \$1.5 billion and interest for \$350 million. For the rest of Queensland, their fate is 7¼ per cent unemployment and massive downwards pressure on incomes. The government has a major opportunity to be proactive in reforming public sector administration, but it seems so beholden to the trade union movement, particularly those in the public sector, that it has actually increased costs.

In this budget the annual cost of employment, including superannuation, has now reached \$100,000 per person per annum based on an even figure of 180,000 public servants at \$18 billion of costs. While about 12,000 of these public servants retire or leave each year, if the government replaced only half, it would produce cumulative savings of hundreds of millions of dollars per annum to say nothing of reduced rental, utility and vehicle costs. Of course, this would have an adverse impact on public sector trade union subscription income and its ability to fund Labor, so that is immediately ruled out.

Let me turn to the Department of Public Works which is, of late, kept busy largely dispensing billions of dollars worth of Commonwealth funds. Goodness knows what this Labor government would do without its federal mates. They hand it out as stimulus packages and Queensland Labor grabs it and gobbles it up into the big black debt hole. Almost every part of the ministerial statement on this department is a major cause of concern and in many respects it is little more than a microcosm of the whole of the Labor administration.

It operates a wide range of commercial services of the sort that are readily accessible in the private sector but which have mandated monopolies over government business. Common practice is to balance the books in such a manner that income and expenditure balance each other. For example, the budget for the Department of Public Works, which appears in the SDS at page 2-241, has a figure of \$612,357 million for income and exactly the same figure for expenses. That indicates no competition and no idea of whether the well-established private sector could offer lower prices and higher quality.

QFleet and Goprint are in a similar category, with the latter requiring a subsidy of \$3.6 million, which is 20 per cent of costs, to break even. Other divisions exist solely to provide administrative support to government entities that are too small to support financial and human resource activities. If these were incorporated into larger departments with related roles, these services could be supplied by the existing departments. Quite simply, the system the government is using is bad.

The government would like to pretend that it has made the tough decisions when the only decisions it has made that are tough are decisions such as scrapping the petrol subsidy, which is better described as a new tax, which impacts most adversely on rural and regional Queensland, as I have said. The remainder of the budget protects trade unions at the expense of the rest of Queensland.

It is ironic that Labor has not a skerrick of concern about its failure to honour promises that it made less than three months ago on prices, charges and subsidies, recognising that the economic circumstances have changed, yet it feels obliged to honour enterprise bargaining agreements and other services growth and environments that see employee expenses increase by 5.3 per cent in 2009-10.

But where does that leave my constituents? Their share of the \$85 billion debt is about \$21,000 for every man, woman and child, or \$78,000 for every family, each of whom will pay about \$1,000 per year in interest. This budget is a coward's budget. It places the state on a credit card economy with ever-increasing interest costs, pushes tax and charge increases on to the people, makes no effort to reduce administrative costs through quite feasible public sector reforms and makes extraordinary concessions to the financiers, the public sector unions.

I move now to my electorate of Currumbin, which is a truly magnificent place in which to live and raise a family. We recognise that times are tough. However, we expect our fair share of services—nothing fancy, just our fair share. Job losses will affect the Currumbin electorate hard, as it has a high number of small businesses, light industry and tourism. 'Jobs, jobs, jobs' is the mantra of the Premier. Already, thousands upon thousands of jobs have been lost in Queensland, with unemployment scheduled to rise. We are going backwards, yet the Premier promises 100,000 new jobs. This government's debt will cost us dearly in nurses, teachers, police officers and doctors. Labor simply cannot stick to its budget or deliver large projects on time. It is in its DNA.

Let us look at the cost blow-outs on both the desalination plant and the bypass in Tugun. How many hard-hat media opportunities did the Premier and her entourage milk from these construction sites? Now we learn that the desalination plant will cost \$95.5 million—almost \$100 million—to repair and run during the 2009-10 period. This week on Gold Coast ABC Radio the Treasurer said that the money—\$100 million—was for repairs and running the plant at capacity. The last I heard, the plant was still being repaired and trialling a run at around 30 per cent capacity. How can the Treasurer say that when the plant is not running at 100 per cent capacity and water from it is not required as we are no longer in drought? The Treasurer is either embarrassed about this billion dollar water experiment or does not have a clue about good financial management.

Misleading statements in the Department of Infrastructure and Planning section of SDS 2 claim an achievement of 2008-09 was—

Completed construction and commissioning of SEQ Water Grid Projects including ... Gold Coast Desalination.

That is clearly not true. It is not commissioned. The government has made an art form of telling untruths. As I said, it is in its DNA. The patient people of Tugun and the surrounding suburbs have been through enough. As I said, the plant is running at only one-third of its supposed capacity and when it was turned on full bore last October, pressure valves burst and a street in Tugun opened up with the force of the water. Excuse after excuse has spilled from the lips of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and successive ministers. People are still waiting for their homes to be restored to preconstruction condition. The Tugun footy club is left sinking.

Steep increases in power and water bills are on the horizon, too. After all that these good folk have been through, they should get rebates, and significant ones at that. We waited 20 years for the construction of the Tugun bypass and then got Australia's most expensive road at around \$100 million per kilometre. Rumours of signs of corrosion in the metal framework of the tunnel after barely one year do not offer much confidence to the residents of Tugun. One environmental scientist claims that the tunnel will require serious attention within two years, yet it was built to last 100 years. New South Wales is due to take over the maintenance of the tunnel in 2018, but will it want to take on a project that may end up costing it plenty? Will these claims of corrosion blow-out Queensland's debt with substantial costs for repairs? What of the ongoing vandalism of glass panels for Tugun? If the material is not changed then we are set for more unnecessary ongoing expense. There is still no sign of funding for the M1 extension for the people in my electorate. However, I note the mention of funding for planning for the section to Stewart Road in Currumbin Waters. You would have thought that would be well and truly done by now.

The Minister for Community Services rips into the Queensland public about helping out, while her mates in the federal government set a target to halve homelessness by 2020 with a 25 per cent reduction by 2013. For the Gold Coast, money is broadly allocated for community services but none is allocated for the Blair Athol crisis accommodation service at Bilinga. Prime Minister Rudd's promise to halve homelessness is not looking too promising for the dedicated staff at Blair Athol. This year, approximately 6,000 individuals will be turned away from that accommodation due to no vacancies. Last year's figure was 6,262. Blair Athol has been providing accommodation in the form of a range of support services and outreach to families, single adults and young people for over 30 years. In more than 20 years, Blair Athol's accommodation and support services have operated without any increase in funding apart from indexation, particularly for human resources, while the demand for services has grown phenomenally and the complexity of need for people who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness has increased dramatically.

Blair Athol's evaluation of its existing service delivery and its recommendation for increased specialist staff means that an extra three to four full-time positions are required to provide homeless services to their nine family units. Blair Athol urgently requires a review of staff funding ratios to enable it to continue to provide quality services to people who are experiencing or who are at risk of homelessness.

From the way members opposite are talking, it appears they really do not care about the homeless people in my Currumbin electorate—the 6,000 people a year who are turned away—or about Blair Athol's plight in providing this service. Then, of course, there is the funding cuts to Mirikai—one of the very few places that provides mental health services and drug and rehabilitation services on the Gold Coast. It beggars belief that the government would cut that funding.

In Currumbin, the government owns 500 public dwellings and there are around 800 households on the combined waiting list for social housing. We can expect this list to grow as people feel the pinch due to Labor's broken promises. There will be a heavier reliance on volunteers, yet retirees are also feeling the pinch, with petrol and electricity prices going up.

Once again, the Currumbin electorate has been short-changed with police. The new station that is opening at Reedy Creek will deplete the Currumbin area as staff will be relocated there from the Palm Beach and Mudgeeraba stations. The LNP's promise of a 24/7 station at Palm Beach will not be able to be delivered. But the good news is that a police beat opened at The Pines Shopping Centre last week as a result of 1,200 petitioners who are disturbed by unruly youth behaviour. That shows what can be achieved with community consultation, cooperation with police and shopping centre management—and no interference from the government.

The Currumbin electorate was promised funding in relation to the Tweed River sand bypass project at Kirra and underground powerlines. Since the sand bypass project commenced eight years ago, our beaches have been oversupplied with sand and we have lost our famous Kirra surf break, among others. The government has done nothing. During the election campaign the government got wind that the LNP was committed to addressing the issue and quickly pledged \$1.5 million for beach excavation works. That amount will not offer a long-term solution, which is why I have been calling for the contract between New South Wales and Queensland to be made public. My request has been denied and I am awaiting the decision of the independent review.

I am pleased to see that \$1.5 million has been included to undertake beach sand excavation, but I am puzzled by the regional budget statement for the south coast area, which shows an amount of \$1 million to continue restoring Kirra Beach. Does that mean that we are getting \$2.5 million for Kirra Beach? A long-term strategy for the whole area that is affected by this Tweed River sand bypass project is required. I understand our mayor will be undertaking community consultation, which is more than I can say for the minister.

The underground powerlines are an issue that enraged residents into a prolonged protest over Energex's proposal to install 110kV powerlines through Palm Beach and Currumbin via a route between Mudgeeraba and Tugun. The STOP protest group are to be congratulated for their efforts. Following the LNP's announcement during the campaign to underground powerlines, Labor promised to do the same, offering \$28 million. To date no progress has been made. I have had a good look in the budget statements but I cannot see this funding anywhere. It is an absolute disgrace.

There is good news for the community in relation to what our surf-lifesavers have provided, no thanks to the government. The new department of transport customer service centre has handled 28,000 transactions in the last year.

(Time expired)

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (4.00 pm): What a difference a year makes. It was about this time last year, or perhaps a couple of months earlier, that I was speaking with the CEO of the Mackay Whitsunday Regional Economic Development Corporation about how we were going to manage the fallout from boom II—that is, the next wave of mining related activity in the Mackay-Whitsunday area that would have put enormous pressure on the already overburdened housing situation and added to the skills shortage that was affecting us in so many ways. That was just over 12 months ago. At that time we were discussing the two-speed economy: the difference between those people who worked in the high value industries of mining, mining services and construction, who were being paid a highly competitive salary because of the skills shortage; and those in our communities who were working for far less—those in our service industries, our community services and areas such as that. That was just over 12 months ago.

Today I reflect that we are probably having what I would call a two-speed recession. Today in the Mackay-Whitsunday area there are still those who have steady employment on reasonably good incomes. Quite frankly, with the low interest rates we have enjoyed for some time they are doing okay and faring quite well. But then there is the other side: those people who have lost their jobs as a result of the recession and the downturn in the economy, particularly those in the mining and construction areas who have simply lost access to work because of the downturn. Things are fairly tough at this time and they are facing the full brunt of these times of economic difficulty.

When one looks around a town like Airlie Beach, a tourist town, one can see the full impact of the economic downturn. Many of the planned resorts and residential complexes have failed to go ahead. The tourism industry in my area is nervous but still buoyed by a continual visitation, although I am beginning to see empty shops in our main street. The cracks are starting to appear and it is concerning. Even in Mackay where things are still relatively buoyant there is some nervousness. What I am being told is that businesses are hanging on tight to their skilled workforce. They do not want to lose them because when we do come out of this downturn they will need those people more than ever. They do not want to go back to the former times when they simply were not able to find the people with the right skills for their business. But they cannot hang on forever. They really need support during this time when they are trying hard to hang onto their workforce before we start to see some upswing in the economy. They are looking to the government to support them right now. I thank the Treasurer for a budget that actually does just that.

There is no doubt that my constituents actually understand that what the state and federal governments are doing is taking deliberate action at this time for a deliberate purpose and that is to keep the wheels of our economies turning so that when the inevitable upturn comes we can hit the ground running and places like Mackay, Airlie Beach and Proserpine will again reap the benefits of employment that comes from those good times.

How have our election commitments to the people of Whitsunday around creating jobs been manifested in this budget for my electorate? Let me firstly turn to the area of tourism. One of the single most important items in this budget for the northern half of my electorate was the \$4 million given to upgrade the Whitsunday Coast Airport. This has been a long running issue of great uncertainty. During

the election campaign the Premier announced that the uncertainty was to end and the government would put \$4 million into upgrading the existing airport facility so that we can get on with the business of attracting tourists to the Whitsundays, because that is what we need to do. That that money is there in full was a welcome funding announcement from the Treasurer. It is a priority project, not only to help us with our tourism capacity but also to provide those much needed jobs in the local area.

I was pleased with funding of \$410,000 to complete the second Great Walk in the Whitsundays, locally known as the Ngaro Sea Trail or the Whitsunday islands walk, which takes walkers across different islands and a variety of ecosystems and wonderful vistas such as across Hill Inlet to Whitehaven Beach. This is a fantastic attraction and positions us very well with that particular niche of tourists who travel the world enjoying walks such as this.

I am also pleased that there has been additional funding for facilities and trail upgrades in our national parks right across my electorate, including Conway, Cape Hillsborough, the Finch Hatton Gorge area, Eungella National Park and Crediton as well. These little things are really important, not just for visitors who come to our area to enjoy our national parks but also for locals as well. It is a fantastic thing to do with your family to get out and enjoy the fresh air and have a bit of exercise walking through one of our lovely local national parks.

I am also pleased that there is continued funding to support our RTOs, Tourism Whitsunday and Mackay Tourism Limited. They do a great job and with the continued support of this government I am sure that they will continue that.

It is really fantastic to see the delivery of funding on another election commitment and that was our commitment for just under \$38 million over the next three years to assist the tourism industry in Queensland. In particular, this budget has around \$12 million, \$10 million of which will go towards marketing and soft product development for places just like the Whitsundays to continue to attract international, national and local visitors to our wonderful tourism areas. Following the great success of the Best Job in the World campaign I can barely wait to see what Tourism Queensland will come up with next. There are some wonderfully innovative people within that organisation and I feel very proud that they do this work on behalf of the government. I am sure that \$10 million will be well spent. The amount of \$2 million for events marketing will also be very welcome.

I turn now to education and how pleased I am that the new kindergarten for the Seaforth district is funded in this budget. I acknowledge the efforts of Jenny Frost and her team of people who lobbied very hard for that kindergarten. I know that they will reap the benefits of it in the future.

Across my electorate there is more than \$300,000 in funding for school maintenance through the Schools of Tomorrow program. This is really important as schools are ageing right across this state and they constantly need those upgrades that lift the morale of the whole school.

Roads, of course, are most important. If you asked anyone in regional Queensland what is the most important thing to them they would probably say that it is roads. I am pleased that the Peak Downs Highway which services our mining industries is having more money put into it to accommodate all types of traffic and improve safety measures. While that is a very important road, the most dangerous roads are the local roads that take miners on the last part of their journey. So I am pleased that roads such as Dingo Beach Road, Conway Road, Yakapari-Seaforth Road, the Hampton to Marion road, Gregory-Cannon Valley Road and the Cape Hillsborough Road—all roads of lesser significance than the highways in our area—will receive funding for additional work to improve their safety and serviceability.

There is a roundabout being funded on Shute Harbour Road, which is the arterial road from Proserpine to Shute Harbour, as well as a roundabout at Tropic Road, in which I have a personal interest. It is getting to the stage where I have to wait sometimes up to 10 or 15 minutes to access Shute Harbour Road, such is the volume of traffic getting out of Tropic Road. I look forward to that roundabout being in place before the end of the financial year.

Finally, I want to talk about funding that has come to the volunteers of my electorate and right across Queensland in this budget. I believe that the work volunteers do is so important that I declared 2009 to be the year of the volunteer in my electorate. Volunteers are the lifeblood of every community, providing support for those in need, underpinning the success of local sporting organisations and at times putting their own lives at risk to assist in times of emergency or natural disaster. I am absolutely delighted that this year's budget provides a funding boost for a range of volunteer groups across the state.

There is funding of \$200,000 per annum for extra beach patrol and lifeguard services and expanded communications and camera surveillance networks for regional beaches north of the Sunshine Coast. That is for our very important lifesavers. There is also money for additional vehicles, flood boats and trailers to boost the capability of the State Emergency Service and also nearly \$2 million to purchase safety equipment and fund initiatives aimed at improving the safety of rural fire brigade volunteers. This is welcome funding and I know it will be well spent.

While I am speaking of volunteers, I want to say how pleased I am that my own surf-lifesaving club at Eimeo on the northern beaches of Mackay has received its \$100,000 in funding to help them complete their clubhouse and amenities there. They were stuck between a rock and a hard place trying to get that facility completed. The Premier stepped up during the election campaign and said, 'Yes. Our volunteers are so important that we will of course help out,' and that money is in the budget. I congratulate them on their success in accessing that funding and wish them well for the completion of the project.

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.11 pm): I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Treasurer for putting together this budget under the most difficult circumstances this government has ever faced in the midst of a global economic financial crisis. Countries around the world are experiencing the worst financial crisis since the 1930s, and it is anticipated that the average unemployment rate of advanced economies will reach 9.2 per cent by 2010. But Australia and more so the Queensland economy is doing better than the rest due to our efforts to stimulate the economy and by building infrastructure to create jobs throughout the crisis. This is an intentional strategy to support the economy and to create and maintain employment. Funding of \$18.2 billion will be injected into a capital program—building hospitals, schools, roads, busways, public facilities and public housing—over the next few years, but this budget sets out a framework to return the budget to surplus in the future.

People continue to flood into Queensland at a rate last year of 2,000 per week. Consequently, this budget will provide front-line services including 350 more teachers and teacher aides; 203 more police; 645 more doctors, nurses and health practitioners; and another 50 ambulance officers. Teacher aide hours will be increased and \$20 million will be dedicated to improve literacy and numeracy, with 80 dedicated coaches, summer schools and more resources for children who need extra help.

This year's state budget provides almost \$13 million in extra support for pensioners by increasing rebates for electricity and life-saving medical equipment. Queensland continued to have among the lowest electricity prices in Australia, but these are difficult times and we know that every cent counts. Currently pensioners receive \$165 a year in concessions. That will increase to \$190.85 a year in 2009-10—an increase of more than 15 per cent.

As the Parliamentary Secretary for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs, I have learned much about the ever-increasing funding needs of people with a disability and am pleased with the increases of 12 per cent for disability services, 16 per cent for home and community care and 13 per cent for mental health services. The multicultural sector will continue to be supported with funding of \$5.9 million over three years. Funding has also been allocated for a new disability service centre at Oxley and it is anticipated that this will be established in the next two years.

The Bligh government is focused on creating and sustaining jobs, supporting families, meeting election commitments and positioning our economy for future growth. This budget will provide \$35.9 million to assist low-skilled workers, those disadvantaged in the labour market, and to support the Queensland Green Army strategy. Mount Ommaney will also receive millions of dollars in funding to deliver local road infrastructure projects, generating jobs in the community. There has also been significant investment in community services, housing and health.

In tough economic times front-line community services are vital to support families which may be feeling economic strain. Additional funding affecting the Mount Ommaney electorate in relation to jobs included: \$613.71 million for vocational education and training activity to underpin the social and economic development of the greater Brisbane region; \$1.87 million at Oxley to upgrade the current electricity transformer with a new unit, with a total project cost of \$2.19 million; \$301,000 to Brisbane Marketing towards destination marketing and product development across the greater Brisbane area, with a total state government contribution of \$602,000; \$28.1 million across greater Brisbane for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative including Queensland's Green Army to create 3,560 jobs for young people and those disadvantaged in the labour market. An additional \$7.1 million is to promote social inclusion through increasing economic participation in low-socioeconomic urban fringe communities.

In relation to main roads, \$11.1 million is provided to continue the planning study for upgrading the Ipswich Motorway between Rocklea and Darra, at a total cost of \$14.6 million; and \$2 million is provided to continue the provision of variable speed limits on various sections of the western arterial road between Jindalee and Everton Park, at a total cost of \$5.2 million, funded under the traffic management initiatives package across South-East Queensland.

In relation to health, \$700,000 is allocated to the Palliative Care Program in the electorate of Mount Ommaney for funding to non-government organisations to provide a range of palliative care services, at a total cost of \$971,000. In relation to the community, \$2.29 million is allocated to approved non-government, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations including local government authorities to provide services such as respite care; domiciliary nursing; transport; home care and modifications; allied health; domestic assistance and personal care to the frail aged; younger people with moderate, severe or profound disability and their carers, with a total state government contribution of \$2.43 million.

In relation to the arts, \$3.74 million is allocated towards the purchase of book stock for public libraries in the Brisbane region. In relation to housing, \$526,000 is provided to complete construction of two public housing dwellings in the Mount Ommaney electorate.

In relation to the environment, this budget will help Queenslanders reduce their carbon footprint and the cost of their energy bills. From 1 July this year the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program will provide up to 200,000 affordable solar hot-water or heat pump systems to be installed over the next three years. Fully installed, greenhouse efficient hot-water systems will be available for \$100 to eligible Queensland pensioners and low-income earners and \$500 to other eligible Queensland homeowners. There will be \$15 million over four years for the ClimateSmart Business Service to assist small to medium sized Queensland businesses to save energy and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in the lead-up to the introduction of a carbon pollution reduction scheme.

In relation to education in the Mount Ommaney electorate, \$181,243 has been allocated to complete additional amenities at Corinda State High School, at a total cost of \$521,850; \$143,100 has been allocated for maintenance work at Corinda State High School; \$52,400 has been allocated for maintenance work at Oxley State School; \$3,200 has been allocated for maintenance work at Middle Park State School; \$2,700 has been allocated for maintenance work at Centenary State High School.

Over the past 11 years I have ensured that there have been substantial improvements to amenities in my local suburbs. Some of the major facilities constructed have included: major sports facilities and performing arts centres at local high schools; resource centre upgrades; outside school hours care facilities; arts centres; pre-school buildings; library extensions; community halls; tuckshop upgrades; new classrooms; refurbishment of buildings; additional maintenance and new amenities; pick-up and set-down facilities; new and improved science blocks and environmental projects; new preparatory year facilities at primary schools; a 24-hour Centenary Ambulance Station with more vehicles and more paramedics; the Corinda Community Health Centre and extensions; a new police station at Sherwood; an increase in local police numbers; and two police beats at Oxley and Jindalee.

Other facilities include: a major upgrade to drainage works along the Centenary Highway; a bikeway from Sumners Road to Toowong; the fast-tracking of another exit from the Sumners Road industrial estate and building a temporary ramp for Bullockhead Street; an extension to the Corinda Bowls Club; the relocation of the Centenary Rugby League Club's football fields; the preservation of a vast amount of green space at Wacol—

Government members interjected.

Mrs ATTWOOD: This is over the years. Others include: capital and recurrent funding for the construction of the Wesley Mission Brisbane-Youngcare facility at Sinnamon Village; a high-voltage feeder line out of a new Sumner power substation and the rebuilding and upgrading of the electrical switch yard at the West Darra substation at the end of Sumners Road; upgrades to Oxley and Corinda and currently Darra railway stations, with lifts, extra car parks, new platforms and a third track.

I realise that there is a lot more that has to be done in my electorate to assist with growing congestion problems, particularly along the Centenary Motorway and the Sumners Road on-ramp and off-ramp. Currently, Main Roads is upgrading the Centenary Motorway from Ipswich Road to Sumners Road and has added another lane to the Sumners Road off-ramp inbound. This is part of the \$700 million Wacol-Darra upgrade and includes major improvements to the Centenary Highway-Ipswich Motorway interchange, which is well underway. The South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan allocates \$310 million to construct a future transit lane along the Centenary Highway. This is one of the proposals put forward by the Western Brisbane Transport Network Investigation study to reduce traffic congestion into the future.

It is indeed an honour to serve all of the residents in my electoral area, which now includes parts of Darra and the whole of Oxley. There is always more to be done, and I continue to work hard to obtain better services and facilities for the area. I appreciate and praise the hard work of all our community workers and volunteers who just keep on giving to make someone's life a little bit easier. I enjoy working with these inspirational people and I know what an extraordinary contribution they make to our society.

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (4.22 pm): I am proud to stand here today as a member of this government. We have had to make some tough decisions in bringing down this budget, but they are decisions that chart a course for Queensland's future. Let me first say that I am disappointed in today's response to the budget by the opposition—an opposition which daily finds new ways to express its negativity. But when it came time to lay their cards on the table, where were the ideas from the opposition members? Where was the plan, the blueprint, the framework for the future?

Those opposite will argue that they, too, are capable of making the tough decisions, because sometimes that is what you need to do when you are in government. But their idea of a tough decision—and who bears the brunt of those decisions—differs greatly from this government's. Let us take a moment to think about what they would do if they found themselves in a position where they had to take charge of the Queensland economy. What would they do if the buck stopped with them? What would they do? They would sack people; that is what they would do. They would bring the building program to

a grinding halt, raise taxes and cut vital community programs. They would shut up shop faster than No. 4, race 7 at the dishlickers on a Saturday night. In a vain attempt to emulate the approach taken by the pin-up boys of conservative fiscal policy in Western Australia, they would rather axe thousands of jobs, regardless of the human cost, in an effort to bring the budget into surplus overnight and score some short-term political points—just so they can put their hand on their heart and say, 'Not on my watch.'

The Treasurer has delivered a responsible budget that makes one thing abundantly clear: this government values jobs. We have put the needs of people ahead of political expediency. In Far North Queensland, the budget demonstrates that we are getting on with the job by continuing our building program that is creating jobs and supporting demand through projects of regional significance, such as the continued redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital and the completion of a replacement 275kV transmission line between Innisfail and Edmonton to ensure a secure and reliable high-voltage electricity supply to the Far North.

In Mulgrave, continuation of a number of local infrastructure projects will protect and create hundreds of jobs in the community. In education, \$19.2 million has been released to complete the \$36.7 million Innisfail State College, and more than half a million dollars in minor works will be carried out in state schools at places including Aloomba, Babinda, Bellenden Ker, Bentley Park, Daradgee, Flying Fish Point, Miriwinni and White Rock. Other examples include the \$8.68 million for the construction of the new Yarrabah Primary Health Care Centre at a total cost of \$15.77 million or the combined \$4 million towards the Edmonton and Southern waste water treatment plants.

There has also been significant investment in social housing across the state, including \$3.4 million to commence construction of 13 homes in Mulgrave. Low-income social housing applicants with a severe and immediate housing need will also have access to short- to medium-term accommodation through Innisfail Youth and Family Care, thanks to \$215,000 under the Community Rent Scheme.

Projects that are part of our program of Main Roads capital works will also be maintained. On the Bruce Highway between Innisfail and Cairns north of Blundell Road, \$1.64 million and \$0.75 million in federal funding will allow drainage improvements and an asphalt overlay to be completed. Other works include upgrades to the Yarrabah access road, replacement of a bridge on a section of Hussey Road at Edmonton, and \$1 million to complete replacement of a floodway at Hemming Creek on the Gillies Highway near Gordonvale.

I know that residents in the southern suburbs of Cairns will be pleased that \$1.35 million in state and federal funding has been allocated to complete concept planning between Ray Jones Drive and Sheehy Road. It means that we are one step closer to addressing traffic congestion on the Bruce Highway.

I have been working hard to secure a new ambulance station for Gordonvale. It was one of my highest priorities at the last election and I am pleased that the first \$200,000 investment in this project has been announced. The total spend of \$1.8 million is a significant investment in community safety for the Gordonvale area. The existing Gordonvale Ambulance Station is over 50 years old and, as the population in and around Gordonvale continues to grow, existing services will be placed under increased stress and the complement of paramedics required to service the local population will outgrow the current facility.

In light of population growth on the western side of the Bruce Highway and the need to service call-outs associated with motor vehicle accidents on the highway, the location of the new station must be carefully considered. While there is still some detail to be worked out in terms of where it will be positioned, I can assure residents that the Cliff Trembath Memorial Training Room, which plays a valuable role within our community, will form part of any new centre.

The other pleasing outcome is confirmation of the additional \$6 million committed during the election towards replacement of the Jubilee Bridge in Innisfail, bringing the state government's commitment to \$12 million for this project. The Cassowary Coast Regional Council is working with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to finalise an overall cost estimate for the project, and I am continuing to lobby the federal government for the remaining funds.

Despite the measures outlined in the budget to create and sustain jobs, unemployment is expected to reach 6.5 per cent in 2009-10 and 7.25 per cent in 2010-11. In the Far North, this figure is already in double digits. This will put enormous pressure on services and enormous pressure on working families. This is why the Bligh government's investment not only in the building program but also in training and community support services is so important.

Before the economic downturn, the public and private sectors alike were facing a skills shortage on a grand scale. Another great feature of this budget is its investment in training, with \$414 million for 150,000 new training places to ensure we have the skilled workers we need when the economic upswing happens. In Far North Queensland, \$66.51 million has been committed for vocational education and training activity to underpin the social and economic development of the region—with \$4.93 million across the Far North under Skilling Queenslanders for Work, including \$584,000 to provide accredited training to low-skilled workers.

This budget also delivers on election promises from 1 July, with the Payroll Tax Incentive Scheme that rightly rewards those businesses that take on and continue to employ trainees with a 125 per cent payroll tax rebate. In addition, Green Army work placements and traineeships are expected to create around 660 jobs for young people in the Far North.

As the Treasurer stated, the single biggest allocation of additional resources in the budget is \$414 million over four years to community sector workers who care for and support some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders—the frail elderly, the disabled and the unwell. I would like to acknowledge the significant investment in Mulgrave for community services providing vital frontline support for families, such as counselling, early intervention and specialist support services. This is the sign of a Labor government doing what it does best—caring for those who need help the most.

I am aware that there are some areas across the state that have had some of their commitments or projects postponed for a period—some indefinitely—as a result of the budget bottom line. From my reading of the budget papers, I have not seen evidence of this in Mulgrave, and I am thankful for that.

I campaigned on a number of priorities, and just because some of these have not been funded in this budget does not change my resolve to continue to present a case for them. I want the people of Mulgrave to rest assured that I will continue to look under every rock for possible funding sources. This is what I have been elected to do. Yes, economic circumstances are bleak, but there is cause for some optimism. This is a budget that reinforces the Bligh government's determination to govern for all Queenslanders and lays the foundation for returning the budget to surplus to build a positive future for this great state.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (4.29 pm): On 2 June this year the Premier rose in this chamber to speak about the asset sales that this government proposes. In part she stated—

It is why I was clear during the campaign about what the priorities of a re-elected Labor government would be—jobs, jobs, jobs and our building program.

...

At the election Labor sought and gained a clear mandate. It was a mandate to secure jobs in the short term to soften the blow of the global recession ...

Since the announcement in my electorate of the proposed asset sales, can I say that the reaction of the majority of people who have responded to the asset sales—the privatisation proposals—has not been that the government received a mandate for privatisation. Indeed, the opposite is true. The feedback that I received from many people who went to meetings that were organised—the Premier visited my electorate three times, and obviously I was not invited to those meetings—was that it was stated there would not be asset sales; there would not be privatisation. So people in my electorate have reacted very strongly, as an electorate that will be quite significantly impacted by the proposed sale of QR coal.

QR employees themselves are bitterly disappointed and they feel betrayed at the proposal to sell the QR freight line. In one letter I received a constituent states—

I am tired of broken promises from Anna Bligh.

First she said on many occasions she would not hold early elections. She would run the full term. The 8c a litre would stay no matter what.

I will get on to the fuel tax in a moment. Another writer to my office said—

As a current employee of QR Ltd I would like to voice my opinion against the sale and breaking up of our company.

The sale of QR assets and service will only produce a one-off lump payment to the State Government.

I understand this payment will help decrease the debt that we find our state getting into.

But our biggest concern is what will we have to sell off next time we get into debt.

Already our pay packets are hit by petrol companies charging top dollar for fuels, Petrol, Diesel LPG and now we are going to lose our 8 cent petrol subsidy.

The increase in registration costs on our vehicles and especially our utes.

The ever increasing cost of buying food to feed our families.

Electricity Companies increasing their charges

The ever increasing cost of Private Health Care

As well as the ever increasing cost of having our money in a Financial Institution.

As wage earners there is a lot of strain on our little budgets from all directions.

And now there is the added burden by the 15000 employees of QR Limited of what is going to happen to the company that they work tirelessly for.

Here the Gladstone, Mackay Coal Corridors by the sounds will be the areas that will be majorly affected by the sale of QR.

He goes on to say—

If you could bring any sense to the selling of major assets by the Government to get out of debt could you let us know.

Another gentleman wrote—

Noting that the Queensland public, the rightful owners of Queensland Rail, the Ports etc., were not consulted at the recent state elections about their sale, that the question of their sale be put to the Queensland public at a referendum.

People in my electorate, the ones who will be affected by these proposed privatisations, particularly the coal freight, are not happy. They do not believe the government had a mandate. They do not believe that the issue was canvassed during the election, and they believe they have been betrayed quite significantly. On their behalf I will not be supporting the privatisation because they have made it very clear that they are not happy about it.

In relation to the introduction of a fuel tax, again, the recollection of the people in my electorate and my recollection was that promises were made that what is being called the fuel subsidy would not be removed. This fuel subsidy goes back I think to 1997-98 when there was a High Court challenge about the legality of states levying tax on I think tobacco and fuel—there may have been other things. The High Court upheld the challenge and it was transferred for collection by the feds. It is not a cost to Queensland of \$500 million, as has been bandied about. The fact is that the feds repaid to Queensland the amount of money that was collected in Queensland as a fuel tax had Queensland had one, so it was rebated back to Queensland in recognition of the fact that we did not have a fuel tax. It has got nothing to do with saving Queensland money. The government was a conduit to return the money collected by the feds to make the collection of the tax across Australia easy in recognition that we had no fuel tax.

Now that this tax has been imposed, it will affect everybody, particularly those in rural and regional Queensland. All of us who travel interstate know that our fuel prices are often on par with other states. There has been no real explanation, certainly not by the major fuel companies, as to where that 8c a litre that Queensland should have been showing as a saving was actually going. As soon as the announcement is made that the tax will be applied, our fuel will go up 8c a litre and we will be one of the dearest states in Australia to purchase fuel. This may not be the case in the south-east corner, as you have huge volumes, but for the rest of rural and regional Queensland it will have a significant impact on family budgets.

Added to that, this budget intends to increase registration charges, and other fees and charges, and it will only be time that will determine the extent of those fees and charges, and things like fines will increase. It is easy for us to sit here and say, 'if people don't do the wrong thing, they will not be fined,' but I think one only has to see current affairs shows and read other items where people say they have been unjustly targeted or the equipment was not appropriately calibrated to know that some people do suffer unjustly—maybe not the majority but some do. All of these extra charges aggregate on to the cost of families to live, and it is not just one or two things. It has been stated that, with the increase in transportation costs, food and all transported commodities will rise, particularly in rural and regional Queensland. Often they are the families who can least afford the increases, more particularly because they often have the least amount of choice in terms of opportunities to buy.

In relation to the fuel subsidy, I know that the MTAQ, the RACQ, AgForce and Commerce Queensland all lobbied the Queensland government not to take that action—it appears unsuccessfully so. Another constituent of mine wrote—

For those in Queensland—

and he did a mass email—

—some of you, I assume, are probably unaware of the State Government's plans to scrap the fuel subsidy in the July budget. Without this subsidy, fuel will become approximately 9c/litre more expensive and registration costs on all vehicles will increase.

This constituent was urging members of my community to lobby the government. Again, the MTAQ in a letter to the Treasurer stated—

If a fuel tax was imposed equivalent to the current fuel subsidy, together with the Goods and Services Tax, it would increase the cost of fuel to Queensland motorists by in excess of 9 cents. It would be reasonable to conclude that a cost increase of this magnitude to consumers and to the transport of goods and services across the state would generate a significant inflation and substantially offset the Federal Government's stimulus policies.

These two initiatives that the government has taken—the privatisation of assets and the imposition of a fuel tax—will significantly impact on Queenslanders and my residents. The privatisation of assets because of the lack of job security and the fuel tax because of the increased cost of living.

The Premier here today and regularly, rightly, has spoken about the prospect of a lot of new jobs in the Gladstone region, particularly in relation to the LNG industry. Almost without exception the residents of my electorate support the diversification of our industry base. Some have concerns about the siting of LNG on Curtis Island, and I believe their concerns deserve consideration. However, I have not heard more than a handful of people who have objected to the LNG industry per se. We are very dependent in terms of commodities on bauxite and alumina. Where there is a downturn, as there has been globally, that has a marked impact on the community so this diversification is fine and welcome.

However, with all the talk of jobs, and very welcome jobs, this budget shows a lamentable lack of investment in infrastructure for an electorate where such a large employment base would be located. We have talk of 2,000 jobs, some in construction and some full time, 3,000 jobs, 6,000 jobs, depending on the project. But we have not got a significant ramping up in this budget of the infrastructure necessary to support those sorts of population increases.

During the election campaign the then minister for transport, John Mickel, announced a \$2 million upgrade for the transport department in Gladstone. I would like to commend Minister Nolan and thank her adviser Svetlana for an update on that. It is anticipated that the complex will be completed in mid-2010. I have still got to get confirmation about the funding but it is believed that the funding was prior to this budget. That upgrade was necessary because queuing times at the department of transport depot for registration renewals and all other transport related matters was significant, and particularly during periods like lunch time. I welcome that upgrade.

In the run-up to the election the then minister for police announced a new \$3 million police station for Calliope. That police station that needs upgrading. There is no line item in this particular budget. If it has been dropped off then again that is very short-sighted given the population increases that are projected for the region.

Calliope township has grown exponentially. It has provided an alternate housing option for people who particularly want to work on the industrial sites because there is access to the industrial sites from there and not through the city. It has a very small police station with two officers. It desperately needs an upgrade. There is a spare block of land beside the current station. A stand-alone purpose built police station for additional officers is absolutely essential for the growing population. The site directly beside the current police station would allow for off-street parking which is not available at the moment and would add a great measure of safety to the operation of the police station. I would commend to the new police minister the need for the planning and funding to continue for that police station.

I welcome the funding that is in the budget for the mums and bubs centre—the one-on-one midwifery service. We have got a young population and there are a lot of births. Quite a number of parents have to go to Rockhampton Hospital for reasons that a reasonable person—I acknowledge that I speak from a non-clinical point of view—might not expect they would have to go to Rockhampton for. There has been some lobbying for a stand-alone birthing centre to allow for safe alternatives for birthing.

In the budget there is a line item for the co-location on the hospital precinct of oral health, mental health and community health facilities. The community health and mental health facilities have been completed. Oral health has been promised for three or four budgets. It is unacceptable that the staff who work at the current dental clinic are still working in very cramped and quite aged facilities and that their patients also have to use those facilities when it has been promised and funded in at least three, if not four, budgets. It is essential that that facility be built.

There is funding in the budget for the gas superhighway. As I have said, that is an important piece of infrastructure for this state's economic development as is the investment in the port and QR. The government seems happy to invest in pieces of infrastructure that will return funding to the state coffers. But the infrastructure necessary to support the growing community is no less important. It is incredibly short-sighted, if not worse, to be talking about additional jobs in 2011-12 and not, at this point in time, be planning appropriate infrastructure to support that community growth.

There has been funding allocated for Gladstone schools, some of which is federal funding. Can I say that the federal government has been incredibly generous in terms of its funding strategy for education right across Queensland. Many of our schools are benefiting not because of the state government's funding but because of the federal government's funding.

I continue to lobby for a full renal unit and better oncology services so that members of my community do not have to travel constantly to access these services. In many instances members in my community move.

In the budget documents and the publicity that has occurred since the budget was handed down the government has rightly talked about new teachers, police, doctors, nurses and allied health workers. They are essential. I was extremely surprised at the strength of concern expressed by teachers before the election about their pay scales. Unless these government employees are paid appropriately we will not be able to get the additional staff that we need for a growing population. It may be fine to talk about it but without the actual ability to recompense these people for the work that they do it will be very difficult to engage them.

I hope the funding for some organisations promised during the election will be forthcoming. There were promises of funding for Indigenous children, funding for the Tannum Sands Road and funding for some creative arts provided by a not-for-profit organisation.

We also have a great need for early childhood facilities, as I mentioned yesterday, in the Benaraby/Boyne-Tannum area to provide for those children whose families have relocated to that region and who would then be able to feed into the smaller schools. This is essential for a sound and strong community. I finish by commending the then minister for housing, Robert Schwarten, for funding for Louise Lodge and Ozcare for a secured women's shelter.

Unfortunately, in all of our communities there are women and families in dire circumstances who have suffered abuse—physical, mental and sexual abuse—and have to relocate to a safe environment. The construction of this facility, which is in train now, is welcome not because we want to see the need continue but because we know that it will continue, and supporting those women and children in that circumstance is vital. I also put on the record my appreciation to our volunteers for the work—

(Time expired)

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.49 pm): Queenslanders deserve better than a snatch-and-grab budget which sells their assets and makes them pay for the privilege. When Queenslanders were told by Premier Anna Bligh to count on her, little did they know that that meant they can count on Premier Bligh to give them higher taxes such as the fuel tax, that they can count on Premier Bligh to mislead them about the selling of their state owned assets such as Queensland Rail, that they can count on Anna Bligh to mortgage their future with record debt and no repayment plan. The Bligh government is acting like a pack of Nigerian scam artists taking down the voters of Queensland—the voters who trusted them when Premier Bligh swore, hand on heart, before the election on 21 March that her government would not do any of these things.

Well, the people of Queensland were betrayed. Premier Anna Bligh has no mandate to sell off Queensland Rail and other transport assets. The Premier has no mandate for a fuel tax. How can the Premier claim that she told the people about flogging off Queensland Rail? Even her own transport minister stood up in this House and denied having knowledge of this plan! I do not support the plan for Queensland Rail and these other assets to be flogged off, and I do not support the fuel tax. But worse than the Premier's sell-out of the state's assets and the sell-out of the Queensland people is the fact that this Premier knew—she knew—before the election that she intended to do these things, and that is why the Premier took the people to an election more than six months early. The Premier knew. She had a plan, and her plan was not to tell the people. She has no mandate for this plan.

This budget and other bills attached to it putting up taxes and allowing for these sales are a disgrace. We only have to look to Victoria and Tasmania, where quick sales and privatisation have proven not to have been a lasting golden goose that delivers for the people but have shown that the golden goose does not keep giving once you have flogged it off. The privatisation of those rail assets and the contracting out is now costing those states dearly, and there is a lesson here for Queensland. Rather than delivering a framework which can sustainably fund future infrastructure and thus tomorrow's jobs, this budget is putting a pair of concrete boots on a future generation who will have to shoulder the burden of debt.

This budget does not reduce recurrent spending or retire debt; it increases recurrent spending and increases debt. This budget puts at risk the jobs of many Queenslanders who are currently employed in those state owned assets, such as Queensland Rail workers, who have every right to worry about their future because they have been betrayed by this government. But let us ask: who is going to own these assets? Will an overseas country come in and see what a great deal it is that this state is flogging off some of its strategic transport assets? We must ask that question today. This government has not answered that question. It has alluded to the fact that there could be an integration of ownership from mine to port. If anything, it worries me that there will be an integration of an overseas country coming in and buying our assets from mine to rail to port, and that is in fact a risk to our sovereignty and to the jobs of this state. I am so angry that this incompetent government could abuse the trust of this state and take no responsibility for it. There has been no apology. It blames everybody else but itself for its mismanagement.

It has been estimated that government debt will rise up to \$78,000 per household in Queensland. When all income-producing assets are sold, how will government pay for services and the interest on the debt that it is accumulating? There will be \$85 billion worth of debt in a few years and it has been estimated that this could rise to over \$100 billion—\$14 million a day. That has to be paid for, and it is another generation that will be paying off this debt. Meanwhile, the government is digging a bigger hole and calling it a construction site, but all we see is a mountain of debt and no plan to get us over it.

With regard to comparing Queensland's debt to the rest of Australia, we have already heard that it will be \$85.5 billion by 2012-13 for Queensland. Does New South Wales have a bigger debt? No, it does not. It is a bigger state with a lower debt of \$67 billion. We have always rubbished Victoria as a rust bucket state. It has turned the corner but still has a debt of \$39 billion—far less than Queensland. Western Australia has a debt of \$27.7 billion, Tasmania \$23 billion and South Australia \$7.8 billion. As has been mentioned, the chair of the QTC, Sir Leo Hielscher, says that Queensland's debt could go even higher, and the cost of repaying that interest has grown with the loss of Queensland's AAA status. That AAA rating loss will impact on future infrastructure budgets. That \$1.2 billion in extra interest payments per year has been estimated to be equivalent to a new children's hospital every year. It is also enough to have paid for a new hospital on the Sunshine Coast. As we have heard, this government promised a new hospital before the last election and now it is disappearing off into the neverland.

Ms Struthers interjected.

Ms SIMPSON: I will say it here again: the decision to delay this hospital will kill people. That region is 450 beds short today. If you are down by 650 beds, you are going to kill people. The health planners have said that the region will be short of 650 beds by 2014-15. Now, those opposite might think that you can shove people in a chair and call it a hospital bed, but it does not work!

The budget is not about structural reform of Queensland to align the assets with the future industries of Queensland, as the Premier and the Treasurer have said. That is absolute twaddle! There are critical pieces of infrastructure that are not even funded in this budget such as the inner-city rail

network. By 2015-16 the rail system in Brisbane will reach capacity, severely affecting freight and passenger capacity. This is not just a city commuter problem; it is a whole-of-state problem with a bottleneck at Roma Street, and this problem will become intolerable.

Is there a plan that we have seen in this budget to fix this? No! There is no plan on the horizon other than some pretty pictures and some pin money for a feasibility study—a study, by the way, which is federally funded—but no plan to actually resolve the bottleneck which is looming and which is going to further cripple this state. This government said that it is selling off the assets to fund infrastructure, but it has no plan to fix one of the worst infrastructure problems that this state is facing. The future of Queensland's transport network and its economic development will not be achieved by flogging off the income-earning infrastructure of Queensland.

As Queenslanders face tough times and are trying to tighten their belts, the state government has whacked them with an extra 8.2c per litre, rising to over 9c a litre when GST is included, with this new petrol tax from 1 July. Registration is also estimated to rise by about 20 per cent, and for many truck operators that is even higher. For the average family it is estimated that the extra costs will be \$300 per year. Altogether, it will take out about \$600 million throughout the economy of Queensland that is transferred into Treasury coffers.

The fuel tax will hurt the hip pocket directly and indirectly, as industry experts predict that it will have a significant inflationary impact on the cost of goods and production. The state Labor government has no mandate to impose this tax on motorists and the trucking industry, as it claimed. Queensland has been the only state without a petrol tax—a situation maintained by the coalition government when other states around Australia had their petrol tax struck down as unconstitutional, requiring the federal government to step in on their behalf and levy it formally as an excise.

In Queensland, the coalition government rebated this excise to assure motorists and the trucking industry that Queensland would maintain its fuel tax free status. That was in recognition of the hugely negative impact that a petrol tax would have on a state such as Queensland, where people have to travel vast distances. So this tax will disproportionately hit those who have to travel the furthest and who already carry higher costs. I have had significant feedback from people who are angry about this tax and also from small businesspeople who have said that they have fixed contracts so they will not be able to recoup these costs. People in the trucking industry have said to me that this decision will cost jobs. You do not save jobs by putting higher taxes on businesses. One North Queensland trucking business told me that they have contracts which mean that initially they will have to bear the burden of this cost, but that cost will end up being passed on to clients and it is going to cost them over \$100,000. They have said that they cannot pass on the cost initially, which will mean that jobs will be lost. But eventually, that extra cost will be passed on to customers. That is something that people in the regions just cannot afford.

I want to address SEQIPP, which is where the forward projections for a lot of transport and road projects are outlined. It was due out this week but it has not been released. It has been delayed by another month. This document contained about \$35 billion in forward estimates when Peter Beattie launched it. Over five years it has turned into a document containing about \$100 billion. It has become a bit of a laughing-stock with industry, because it is no longer an operational document; it is an aspirational document. Industry and those involved in construction businesses say that they truly need to have a pipeline of works that have clarity and which give them greater confidence. We have not seen that with this government. That, too, costs jobs and investment. In fact, industry has been briefed on projects and it has worked up tenders for those projects only to see those projects pulled at the last moment. That has literally cost some businesses millions of dollars.

SEQIPP is due out next month and the word is that more projects will be rolled back and delayed. But a lot of the delays and roll-back of projects in SEQIPP in regard to transport and road projects has been because of the poor scoping and poor management of projects, which has also resulted in Queensland being seen as one of the worst states when it comes to proper forward planning of road and transport infrastructure. That lack of planning has added hundreds of millions of dollars to projects. It has also meant that critical access to federal funding from the infrastructure fund for projects has slipped by. There simply has not been the appropriate work done. There were no business cases for some of those large projects in order to ensure that the government had access to those funds.

Meanwhile, this government has continued to spend like a drunken sailor on other projects that have wasted considerable funds, such as the Northern Pipeline Interconnector Two through the Sunshine Coast. How on earth could the government spend \$100 million in the last financial year on a project where it has not even turned the first sod? In this financial year, the government is going to spend another \$200 million on this project. Is it any wonder the state is broke? The government has spent \$100 million on a pipeline for which construction has not even started and it is going to spend another \$200 million on it. By the way, that pipeline is supposed to connect to Traveston Crossing Dam and the government does not even have the environmental approval for that. It is just a joke.

There is no money for other projects such as the missing Sunshine Coast Hospital and other critical infrastructure, because this government has not got its priorities right and will not stop wasting money in such an appalling and scandalous way. The upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway, which is a project that will be federally funded, has seen an \$884 million blow-out. The Queensland government has a bad reputation for being incompetent and incapable of appropriate forward planning so that it knows what these projects will cost. That project is going to take another huge slab of funding, albeit of federal funding. But that has meant that that funding is not available for other projects in Queensland.

In the 2008-09 year, \$176 million of federal funding was provided in Queensland to be spent on the Bruce Highway Cooroy to Curra project, yet only \$50 million will be spent, meaning a \$125 million subsidy direct to the Queensland budget bottom line. I return to the upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway. Of the \$484 million of federal funding that was provided in Queensland to be spent in 2008-09, only \$156 million will be spent, meaning around about a \$330 million subsidy direct to the Queensland bottom line. There is a pattern here. The government is very good at taking the money off other people but it is not particularly good at spending it in a timely and cost-effective way.

We have also seen transport corridor acquisitions in South-East Queensland blow-out from \$14.5 million to \$115.4 million, yet for the Eastern Busway, Buranda to Coorparoo stage 2A, there was an \$80 million underspend in the last financial year. I have talked to a range of businesses in the Coorparoo Mall about this busway. Because of the mucking around of this government and the delays on this project, people have gone broke. They have lost their businesses in the process. One gentleman who came out to Australia was heartbroken. I believe he has gone back, because he lost his livelihood because of the way in which this government treated him and his family. There are other businesses in the area that are affected as well.

There are other projects that have cost taxpayers dearly because of the way in which this government has failed to go forward in a timely way with projects that it promised. The new Queensland driver's licence is a project that is still dragging its heels and is yet to come to fruition.

Mr Nicholls: How much is that?

Ms SIMPSON: Interestingly enough, in the last financial year they underspent on that project. The overall budget compared to what they were supposed to spend, of course, has blown out by tens of millions of dollars, but it is a project—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): Order! I remind the member for Maroochydore that you are not addressing your answers to the questions asked by the member for Clayfield through the chair.

Ms SIMPSON: In terms of the Robina to Varsity Lakes rail extension, that was a \$25 million underspend in 2008-09 which will roll over into this year, and there is the Gold Coast Highway upgrade from Helensvale to Southport. There is a range of these projects that the government says it is spending the money on. It is extraordinary. The government seems to be able to blow its budgets and yet still be so far behind in delivering these critical projects. In relation to the Centenary Highway, Springfield to Darra project, we will see that money roll over and the government will reannounce that project two or three times more. In 2008-09, there was a \$38 million underspend. Of course, with the Gateway Motorway upgrade, in 2008-09 there was a \$90 million underspend because of delays in the rollout. So this government is not covering itself in glory in terms of its commitment to a steady pipeline of works that is predictable and available to the industry.

I want to come back to my own area on the Sunshine Coast. Because of the way in which a number of bills have been rolled in together and we have to debate them cognately, there is not enough time to address all of the issues that I would have liked to address today. In regard to my own electorate, CAMCOS was originally supposed to see the first leg of the rail to Caloundra delivered by 2015. We announced that CAMCOS would be better as a light rail project like the Gold Coast rapid transit project, which is also a light rail project, where you are able to go from population nodes, including the key hospital centre. You are able to stage it by initially having it as light rail, with rapid bus back to your heavy rail. The Gold Coast proposal is a similar concept to what we proposed for the Sunshine Coast. But under this government, we do not know when CAMCOS in any form will be delivered because the 2015 deadline for the government sequencing the rail to Caloundra is not going to be met. We understand that in the latest SEQIPP this deadline is likely to blow-out further into the future.

The future for Queensland is about a need for certainty from government as to the pipelines of work—not an aspirational SEQIPP and transport and roads plan, but one which is fair dinkum and has some time frames in it that industry can believe and the community can believe and not just for one part of Queensland but for all of Queensland. Industry is saying that when governments have a rush of projects and then they stop them, that costs jobs. We have already seen that in regard to projects such as the rail project on the north coast line, which was supposed to continue with the next stage after the current works. Yet that project was pulled, despite the fact that industry had been briefed that it would continue. Those people working in that area have been lost to those communities and those skills that have been built up have dissipated, probably to other states. If the government wants to deliver infrastructure in a more cost-effective and sustainable way for jobs in the future, it is time for it to have a pipeline of work that is believable.

We cannot count on this Premier; the people of Queensland have found that they cannot trust her word. It is time to have a government that has a sustainable approach to infrastructure that is delivered on time and on budget and with a program that does not indenture future Queenslanders with mortgages that they will never be able to repay. This government has no repayment plan. This government has no plan to ensure that the people of Queensland are able to have hospital beds. It might be acceptable for the minister to rule out the plans that we supported for a new hospital on the Sunshine Coast, but by killing off that hospital he will kill people. I stand by that. It is an absolute disgrace. My constituents and my family live in that region and to see a situation where this government has canned that hospital and we have no hope under this government of seeing it delivered is a disgrace.

(Time expired)

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.10 pm): I rise to speak on the government's Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2009, Appropriation Bill 2009, the Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill 2009 and the Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2009. At the outset I express my disgust at the way the Bligh Labor government has muddied the waters of the appropriation bills by incorporating the fuel tax bill and the asset sale bill to hide the pain the Labor members feel about these very contentious and anti-Labor bills. The figures speak for themselves. The state's net operating balance is a deficit of \$574 million for the 2008-09 year, but the concerning issue is the massive blow-out to a deficit of \$1.954 billion for 2009-10 and further forward projection deficits of \$3.459 billion for 2010-11 and \$4.090 billion for 2011-12.

With economic growth expected to slow to half a per cent in 2008-09 and then a quarter of a per cent in 2009-10, the state's economy is in crisis. The net debt is ballooning to \$85.5 billion, leaving an average Queensland household of four facing a debt of \$78,000. Shame on this Labor government. That \$85.5 billion will be generating \$5.1 thousand million in interest every year. The new Children's Hospital, the Gold Coast Hospital, the Sunshine Coast Hospital and the light rail on the Gold Coast could all be built in one year with the interest payments. That is an absolute shame on all the members on that side of the House. They should hang their heads in shame for putting this state into this parlous position.

This Bligh Labor government has failed the people of Queensland. It truly does not understand that in good times, which we have all experienced over the last seven to eight years, one should keep a little in reserve so that when the bad times come one can weather the storm. But the Labor Party cannot comprehend that Liberal National Party philosophy of saving for a rainy day that John Howard provided to Kevin Rudd.

This state Labor government has squandered the billions of dollars from the GST receipts given to it by the Howard government and the billions of dollars from the property boom and the recent mining boom. Did it manage this revenue properly? No, it did not. Now, when the economy is faltering because there is a global financial crisis, it has to sell off the state's most prized assets in a bottom-of-the-market fire sale. What would Rudd have done in response to the global financial crisis if he did not have the expert fiscal management of the former Howard-Costello government that delivered a record surplus for the people of Australia and left a fat piggy bank for Kevin Rudd?

Rudd and Swan, until Monday, 25 May, could not even refer to their debt-laden budget by the billions but only as a percentage because they know the impact of letting the people of Australia know how they ruined the economy. We all know that when the people of Australia realise—and they are slowly beginning to, as recent polls show—what a disaster Labor has created in an incredibly short time frame with Australia's finances, from Kevin07 to 18 months later, this will have a major effect on their future electoral success.

The Bligh government's Labor mates in Canberra would not have been able to implement their stimulus package unless the money was there in the kitty, courtesy of John Howard's prudent financial management. Yes, we are in the midst of a global financial crisis, but why did the state Labor government not consolidate revenue over the last 11 years of the greatest boom times that Queensland has ever seen? Because it does not have the skills to manage the state's finances and plan for the future of Queensland. All the decisions that are made by this Bligh Labor government are pure spin and politically motivated. This budget proves its lack of ability to manage the state's finances.

In boom times it had problems managing the state's finances; in difficult times it has no hope of being able to supply the services that all Queenslanders expect through efficient fiscal management. Why did it not take the lead and prepare for hard times with revenue and income set aside to weather any potential economic crisis in the future rather than the profligate spending on the state government credit card with no intention and no plan of paying any of its extravagant borrowings back—no plan whatsoever? Instead, out of sheer desperation, it intends to sell some of Queensland's finest state owned corporations and assets in a bottom-of-the-market fire sale that the LNP cannot support.

Queensland Motorways delivers some of Queensland's key infrastructure and transport technology projects. It operates toll roads and bridge infrastructure across South-East Queensland. The road network the business manages extends across 61 kilometres and carries more than 76 billion

motorists a year, including the Gateway Bridge, the Gateway Motorway extension, Logan Motorway and Port of Brisbane Motorway. It also operates five toll points at Gateway Bridge, Kuraby, Loganlea, Heathwood and Paradise Road. This is a significant asset that returns strong income through the toll facilities it manages, and this asset should not be sold in this difficult economic climate.

The unions are against the sell-off of the state's assets. I am sure the 34,000 public servants are against the sell-off of these assets because of the major upheaval and forced transfer and loss of jobs that will occur. Most importantly, Queenslanders are against it. Queenslanders are only beginning to realise the dire straits the state's finances are in. I also note that many party members opposite are against it. I congratulate the member for Waterford and the member for Bundamba for taking their very principled stand against this desperate and financially irresponsible knee-jerk reaction.

With the sell-off of Queensland Rail's \$7 billion coal and freight arms, the Premier's promise that bus and rail passengers could expect extra government money to be invested in the state's passenger rail and public transport networks following privatisation has to be questioned. Can the Premier guarantee that the \$7 billion from the sale of the coal and freight businesses will be used to invest in public transport for Queenslanders? The Premier has indicated in the media that her government's asset sale program would go ahead between 2012 and 2015 if the appropriate market price was found. Yet we have these cognate bills in 2009 not knowing if this bankrupt government will even be in power in 2012.

The proposed privatisation of \$15 billion of the state's \$63 billion government owned assets is a desperate garage sale so that the state does not get a further downgrade of its credit rating. Will the Premier guarantee that none of this asset sale money will be used to pay the wages of public servants, thereby costing the people of Queensland more money through higher interest rate payments through further downgrades as the credit agencies look so poorly on Queensland for the future? The sell-off of state assets is a policy position that is in stark contrast to the ALP's 2008 party policy and was hidden from all voters just 12 weeks ago at the Queensland state election.

One of the assets that will be sold is Forestry Plantations Queensland. Forestry Plantations Queensland looks after and manages the government's 199,000 hectares of softwood and hardwood forest plantations and is the largest forest grower, specialising in plantation forestry products including exotic pine, Australian native hoop pine and plantation grown hardwood. Last year Forestry Plantations Queensland planted 5.8 million trees and generated \$85 million in revenue for Queensland taxpayers. Selling this asset is literally selling off the family farm to pay off the errant child's gambling debts. This is a major indicator that cash for this government is desperately needed.

It was only 12 weeks ago that the Premier won the election based on no job losses, no new taxes, no sell-off of assets and a promise of 100,000 new jobs. There was no whisper of the sell-off then. I wonder what the outcome of the election would have been if the taxpayers of Queensland knew what they know today of Labor's economic mismanagement. A re-run right now would settle the argument, but I suspect the early election called was more subterfuge to hide Labor's failings and to hide the parlous state of the Bligh Labor government's economic mismanagement.

Another asset to be sold off is the Abbot Point Coal Terminal, which is situated 25 kilometres north of Bowen. The port of Abbot Point is Australia's most northerly coal port. It comprises a rail in-loading facility, coal handling and stockpile areas and a single trestle jetty and conveyor connected to a berth and ship-loader. Coal is supplied to Abbot Point by rail from Newlands, Collinsville and Sonoma mines. In addition, small quantities of coal are brought north. The port terminal is operated by Abbot Point Bulk Coal Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of Xstrata Coal Queensland. The port is serviced by two tugs. This is yet another major and significant asset of Queensland that this government will be selling.

This government has already sold off the Golden Casket business operation to Tatts, which brought in \$530 million. It has sold off the electricity and gas retail business of Energex, the retail business of Ergon Energy and Energex's Allgas Energy natural gas distribution network. As we know, the Labor-supporting unions are opposed to this sell-off as espoused by none other than the Electrical Trades Union, who said the sell-off was madness.

This Bligh Labor government act is the height of irony, with the US government giving out money in the US stimulus package worth \$787 billion, where a key element of the stimulus bill would provide most Americans with a tax credit of US\$400 or US\$800 for couples. In Europe, the €200 billion stimulus package will give major relief to the community. Its package of fiscal stimulus is 1.5 per cent of all national incomes. In Germany, in the stimulus package of €50 billion there are modest cuts in income tax aimed at encouraging people to spend. In the UK, the stimulus package would offer financial relief to most Britons by cutting the sales tax from 17½ per cent to 15 per cent. But in Queensland the Australian stimulus package that Rudd rolled out with Howard money that gave \$900 to middle- to low-income earners will be taken back by the Bligh Labor government in the form of increased fuel taxes—8.354c a litre—and increased electricity prices which will soak up the whole \$900.

The increase in the price of petrol at the pump of 9.2c a litre—the removal of the subsidy plus GST—will increase every consumer commodity that Queenslanders use daily—milk, bread, grocery items, fuel, water, essential services and auxiliary services. This is a classic example of how the Bligh

Labor government pretends to look after the Queensland battler but really is more happy to shaft them through backdoor taxes and higher fees and charges. With electricity going up 16 per cent, for a bill of \$350 a quarter that will add another \$55, which means that for a whole year consumers will fork out an additional \$220.

The Premier has promised the people of Queensland 100,000 jobs over this term. With this disastrous budget, the likelihood of it being delivered is nil. The Premier won the election under false pretences. There is a new terminology out there for this promise of 100,000 jobs. It is called an 'Anna Bligh'. In Australian vernacular, instead of calling them porky pies, we are now calling them 'Anna Blighs'. This is another 'Anna Bligh' that got her elected at the last election. Higher taxes on business will mean more job losses in the private sector. No amount of pork-barrelling more Public Service jobs through asset sales funding will make up for the loss of small businesses' capacity to employ. The Bligh Labor government needs to realise the potential risk to the industry if it is not supportive with innovative policy solutions to weather the downturn in the economy.

In relation to tourism, the federal government released the Jackson report titled *Informing the national long-term strategy* on 14 June, which was produced by the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy Steering Committee, chaired by Margaret Jackson. Other members were Christopher Brown—a good Labor boy—Kayleen Collins, Saul Eslake, Matt Hingerty, Greg Hywood, Karen Jacobs, Jeff Kennett and Jenny Lambert. So any dismissal by the government of this august group of tourism individuals to protect Queensland's deficiencies just does not wash.

The report is a current critical analysis of the tourism industry in Australia which is in crisis. The tourism industry in Australia contributed more than \$40 billion to the gross domestic product in 2007-08. It goes on to say that tourism is Australia's largest service export industry, providing 10.1 per cent or \$23.6 billion of Australia's total exports. The tourism industry directly employs 500,000 people and accounts for nearly one-third of all businesses.

With the tourism industry being so significant to the Australian and in particular Queensland economies, it is a shame that the state and federal Labor governments do not take the industry more seriously. Innovative solutions need to be implemented to ensure the longevity of one of the most important industries. Queensland has the best product in the world, but the packaging and marketing of the best product in the world needs to go to the next level. The Jackson report goes on to say that, if the decline in the industry continues at the rate it has been, there would be a \$22 billion shortfall on what would have been achieved with 100,000 fewer jobs for the industry.

Mr Lawlor: Not one cent to promote tourism. Lucky they can see straight through you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): Order! The member for Mermaid Beach is on his feet.

Mr STEVENS: It reveals that Queensland has been hardest hit. I note that Minister Lawlor does not agree with the findings and comments of the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy Steering Committee in the report. To give the minister a little help in his portfolio, there has been a decline in tourism over a period of time. Unfortunately, it is the minister who has to come up with innovative solutions to fix tourism in Queensland.

The global financial crisis has an impact on tourism across the globe as well as here in Queensland, and this budget the state government has handed down has delivered very few positives for an industry under pressure—that is, the Queensland tourism industry. While the tourism industry is the second largest export earner for Queensland, it has reduced the funding to plunge the industry further into crisis. There have been 60,000 fewer tourists on the Gold Coast over the last 12 months, which means a loss of 750 jobs according to the government's own figuring.

Tourism Queensland's budgeted amount for 2008-09 was \$49.07 million and the estimated budget for 2009-10 is \$43.536 million. Any fiddling and faddling by putting money into other areas does not take away from the fact that Tourism Queensland has been short-funded \$5.35 million. This sends a clear message to the tourism industry that the state government commitment to the industry is just not there. Forget the deck chair shuffling on the *Titanic* of shifting regional tourist organisation funding back to government departments. I warn the regional organisations of massive cuts to their funding in the years to come through this government department. Why is that organisation being removed from Tourism Queensland? So Tourism Queensland will not become unpopular and get the blame when the chop comes down on regional tourism funding. This government will put the onus back on to local councils to collect the levies for tourism across the state.

The budget announcement of \$36 million over three years for the tourism industry has already been announced in the Governor's opening speech of the 53rd Parliament. Increasing the price of fuel by 9.2c a litre will have an enormous impact on the tourism drive market. It will equate to a five per cent increase overall on all associated expenses. The Labor Party simply does not take the tourism industry seriously. It is barely keeping the industry afloat with financial support, with most announcements being made for operational needs like the \$520,000 for Tourism Queensland for information technology hardware upgrades.

There is one particular matter that I would like to make the minister aware of. The election announcement of \$60 million over three years towards the development of the Carrara Stadium has turned out to only be funding for the interest payments on the development rather than the capital expenditure. I would like the Premier or the minister to tell me where the \$60 million is being borrowed from and why it is not in the capital expenditure. All they are talking about is paying the interest on the Carrara Stadium.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight that the biggest change to our taxation system was the introduction of the GST and John Howard went to the people and was given a mandate for that GST. As a responsible Premier, she should have called an election to get the mandate to sell off state assets, but she has failed to tell Queenslanders her intentions. Martin Luther King said that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, and this budget is a tawdry attempt at spin doctoring.

(Time expired)

Hon. KL STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (5.29 pm): I rise in support of the 2009-10 state budget. I commend the Treasurer and the Premier for delivering a responsible budget for tough times. Funding for community services alone shows the Bligh government's determination to fund core services and help all Queenslanders through challenging economic times. This budget includes an extra \$414 million over four years to increase pay rates for community services workers. This wage supplementation recognises the valuable work they do in caring for our most vulnerable citizens. It recognises their need to be sustainable into the future.

The global recession means we have been forced to make some tough choices, but cutting back on key services, such as Communities funding, was not an option. I commend peak bodies such as QCOSS, NDS and others. The Australian Services Union has been calling for these wage increases for many years and for community services workers to be valued and remunerated appropriately. We have heeded those calls.

The worst economic crisis since the Great Depression will not prevent the Bligh government from providing services to people who need someone to turn to and somewhere to go when times are tough. In addition to the \$414 million to support jobs and services for vulnerable Queenslanders, the Communities budget includes: \$610,000 to expand youth justice conferences around the state to help young people get their lives back on track; \$1.8 million for legal and support services for seniors; \$70.2 million capital funding to expand the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre in Townsville; and an additional \$2 million for Lifeline for financial counselling services.

For the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that there was no new money in the budget for Communities shows that he has not done his homework. His budget reply was big on rhetoric and very, very short on positive strategies and policies. He was certainly all talk and no action. Unlike the opposition, we are about jobs, with clear plans for jobs, not job cuts. If the opposition's planned three per cent efficiency dividend was applied to housing's current budget, this is what would happen: \$22 million would be gone; 70 social housing units, gone; hundreds of construction jobs, gone; 275 front-line staff, gone. A Labor government understands that, while tough times call for tough measures, some things are simply not negotiable. We will continue to reach out to people who need our help—help with housing, help with family support, help to get a job.

The youth justice conferencing initiatives, which will be expanded across the state, are important initiatives. It is important to remember, for instance, that the vast majority of young people do the right thing, and that is reflected in the latest youth crime trends. In 2001, the rate of juvenile crime was around nine offences per 100 young people. It has now dropped to eight offences per 100 young people. That is a significant figure, given that the population of young people rose by almost 50,000 in that same period. These figures show that police, courts and youth justice workers are striking the right balance between helping young people in trouble and protecting the community. The drop in youth crime is due in no small part to services and activities like youth justice conferences. The conferences are where young people who have done the wrong thing face the people they have wronged and take responsibility for their actions. Youth justice workers tell me it is a powerful process and a powerful deterrent.

Our housing budget is a massive jobs generator. A total of \$1.4 billion will be spent next year on new housing projects in Queensland. We are ramping up our investment in job-generating infrastructure. We are rolling out 4,000 new homes over the next 3½ years. It is an unprecedented level of investment in social housing in Queensland. The new funds will build new public and community housing as well as Indigenous housing in remote communities. We will also deliver additional services and specialist accommodation for homeless people. It could not have come at a better time. It is a win for people who need a roof over their heads, and it is a win for the thousands of builders, electricians, plumbers, tradespeople generally and people in the supply industries who will get jobs out of this massive build.

My electorate of Algester has new funding that will go straight into the education front line. Students and schools in the Algester electorate are big winners in this budget. Funds of \$7.5 million will deliver an extra 10,000 grants for each school in Logan from next year, and I have picked up lots of the Logan area in my changed electorate. There will be an extra \$3,000 for each school in disadvantaged areas. A further \$2.8 million will be invested in the new Every Child Counts program. It is a wonderful program that is reaching out to students in 12 Logan schools, giving them specialised help to improve numeracy and literacy and their educational outcomes generally.

A further \$8.7 million will be spent over the next three years to support innovative programs at schools in the region. The money will go towards establishing a support team to work with students, helping them address social and emotional issues that may affect their ability to learn and succeed at school. This is what Labor governments are good at—really understanding the needs of people, including young people, and trying to address those needs. The teams will tackle truancy, family issues, social disadvantage and parenting skills, with the aim of improving student learning outcomes.

Roads in my electorate are also big winners. A total of \$15 million has been set aside to complete the duplication from two to four lanes on the Mount Lindesay Highway between the Green Road and Federick Street intersection and Rosia Road, Park Ridge. Also, \$1.36 million will be spent to complete concept planning for the Logan Motorway and Gateway extension road between the Pacific Motorway and Ipswich Motorway south of Calamvale.

This budget is investing in more than roads; it is investing in the people who live and work in my electorate. It is an investment in their future and I commend the bills to the House.

Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (5.36 pm): It is an honour to rise in this parliament as the state member for Morayfield and contribute to the debate on the 2009-10 Queensland budget. This 2009-10 state budget has been framed in the toughest economic times in three-quarters of a century. There has been much interest in this year's budget. I will not deny that many of my constituents have contacted me to convey their thoughts and comments. I welcome those comments, and I am pleased that the people of the Morayfield state electorate are positively contributing to the discussion about how we can ensure Queensland comes through this global recession stronger, not weaker.

Of course, governments around the world would prefer not to be in this current financial situation and would prefer not to be in the position of having to make hard decisions about how to protect jobs and services in our communities. Nonetheless, circumstance dictates that decisions must be made. Governments are elected to make those decisions. To do nothing but complain about the situation is not possible. If we do not act decisively, then we deny the dark realities of the moment.

This state budget is about priorities. We must re-evaluate our spending. We must focus on the proper role of modern and contemporary government. That is why this state budget makes the hard decisions. Effecting these decisions means the government can invest in strategies which create and support jobs and continue and expand the \$18.2 billion infrastructure building program, which is delivering new government assets, new hospitals, new schools, new public transport infrastructure and new roads for our communities.

This state budget will see investment in health services increase by 8.2 per cent to \$9.037 billion; \$110 million for Surgery Connect to reduce wait list times; and more than 3,500 doctors, nurses and allied health workers employed over the next three years. We will also see 350 new teachers and teacher aides, 203 new police officers and 50 new ambulance officers employed, as well as 150 new ambulances, 20 new or improved ambulance facilities and nine new or improved fire stations.

In addition, the Solar Hot Water Program, a 25 per cent payroll tax rebate for eligible employers who employ apprentices and trainees, a \$25 per year increase in the electricity rebate for pensioners and wage increases for some community sector workers on a priority basis will be funded in this year's state budget. Locally, this budget provides some real and positive benefits to the residents of the Morayfield state electorate. I would like to spend some time detailing those benefits because in a state budget with total income and expenditure in the magnitude of billions of dollars it is easy to overlook aspects which provide particular assistance to the residents of the Morayfield state electorate.

I am pleased to see that education remains a key priority for this Labor government in the Morayfield state electorate. One of my highest priorities as the state member for Morayfield is to see investment in our schools. I am especially pleased to see that the Caboolture Special School has been allocated \$2.6 million for a new general learning area block, that the Narangba Valley State School has been allocated \$1.75 million for a general learning area block and \$600,000 for additional amenities, and that the Morayfield State High School has been allocated \$1.36 million for the Morayfield trade training centre and \$250,000 for new parking facilities. In addition, the Burpengary State School, Minimbah State School, Morayfield East State School, Morayfield State High School and Morayfield State School will receive additional funding to complete some much needed maintenance projects.

This state budget also invests in local jobs for local people. The Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative will provide direct assistance to the people of the Morayfield state electorate. In addition, Queensland's Green Army strategy and additional funds to promote social inclusion through economic participation will create local employment opportunities for local people in the Morayfield state electorate in these tough economic times.

I note that this state budget also provides an allocation of \$11.74 million to complete the widening of the Bruce Highway between Uhlmann Road and the Caboolture turn-off. This allocation brings the total project costs to \$195 million. This road-widening project is nearing completion and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of the Morayfield state electorate for their patience. I trust that they will agree with me that the end result will certainly be well worth the wait.

There is also an allocation of \$90,000 in federal Black Spot funding to provide median barriers on the Lindsay Road approach to O'Brien Road at Burpengary. This is a notorious road intersection and this funding will be warmly received by local residents. The residents of the Morayfield state electorate are keen and patient supporters of public transport. My constituents will therefore welcome the allocation of \$9.5 million for the establishment of additional Park & Ride facilities under the South-East Queensland urban congestion initiative. I am pleased to see that Burpengary has been identified as a key priority area under this strategy.

The valuable work of local community workers is not overlooked in this state budget. Some community organisations serving the Morayfield state electorate will receive around \$325,000 for gambling support services and around \$371,000 to provide crisis and medium-term accommodation as well as social support for young people. In addition, Bargumar Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation will receive almost \$414,000 over three years to support young Indigenous people in the Moreton Bay region. The outstanding work of the Youth Justice Service Centre at Morayfield will also be supported and enhanced through funding of expansion works.

This is a tough budget for tough economic times. Nonetheless, I am pleased to see that this state budget delivers critical infrastructure and support measures for the residents of the Morayfield state electorate. I commend the Appropriation Bill to the House.

Mr KILBURN (Chatsworth—ALP) (5.43 pm): I also rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill. I support the comments of my colleague opposite. I, too, have had people from my electorate of Chatsworth contact me about some of the decisions that have had to be made in this budget. I have found that, when we sit down calmly and explain the situation in which this budget was framed without the hysterics that we hear constantly from the other side of the House, most people understand the need for these decisions and understand the long-term benefits that these decisions will have for the state of Queensland. I am under no illusion that every decision a government makes is going to appeal to everyone; it never will. The point of being in government is to make decisions that will have long-term benefits for the people of Queensland. With that in mind, I am happy to support this bill.

As a member of the very new class of 2009 in this parliament, I must say that it has been an interesting ride. The first budget in which I was able to partake is one that has been framed in one of the greatest economic downturns we have seen in history. It has been a steep learning curve. I can only say how happy I was with the level of discussion and debate, the amount of input that I had—and I am sure other backbenchers had—and the information that was provided to us by the Treasurer, the Premier and the Cabinet Budget Review Committee to allow us to understand why these tough decisions had to be made. I am happy to say that, even in the time of a huge economic downturn and a reduction in the income that this government receives, I am still very proud of the decisions that were made.

A number of decisions were made regarding areas throughout this state. They included \$613 million for vocational education and training activities. I have two teenage girls in school. One is studying for an OP and one is doing a vocational education and training program. It was an incredibly happy event for her when we went down that road and managed to achieve a traineeship, which was supported and paid for by this state government under the vocational education and training program. These are the sorts of decisions that are made of which people do not see the benefits unless they are directly involved in them. As a government member of this House, I do have the privilege of seeing the vast array of expenditure that this government is making that is specifically aimed at supporting people and making Queensland a better place to live.

In relation to my electorate of Chatsworth, I am also pleased to announce that, even given the tough economic times, there is a range of initiatives in my electorate that is going to be hugely beneficial for the people in and around Chatsworth. Some include \$138.2 million as part of the construction of the Eastern Busway from Buranda to Capalaba. I have already spoken on this issue and I have been briefed recently by the project team. I was interested to hear the comments made by the member for Maroochydore earlier about what I am sure was a very long and detailed visit to the Greenslopes electorate in which she found out all about the Eastern Busway. I can tell her that I talk to people quite often about the Eastern Busway. Everyone I speak to in the Greenslopes, Chatsworth or Capalaba electorates cannot wait for this piece of infrastructure to be built. I am proud that, even in tough economic times, this government still shows commitment to building infrastructure and public transport which is going to be of huge benefit to the people of my electorate.

There is also \$259.15 million for the continuation of the Gateway Upgrade Project—another massive infrastructure project that is going to benefit the people in my electorate of Chatsworth. I can say that the people in my electorate are very happy about this piece of infrastructure not only because of the benefits that it will provide for my electorate but also because of the jobs that it is creating and the money that it is injecting into my electorate. I am very proud that that continues. I think it is a sign of this government's commitment to infrastructure.

There is also about \$6.1 million to upgrade the substation high voltage switchboard at Carindale. Once again we are building the necessary infrastructure that makes Queensland a great place in which to live. I am also happy to see that there is \$2.44 million for the construction of a police station in the Camp Hill-Carina area. This police station is welcomed by the people in my electorate. I have spoken to a number of people and they are very keen to see this progress. I am looking forward to the council coming to an agreement with the government to allow us to get started on this important project as soon as possible.

There are a number of other announcements in the budget. There is \$1.38 million towards intersection improvements at New Cleveland Road and Tilley Road. This is a commitment to road safety that is very much welcomed in my electorate. There is \$891,000 in joint state and federal funding to complete concept planning for the section of the Gateway Motorway south between Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road and the Pacific Motorway.

This is what planning is. I keep hearing from the members opposite that this government does not plan. Here is a plan. We have upgraded the Gateway Motorway and we are already planning the extension of that upgrade from Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road to the Pacific Motorway. That will be a huge boon in terms of traffic in that area. There is an allocation of \$792,000 for the commencement of traffic signal improvements on Old Cleveland Road and New Cleveland Road. This is a huge amount of money to be spent at a time when economies around the world are collapsing. It will be of huge benefit to the people in my electorate. I commend the spending initiatives outlined in this budget.

One of the great joys that I have had since becoming a member of parliament is my regular visits to the schools in my electorate. I am very lucky to have in my electorate a number of fantastic schools. The more I visit those schools and see the wonderful achievements of the students and teachers at those schools, the more I am amazed to hear the constant negative diatribe that comes from those on the other side of this House.

Anyone would think that this state is falling apart; it is not. I am constantly impressed by the level of education, understanding, fantastic behaviour and output of the children at these schools. There are great initiatives for my electorate contained in this budget. I am glad to announce that in this budget there is funding of \$24.928 million for the new Bayside State College being built at Wynnum. Although that school is in the Deputy Premier's electorate, the catchment area for that school takes in people in my electorate of Chatsworth from Wakerley, Gumdale, Belmont and Tingalpa. I was recently briefed on this school. I can tell members that this is a fantastic initiative. There will be total expenditure of \$57 million on a fantastic state-of-the-art high school which will service the people in my electorate.

Here is an example of planning because this was interesting. During the election campaign the member for Southern Downs turned up with the LNP candidate and, in a case of political opportunism, announced on a whim that they were going to build a high school at Wakerley. Wakerley is five minutes from where the new \$57 million high school is currently being built in Wynnum. They turned up for a day and said, 'We are going to build you a new high school in Wakerley.' They thought it would get them a few votes.

How much did they set aside for that with no planning? Some \$18 million. They are going to build a state-of-the-art facility for \$18 million. The land for the Bayside State College cost \$17 million. They had \$1 million to build a state-of-the-art high school five minutes from the \$57 million state-of-the-art high school being built. They are planning extraordinaires. If that is the level of planning that those opposite espouse, I do not see that they are going to get too far.

We have \$512 million for the State Schools of Tomorrow renewal program. The improvements to Tingalpa State High School, which I have visited a number of times, are fantastic and much appreciated by the people in my electorate. There is \$54.7 million for maintenance at Carina State School, \$62 million for maintenance at Camp Hill State School, \$132,000 for maintenance at Whites Hill State College, \$15,500 for maintenance at Gumdale State School, \$140,000 for maintenance at Mayfield State School and \$65,000 to improve the set-down and pick-up facilities at Belmont State School. We just need the council to chip in its share of funding and we will be able to get that project underway quickly.

There is investment in schools by the federal government. That investment is welcome and long overdue after an 11-year drought under the Howard government. Finally, the purse strings have been loosened in Canberra and there is some real investment in our schools. The people I speak to really appreciate the level of support they are getting nowadays.

One of the things that sets us apart from those opposite is our commitment to looking after people in our communities, particularly the disadvantaged. I was particularly impressed that in this budget there are a number of initiatives to help out in my electorate. There is \$559,000 to provide 24-hour, seven-day-a-week staffed residential intensive intervention programs, \$100,000 to provide accommodation and support for homeless young men between 16 and 25 years of age, \$120,000 for support services for women and \$2.14 million to complete construction of 12 dwellings in the Chatsworth electorate. I am only too aware that those 12 dwellings are only part of the 4,000 dwellings that this government will build across this state to help the public housing situation. I am very proud to be part of that.

We have made extensive investment in sport. There is \$680,000 in this budget to upgrade the sporting fields at the Clem Jones Centre at Carina. I have spoken at length about this.

There is a range of other initiatives that have been developed in my electorate. The thing that I am really proud about when it comes to this government and making tough decisions in tough times is the \$414 million that has been set aside for community sector workers. I would say it is a long overdue investment in our community service sector workers. This job has given me an opportunity to get an understanding of the work that these people do in our community.

I was fortunate enough to attend a carers and kinship Mother's Day breakfast. I saw people from a range of non-government organisations. A lot of people probably think they are funded by charities and by other means. I spoke to the people there and, without exception, they told me that they were at least 90 or 100 per cent funded by the Queensland government. This is the sort of expenditure that makes Queensland a better place, provides housing for the disadvantaged, provides job opportunities for those who are less able than others. That is why I am proud to stand on this side of the House as part of the Bligh government.

As a new member in the House, I must say that I have been on a steep learning curve. I would like to thank the members on both sides of the House who have taken the time to give me the benefit of their knowledge and explain to me some of the things that go on in this House. I would say that I learnt quite a lot from the Treasurer in the briefings that we received about the budget, how it was formulated and the reason decisions had to be made the way they were. I am comfortable with those decisions.

In the short time that I have been here I have learnt a lot from those on this side of politics. I was hoping that today in the Leader of the Opposition's reply to the budget speech I would begin to understand or be given some information about how those members opposite would deal with the current economic crisis. I was hoping to find out what their proposals would be. I have heard non-stop since I have been in this House a barrage of negativity from the other side of the House. It is unbelievable how negative they can be. They need to get out a bit more.

I understand that negativity, because it must be hard losing an election. I think the most negative person we have seen in this House recently is the member for Southern Downs. I understand that he is hurting from the election loss. As the member for Chatsworth, I know how much LNP members can hurt when they lose an election.

I was really looking forward to being educated about an alternative point of view to the decisions that this government has made to progress Queensland. Whilst none of us really wants to get rid of the fuel subsidy, in tough times tough decisions have to be made. It is in times when hard decisions need to be made that true leadership comes out. We have seen leadership from this side of the House. We have seen the government take on a program of well-thought-out asset sales to help balance the budget and to ensure we can maintain our jobs program. That is leadership.

What I saw from the other side today—I waited to hear an alternative program—was nothing. There was 46 minutes of negativity with not one bit of information about the alternative plan of those opposite. I am a bit disappointed.

Mr Messenger interjected.

Mr KILBURN: Are you going to give it to us? I cannot wait to hear that. It will be a purler.

Everyone in Queensland and Australia, except for some of those sitting on the opposition benches, understands that there is a global financial crisis. We all know it and everyone out there knows it. I have not heard in my short time in this House one person from that side of the House tell us to stop spending money. I hear those opposite constantly saying that they want more money, they want more hospitals, they want more roads for their electorates, they want more police and they want more ambulances. As they ask for all of this, I wonder: where do they think the money comes from, because it has to come from somewhere?

Then I thought back to the time when Joan Sheldon was the Treasurer of this state and I remember her talking about taking away the toll from the Sunshine Coast. She was asked, 'Doesn't this mean that the taxpayer will have to pay it instead?' She replied, 'The taxpayer won't pay for it; the government will.' That was a long time ago, when I really was not that interested in politics, but I started thinking, 'Maybe these people don't understand.' The longer I am in this chamber, the more I think that is true, because I have heard nothing but claims from those opposite for more money while at the same time they say, 'Don't sell assets. Don't raise taxes. Don't do anything and don't go into debt.'

I just quickly looked through the Register of Members' Interests and I do not see many members who do not have a debt. I have a debt: I have a mortgage. In terms of my mortgage-to-income ratio, it is actually a worse ratio than the state government's debt-to-income ratio. However, I am not losing any sleep about it. I am comfortable with it. I am comfortable that I will be able to pay it off, and I am doing it because I know that in the future my children will benefit from the fact that I am buying a strategic asset that will go up in value over time and which in the meantime will provide benefits to them as they go through life. So I have no problem with having a well-thought-out plan and having debt that is controllable to invest in the future and improve the state.

Mr Messenger interjected.

Mr KILBURN: Have you got a mortgage?

Mr Messenger interjected.

Mr KILBURN: So you do not.

Mr SPEAKER: Address your comments through the chair.

Mr KILBURN: Sorry, Mr Speaker; I should not even listen. What I see here is a group of people who have not actually said on the whole that privatisation is a bad idea. They will privatise; we all know it. The difference is that we will do it with a bit of compassion and a bit of understanding and support for the people who work in those organisations. That is the difference between us and them. We will do it in a controlled way, in a way that shows some compassion for the people who are involved. It would just be an open slather sell-off if those opposite got the chance. We saw what Kennett did—exactly what those opposite would do. In fact, I am surprised that when the Leader of the Opposition spoke about his heroes—Margaret Thatcher, John Howard and Lawrence Springborg—there was not room for Kennett, because I am sure that he would have been a great mentor for the people over on that side, because they will sell off state assets.

Ms Stone interjected.

Mr KILBURN: And he is a mentor who is still alive, I am glad to say. We will make the changes. This government has made the tough choices, but it has made those choices with compassion and empathy. It has made sure that it has looked after the rights of the workers—something that will not happen when those opposite do it.

I constantly hear from those opposite this feigned concern about the unions and consulting with the unions. They are the same people who were going to slash the Public Service but somehow improve service delivery! It cannot happen. As someone who was in the fire service for 20 years, I can tell members about the idea of front-ending. You can have as many people in uniform as you like standing out the front, but they are not much use if they do not have training, if they do not have resources, if they do not have equipment and if they do not have trucks. All of those things take people behind the scenes, and that is something members opposite still have not understood. They do not understand that the Public Service provides a service, not just the people on the front line. There needs to be support. I needed it when I was a firefighter in uniform, and I am sure that most other people in uniform understand the need for that support. So when those opposite think they can cut \$1 billion out of the budget without affecting service delivery, they are kidding themselves.

As for the member for Southern Down and his diatribe relating to the bunch of flowers that he brought in here, I would love the member for Southern Downs to come with me to the Labour Day march next year. If he comes along I will introduce him to some of the boys he was calling names and we will see how many of them meet the definition of what he was calling them. Those are people who are doing the right thing for their union in terms of negotiating the best deal they can, and the outcome has been a good outcome for all people involved. I am happy to stand here in support of this budget. I am proud to be a member of this government that looks after people and makes the tough decisions, because that is what leadership is all about.

Mrs PRATT (Nanango—Ind) (6.03 pm): Before I start with my speech proper, I want to acknowledge that we are going through adverse economic times, but I cannot dismiss the fact that Queensland has been riding on a wave—hanging five, so to speak, and enjoying the ride. But this government has been so engrossed with the ride that it has forgotten that there is always a dumper behind the wave. It is something it has overlooked. I know what it is like when it comes to balancing a budget. I know what it is like to prepare for hard times, because when you are a farmer you know that there is a boom-and-bust cycle continually going on. If you deal on the stock market, it is the same thing. It is just an everyday occurrence. It is boom and bust and it goes on and on.

I rise to speak to these cognate bills which include the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill, which address the budget of this state—bills that I would have thought would be enough on their own to debate without having to lump them in with other bills. Each MP in this House should be entitled to 20 minutes to voice their opinions on the budget and how it will impact on or benefit their constituencies and the electorate as a whole. But the government has chosen to include other bills—namely, the Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill and the Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Each and every one of these bills could have and would have in their own right created enormous debate in this chamber for at least 20 minutes each per member, but we have been restricted to just a few minutes per bill if we want to address each one.

These bills have also created a lot of very heated debate in the general public. Without exception, every single person who has raised with me the sale of assets has been in total opposition to the sale of what they call the people's assets. Each member in this House should be aware that Labor does not look good. I can assure members that the Premier has not come out smelling of roses and if she came

to my electorate—and I know after speaking with people that many other electorates feel the same—she would definitely need her hard hat. As I said, each member in this House could easily use and should have been given a full 20 minutes for each of the bills that we are debating tonight.

Selling off state assets is a serious business and should be treated as such. I have some questions that I would like to get answers to, and so would the people. Is there a limit to the eligibility of people or countries that could buy these assets? Will they be foreign owned? What exactly is involved and what has been decided? Where will these assets end up? It is time the people were told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

The unions saw the problems which would come from the sale of these assets and I remember hearing the words 'it is madness' when referring to the sale of these assets. They knew and understood that from the beginning, but I have never, ever seen anybody or any group of people cave in as quickly as they did. They were like soggy white bread. Believe me, I have never, ever seen a group of people cave in in such a quick fashion.

I had to ask myself why. What did they trade the security of workers' jobs for? Was it perhaps a political future? Were they told that if they did not pull their heads in they were jeopardising the future of the Labor government because it was election time? What was their price? The price is one the workers will ultimately pay. The sale of these assets will impact on Queenslanders—be it jobs or the cost of goods. The union bosses will be okay. I have seen it before in my electorate: the union bosses looked after themselves but it was the workers who paid the price. I have seen it before and I will possibly see it again. They sold out the workers in my electorate once before and they have now sold them out again. As far as I am concerned, any union member should tear up their union ticket to show how disgruntled they are.

This government has relegated these important bills to the position of what we in the country call a job lot. For those members who do not know what a job lot is, it is a lot put up at an auction which is made up of bits and pieces deemed unable to be sold on their own. It is the case here that these bills have been put up in a job lot so that they can pass through this House in a very short amount of time. Every member in this House who is entitled to speak on every bill for 20 minutes is really only getting possibly five minutes per bill tonight.

The proposed sale of Queensland Motorways will affect everybody, as will the sale of Queensland Rail's haulage business and the port of Brisbane. The sale of Forestry Plantations Queensland will affect my electorate quite substantially. These assets and the Abbot Point Coal Terminal are not job lot assets, and these bills should have been given the debating time that they are due and that they deserve.

These assets need to be recognised as very important assets of the state. They are major pieces of infrastructure. They are important assets of the people and this government has relegated them to being worth but a few minutes debate. I find that particularly shameful. The people may have been appalled to learn that the government is intent on flogging off the farm, but they should be even more appalled by the government's actions of limiting proper debate on these bills. I have not heard one person who voiced their opinion agree—

Ms Struthers interjected.

Mrs PRATT: The members on the other side of the House who are willingly selling our assets can interrupt all they like because the opinion of the majority of my electorate is that the government is not worth two bob at this particular moment. I have not heard one person who has voiced their opinion agree with this asset sale. The people have been bitten before by the promise of low prices brought about by privatisation and the promise of more competition.

Ms Struthers interjected.

Mrs PRATT: I know for a fact that you do not sell off your assets. If you sell the cow, you do not get the milk.

Ms Struthers interjected.

Mrs PRATT: You sell the milk and you maintain the cow and you improve on it. You just do not get the milk. You sell the milk and you maintain the cow and you improve on it.

Ms Struthers interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister will allow the member to speak.

Mrs PRATT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have always been told that privatisation brings more competition and lower prices. To date, in the area in which I live I have not seen that. People may see that occur in the city where fuel is a lot cheaper and freight is very cheap, but I have not seen that occur in the rural sector. With privatisation, in most cases competition did not occur and the prices definitely did not come down; they rose quite substantially.

The combining of the debate on these bills takes time away from being able to dissect the budget. I believe it is a devious and sneaky tactic to push all of these bills through the House in one hit. It is expected that \$15 billion will be raised from this fire sale, but Queensland will have a \$44 billion debt and in four years time Queensland's debt will be over \$80 billion. So I cannot see this relatively paltry \$15 billion making much of a difference in the future. It is the people of Queensland who will be asked to pay.

It was stated earlier in this chamber that Queenslanders will be required to pay \$14 million per day in interest alone on this debt and they will pay it in the form of increased fees, increased levies, increased old taxes and new taxes. The government has stated that the fuel subsidy is to be abolished, but if it were honest it would refer to it in its proper form. It is really the introduction of a new tax. The people will be forking out 9.2c a litre in extra tax. For an average household, that is an extra \$200. This new tax raises a lot of questions for my constituents and, no doubt, every other rural person who needs to travel for health, medical and other services. Will this government lift the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme rebate? It is currently 15c a kilometre and \$30 per night for accommodation. But I did not see any mention of an increase in the PTSS to assist the most vulnerable in these harsh economic times. All I have seen to date is this government adding to the hard times.

Recently, a small operator stopped me in the street and stated that, with the implementation of this fuel tax, his fuel costs will increase by \$1,000 a week. Just in case members do not know, that is \$52,000 a year. He has to pass on those costs and will continue to pass on those costs to the consumer. The consumers will pay for this tax through every service they receive, every piece of goods they buy and every bit of food they buy to feed their families.

I would like to quote from a letter that I received from the RACQ. It states—

RACQ's *Fight the fuel* tax campaign... This new tax, combined with increases in vehicle registration fees of 17 to 22 percent from 1 July, will contribute to making Queensland the most expensive place in Australia in which to own and operate a motor car. In the current recession, RACQ believes it is more important than ever to ensure that motoring is as affordable as possible, especially in a state as large and decentralised as Queensland.

Major industry groups AgForce, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, Marine Queensland, Motor Trades Association of Queensland and Queensland Trucking Association, have all lent their support to the campaign because of the major negative impact the fuel tax will have on business. It has been estimated that the increased fuel costs would add about three percent to transport costs, leading to a rise of about one percent in the final cost of goods and services generally.

One per cent may not sound much, but when it is added to all the other increases that will be added over the next few years it will be quite a considerable amount.

Registration is up 17 to 22 per cent, depending on the number of cylinders of the car. That increase is equivalent to the combined increases that have occurred over the past six years. People will pay, pay and pay again. It is this level that people can relate to—the hip pocket. The Premier and the Treasurer are the modern day Fagins—picking the pockets of everyday Queenslanders. But the difference is that, although Fagin was subject to the laws of the day as he picked people's pockets, the Premier and Treasurer are making the laws to allow them to pick people's pockets legally.

The burden of this debt will be felt the greatest by the regional and rural sectors. People in those areas travel more, as there is often no public transport for them. The people in those areas have large vehicles owing to poor road conditions or virtually a lack of roads at times. The freight bills for people in those areas are higher. Their fuel is often up to 10c or more per litre dearer than it is in the city. So, yes, people in rural and regional areas will pay. The unemployment that will ensue will impact on the rural sector as well. Members should not think that unemployment will not be exacerbated, because as I speak people in small businesses are laying people off and they and their families are carrying out much of the work themselves.

Ms Struthers: Tell us your answer.

Mrs PRATT: I would not have got myself in this situation, because I have always saved for a rainy day. This government failed to save for a rainy day in the boom times. If the minister cannot save for her own future, she should not start throwing comments across the chamber.

The capping of the annual subsidies paid to councils will be picked up by the ratepayers, too. Some of the shires in my electorate have found that, with the government's insistence on fluoridation, their water systems need to be upgraded. That is going to cost us money. But with this cap on subsidies, how many other services will be lessened, will not be delivered at all, or just shelved forever? Will the government consider, for instance, relaxing the fluoridation implementation time so that the money can be raised in due course? Will the government offer assistance in other forms? Again, the public will pick up the shortfall. The rates will go higher. Just because the amalgamated councils now have a larger rate base does not mean that their overall income will be greater. It will only be greater if the subsidies are increased. Again, the people will pay.

We are expected to be in debt until approximately 2017. I am old enough to have grandchildren—and I do have grandchildren—and they will be in the workforce by then and they will be paying off this debt. If the repayment of this debt does not go to plan—and we have found over the years with this government that most things have not gone to plan and just about everything has doubled in price—I can see my great-grandchildren paying this debt.

We have a 7.25 per cent unemployment rate—175,000 people. People are paying very dearly for the squandering of the money over the past decade. They are losing their jobs and they are paying more and more in fees, levies, charges and taxes. They are doing it extremely tough and then the Treasurer releases a statement that says that ministers will no longer get free lunches, which will save \$28,000 per annum. Can anyone blame the general public for being cynical about politicians? I certainly do not.

At this point I should acknowledge a couple of questionably good things in the budget. One was the annual rise in the electricity rebate for pensioners, which will rise in line with the increase in power prices. So pensioners will not be out of pocket in terms of their electricity bills. The other one was the rise in the stamp duty threshold for first home buyers purchasing land, which should save first home buyers \$5,600. I cannot help feeling very cynical. These are good ideas and I commend the government for them. But I wonder how much the first home buyers will save when freight, fees and other charges continue to rise. Will their Australian dream become a nightmare?

The Nanango electorate will benefit from this budget to the tune of more than \$200 million, but that funding is primarily for the continuation of Tarong Energy to secure its future fuel supply and to continue the supply of energy to the state. Tarong Energy provides an essential service. But it worries me that in due course even that may be put on a job lot. There are other projects that I will refer to later in this speech but I believe it is necessary to outline that this budget is basically letting my electorate down.

In relation to Health, there is 80 per cent more funding than last year, which is definitely needed. There are 646 more doctors and nurses. How many will go to rural and regional areas? The planned Sunshine Coast Hospital has been postponed. In rural areas we dream of having a new hospital and we dream of not having other hospitals closed down. I can see that each day people from my area will be forced onto the congested roads of Brisbane as they try to seek services.

In relation to Education, it was pleasing to see in the budget that Kingaroy State High will get \$2,600,000 towards the Burnett trade training centre. This is a very worthwhile program and has been beneficial to the area.

Ms Struthers interjected.

Mrs PRATT: It is a perfectly good school and it has got great leadership. That is to be acknowledged. Nanango State Preschool will receive almost \$2 million for construction of an early childhood education centre. Their community will thank the government for that. But we do not thank the government for overlooking the Kingaroy 'dump-of-the-month' Police Station. It is only so often one can putty and paint over termite damage and crowd police into small rooms. I believe that if the government spoke to those police officers they would be begging them to give them a decent place to work to do the job of protecting the community as is expected of them.

Roads are another major problem. I note that this budget is \$300 million down on previous funding. It is mostly federal funding that we are talking about and it is mostly going to the south-east corner. I will not argue with that because I have no problem with roads being built anywhere and I am very grateful when I see them in my area. I do ask: why is it that the government has not been able to keep up many of our bridges on the major highways like the New England Highway, the D'Aguilar Highway, and the Brisbane Valley? Why has the government not kept them as dual carriageways? It has been reducing them steadily to single-lane bridges. These are major thoroughfares in Queensland that are seen by people from other states and visitors from overseas. The government tells me that it is to do with the safety of the bridges and their carrying capacity but it is a retrograde step to let our bridges fall into such disrepair.

Recently the Treasurer stated that there would be a 20 per cent rise in registration costs and that that money would not go into the roads budget as would normally occur but into consolidated revenue. The government also touts very strongly its desire to reduce our road toll. But this money grab, to me and to my constituents, puts the lie to that professed desire to reduce our road toll.

Mr SPEAKER: The word 'lie' is unparliamentary. You will withdraw it immediately.

Mrs PRATT: It puts an untruth to that desire. The government is going nowhere but backwards. If it was possible I would like to see much, much more money going into roads. Those opposite might ask where it would go. The point I make is that it should be spread around a little bit more. The member for Chatsworth was quite honestly standing up in this House and stating how happy he was with the government's performance. I have to say to the member for Chatsworth: you have the benefit of being on the governing side.

Mr SPEAKER: Talk through the chair, please. Do not talk to the member. You will address your comments through the chair.

Mrs PRATT: The member for Chatsworth might be big enough to recognise the fact that he has a distinct advantage over any electorate that is on the opposing side.

(Time expired)

Mr MALONE (Mirani—LNP) (6.23 pm): Again the people of Queensland have been conned. There have been interjections from those opposite pointing the finger and saying, 'What would you do?' I can tell members right now that we would not be in the situation those guys are in.

Government members interjected.

Mr MALONE: The government did not know what it was doing and it still does not know what it is doing. The reality is that we would not have been \$65 billion in debt before the financial crisis hit Queensland. Those opposite do not know what they are doing; they have not known what they were doing for the last 10 years and the reality is that they still do not know what they are doing.

Government members interjected.

Mr MALONE: We have a situation here tonight where those guys opposite are trying to put through this parliament a budget that is absolutely defunct. There is \$85 billion of debt in front of us. It was interesting to hear the member for Nanango talk about her children and grandchildren. They will be the ones paying this off.

Government members interjected.

Mr MALONE: You guys sit there and interject and think you are so good.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable member for Mirani.

Mr MALONE: Sorry, the members on the other side of the House interject with 'What would you do?' I can tell you right now that we would not have done what you guys have done over the last few years.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mirani, address your comments through the chair.

Mr MALONE: Yes, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: The people on my right will cease interjecting to allow the member for Mirani to be heard and make his contribution on the budget.

Mr MALONE: Thank you for your preservation of my dignity, Mr Speaker. As we move through this debate tonight on the cognate bills before us, including the asset sales we are faced with and the imposition of a tax on the good people of Queensland, the members on the other side of the House have the audacity to stand up and ask what we would do. The reality is that we would never be in the position those guys are in now. It did not start yesterday; it did not start three months ago with the Premier running around the state telling us it was in their DNA. The Premier visited 33 electorates in three days telling Queenslanders that they could depend on her government, that it would look after them. The whole issue of the last election was a typical lie that this government is so good at telling.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! You will withdraw the word 'lie'. It is unparliamentary.

Mr MALONE: Untruth. Sorry about that. We currently have a situation where we are heading towards \$14 million a day in interest. We have lost our AAA rating which has been downgraded to a AA plus rating. Just that very exercise costs us another \$1.2 billion a year. As others have spoken about in the House, that is equivalent to a children's hospital in Brisbane every year from here on in—and all the other things that could be done with \$1.2 billion—simply because this state, of all of the states in Australia, is the only state that has lost its AAA rating. Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria—all the basket cases, supposedly—and New South Wales have all retained their AAA rating. As a result of the very bad management of this government over the last at least two terms we have a situation where we are down the hole \$1.2 billion each year simply because we have lost our AAA rating. What a disgrace! Those opposite pretend they can run Queensland. It is quite amazing. Each family in Queensland has a debt of \$78,000. Those are figures that come home to bite. Leo Hielscher is talking about the situation we find ourselves in as we speak. With that combination of issues the government is looking at ways and means of putting some money back in the kitty.

In relation to the sale of assets right across Queensland, those assets have actually been built up by conservative governments and conservative clear-thinking Labor governments over the years, and I give them credit for that. They were actually putting money into assets that are of real benefit to Queensland. I can recollect the building of the coal line out to Goonyella back in 1975. The work that went on there was absolutely mind-boggling. The project cut through the Connors Range. Americans came over thinking they could drive dozers better than Australians. We proved them wrong. The work that was involved in pushing that cut through the mountain was mind-boggling. That project has benefited Queensland tremendously. The ability to get coal to the coast and put it through the biggest coal port in the world has been a magnificent project for Queensland. It has been putting money into the coffers of the Queensland government and you guys have been wasting it. As quick as it has come, you guys have been spending it. The government is in the process of selling off the coal lines. There will be no more income from coal freight. This is an asset that the government is selling at the worst possible time.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

Mr MALONE: As I was explaining before the dinner break, the people of Queensland are going to be duded by this Labor government. This is about the third time that the people of Queensland will have been duded. Before the last election, we were continually being told that the government would go full term. Then, in the government's very deceitful way, the Premier called an early election, even after indicating that she was in favour of four-year terms.

In my home town of Sarina there is a big proportion of railway workers. They are very strong Labor supporters, obviously. I recollect that during the last election campaign the Labor candidate made plenty of radio advertisements indicating his support for the continuation of the project at Jilalan, which is a great project, and indicating that the jobs of railway workers were secure. Three months after the Labor government won the election we now have a situation where the QR drivers, the fettlers and all the people who work in QR at Jilalan are unsure of their job security and their futures.

I can assure members that as I move around my small community of Sarina I hear many derogatory comments about the leadership of the Labor Party at this time. The economy in the seat of Mirani is dependent on the QR network, the coal haulage network. The Jilalan line runs right through the middle of it and then the line from Blackwater to Gladstone runs through the electorate as well. I would hate to guess the number of families who are reliant on a pay packet from QR to maintain their lifestyle.

The other situation that will have a huge impact on their lifestyle is the imposition of the almost 10c a litre fuel tax. A lot of people in this House do not realise that when you get outside of Brisbane there is no public transport, there is no subsidised transport and everything moves on wheels. QR has given up all the produce haulage that it used to do many years ago. I heard Shane Knuth, the member for Dalrymple, talk about how years ago every little town along the railway line had a siding that they used to shunt into and people used to go and pick up their groceries. That is all gone. Anything that moves in the country now moves on wheels and relies on fuel. So an extra 10c a litre is going to make a huge difference to the cost of living in the bush.

A lot of people, and not just in remote areas, take their children to school. There are people in my electorate just north of Rockhampton who drive up to 100 kilometres a day just to take their children to school. Obviously the increase in the price of fuel is going to have a huge impact on their life. Not only that; there will be the extra cost of registration, which I believe is going up around 20 per cent. So there will be increases in the costs of running a car, which is an essential item once you get outside the Brisbane area. It is almost impossible to live in regional Queensland without operating at least one car and possibly two or three depending on the number of people in your family.

The other issue I am really concerned about is the loss of subsidies to local government. We have had a number of debates in this House about the pollution of the Great Barrier Reef lagoons. One of the biggest polluters—and it has never been highlighted to any great extent—is the sewage plants that have not been upgraded in a number of smaller towns. The spillage into the lagoons is quite substantial. As I said, that has never really been identified. The government blames the farmers for pollution. Quite frankly, farmers are copping it in the neck. Now we have a situation where the state government is going to withdraw major subsidies that would have gone into upgrading those sewage plants. In the Mackay region there are quite a number of plants. All of those smaller communities on the coast are becoming very popular, and so the sewage plants not being up to speed and polluting the lagoons is becoming a real issue. To what extent that has any impact on the reef, who knows? But it has to have some impact on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. So the SCAAP funding that was very important to our small communities has been taken away and local councils, again, have been put in the gun to cover that issue.

The sale of Forestry Plantations Queensland is another issue I am concerned about. It is a great agricultural reserve of forestry for the future of Queenslanders and of course it generates jobs. It is possibly worth \$1.6 billion. But we have the downturn and we have a situation where Timbercorp and others are going belly up and I would imagine quite an excess of forestry land will be going on the market. So I would find it very difficult to believe that in this financial climate the government will get full value for money for Forestry Plantations Queensland. Obviously that will have a huge impact on the way this government finances the budget.

As I said before, this side of the House is not opposed to asset sales. But we are in a financial crisis and any money to that extent would be very hard to find, and companies that are looking at buying major assets we have on the market would be looking for a bargain. So in real terms there will not be a real return to the people of Queensland, who own the assets, or to the government for that matter to in some way fill the black hole that it has created over the last two or three terms in government.

The other issue—and it is quite significant in my electorate because of the distances—is that there is no increase in the travel subsidy for patients who have to travel for medical assistance. For people travelling from Middlemount, Blackwater, Dysart, Moranbah, Glenden and even Sarina to Townsville or in some cases to Brisbane, there has been no increase in the fuel rebate. So that will be a difficult situation for them as well.

As I said earlier, the issue we are facing tonight is that we have two days to pass the budget bills through the House. The other two pieces of legislation that also have to be passed are to do with abolishing the subsidy, which will result in a 9.2c a litre increase in the price of fuel, and asset sales. I reiterate that selling public assets in a downturn is not the way to go. As I said, those assets have been built up over many years. I spoke earlier about the Goonyella coal line, which is a huge asset. There have certainly been some issues in terms of QR running that line efficiently, but it has got back on track. There has been a major expansion of the Jilalan rail yard. I think the government spent something like \$600 million on it. By putting it on the market at this time I doubt whether the government will get back the money it has already spent. So that is just throwing good money after bad.

The portfolio issue that I would like to raise quickly deals with rural firefighters. In my shadow portfolio of emergency services, I am always heartened and I guess humbled by the way in which our emergency services people work in our community, from lifesavers to rural firefighters, QFRS officers and QAS officers. The work they do in our community is absolutely magnificent.

I have to say that from time to time I get frustrated with the management of the paid organisations, the QFRS and the QAS. It seems to be that there is a rule for them and a rule for those guys who are out on the front line. One of the issues I am concerned about with the rural firefighters is that there is a mandate, I guess, now for rural properties to pay a rural levy. That rural levy will be set, although I am not sure how it will be set. It certainly appears that every property in Queensland will pay a rural levy to the regional council. That money will go to a finance committee which will be made up of seven officers, only two of whom will be volunteers.

My real concern is that the money that is raised in our local communities—and some of them are far-flung communities—will be accumulated in an account in the regional councils and will not necessarily go back to the area in which it was collected. I am concerned, quite frankly, that we will have a situation similar to when the QATB was taken over by the Goss government when there was a change of government back in 1989 and all the QATB funds were transferred to Brisbane. I am concerned that this issue could easily head in that direction, and the volunteers are also concerned that that could happen. I will be following this issue closely in the next year or so to make sure that the funds that are collected in the local areas go back to the areas in which they were collected.

I reiterate that we have a situation here in Queensland where basically we are facing a black hole. No other state in Australia is in as bad a situation as Queensland. The federal government is heading towards a \$300 billion debt, and on top of that we have a debt here in Queensland of possibly up to \$100 billion. This loads all of our families—our children and our grandchildren—with a debt they will have to repay sooner or later. Sometimes it is hard to get the message across to the people that we actually are part of the assets of the state and we are part of the liabilities of the state. We have actually got to a situation here in Queensland, in less than two terms, where our liabilities have quadrupled in a very short time. The road ahead does not look very much clearer than it did before.

In my area, we have lost a huge number of jobs in the mining industry and the ancillary industries. Unless we can get some clarity, those jobs will continue to go. They are high-earning jobs and they are jobs which employ contractors et cetera, and those people feed money back into the community which is turned over numbers of times in a multiplying effect. Quite frankly, they support all the small businesses throughout our towns. They buy the houses, and they employ the plumbers, the builders and the electricians and it all goes around in a cycle.

Major infrastructure is being built in Mackay. A number of industrial sheds et cetera are being built and there is a huge investment by private investors in Mackay. Quite frankly, let us hope that the coalmining industry can get back to the stage it was before so that the Central Queensland region can continue to grow and employ not only our children but our grandchildren into the future. Our children and grandchildren have a huge debt ahead of them and they certainly need to be in the situation where they are able to pay that back.

Mrs MENKENS (Burdekin—LNP) (7.43 pm): Let me start by saying that I am appalled that this budget will be hitting our struggling households with a massive \$85.5 billion debt. This means the average household of four is facing a debt of \$78,000 each and that Queensland's annual interest bill will be \$5.2 billion each year. Every Queenslanders is paying for Labor's financial incompetence through increased registrations, increased electricity prices, increased council rates, increased water prices, increased fuel costs and increased food prices, and this can all be laid at the feet of this Labor government, Premier Bligh and her Treasurer Fraser.

From 1 July, everyone in this state will have to find more money on which to live, more money that in these tight financial times will not be easy to find. To help pay for that debt—the daily interest of which will be \$14.2 million—this government has deemed it necessary to sell off Queensland's assets: assets that are making this state money and that are to be sold off at the worst possible time with the market at rock bottom. This sale of profitable assets is driven not by good economic policy but by economic desperation. This fire sale of assets is yet another broken promise from a desperate Labor government that went bust in a boom.

Nothing has caused more consternation amongst my constituents who come to my office than this unprecedented slap in the face for Queensland—selling off the wealth-creating assets of Queenslanders to fund the ongoing expenditure of a failed government. There has been no consultation, no planning, no business sense.

Bowen people and North Queensland have been let down time and again with this government's broken promises over the building of the Northern Missing Link and the consequent effects on the expansion at the Abbot Point Coal Terminal. The government has been holding the mining sector to ransom over this project, demanding an unprecedented repayment schedule that naturally no business could accommodate. I note that QR is now going back to the drawing board and revising the scope and costings of the Goonyella to Abbot Point expansion project. Let us hope it is not another failed attempt.

Why can't this government get it right in the first place, without wasting millions of dollars of taxpayers' and local contractors' funds? It seems totally inept at completing any major project and, in this case, is desperately hoping that major mining companies will come and bail it out. This broken promise and Labor's debt driven budget will leave Queensland more vulnerable than before. This government racked up its \$64 billion debt well before the global economic downturn and has gone bust in a boom.

Government debt is set to reach \$85.5 billion. When an eminent person such as Sir Leo Hielscher suggests that that figure will be higher than \$100 billion once the full borrowing program is finished, Queenslanders have a very real cause for concern. Queensland is carrying by far the highest level of debt of any of the other states. It is currently the only state that no longer carries a AAA rating, and that comes at a huge cost. When we consider the once proud Queensland that we all remember, this is truly a tragic situation.

The Labor government's decision to impose a 9.2c a litre fuel tax which will affect all fuels is job destroying and will hurt struggling Queensland businesses and families. Upping the cost of fuel is a poor attempt by this government to solve its financial mismanagement. It is again a broken promise and it is not good enough. These increasing costs will have a huge impact on the sectors covered by the Communities and Housing departments.

One of my main concerns is that our state's seniors have again been neglected by this government. With the numbers of seniors in the state increasing, there should have been more in this budget to help and acknowledge them. It is our seniors who are bearing the brunt of the current economic climate and they face increasing costs of living. They face an increase in rent, an increase in water charges, an increase in vehicle registrations, an increase in fuel prices, an increase in food prices and an increase in electricity costs. For those who are reliant on the interest made by their savings to pay for those increases, the current low interest rates are further impacting on their financial resources.

This government may have adjusted the rebate on electricity to help cover that increase, but how is it helping our seniors cover the other increasing costs? Those pensioners living in public housing will find it particularly hard. They already automatically lose 25 per cent of their pension to rent. That means that, of the \$32 they receive from the federal government, \$8 will go towards rent. With the other rising costs they have to face, they will have nothing left. The most important group of people who have been responsible for creating the lifestyle we enjoy today—the self-funded retirees who have built and developed this state—will be hit even harder, with no government assistance whatsoever.

This government has repeatedly refused to increase the profile of seniors as a government responsibility. On top of that the government is failing to spend the money it has promised on the seniors sector. The budget for the seniors sector in 2008-09 was \$12.809 million. This government spent \$10.68 million. This is an underspend of \$2.12 million, or a massive 16.5 per cent of the budget underspent. This year's budget allocation is \$11.35 million, which is still nearly \$1.5 million less than the 2008-09 promised funds. Surely the government must realise that our population is ageing and services for seniors should be a priority.

An interesting fact in the budget is that the Department of Communities' budget capital allocation for one information technology system—ICMS—is \$10.441 million. This allocation is just \$220,000 less than the total spent on legal support, advocacy, information and promotion of issues for seniors over the past 12 months. It is appalling that seniors funding, going on state contribution figures only, constitutes less than half of a per cent of the new department's total expenditure. Surely our seniors are worth more than that.

The Seniors Card is also suffering from decreases. This government has also failed in meeting its target of 80 per cent of eligible Queenslanders holding the Seniors Card. It has missed that target as only 77 per cent of our residents aged 60 or over have taken up the Seniors Card. In this budget the government is now only targeting a 75 per cent take-up rate. Surely in these tough economic circumstances with rising rego, food, electricity and water charges this card should be more valuable. This government should be encouraging seniors to participate instead of preparing to help fewer and fewer. It certainly shows the lack of regard the government has for our seniors.

In the Communities sector there is a \$414 million fund to help the state's charities. I note that \$65 million of that funding is to be allocated across a number of government agencies to distribute. This is going to make it very difficult to identify where the money is being spent. State government support for communities and individuals has fallen from \$159.475 million to \$117.948 million. Even with the transfer from the Communities budget of \$21.8 million in early childhood funding, there is still a cut of more than \$19 million. The role of the communities sector cannot be overstated. Yes, it is under more and more pressure than ever before. The demands for assistance are at a peak. Costs have skyrocketed and our non-government organisations are doing it tough. The gesture by the government is too little too late for many of these organisations. They have had years of government imposts and bureaucracy all adding to their costs. They have had to fight the government service providers for government funding, yet they have been the most effective assistance for so many in our community in need.

The government has to realise that the point of a communities department should be to strengthen the community, to give the community the resources it needs to get through tough times. This government's attitude is to make the communities sector dependent on the whims and processes of the government before it can dedicate itself to trying to help the community. Only last week the Queensland Council of Social Service said that the increase in retail electricity prices would put more people at risk of poverty. The 400,000 Queenslanders already living in poverty need more support from this government, certainly not less.

I support QCROSS in its call for more targeted rebates and concessions for those struggling in today's tough economic climate. An amount of \$65 million is not enough to ensure that people will keep jobs in the communities sector. The funding is hardly enough to help the thousands and thousands of people who already work in the sector; it is hardly enough to maintain the organisations that have to choose between paying dramatically increased payrolls or cutting back on their valuable workforce; and it is hardly enough to ensure that these vital services remain available to the most vulnerable people in our community.

The fund also seems to have many strings attached. I look forward to hearing how the prioritised bases for distribution will work, how it will benefit organisations that survive without state subsidy and how it will keep essential community organisations functioning. The people who work in community service do not do it for the money, though adequate wages are a must for keeping these dedicated people with our community organisations. These organisations will also now have to bear the brunt of the new fuel tax. They include organisations such as the Burdekin Community Association, which recently contacted me regarding this fuel tax and its impact on BCA finances. In the 2008-09 financial year the BCA's fuel bill is expected to exceed \$34,000. Of that total, 54 per cent is for the BCA's transport services: its daily bus services to Townsville plus the all-day shuttle services within the Burdekin shire for people to attend medical and hospital appointments. I understand the BCA has been advised that it will receive no increase in its funding, which would help combat these rising costs. These buses are essential to Burdekin residents, and the extra financial load on this organisation caused by the fuel tax could mean service cuts and job losses. How will our aged and infirm residents get to their medical appointments then? Once again, this government, through its decision to impose a fuel tax, has shown blatant disregard for our communities and our seniors.

This government claims to care about Queenslanders. It cares nothing for our community services and it cares nothing for those in desperate need of a roof over their head. In 2008-09 this government underspent significantly in two areas: social rental housing and Indigenous community housing. In the 2008-09 budget the government promised \$72.6 million in social rental housing, yet it spent only \$44.6 million in state funds. It promised \$41.8 million in the 2008-09 budget for Indigenous community housing, yet only spent just on \$30 million in state funds. It was not until the federal government stepped in with bucketloads of cash that spending was increased in these two sectors.

It is also disappointing to see the continued neglect of positive action for the many groups in the community. One example of this is the Office for Women. The women's office will have a staff of 29 and a budget of \$4.6 million, yet the priority of the office in the coming year is providing new strategic direction, not providing funds to help victims of domestic violence, actively assisting women in employment and leadership or implementing programs to help single mothers cope with unemployment.

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian has been given an increase of \$10 million and additional staff—16 full-time employees and 17 casual community visitors—to deal with the increased number of complaints. It is time that the government moved to address the needs in this department. The commission has been faced with an increase in the number of complaints received—2,450 to 3,570—and an increase in the number of complaints progressed: 665 to 1,170. However, it has failed to reach its target of 85 per cent of cases closed. In fact, the percentage of cases closed fell from 82 per cent to 77 per cent. It would seem that the commission is coping overall with the significantly increased workload, but I question whether the budget increase is being directed to best use.

In the youth justice sector there were fewer people in detention. The number dropped from 150 to 127 and the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth being held in detention dropped from 89 to 75. This significant drop in numbers has to be questioned. It could be that the decrease is due to fewer youth committing crimes, which is an unlikely scenario. It could be that fewer youth who are on

remand are being held in detention centres—possible, but not quite convincing. The more likely scenario is that detention is being given to juvenile offenders as a last resort. There is also a lower success rate for community service orders among our young offenders.

The government is touting that it is for jobs, jobs, jobs, but when we look at the total of moneys allocated and actually spent on community projects, we see that a lot of money which could have provided those jobs, jobs, jobs was not spent. In the Brisbane Children's Court refurbishment last year the government allocated \$4.26 million yet underspent by 20 per cent, or \$3.45 million.

The government budgeted \$15.3 million for the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre yet spent only \$14.3 million. The government last year promised to spend \$3.6 million on neighbourhood centres yet spent only \$2.5 million. The government has a poor record on delivering its promises. It promises to spend money in these areas and then fails to do so. It promised no new taxes before the election but then changed its mind when elected and announced the addition of the fuel tax. How many of its promises in this budget will be kept?

Another area of very real concern, particularly in North Queensland, is this government's appalling treatment of the agricultural sector. The government is doing everything it can to put imposts on the agricultural sector. We see this as one of the few industries in Queensland that is doing well. It is a significant contributor to the state's economy.

The farming, grazing and fishing industries are totally under attack by this government with the regulations, taxes and straight-out bureaucratic red tape being foisted on them. On top of that, the government has slashed 23 per cent from the primary industries budget, which equates to \$25 million. So much for creating jobs. This is going to see the loss of some of our foremost scientific knowledge, which is a huge blow to Queensland.

This will affect front-line services—front-line services in a department that should be at the cutting edge, leading the agricultural industries with new technology. But how can it possibly achieve that when the government shows its complete indifference to this sector? Small business is being treated with complete contempt by this government. It is small business that is the foundation of our entire economy.

How can the people of Queensland trust that this government is going to keep its promises when its record is so poor? How can the people of Queensland trust this Premier with her appalling record of financial mismanagement that generations of Queensland people are going to have to pay off?

Mrs SCOTT (Woodridge—ALP) (8.01 pm): This budget is the antidote for the economic ills that have overtaken the entire global economy to lead into a slow but effective recovery which will ensure our state is able to sustain strong, healthy growth into the future. The electorate of Woodridge, which I serve, has a high proportion of residents who are used to a strict budgeting regime. They are not overcommitted financially. Many serve their community through volunteering and the happiness quotient is very high.

While a number of measures in this budget will mean household budgets are tighter, I believe there is an understanding throughout the community that we all need to work together to ensure that as we return to improved financial circumstances we have taken the opportunity to build roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, much needed social housing et cetera that will be a lasting legacy for the future. The jobs created through this infrastructure spend are widely distributed throughout the state. Every person employed means that those in the retail and service industries also remain in jobs.

Some of the funding which will make a difference in Woodridge includes \$28.1 million for the Greater Brisbane area, including Logan, for Skilling Queenslanders for Work, including Queensland's Green Army, which will provide 3,560 jobs for young people and those disadvantaged in the labour market. I have to say that the CJP, the Community Jobs Plan, works magic in my area. So many young people and disadvantaged people get into full-time work.

There is an additional \$7.1 million to promote social inclusion in urban fringe communities. Some \$900,000 will complete the \$5 million Crestmead-Marsden Police Station, which is soon to open. There is \$3.7 million for a replacement fire station in Woodridge. Millions of dollars will be spent locally upgrading the Pacific Motorway, sealing Third Avenue, Berrinba, increasing noise barriers and guardrails on Wembley and Kingston roads, concept planning for the Logan Motorway and improving disability access for Citytrain stations.

We have received funding for our magnificent community services including: Home and Community Care; Fax-Back domestic violence program; outside school hours care; diversionary activities for young people at risk; disability living arrangements; an all-abilities playground; a safety camera network; security lighting at Ernie White Park; book stocks for public libraries; Home Assist Secure; a social inclusion pilot program; healthy eating education; Churches of Christ for residential care; Lifeline Community Care for family intervention services; Spiritus for foster and kinship care; Ganyjuu for family support services; First Contact for family intervention services; Protect All Children Today for court support; Nutchu for economic and community development and support to children and young people; and Mercy Family Services for residential care services.

Some \$20 million this year will be spent on the expansion of the emergency department at Logan Hospital, with 18 adult treatment bays and children's waiting area, at a total cost of \$44 million. There is \$81,000 for healthcare workers to address chronic disease. There is \$2.17 million for a multipurpose indoor sport and recreation centre in the Crestmead-Browns Plains area. There is \$31,601 to upgrade lighting for the Australian rules club at Underwood and \$50,000 to improve Indigenous health through sport.

There is no more important sector than our schools. The principals, teachers and staff in my electorate do a fantastic job. It matters little whether the student is a refugee with no English language, a student with a disability in a special education unit or a highly motivated high-performance student; they are encouraged and inspired. However, more resources are needed.

We recognise that some of our children come into prep with little readiness to learn. Some \$8.7 million has been allocated to schools in areas of high need and will support a team of workers to tackle truancy, family issues, social disadvantage and parenting skills to improve student learning. In addition to high activity planned for our local schools with new facilities and maintenance, further funding has been announced in this budget. There is \$30,200 for maintenance at Burrowes State School, \$2,500 for maintenance at Berrinba East State School, \$62,550 for maintenance at Kingston College, \$2,000 for maintenance at Woodridge North State School and \$20,000 towards passenger set-down at St Paul's.

Within any budget there is so much which will benefit the entire state such as increased numbers of teachers, teacher aides, doctors, nurses, health professionals and ambulance officers as well as increased budgets in important areas such as health and education. However, the lifeblood of many communities—and this is certainly the case in Woodridge—is the extent and dedication of our volunteers.

This year I have once again held my Queensland Day volunteer and service awards. I would like to include some details about these. I can assure the previous speaker that this government truly knows how to care for vulnerable people and those with high needs. Gina Dowd, Sarah Murray and Kevin Mackenzie volunteer at the Kingston East Neighbourhood Centre, where they assist with emergency relief, newsletters, cooking group, community events, parenting group, holiday programs and computer club.

Michelle O'Sullivan volunteers at the ADRA centre. Having been helped herself, she chose to return to help others. She is now a valued volunteer. John Page commenced his volunteering in the 1970s and has volunteered in many capacities. He is now with Meals on Wheels and he has not had a holiday in three years. That is dedication. Christine Trevor, who is a volunteer, and Michael Krafft and Daniel Zingifuboro, who are both employees, are also wonderful volunteers at ACCES Services, where they help with all aspects of refugee settlement. However, they are all so much more. Their volunteer hours extend out from their paid work because they enjoy their roles so much.

Deidre Foreman is the driving force within Career Keys where many young people and those returning to the workforce after long absences receive wonderful encouragement and assistance. Eva Jakob Rivera has been on the staff at MultiLink for 17 years. She works with the frail elderly, socially isolated and disabled from diverse cultural backgrounds and has helped establish a wonderful multicultural respite centre. Carol and Darcy McKenzie, who are grandparents, are the treasurer and secretary at our Woodridge Scout group and have taken the club from a debt of \$9,000 to \$11,000 in credit—a very dedicated couple.

One of the very valued members of any school staff is often the school cleaner, who often goes way beyond the call of duty. Such is Linda Bell, who has been at Berrinba East State School for 28 years. She volunteers in the tuckshop, classroom, gardening and all fundraising activities. Carmel Gyemore Senior is the remarkable guardian of three of her grandchildren, one of whom has cerebral palsy. She also lost her home and possessions in a house fire. She is cheerful, never complains and her home is always open to family and community. She is a loving, caring woman. Cath Bartolo is the dedicated skilled manager of Youth and Family Service. Cath has grown this service to its present 140 workers who serve our community in many capacities. YFS has recently celebrated 25 years of service to our community and it is fitting that we recognise Cath as the caring, empathetic heart of YFS. Ken Palmer is an original member of the Logan City Theatre Company and volunteers his time tirelessly in stage, lighting, sound, secretarial duties and historian—a willing hand always there to help out in any capacity. Tracey Amos is a domestic violence support worker with 10 years service, caring for women and children seeking help through this service. She is a great worker and volunteer.

Mobility is a huge problem to many people who, because of age or disability, cannot get to shopping centres or to appointments. LANDS, our volunteer transport service, has many amazing volunteers. The first life member and remarkable volunteer with 15 years service, available day or night, is Merv O'Brien, who along with Norma Smith with 14 years service were both recognised for the many thousands of kilometres travelled helping our community members. Bev Threlfo is a child witness support volunteer with PACT—Protect All Children Today. Bev's special skills have put many families and children at ease through very stressful circumstances as they appear in court as witnesses.

Reverend Tass Augustakis has been working with families and individuals for many years through his organisation Family and Kids Care and has plans to build the Hope Centre for emergency accommodation and a new home for his very substantial food bank. Jan Raumati and Bessie Ngatai are workers and volunteers with Pan Pacific Oceania and have been responsible for incredible results getting young Pacific Islanders skilled up and into work. They are involved as volunteers in many capacities and are really making a difference for their community. Phyl Grant is a volunteer extraordinaire. Still the driving force in netball locally and having just helped organise a major netball state-wide tournament in Logan City, Phyl has now been volunteering in every capacity in netball for 63 incredible years. She is an absolute legend. She has been chosen as one of eight remarkable sports volunteers in Queensland.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to three very remarkable people. John Pale, a very respected leader and chief from our Samoan community, and Auntie Betty McGrady were both at the heart of the planning for the Healing Ceremony between the Indigenous and Samoan community on Australia Day. They are both very special people and have a deep desire to see their people live happily together in what is a very special community. Finally there is Troy Sadler, an Indigenous young man who, through the days following the sad death late in 2008, has worked with the students at Mabel Park High to keep emotions from erupting and to work particularly with the Indigenous students. It was my pleasure to recommend Troy to attend a recent student leadership forum here at Parliament House and he is going to be a very fine leader among his people.

These are the heroes of 2009 chosen from the hundreds and hundreds of remarkable workers and volunteers who make Woodridge the special place that it is. While our economy is going through troubled times, it is the quality of the people that will ensure we survive this time and I am sure that Queensland will come out stronger and remain a great place to live.

Mr SHINE (Toowoomba North—ALP) (8.15 pm): I must say that I feel rather dejected tonight—dejected because today I had anticipated the Leader of the Opposition's reply to the budget because I was going to be all ears as—

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr SHINE: I was going to be all ears as to how the opposition was going to come up with solutions to the problems which Queensland faces.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr SHINE: My friend the honourable member for Toowoomba South is muttering over there, as he does. He will be speaking shortly after me in this debate and he no doubt will come up with the solutions to the economic woes of Queensland—that is, how to get us back into surplus—

Mr O'Brien interjected.

Mr SHINE: Yes; if he were the leader, how he would deal with these problems, as the honourable member for Cook says. So whilst I might be dejected at the moment, I live in hope that within a relatively short period—within a half an hour or so—all will be revealed. Perhaps they are leaving the best till last.

Mr Horan: Don't you worry about that.

Mr SHINE: As the honourable member says, 'Don't you worry about that'. They really have not learnt too much in the last 20 years, but they remember that one at least.

Whilst I might have been dejected at the lack of revelations from the Leader of the Opposition, I did listen to the member for Clayfield. Whilst the Leader of the Opposition's contribution was described by the media tonight as pathetic and woeful—with which one must confess you would have to agree—the member for Clayfield was totally inaccurate in his retelling of history. He blamed the woes of the 1930s Forgan Smith government on the mismanagement, as he said, of that government. If one looks at the 1933 parliamentary debate reports in the next room—which I have done—they will see that the greatest challenge to the Forgan Smith government was trying to handle the debt that it inherited from the Moore government. That is the fact of the matter. We can learn from history, and I suggest to the honourable member for Toowoomba South and his friends that they do a little bit of research.

We hear from those opposite this constant refrain that we have squandered the benefits of all of those boom years and they ask where the money has gone. They forget to tell us that over that period of time we have had such projects as the Smart State initiatives, the introduction of the prep year, the training reforms, the new hospitals, the roads, the police stations, the courthouses, social housing, the new ambulance stations, the new fire stations, Paradise Dam, the western grid and a huge amount of money spent by way of local government subsidies, just to name a few. Of course, in the eight years I have been in this parliament listening to the budget debates during that time never once did the opposition not ask for more expenditure to be made on almost every portfolio. Members opposite come here today asking, 'What did you do with the money?', but it was they themselves who urged that greater expenditure be made.

They have always ignored the fact that even eight to 10 years ago 1,000 people a week were coming to Queensland. That figure rose to 1,500 and now it has been revealed that 2,000 people a week are coming to Queensland. They have ignored that fact. These are the failings, of course, of the opposition. It is not a credible alternative government. It cannot come up with alternatives. It is indeed pathetic and woeful.

The centrepiece of the budget is the government's determination to persevere with the capital expenditure—the \$18.26 billion capital expenditure of necessary infrastructure to preserve 127,000 jobs. Of that capital expenditure, 57 per cent will be spent outside Brisbane, which is of interest to me as a member of parliament who represents a regional area. If members looked at those parliamentary reports of the 1930s they would see also that the Forgan Smith government tackled the Depression through public works expenditure.

We are indeed in tough times. The economic forecast 12 months ago was for growth of five per cent. Now growth is forecast to be a mere 0.5 per cent. Unemployment is predicted in the next 12 months or so to be at 7.25 per cent. It is necessary to realise that the revenue streams will be down. There will be a write-down of \$15 billion over four years as a result of GST, stamp duty and royalties being decreased. In fact, it is estimated that there will not be a surplus until 2016.

So we are in difficult times and we are in those difficult times because of the worldwide economic crisis, as the Forgan Smith government was in the 1930s because of the worldwide Depression. Notwithstanding that, it is pleasing to see these major items of expenditure in the budget—\$1.8 billion in capital expenditure in education, albeit \$1.1 billion coming from the federal government and \$1.4 billion on social housing, which has been described to me as being akin to the significance of the Chifley investment in social housing. That is tremendous to see. Of course, we have \$9 billion being spent in Health.

So notwithstanding the challenges that the government faces, it is meeting its responsibilities to the people of Queensland where it really matters. The government is determined to meet those challenges and preserve jobs at the same time. So the Capital Works Program will be maintained, payroll tax will be further liberalised and stamp duty concessions for first home owners will also be further liberalised. These are tangible ways in which jobs are being preserved and business is being encouraged.

Clearly, as has also been said, government investment, both state and federal, over the next 12 months will truly be the only show in town. Without it, it is estimated that unemployment would rise to about 11 per cent or 12 per cent rather than that seven per cent or eight per cent level to which I referred earlier.

In the short time available to me, I indicate that I was very pleased with the government's attention to my electorate and to the Toowoomba area. I have a press release about five pages of foolscap long that indicates many areas of government expenditure in health, roads, education, job creation and so on. As it is on the website and has been given to the press, I will not attempt to go through that expenditure tonight. However, bearing in mind the need to maintain the infrastructure expenditure, might I say it is pleasing that over \$6 million has been budgeted for the Cobb & Co Museum, over \$4 million has been budgeted for the refurbishment of the Toowoomba Courthouse and \$121 million has been provided in the budget for the pipeline from Wivenhoe Dam to Lake Cressbrook. It is important for Toowoomba's water security that that pipeline is built.

I was particularly pleased to see \$1 million allotted in the Health budget for the provision of a birthing centre at Toowoomba Base Hospital. That was an election commitment. Several other commitments were made and I hope we will see them in the budgets of the next two years. For years a group of women had been lobbying me for this particular birthing centre and I had been pestering various health ministers over a period for it. I was very grateful that the Premier took a personal interest in the matter and that we see funding for that birthing centre provided for in this budget.

Time does not permit me to go further in relation to these matters, but I am happy to speak to honourable members in private if they wish. I congratulate the Treasurer on a fantastic job in very difficult circumstances. I will stick around in the House for a while tonight because I am looking forward with great anticipation to the contribution of the honourable member for Toowoomba South, who will reveal all.

Mrs SMITH (Burleigh—ALP) (8.25 pm): This 2009 state budget is focused on creating and sustaining jobs and positioning our economy for future growth. Despite the tough economic climate, the budget ensures that more teachers, police officers, doctors and nurses will be employed to meet the demands of modern Queensland communities.

I am pleased to see a commitment to further roadworks in the Burleigh electorate this coming year. Investing in roadworks means safer roads, better travel and lots of jobs. Reedy Creek Road, which is a very busy connection road between the M1 and Burleigh Heads, will see \$3.45 million spent on it in terms of intersection improvements. There is also significant state and federal funding to be invested in sections of the Pacific Motorway and \$2.8 million to complete the installation of bicycle lanes on the Southport-Burleigh Road.

A further \$35.2 million in joint state and federal funding to continue the interchange improvements on the Pacific Motorway will make access to the new Varsity Lakes Railway Station easier. The extension of the railway from Robina to Varsity Lakes will see trains running on this track early next year. An amount of \$13.2 million has been confirmed for the transit oriented development that is being delivered in parallel with the railway. It will provide housing, commercial and retail space, park-and-ride facilities and open space for recreational activities. A transport interchange will allow access to the wider Gold Coast area.

I am very pleased to see the final dollars being committed to complete the refurbishment of the ambulance station at Burleigh Heads. This \$1.3 million refit will make the station a much more efficient workplace and will add to the delivery of services provided by the officers who are stationed there. The station was built 25 years ago. Since then, the paramedics at that station have provided exceptional care to the southern Gold Coast's growing population. These new facilities will ensure that this care is continued.

Tourism is vitally important for the Gold Coast and that is why the Bligh government is pressing ahead with its investment in the Gold Coast AFL stadium and injecting over \$200,000 into an essential marketing campaign to bring people back to the coast. An allocation of \$693,682 to the Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park Surf Life Saving Club supporters' club is very welcome. This will allow the club to construct a multipurpose building for kayaking, aerobics and lifesaving at Burleigh Heads and the completed project will be open to all members of the public.

Access to stable and sustainable housing is a basic human right. An amount of \$422,000 has been allocated to continue the construction of 52 rental units through the affordable housing program, which provides housing for low and moderate income households at a price they can reasonably afford. Also very welcome is the continuation of the program for the upgrading and renewal of social rental housing properties. This program has been running in Varsity Lakes for the past few years and the tenants are so proud of their refurbished houses.

The Burleigh electorate has some of the best schools in the state, but many of them are showing their age. Maintaining our older schools is a continuing battle and I am glad to see nearly \$450,000 to be shared between Miami State High School, Palm Beach State School and Burleigh Heads State School for their maintenance programs.

Improvements to the teaching and learning environments can only lead to better outcomes for the students. Young people are our future but not all of them have the advantage of a loving, supportive family. Funding of more than \$420,000 to provide counselling and support for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to assist them in progressing towards living independently is very welcome.

The greatest fear among my constituents is unemployment. While this budget may not have all the bells and whistles of previous budgets, this government has made a commitment to jobs, jobs, jobs. The proposed infrastructure program is at the heart of this commitment. I recently attended the graduation ceremony for participants in a Skilling Queenslanders for Work project. They told me how much they had learnt from the project, how it had not only given them new skills but also improved their self-esteem and given them the courage to enter the workforce. Continued funding for this program and the new Green Army project will allow many more unemployed people access to relevant training and equip them for the future. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr RICKUSS (Lockyer—LNP) (8.30 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate on the appropriation bills, the fuel tax bill and the asset sales bill. The fuel tax is rather disappointing for a regional area like mine where there is limited public transport. It is rather disappointing that my electorate is facing a 10 per cent increase in fuel when only 12 weeks ago it was promised that there would definitely be no fuel price rise. To add to the fuel tax there is a registration tax. I actually looked at some of the figures. Registration between 2007-08 and 2008-09 rose five per cent. With inflation being about 2½ to three per cent, that was still above inflation. But from 2008-09 to 2009-10 it will rise 21 per cent. This is outrageous and a real impost on communities such as mine in Lockyer. The second reading speech of the minister actually states—

The Government recognises that Queensland motorists will all feel the impact of these changes and does not want to diminish in any way the burden this may place on them. However, abolition of the Fuel Subsidy Scheme is part of the Government's plan to regain our AAA credit rating ...

I cannot see how this is going to help regain the AAA credit rating. All it will do is put an impost on every member of the community. I have some large freight operators in my area. As the Minister for Primary Industries would realise, freight operators such as Blenners—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right, please take your conversations outside the chamber. The member for Lockyer has the call.

Mr RICKUSS: They are being a bit unruly, I must admit. As I was saying, the primary industries minister, the member for Hinchinbrook and the member for Gregory would all realise that the costs this fuel tax will add to these major transport operators will have to be passed on. They cannot absorb a

10 per cent fuel tax. That is really what it is. They will not be able to absorb it so the cost of a hand of bananas, a lettuce, a case of oranges or a beast being brought in from the bush will definitely go up because of this fuel tax. It will be inflationary. This fuel tax goes against the grain and will affect every Queenslander. It particularly affects Queenslanders in my area.

Mr Schwarten: Where'd you get that suit from?

Ms Spence: Don't listen to him, I think it's great.

Mr Schwarten: At the undertakers picnic?

Mr RICKUSS: I am sure that some of the constituents in the Deputy Speaker's own electorate would be very frustrated. This 10 per cent fuel tax will definitely increase costs for some of the constituents around the Lowood, Marburg and Minden areas, where public transport is very limited. Just for Minister Schwarten's knowledge, it is actually a Nehru suit. He was the father of Indian democracy. I would like to put that on the record.

Let us face it, unfortunately this government has actually sent us bust in a boom. It has been one of the most prolonged periods of growth in our economy in the 150 years Queensland has existed. It has really been a good time. I can remember two or three years ago saying to some of the young businesspeople around my electorate, 'If you are not making money now, it is time to get out.' It was a real boom. The boom went from 2000 to 2008. What did this government do? It did not put any of the extra revenue away. It did not make any savings. It just put up the bankcard. It just kept running the debt up. It just kept going higher and higher. Where have we ended up now? It is almost like we have a loan from Cash Converters. Because our rating has gone down, it is like getting a loan from Cash Converters. The interest rates are above the mark and therefore it is just draining this enormous amount of money out of the state.

Can members imagine the response of the hardworking families of Greenbank, Logan, Willowbank, Gatton or Laidley when they realise that every family is actually in debt \$78,000 to the government? That is what the government owes and they are the government. Unfortunately that is where this Labor government has led them. They now have this enormous debt that they will never pay off. Talking about jobs, the infrastructure underspend over the last year was something like a billion dollars. If that is put into figures it equates to 5,000 to 6,000 jobs, yet that was already budgeted for. This government is struggling to plan anything.

It is important to keep educating the children of our great state. It is really about managing things correctly. Beattie's inability to make hard decisions was part of the problem. He made bad decisions at the wrong time. He was involved in the scrapping of the Wolffdene Dam back in the early nineties. So what did we have to do? We had to rush out and build water projects such as the \$2.2 billion recycled water project that sits idle in the Lockyer Valley. It has not created a job. They are selling 40 megalitres of water to a few power stations. The Lockyer water users group wants to buy water but cannot even negotiate a price with the government. They are not interested in jobs.

Mr Seeney: Outrageous!

Mr RICKUSS: It is totally outrageous. There should be jobs, jobs, jobs. That is what the water would do. The primary industries minister is sitting on the other side of the chamber. He would understand what I am talking about. Primary industries is carrying the economy of Australia at the moment. It has been one of the bright lights in the economy, yet it has been cut in this budget. I encourage the minister to talk to Treasury and infrastructure officials about the recycled water project for the Lockyer water users. We should be creating jobs. That is what the recycled water project would do, as I am sure the Deputy Speaker would be aware. There are plenty of good water users in his area on the Brisbane River who would really appreciate having a backup supply from the recycled water pipeline so that they are not taken offline the next time Wivenhoe Dam gets a bit short.

Primary industries are important in this state. The great thing about primary industries in Bundaberg and the Lockyer Valley is that, so far as food miles go, they are actually very close to the city of Brisbane and to the major centres of Queensland. It is important that there is not a great cost to the community to transport products, even though the government will increase fuel 10 per cent. It is still within an hour and a half to two hours of the major marketing centres in Brisbane. It is a bit further to Sydney, of course.

It is disappointing that we are going to have this fire sale of assets when the market is at the bottom. If the economy had been managed more efficiently, these projects would have been more balanced over the last 10 to 12 years. The Beattie government should have started some of these projects earlier instead of them being rushed in all at once. Whatever the problem is—child safety, health, water—the government just throws money at it to try to solve the problem.

I will come back to the water projects. For all the money that has been spent on them—\$2.2 billion on the recycled water project and \$1.2 billion on the desal plant down the coast—they are just sitting there doing nothing. They are producing hardly a megalitre of water and creating not one new job in Queensland. It is a total shame that that has happened.

The Lockyer is an exciting area. It borders on the western growth corridor of Brisbane. There are some exciting things happening in our area. We are only one or two hours drive from Brisbane. One of the interesting things about that is that, when people will not be able to afford to drive too far because of the increase in the cost of fuel, they will still be able to afford a weekend drive to the Lockyer Valley to see some of the prettiest rural areas in South-East Queensland. It is really important that this government supports tourism in the south-east corner and all over Queensland. It needs to be supported and encouraged because tourism is a big job creator in the local areas.

For years Queensland has balanced the books, but when this government got control of the books it became a total shambles. The promise of 100,000 jobs is not a promise anymore; it is only a target. It is amazing how everything swings around. The Premier keeps talking about the recession. The federal government is telling us that we are not in a recession and the Premier is telling us that we are in a recession. Let us build some confidence in the economy. When it comes to employing people and having the economy go well, it is about confidence. What is this Premier doing? She is talking the economy down all the time.

Mr Seeney: We have to get that water to the Lockyer Valley.

Mr RICKUSS: We have to get that water to the Lockyer Valley. That is right. That would create jobs. I take that interjection from the member for Callide. The confidence in the economy is what is lacking, and that is what we need to build. Unfortunately, when we have a government that is driving us into debt and putting up fuel prices, how can we have confidence in the economy? That is part of the problem. How will the fuel tax create confidence in our economy? It definitely will not. Electricity prices are going up. How will that create confidence in our economy?

The other day I was talking to a solar energy expert in our area. He supplies solar hot water systems to the local area. He was saying that this government has virtually driven the industry to its knees. He cannot see how it can supply the solar hot water systems for the sort of money that the government was talking about in the lead-up to the election. He does not see how—without buying cheap, nasty products from China—it will be able to supply decent solar cells that are frost protected and that will work in our area for that sort of money.

We need better management of state roads. Not only do we need money spent on state roads and federal roads—and this is important in our area, as Deputy Speaker Wendt would realise, with the Warrego Highway and the Cunningham Highway—but we need better management of those roads. We have to stop some of the access roads feeding on to those highways, particularly where there are blind corners and where traffic is able to cross four lanes of a 100-kilometre an hour highway that has 3,000 B-doubles travelling on it every day. It really is a recipe for disaster.

We should be encouraging the state government to plan for the Toowoomba bypass with the federal government. I see the Minister for Main Roads standing over there. I hope he is listening very carefully to this. I encourage the minister to have his department look at the Warrego Highway. I have written to him in the last couple of days asking him to have a look at the management of the highway. I am not talking about a big spend; I am talking about just closing off some of the roads and making some of the areas safer. I am sure that the minister will agree that we all want safer roads in Queensland. We also want the Toowoomba bypass built. I realise that it is a federal highway and federal funding is required, but the state has to prioritise it. So let us have the state government prioritise this bypass. I see the member for Toowoomba North nodding his head. I encourage the member for Toowoomba North to make sure that he is knocking on doors and making phone calls about the Toowoomba bypass.

Mr Shine: I am just glad that you finally realise that the range crossing is an issue.

Mr RICKUSS: I take that interjection. Yes, I do realise that the range crossing is an issue. My good friend the member for Toowoomba South is continually telling me that it is an issue. Most of it is in my electorate.

Mr Seeney: How many times has he spoken about it?

Mr RICKUSS: He does not speak about it that much at all.

Mr Wallace: Did you tell Macfarlane it was an issue?

Mr RICKUSS: Yes, I have told Macfarlane that it was an issue too, I must admit.

Mr Wallace: Eleven years he was in government. Have you told Macfarlane it is an issue?

Mr RICKUSS: I have told Macfarlane it is an issue.

Mr Wallace: Why didn't they do anything in 11 years?

Mr RICKUSS: I take that interjection from the minister. I have told Macfarlane it is an issue. Unfortunately he is in opposition now.

Mr Wallace: He was in government for 11 years. Did you tell him when he was in government?

Mr RICKUSS: The problem is I did tell Cameron Thompson when he was a member of the government that it was an issue as well. As I am sure the member for Toowoomba South and the member for Toowoomba North will agree with me, there are issues with the BP and McDonald's intersection at College View. There are accidents waiting to happen. Without an enormous spend we could manage that highway much better. A full safety audit on the Warrego Highway needs to be done.

I have even had people write to me about positions in which to put speed cameras on the highway to slow people down at some of those intersections. I have written to the minister about that. I am sure I will also have people writing to me complaining about the speed cameras after they have been put in.

Mr Wallace: Hope you won't be one of them.

Mr RICKUSS: No. If it says 80 kilometres, I encourage people only to do 80 kilometres an hour. That is what is important. As I said before, the primary industry sector is an important part of the Lockyer Valley. It really needs assistance with some of the water projects.

We have community centres in our area too. We have a small community centre in Laidley and a small community centre in Gatton. They only have a small staff of one or 1.25 persons. It is good to see that they did get some funding from Communities. That was pleasing. With a 28 per cent pay rise, I do not know whether that is enough funding to fully support them. I have been talking to some of the groups that are building the new jail at Gatton to encourage them to assist the community centres. Unfortunately, the community centres do get a fair bit of referred work from the lower socioeconomic group that sometimes ends up in those jails. Hopefully we can have liaison there that will assist the community centres and that will also assist our local communities because that is something we do need. As we are getting a rather large correctional centre built in our area, we also need the social infrastructure that needs to come with such a large correctional centre. Mr Deputy Speaker, Borallon is in your electorate, isn't it?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Please continue with your speech.

Mr RICKUSS: I am sure Borallon is in the electorate of the Deputy Speaker.

Mr Wallace: The deputy chair fought for water rights in his electorate. He had a good win with the Brisbane irrigators.

Mr RICKUSS: Yes, he did have a good win with the Brisbane irrigators. I must agree with that. Mr Deputy Speaker, I am sure you realise we need social infrastructure that goes with these types of correctional complexes. I see the former police and corrective services minister sitting over there. I am a bit disappointed still that the complex has not been named yet. I have put up suggestions of the Bill Gunn correctional centre. I know it has been rejected so far.

Ms Spence: We haven't even built it yet!

Mr RICKUSS: Well, you have got 'Correctional Centre' up there everywhere.

Ms Spence: You don't name them until you build them.

Mr RICKUSS: Why not? Where are you sending the people to now? Where are you sending all the tradespeople to? The 'Correctional Centre'?

Ms Spence: Yes.

Mr RICKUSS: You have a name for it though; it is called 'Gatton'. You assured us you would not call it the 'Gatton Correctional Centre', but what is it called? 'Gatton'. I would much prefer Gatton to be known as a university town than a correctional centre town.

Ms Spence: I promised that we wouldn't call it 'Gatton'.

Mr RICKUSS: There you go, but that is what it is getting called now—the 'Gatton Correctional Centre'. Please call it something else other than 'Gatton', and I take the interjection from the Leader of the House. Please name the Correctional Centre by another name. I suggest the 'Bill Gunn Correctional Centre'. I am sure your good friend, the member for Rockhampton, will support me with that name.

Mr Schwarten: We have got the Rockhampton Correctional Centre and we are proud of it.

Mr RICKUSS: I am disappointed about some of the things that have happened in this budget, particularly the fuel tax.

Mr FOLEY (Maryborough—Ind) (8.50 pm): I rise to participate in this debate on the state budget. When it comes to budgets, no-one is ever quite happy—it does not matter what side of the parliament you are on. I came across a classic quote from George W Bush, who said, 'It's clearly a budget. It's got a lot of numbers in it.' I thought that was pretty good. The quote by his esteemed father, George HW Bush, was, 'The Defense budget is more than a piggy bank for people who want to get busy beating swords into pork barrels.' I thought that was a little cleverer than the first one.

At the end of the day, we are in very, very difficult economic circumstances. I was asked by my local media what I thought of the budget, and I said that it is a budget in very difficult times. I must say that Maryborough has done very well over the last six years that I have been in parliament, and I am very grateful for that. I am always like *Oliver Twist* though asking for more; it does not matter what we get. I would encourage the government to keep those rail contracts rolling up and keep our EDI Rail workers—or the Walkers workers, as we know them better as—employed.

Like any budget—it does not matter whether it is a household budget, a federal budget, a state budget or a local government budget—often we find ourselves with too much month left at the end of the money. In my previous vocation as an accountancy partner and also in a financial planning business, we used to lecture in high schools in our free time to give the kids a few clues. We used to teach those principles—the too much month left at the end of the money principle and that people do not plan to fail, they fail to plan.

A lot has been said about the many years of economic sunshine we have had in Queensland. Certainly, in those times, it would have been prudent for the government to save as much money and put money out, but this is not like a normal budget—

Ms Croft interjected.

Mr FOLEY: Hang on, I am coming to that. Do not be impatient. This is not like a normal budget, as I was just about to say before PK got really excited there.

Ms Croft: I am the member for?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! The member will refer to other members by their correct title.

Mr FOLEY: I can never remember what the member is the member for.

Ms Croft: Broadwater.

Mr FOLEY: Sorry about that. I think of her as the mum of Brock more than the member for Broadwater, but let me keep going. This budget differs from a normal budget. It is prudent to borrow—there is no doubt about that—because borrowing is the only way to build the infrastructure we need to provide the go-forward. It is the same as if you are doing negative gearing in housing. It allows you to borrow more money to buy more property, but the disadvantage is if there is a downturn in the property market.

So if you had \$200,000 to buy a property in the old days—when I say the 'old days', I am talking about Maryborough property prices—you could borrow for those assets and split the money into four \$50,000 deposits and buy four properties, provided you could afford the cash flow on an ongoing basis. But the disadvantage of borrowing to invest in the future is that when the market has a reversal of fortunes you end up with assets that can be very difficult to liquidate, to sell, and you end up with the equivalent of margin calls at banks.

Our Treasurer will not get too many pats on the back from this side of the House tonight, but I want to acknowledge what a very difficult job it would be to do a budget in these particular economic circumstances. I am very, very concerned at the levels of borrowing of governments—not just the state government but the federal government as well. We have seen alarming rises in debt, and that is debt that when we look at the go-forward has to be paid back: the piper has to be paid. I really hope that treasurers in general who are overseeing the regime of heavy borrowing have very firm plans to look at the repayment and bring their budgets back into the black.

At a local level, I am fortunate to be the member of an electorate like Maryborough which has such an excellent rail facility as EDI Rail. Because of that, we get quite a significant government spend. We always have. I have been making lots of noise in the House over the last couple of weeks about rail contracts. My job is to continue to represent the needs and wishes of people in my electorate, and I will continue to do that.

It is an interesting budget for Maryborough. We have had some great results. The Maryborough State High School Trade Training Centre will cost \$4.5 million, even though \$3 million of that is Australian government funding through the state. That will be a great facility. We have had all sorts of argy-bargy over some buildings that needed to be removed because they were full of asbestos. With a concerted effort and with negotiation with the minister—who has been very helpful in that regard—we have been able to move the location slightly to the side of the block and site that Trade Training Centre so that the buildings that needed to be pulled down anyway could be removed to provide that clear site to build on. I want to thank the minister and his staff for a common-sense decision. We were sweating on that. Lots of people in my electorate have made their views on the Trade Training Centre very firmly known, so I am glad to see it in the budget.

We have a bunch of roadworks at the Maryborough end of the Hervey Bay connection. I am glad to say that a lot of these roadworks this time are actually in my electorate and not the electorate of the previous member for Hervey Bay. We were always argy-bargying over that.

Mr Wallace: The new member for Hervey Bay said he wants them in his.

Mr FOLEY: We will talk about that. There is quite a big spend for that particular section of the road, and that will be a good thing. We are increasingly finding that people live in Hervey Bay and work in Maryborough or vice versa so that road has become a major arterial road. It is also an important road as people travel through Maryborough to transition to Hervey Bay, which I know is the favourite tourist destination of the member for Southport. You love Hervey Bay, don't you?

Mr Lawlor: Especially Hoolihans Irish bar. I love it. I was there a week ago.

Mr FOLEY: Except you should have come up to Maryborough and we would have shown you an even better time. Maryborough is not exactly a tourism mecca compared to Hervey Bay, but we have a different style of tourism with lots and lots of wonderful heritage buildings.

Mr Reeves: What about your pub crawl?

Mr FOLEY: Were you up there this year, Minister?

Mr Lawlor: I'll be up next year.

Mr FOLEY: All right. The pub crawl always provides a very robust economic input into the town, but there are some mixed feelings amongst local residents about it. We did, however, beat the Yanks again this year, so that is probably a good thing.

Back to the budget areas: we have 25 new diesel locomotives, which is a \$69.3 million spend. I must say to the Treasurer that sometimes it is very difficult to distinguish through the budget figures what is a brand-new rail contract and what is part of fulfilling an ongoing rail contract spend.

I was asked by my local media what I thought of the budget. I am happy with the budget for Maryborough but I am not that happy for the state. It is just such a heavy borrowing budget and I am disappointed to see that level of borrowing. It is going to make it very difficult in the future to progress forward.

One of the areas that has been a particularly contentious one is the sale of assets in Queensland such as Queensland Motorways, Queensland Rail and the Port of Brisbane rail coal haulage business—I have a few workers in forestry plantations at home who are very unhappy and have written to me about that—and of course the Abbot Point Coal Terminal. That combined package is estimated to raise \$15 billion. I am very concerned about this because how many times can you sell the family farm? Once we start selling off assets to fund annual budgets that can very quickly start a downward spiral if a tight lid is not kept on it.

I would venture to say that the government is completely out of touch with the feelings of average Queenslanders on the asset sales in this budget. I dare say that the Premier and the Treasurer have severely underestimated the backlash and the depth of feeling. I have received a lot of feedback from people in my electorate, some from very staunch Labor voters, and they are extremely unhappy. They are not only unionists but also more traditional Labor members. Of course the opposition is very unhappy with selling off the family farm. I do think that that is going to have a significant impact on the credibility of the government going forward.

I point out again, as I am sure other speakers will do, that the selling of assets to procure a budget outcome is sharply at odds with traditional Labor Party ethos and philosophy. We have seen some crazy cash giveaways federally. I said to someone the other day, 'If your children came to you and said, "Dad, I have a good idea. I have saved up \$100,000 and I want to give it away to people in \$900 slabs," I would be saying to my children, "Are you absolutely sure that is what you want to do? Have you thought this through?"' But to come up with another idea and say, 'We're going to borrow \$100,000 and give it away in \$900 slabs,' is just economic lunacy. Finding ourselves with a huge economic debt based on giving away cash unnecessarily to buy plasma TVs to the benefit of China is absolutely irresponsible nonsense.

The fuel tax is another issue that I am extremely unhappy about. Make no mistake, the fuel tax will really hurt regional Queensland. As soon as this was announced a flurry of people were lobbying me by letter and email. One major trucking firm in Maryborough has communicated to me that the scrapping of the fuel subsidy is going to cost it around \$40,000 extra a month in operating costs. It will either have to lay off workers or pass on costs directly to its customers. I am disappointed that the load of that fuel tax will not be as keenly felt in the cities as it will in the regional areas. I want to register my displeasure at that in the strongest possible terms. This will impact local employers, mums and dads and pensioners who have to travel extremely long distances for medical care. The extra impost of the removal of the fuel subsidy—that extra tax—is really going to hurt those pensioners who are paid very little for their travel.

It will also impact tourism. We were talking about tourism earlier with the Minister for Tourism, the member for Southport, who recently travelled to my electorate. Maryborough is an excellent tourist destination, but people will become afraid to travel long distances when they have to pay petrol at premium prices. It amazed me that as soon as the scrapping of the 8c a litre subsidy was announced the media started speculating that petrol was going to rise by 20c to 30c a litre. 'Why is it so?', as Professor Julius Sumner Miller would say. That is just outrageous. With the scrapping of the subsidy, I

believe it would be good to legislate that the fuel price could not rise by more than the CPI. I think that is a very fair outcome. The thought of oil companies and the middle people profiteering on the back of the scrapping of a fuel subsidy is utterly morally repugnant. I really hope that the government stamps down on that with two very firm size 9 boots.

The only other thing I am unhappy about is that grouping a number of bills together into a cognate debate does not provide enough time for the individual bills to be debated properly, as they so richly deserve. People are unhappy about various aspects. Members of the opposition are here to represent the views of the electorate. If the time that we are allotted to speak is severely curtailed, if members are not allowed sufficient time to really let the government know their views, I believe that is going to cause a backlash.

What we have is woeful arrogance. We have a parliament that is simply going through the motions of democracy. No matter what persuasion—LNP, Labor or whatever—when a government reaches the point where it really does not give a rip what the people or the opposition thinks, it needs to take a good hard look at the fact that this is a representative democracy. That is very important. Members opposite can laugh at it and say, 'We're going to cut short this debate. Let's get out of here and go home,' but the reality is that when the government ignores the views of members who wish to speak fully on a debate such as this it is really saying to the people whom they represent, 'We do not give a rip what you think, either.' We are very carefully and clearly told the views of our electorate. We need the time to come to this parliament and fully tease those things out. Arrogance is one of those things that is a sure hallmark of failure as people forget to listen to the ordinary person.

Overall, am I happy with the budget? Yes, I am happy on a local level. I see the Treasurer over there. I say to him: just keep the money flowing and keep the rail contracts coming up to Maryborough and we will be happy. Like I said, when it comes to a budget I am like *Oliver Twist*: I am always asking for more. With the reservations that I have already expressed, that is all I wanted to say.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—LNP) (9.07 pm): What a mess! Have you ever seen a bigger financial mess than what Queensland is in at the moment? It is an even bigger mess because of the fact that instead of debating just the budget, as is the normal practice, we in this parliament tonight find these other two bills have been rammed in so that the government can have them passed by tomorrow night. Those bills will put the petrol tax on Queenslanders for the first time ever and sell off assets.

This budget is about mismanagement, betrayal, deceit and conning the people of Queensland. The people of Queensland will not forget that at the last election all of this was covered up. Never again will they believe the Labor Party, the Premier, the Treasurer or whoever happens to be in those roles come the next election. The people will not forget the gross deceit that was foisted on them at the last election and the gross deceit of putting on a petrol tax within days of denying there would be a petrol tax. After telling people that, first of all, there was a \$64 billion debt and then a \$74 billion debt just before the election, now we find out that it is an \$85.5 billion debt and is likely to be even higher in the years to come.

Debt and deficits have to be repaid. This government has put Queensland in the position where it will never climb out of this mountain of debt. Just look at what it wants to do with the sell-offs. The government is talking about \$15 billion of sell-offs of which almost \$10 billion is debt. Take the \$15 billion off the \$85 billion—

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Sustainability and Climate Change!

Mr HORAN: Take the \$15 billion off the total if those opposite get it in a fire sale at the very bottom of the market and there is still \$70.5 billion or more in debt that still has to be paid off and will cost Queenslanders interest every day. We have heard the QTC say that it is costing us about \$1.2 billion extra in interest simply because we have lost our AAA credit rating. There is a very serious financial situation in the world at the moment. Before we hit it we had \$64 billion in debt. We went bust in a boom as other speakers on this side have said over and over again. It will go down as one of the most disgraceful financial episodes in the history of Queensland.

If a business got itself into debt in a boom like this, if a business kept spending more than was coming in, if a business had debt and it could not repay the capital but could only manage to pay the interest and it went to the bank the bank would sell it up. That is how serious this situation is.

Let us look at the overall debt situation that Queensland has got itself into. We have the Commonwealth government with a debt approaching \$315 billion gross. It is out there in the market borrowing billions of dollars every week from the tight overseas markets where it is difficult to get money. It is probably paying in the order of six to 6½ per cent for the money because of the sheer volume of money it is borrowing and the tightness of the credit market.

We then have the four big banks trying to get money overseas as well. About two-thirds of the money that we borrow in Australia has to come from overseas. They are in the queue behind Rudd and the federal government that are chasing its \$315 billion. So there are also the hundreds of billions of dollars required by the big banks.

Then we have the other states of Australia. New South Wales is trying to roll over its \$67 billion. Victoria is at around \$28 billion and Western Australia is around that mark too. Right on the bottom of the pile, after Tasmania, is the only state that does not have a AAA credit rating—Queensland. There are going to be problems for Queensland rolling over this debt because we simply do not have a AAA credit rating. It is costing our state more for every single loan that we have. It is also costing all the local governments in Queensland that borrow from the Queensland Treasury Corporation because they and their ratepayers are paying for the financial mismanagement of this state government which wasted 10 years of good times.

Government debt is the people's debt. The people have to pay the debt off. The people of Queensland, whether they are battlers or millionaires, are going to be paying this debt off. The ones who are really going to hurt are the battlers. Much of what is being put on them in this budget, particularly the new petrol tax, is nondiscriminatory. Whether you are a prince or a pauper, you will pay the extra 9.2c per litre for petrol. That will affect the workers, the battlers.

This budget has serious implications for average Queenslanders, particularly families and working class Queenslanders. They will pay because it is their debt—not that they wanted the debt but the debt was forced on them by the financial mismanagement of this government over the last 10 or 11 years.

There is a line up of incompetent ministers. It has cost hundreds of millions of dollars to try to fix up departments that were simply mismanaged and were not delivering their services. This is a government that got drunk on its numbers in this parliament and simply treated the financial books of this state with disdain. Money was wasted. Billions of dollars were wasted. There was no proper oversight of contracts and no proper oversight of projects. It spent the money on anything—strategies, glossy brochures and all the rest of it. But there was no focus on service, value for money and delivering for the people of Queensland. There should be proper management from the top, from the ministerial level down. It should have used the people's money wisely.

So the debt grew and grew. But it really grew once we got to the time when the Premier was the Treasurer and the minister for infrastructure. That is when the fox was in charge of the chicken coop and the graph shot straight up. We have the biggest debt in Australia. New South Wales, which is called the basket state—and go down there and everyone will tell you how bad it is—only owes \$67 billion. They have around seven to eight million people who pay taxes and charges who will pay off that debt. We have about half that number of people.

People are going to pay through dearer petrol prices. They are going to pay through dearer car registration. They are already paying more for their cars because of the increase in stamp duty. We have seen the massive increases in electricity charges. Over the last couple of years electricity has gone up by about 46 per cent. We have had increases in gas charges. What we will see after this introduction of the petrol tax is an unbelievable flow-on in increases to everything—food through to services.

This budget is going to cost businesses, it is going to cost families and it is going to cost our whole society. Like poor old Gunsynd, with 65 kilograms on his back, who could not win the Melbourne Cup, this state is going to be saddled with lead in its saddlebags forever. There will be no way it will be able to get out of this debt. It is something Queenslanders will bear for a long time.

Let us look at the services that are lost every year due to the interest payments. What if the government were able to make repayments? It has not been able to make full repayments on many of its loans. Some of the loans are interest only. For the \$85 billion combined debt that will be there by 2012 the interest will be somewhere in the order of \$5 billion or more.

What if there is an attempt to pay it off over 25 years. There is another \$3 billion that we have to find. All this money has to be found before we can even get up in the morning and go to work. The money has to be found every day to pay the interest and to make capital repayments which are not being made now. That money could be going to infrastructure and services.

Other speakers have mentioned what the Rudd government has done. When we start to add up debt around the nation, the federal government debt and the state government debt—and to think that the Rudd government came in with absolutely zero debt and a \$22 billion surplus and about \$50 billion or more in the Future Fund—we find the federal government has got \$315 billion in debt.

Let us look at the \$900 giveaways. There were two lots. If we add them up it comes to \$22.5 billion. Add on top of that another \$2.5 billion for Pink Batts. Let us look at \$25 billion. What could we have done for this nation with that? We could have brought water from the north down to the Condamine River and then it would flow downhill to the Coorong Lakes and fix up the biggest issue in Australia—water for Adelaide and the Murray-Darling—and paid a royalty to the north. We could have put an underground railway around South-East Queensland. We could have put the Toowoomba bypass in. We could have run a road from Sydney across to Perth and opened up this nation. We could have put a fast train from Melbourne to Cairns and done something for this nation. We could have built some roads and infrastructure that would have allowed the productive sector of our nation to get its produce to ports to export, to create jobs in the city for the people who work in the warehouses and manufacturing industries.

We could have done all of that. That opportunity was lost due to these giveaways. Is it not a concern to think that we have governments that think like this? Let us give away cash and try to win votes instead of governing well and doing something for the nation.

What a loss to Australia to think what we could have done with that \$25 billion. Some 40 per cent has gone on screens and poker machines and the rest has been put in the bank because people think that they are going to be safe and not waste the money. That is the same sort of thing that is happening here in Queensland. We will have some \$85.5 billion of debt. This is probably the most serious situation this state has ever found itself in. It is an absolute disgrace and the people of Queensland have to be told.

We saw the performance today in this parliament where they all came in preened up to run the red herring. I heard the disgraceful comment by the Premier about the function that we had in the dining room for one of the most respected, hardworking servants of this parliament, one of the most highly regarded staff members, who is retiring after two decades of service. The Premier sunk so low as to intimate that there was some sort of division.

The strength and loyalty on this side of the House—and I have been in this place for 18 years—has never been as great as it is now, and I am proud to stand here and say that because that is the situation. Those opposite can carry on with all of the little stunts and sidelines they like, but the strength and loyalty on this side of the House has never been better. In fact, it has probably been strengthened by this budget because we can see the problems in this budget and we know what Queenslanders think about it.

Mr Shine: What's the solution, Mike?

Mr HORAN: My colleague the member for Toowoomba North wants to know what the solution is. I will tell him the first solution: we never would have been in this situation if we had been in government. There would have been proper financial management, there would have been good hospital services, there would have been good roads, there would have been well-run departments, there would have been competent ministers and people's money would have been spent wisely. Why would you want to fall for his stunt and come out with some type of plan when there are three years to go?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Toowoomba South will not use that language.

Mr HORAN: The member for Toowoomba North's stunt is to come out with some sort of plan when there is three years to go, and we do not even know what the debt is going to be next year. It is bound to be more. You cannot trust this mob. We have seen what they have done. It could well be that the debt is \$100 billion. But I know one thing: if we were in government, we would not be in this parlous situation. Queensland always had a reputation to only borrow money for infrastructure that could pay its way and social infrastructure was paid for with cash from a budget surplus, and that is good management.

On the issue of the petrol tax, I want to warn the people of Queensland, particularly in my electorate, about what they are going to face. The cost of food will go up. Taxi fares will go up. The cost of running a minibus for sports clubs, nursing homes and retirement villages will go up. The cost of buses will go up. The cost of clothes will go up. Everything that comes to my electorate comes on trucks, just as everything that goes from regional and rural Queensland to the city in the way of food and fibre goes on trucks. The cost to this state is going to be enormous and it is going to grow exponentially.

Queensland has never had a petrol tax. When the federal government took over state excises in the mid-nineties, it introduced a subsidy system and because we did not have a petrol tax here it had to pay the subsidy to Queensland to keep us a no-petrol-tax state. Now, sadly, after 150 years Queensland has a petrol tax.

As I said earlier with regard to the sale of assets, people are outraged. People believe that assets that have income-earning opportunities are there for the state and that if you sell an asset you should use that money to build another asset that will generate income and that will develop or open up the state in order to provide that income. We recently saw the sale of the Cairns Airport, the Mackay Airport and the share of the Brisbane Airport. The income coming from those three airports has now gone and that money was spent on the social infrastructure of hospitals—something which in Queensland was always built with the surplus from a budget, not by selling assets. That was the principle on which Queensland Treasury had always worked and it was the formula which had always stood by Queensland.

The selling off of the Brisbane ports, the coal freight services, the motorway tolling franchise and the forest plantations of Queensland means that these assets are gone forever. So not only are they gone but also the income is gone. What is left to sell? Those opposite have sold off just about everything. I believe that Ian Brusasco has fought them off from selling the port at Gladstone, but one by one they are trying to pick these assets off and sell them only because of their gross financial mismanagement. About 70 per cent of what goes across the wharf at the Brisbane port comes from west of the Darling Downs. So it is the produce—it is the grain and the coal and the beef—from west of the Darling Downs that is providing much of the income across the Brisbane port. What are the charges going to be at the Brisbane port when that facility is sold?

This morning I heard the Deputy Premier say something like the assets are earning only one per cent. If people are going to buy these assets, they will not buy them to make one per cent. If they buy the motorway tolling system, they will want to make their 12½ per cent or more because they have to, otherwise they will not buy it. So they will pay rock bottom prices and up the tolls will go. So Queenslanders will keep paying. They will be paying extra tolls. They will be paying extra to get produce across the wharves. The coal companies that had their royalties jacked up and doubled in the previous budget will be paying extra cartage to get it along the lines and to get it across the wharves at the end of the coal lines.

This budget has been shameful. One of the other issues that I want to touch on is the water pipeline from Wivenhoe to Toowoomba. There are funds in this budget of \$187 million in total because this pipeline is underway. Toowoomba is one place that deserved a better go when it came to water, yet all it is getting out of this is a 40 per cent subsidy on the cost of that water pipeline. Toowoomba—a city that sits on top of the Great Dividing Range and has to lift the water over a 600-metre vertical cliff—deserves something better than the 40 per cent subsidy on the most precious thing in life: water.

This is an area which is on top of the range, so it does not have the catchments to draw from, and which has been in drought for so long. Other parts of the state have got promenades, esplanades, convention centres and all sorts of fancy things. All the people of Toowoomba want is decent support for this Wivenhoe pipeline—not just the normal 40 per cent subsidy for towns that are located where water flows by gravity from dams but a proper and relevant subsidy for a city that sits on top of the Great Dividing Range and has to lift the water up a 600-metre vertical cliff.

I want to again mention the importance of the Toowoomba bypass that we have fought so long for and are getting nowhere on with the Labor government. Rudd cancelled the \$700 million that was there. That bypass would have been underway now had the Rudd government not come into power. He cancelled it straightaway. All of the wealth that is coming through to South-East Queensland and through the Brisbane port is coming through Toowoomba: 4,000 or more trucks every single day—B-doubles mostly—through 16 sets of traffic lights. A city that is the centre of so much of the wealth and export-earning capacity of this nation deserves better. That bypass should be the No. 1 priority so that federal government road funds can go there. That should be seen as a first priority for the productive parts of this state.

I will conclude this speech by saying that this budget will be remembered for the deceit, the dishonesty, the betrayal and the financial mismanagement that has plunged Queensland into \$85.5 billion of debt and years and years of deficits ahead until 2018.

(Time expired)

Mrs SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.27 pm): This is the ninth budget I have risen in the Queensland parliament to speak to and it has been by far the toughest one the government has had to deliver. Surpluses have been delivered in the past, but harsh global economic times have left the state with a massive \$15 billion hole over the next four years. This is equal to one-third of the entire yearly state budget. Because there is a lot less money to spend, tough decisions have had to be made to support the state's economy and to ensure that it grows positively in the future. If any household budget took a similar financial hit, certainly tough decisions would have to be made, along with major changes to lifestyle. This government is in the same position. It has had to make tough decisions. There is not enough money to fund every request, and we have had to prioritise, like anybody else who has taken a major hit in their budget.

The government, however, has maintained the superannuation contribution to public servants—a far more lucrative scheme, I might add, than any other state. Politicians' wages have been frozen since 2007, and they will continue to be so in our harsh economic circumstances.

A major focus of this budget is jobs. Unemployment is expected to rise from 4½ per cent to 7¼ per cent next year. This equates to around 175,000 job losses. This is why it is vital to continue to build infrastructure such as hospitals, schools and roads and to keep people in jobs and to create new ones to cater for an ever-increasing population. Over 2,000 people a week are migrating to live in this great state.

It is not all bad news. The government has put in place a responsible plan, parts of which will not be to everyone's liking, but it is one that charts a course back to budget sustainability and regaining our AAA rating in the medium term without cutting jobs, projects and vital services. Despite the world recession, Premier Anna Bligh and Treasurer Andrew Fraser have framed this 2009-10 budget with a strong focus on jobs, continuing to support those with the greatest needs and meeting election commitments.

This budget is firmly focused on keeping existing jobs and creating new ones by investing over \$18.2 billion this year in our building program. This funding will support 127,000 full-time jobs, boosting front-line services for all Queenslanders and investing in our skills base for the future. Apprenticeship and trainee wages will be exempt from payroll tax, which will assist business to keep apprentices and trainees during these tough economic times. Queensland continues to have the lowest payroll tax rate in the country. The Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative will continue in the Pumicestone electorate with Queensland's Green Army, to create 3,560 extra jobs.

The Health budget has increased from about \$8.5 billion to over \$9 billion. Around \$17 million a day is spent on health in Queensland. That makes for a great health system, but not perfect. But it may have been if it had not been for the decision of former Liberal Prime Minister John Howard to cap the doctor placement numbers—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs SULLIVAN: No, they do not want to hear the truth. The decision of former Liberal Prime Minister John Howard to cap the doctor placement numbers in universities in 1996 was a disgrace. Our hospital lacks doctors because of that short-sighted decision—the worst decision ever made, considering our ever-increasing and our ageing population.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! The House will come to order. The member for Pumicestone has the call.

Mrs SULLIVAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you for your protection. There is a further \$110 million in health allocated to reducing waiting lists. There is \$127 million allocated for faster emergency care, \$7.9 million for additional nurse practitioners, \$37 million for enhanced cancer treatment and \$16.7 million for better maternity and midwifery support services. We are also employing 50 more ambulance officers for Queensland. The government will invest \$80 million for an academic and research centre to complement the new Queensland Children's Hospital. Locally, \$876,000 has been committed to the ongoing planning for the Caboolture Health Precinct.

The government is focused on ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education. The budget provides for 350 extra teacher and teacher aide hours and \$20 million to improve literacy, numeracy and science, with 80 dedicated coaches, summer schools and more resources for children who need them. An amount of \$301 million is allocated to continue the State Schools of Tomorrow program to improve and build new facilities in Queensland's older schools. Certainly, the older schools in my electorate have benefited from this worthwhile program.

A new leadership centre for school principals will be established to provide principals with the best chance to develop their skills and to lift school performance. An amount of \$40,000 is allocated to complete the Civil Construction School Industry Trade Center at Caboolture which is due to open in July this year. Locally, schools will benefit from extra maintenance funding and jointly funded federal and state school based projects. A new kindergarten for Beachmere in the second round will be built as part of the government's commitment to universal access to a quality early childhood education, which also included the introduction by the Labor government of the prep year which has been most welcome.

The government's \$3.53 billion road building program plans for growth by creating and sustaining Queensland jobs, improving road safety and quality, with \$66 million for the Safer Roads Sooner program, reducing congestion and continuing to connect people and places around the state. The Pumicestone electorate has fared well with road funding over successive state Labor budgets, with the recent completion of the Caboolture northern bypass at a cost of \$100 million, improvements to the Beachmere and Bribie roads which are ongoing, and others.

The following projects are either continuing or are due to start in the next financial year. There is \$43.1 million for the Caboolture to Beerburrum rail track duplication, a park and ride for Bribie Island, \$75,000 for the council to improve the Goodwin and Jasmin drives T-junction, the ongoing duplication of the Bribie Island Road to four lanes from Aerodrome Road to Pasturage Road, \$17,500 towards a bus shelter outside St Columban's School, \$40,000 for planned bikeways for the Moreton Bay region, \$230,000 to complete concept planning for King Street, Caboolture between the Bruce Highway and William Street, \$1.38 million to continue concept planning for the Caboolture-Bribie Island Road through Ningi, and ongoing work on Beachmere Road at the Hickey Road T-junction. A significant investment of \$1 million has been allocated to expand the public transport network between Bribie Island and Caboolture, including at Sandstone Point and Ningi.

The 203 additional police funded this financial year will expand the Queensland Police Service, which has grown to 10,000 officers. Only under a Labor government has our police to population ratio been brought to the national average. More police have been allocated to local stations and the opening later this year of another 24-hour police station in the area at Burpengary will see more resources to combat crime. A pay rise for police officers will be effective as of 1 July this year. It is my view that the Beachmere community should retain its permanent police beat, despite the increase in police and resources at the Caboolture and Bribie Island police stations.

This budget provides around \$13 million in extra support for pensioners by increasing rebates for electricity from \$165 a year to \$190.85 and for life-saving medical equipment. From 1 July, the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program will provide 200,000 affordable solar hot-water or heat-pump systems to be installed over the next three years. Fully installed, greenhouse efficient hot-water systems will be available for \$100 to eligible Queensland pensioners and low-income earners and \$500 to other eligible Queensland homeowners.

An amount of \$14 million over four years is provided for community sector workers who care for the frail elderly, the disabled and the sick. The disability sector will receive an additional 12 per cent funding, or \$9.03 million this financial year, to provide extra support for people with a disability and their carers and an additional 13 per cent for mental health services. An amount of \$174,579 is allocated to the Caboolture Area Youth Service to provide more counselling services for families, children and young people. Domestic violence prevention gets a further injection of funding. The donation of a \$6 million twin-engine helicopter for Surf Life Saving Queensland means safer beaches between the Gold and Sunshine coasts.

The ClimateSmart Home Service, which provides \$450 worth of electrical work for just \$50, saves electricity. This year the program will be extended to businesses. This program will cost the government \$15 million over four years. The Donnybrook and District Bowls Club will receive \$170,000 to improve facilities for its bowlers.

Home and Community Care—or HACC—will receive \$3.87 million to continue to provide services, such as respite, in-house nursing, transport, home care and modifications, allied health, domestic help and personal care to the frail aged and younger people with a disability and their carers. An amount of \$5.3 million will be allocated to install a new powerline between Caboolture and Sandstone Point to improve capacity and reliability. This work follows the duplication of the substation on Bribie Island, which will be officially opened later this year.

The continuation of school holiday programs will be jointly funded by state and local councils. The government will also contribute \$350,000 to provide subsidies for up to 82 people at Compton Gardens Retirement Village at Caboolture. The government is tackling homelessness head-on, with an injection of \$306,565 to provide medium-term housing and support to local families at risk of homelessness. An amount of \$25,000 will be contributed to enhance BMX facilities on Bribie Island.

The government has put in place a number of measures to improve the environment, and I am proud of a government that considers the protection of the environment to be paramount. The additional national parks on Bribie Island have been most welcome. The allocation of new green zones in Moreton Bay is a step in the right direction to ensure some protection of sensitive marine habitat areas. I am delighted to be the chair of the newly established Environment and Resources Committee. The committee's first paper will highlight ways in which we can be more energy efficient. The report will be tabled later this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all volunteers in the Pumicestone electorate. Whether they are part of the neighbourhood centres on Bribie Island and Caboolture, the P&Cs, the VIPs or the service clubs, they are all important and it would be difficult for any community to do without them. Their efforts are very much appreciated.

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (9.39 pm): The 2009-10 budget is about schools and roads. Swanbank Power Station has been earmarked for improvements with \$39.6 million in funding. A further \$20 million has been allocated towards the replacement of the existing Swanbank A switchyard to ensure a reliable supply of high voltage power to our surrounding region.

In relation to Blackstone, a total of \$220,000 has been allocated by our Labor government on a section of Mary Street between High Street and William Street for pavement repair works. The school will close at the end of this year. However, I am hopeful that the buildings will be kept for community use. Turning to Bundamba, many young people in the Bundamba electorate attend Bundamba State Primary School and Bundamba State Secondary College. These are State Schools of Tomorrow. Work is well underway at Bundamba Primary with a new junior precinct comprising four new classrooms, new amenities, a new covered area and a relocated playground with new sandpits. The foundations have already been laid for the new administration block and the new car park. The slab has been poured and pillars are in place for the new eight-space two-level classroom block. Work is about to start on refurbishment of an existing classroom block. Bundamba State School will also receive \$127,000 for fixed shade structures, \$50,000 for outdoor learning areas and \$60,000 for the purchase of classroom furniture. Bundamba State Secondary College is having a gigantic makeover. Already the administration block internal refurbishment has been completed resulting in a new corporate services area in the upper level, new student services and staff facilities in the lower level and new disability access ramping. The exterior will be painted at a later stage. The new music centre, comprising classrooms, practice rooms and a recording studio, is now complete and in use by students. The new performing arts centre will be a welcome addition to the school. The site for this centre has been cleared, safety fencing erected and a site office established. It is hoped that the performing arts centre will be completed by the end of the year. The performing arts centre will be open for use by the public, churches and arts groups. A contractor will be appointed soon to refurbish other existing buildings. The State Schools of Tomorrow program will be allocated \$15.66 million this year. The amount of \$10,999 has been allocated for a library security system at the secondary college. A total of \$9.27 million has been allocated at the Bundamba substation to install a second 110 kV transformer to increase network capacity.

Ebbw Vale will change considerably with the opening of the new bridge linking Brisbane Road with the newly developed industrial estate. Traffic lights are desperately needed for the residents of Ebbw Vale seeking to turn into Brisbane Road, especially the Brisbane bound traffic. The long awaited construction of the extended railway car park at Dinmore will start soon. The delay was caused due to the detailed planning of the Ipswich Motorway which included the relocation of services and the planning of a pedestrian overbridge. The Dinmore section of the motorway upgrade will commence soon. Dinmore State School will close at the end of 2009 as part of the State Schools of Tomorrow program. End of year celebrations of Dinmore State School include a ball and a community fair. Another \$3 million has been allocated to complete the planning study for the connection road between the Warrego and Cunningham Highways. The total cost is \$8.17 million. The amount of \$449,000 has been earmarked to complete concept planning for the Cunningham Highway between Dinmore and Mutdapilly.

I am absolutely delighted that the Riverview State School is part of the State Schools of Tomorrow program. Apart from the upgraded Ipswich Motorway, this is the most significant infrastructure upgrade since our Labor government's upgrade program of the Department of Housing houses known as the Urban Renewal Program and the Community Renewal Program some seven years ago. Refurbishment of existing classrooms will include practical learning areas and teacher preparation areas with installation of data projectors and interactive whiteboards. The library and administration area will be extended and refurbished. A new undercover multipurpose area will be built, four new outdoor learning areas built, a life skills centre built and there will be improved entry, street appeal and landscaping. Some \$8.2 million will be spent at Riverview State School this year—money well spent. Riverview State School will also receive \$2 million towards a multipurpose hall, as well as \$40,000 for multipurpose court upgrades and \$85,000 for an outdoor learning area. St Peter Claver College continues to grow and expand with the support of our government, not only in its facilities, but also its academic, sports and outreach community programs. This school will receive \$175,000 towards set-down facilities at the school. The Ipswich Motorway planning includes a new overpass for motorway traffic. There will be seating and landscaping for local residents. The amount of \$200,000 has been allocated towards widening and sealing a section of Old Ipswich Road and \$700,000 has been allocated to continue operation of the Moggill Ferry at Riverview.

In relation to Redbank, funding for rail is as follows: \$19.1 million to overhaul the coal network's 12 and 16 cylinder loco fleets; \$6.18 million to upgrade 38 by 4,000 class locos including an engine rebuild/replacement of major components and also a bogie overhaul; \$13.9 million for the Queensland component of a project to construct 1,190 VCA 106 tonne coal wagons; \$2.27 million to overhaul the bulk freight network's 12 and 15 cylinder loco fleets; \$3.1 million to overhaul the regional freight network's 12 and 15 cylinder loco fleets; \$11 million across greater Brisbane towards infrastructure works to allow Citytrain stations to comply with the 2007 disability standards with a total cost of \$82.87 million; and \$7.5 million towards modifying the EMU, SUM, and IMU fleet to meet disability standards. Our community welcomes the Origin Alliance to Redbank. Known as Origin City by locals, there are many hundreds of workers on site planning and constructing the widening of the Ipswich Motorway. Redbank State School will receive upgraded facilities at a total cost of \$59,000 and 11 interactive whiteboards at a cost of \$66,000. Redbank Library will also share in \$605,000 towards the purchase of books.

There will be a new school built at Collingwood Park. It is a PPP school costing about \$30 million. Site work is planned to begin in February next year with the school opening in 2011. In term 3 of 2010 a principal will be appointed, a P&C established and recruitment of teaching and administrative staff will occur. This new school has been planned for 800 students. This is great news for Collingwood Park residents. As a member of parliament I will be leading the process in our area. Collingwood Park State School in Burrell Street will receive \$10,000 for maintenance work and \$200,000 for upgrades, interactive whiteboards and floor coverings. The budget also allocates an additional \$5.6 million for further purchases of houses in the subsidence zone in Collingwood Park under special circumstances, to conduct repairs on some houses and to investigate a more long-term solution to subsidence including the use of fly ash. Our Labor government has done everything we can to assist these families with millions of dollars in assistance to families, a legislative guarantee for all homeowners of Collingwood Park and counselling and other services. It is a great pity that the council has let the local people down. The council committed to a Collingwood Park marketing program. This has not been funded by council and it has not happened. It committed to a rates holiday for householders. This has only happened on a very small scale. The residents want the council to come good on its public commitments as well as matching state government funding so that families can get on with their lives. After all, the building plans for their houses were approved by Ipswich City Council building inspectors, they were inspected by Ipswich City Council building inspectors before occupancy and the council has collected millions of dollars in rates over the years. Despite its many promises to the contrary, all the council appears to have done is try to shift blame onto our Labor government whilst at the same time dodging its own responsibilities. The council insists on denigrating the suburb and the people who live there by being in the media all the time. It even denigrated an independent report that the residents requested and the state government funded. It is a tell-all, honest, technical report. Residents want it to match our state funding, do what it promised to do, get off the TV and stop whingeing.

A total of \$650 million has been allocated in funding to upgrade the Ipswich Motorway between Goodna and Dinmore. Main Roads is working day and night on this massive project. Our Labor government will allocate \$436,000 towards the installation of traffic lights at the Bertha and Mills Street intersections; \$370,000 towards the construction of a roundabout at the Woogaroo and Layard Street intersection; \$225,000 towards pavement repair and strengthening on Queen Street between Alice and Marie Streets; \$390,000 towards traffic lights at the Smiths Road and William Street intersection; and \$50,000 towards installation of islands on the approaches of Redbank Plains Road and Stuart Streets, Goodna.

The Goodna State School has been allocated \$1.9 million towards a fully enclosed multipurpose hall and \$1.1 million for a new resource centre. A further \$200,000 has been allocated to refurbish six classrooms. Our Labor government has contributed to the funding of the new skate park recently opened at Leslie Park, 18 fitness stations at three parks in Goodna and \$41,000 towards healthy living workshops for Goodna families. Goodna Special School has been allocated \$15,000 for maintenance works; \$35,870 for new floor coverings; \$32,610 for the upgrade of a toilet block; and \$6,521 for safety fencing. Westside Christian College continues to expand its facilities with co-contributions from our Labor government.

In relation to Redbank Plains, \$74,000 has been allocated towards construction of a bikeway and footpath at Redbank Plains State High School. This project needs to be expedited. Redbank Plains Library will share in \$605,000 towards the purchase of books. Redbank Plains State High School has been allocated \$51,656 for maintenance work, whilst the Redbank Plains Primary School has been allocated \$2,500. The primary school has also been allocated \$66,667 for computer connectivity upgrades and a further \$133,334 for general technology upgrades. Redbank Plains State High will also receive \$70,000 for shade paths, \$60,000 for classroom upgrades and \$70,000 for building refurbishments.

Turning to Bellbird Park, a new school will be built at Bellbird Park along Brittain's Road. It will be a prep to year 7 school with a capacity of some 840 students. It will be a PPP school and is expected to cost around \$30 million. Site works are expected to begin in late January next year, weather permitting; a principal appointed in term 3; and a P&C established and recruitment well underway in term 4 next year. The P&C will be actively involved in the school community and decision-making processes including the uniforms, colour themes, behaviour management strategies and other issues. Kruger State School has been allocated \$4,250 for maintenance work, \$55,000 for refurbishment of classrooms, \$75,000 for shade structures for outdoor learning areas and \$70,000 for outdoor prep learning areas.

In relation to Augustine Heights and Brookwater, a new permanent Queensland ambulance station will be built at Augustine Heights. The plans for the new station have already been extended to include parking for five ambulance vehicles, improved office space and training rooms. The new station will begin construction, weather permitting, by late August this year. It will cost \$2.2 million to build and millions of dollars in the recurrent costs of staff. In the meantime, I am pleased to announce that the ambulance service will start in the Springfield and Redbank Plains areas by being temporarily located at the World Knowledge Centre, next to the University of Southern Queensland in Springfield Central. This new temporary station will open by the end of July this year. There will be three ambulances, with 17 ambulance staff on duty around the clock.

A local ambulance committee will be formed next year to support this service, under the guidance of the Redbank Ambulance Committee, of which I am a member and keen supporter. I am sure that everyone in our community will welcome our new paramedics and our new ambos to our community. I have fought long and hard for this service and I know that this is fantastic news for our local people. Yet again, our Labor government is planning for the future by delivering services today.

The new Springfield Regional Police Station is being built at Augustine Heights. It will service the Springfield, Springfield Lakes, Springfield Central, Redbank Plains, Bellbird Park, Brookwater and Augustine Heights suburbs. The Goodna Police Station will continue as a 24-hour station. It is located opposite the entry to the Brookwater Golf Club, near the new service station that is under construction. The slab has been poured and today the steel superstructure is being erected. Our Labor government will invest \$3.68 million into the construction costs of the new police station and millions of dollars more in the staffing costs of the police. It will be a busy police station and, again, our government is delivering this service early to cater for future growth.

Turning to Springfield, Springfield residents will be pleased that \$125 million has been allocated to construct a new 13-kilometre railway line from Darra to Springfield. The extension of the line to Springfield can be fast-tracked if the developers contribute to the bring-forward costs. If no contribution is made, the rail line is planned to be delivered in 2015.

Woodcrest State College has been allocated \$4,800 and \$16,400 for maintenance works. A further \$60,000 has been allocated for sporting amenities, \$50,000 for wireless computer access and \$90,000 for data projectors.

The extension of the Centenary Highway from Springfield to Yamanto will open by the end of this month. This has cost over \$360 million of state funds.

Turning to Springfield Lakes, Springfield Lake State School will receive \$158,000 for an adventure playground and \$30,000 for shade covers for outdoor learning areas, and the Gambling Community Benefit Fund has recently awarded this school \$30,000 towards the purchase of musical instruments. A further \$11,900 has been set aside for a data projector.

I am strongly lobbying for another primary school in the Springfield Lakes area, as well as a high school, providing growth can support the sustainability of these schools. Whilst growth has slowed down somewhat, it is clear that these schools will be needed at some time in the future, so planning must be undertaken now.

If growth continues, our Labor government can have these schools built for its first students in 2011. However, it requires the developers to hand over adequate sized land for the schools to be built on and for them to not be mean and sneaky, which is their usual caper. As I have said in this House before, they try to hand over the smallest possible space and the meanest, steepest blocks of land. The people of Springfield Lakes know that this is true, as is evidenced by the cramped siting of the Springfield Lakes State School.

The community of Springfield Lakes needs to be aware that Education Queensland has for the last couple of years attempted to negotiate joint usage of the council ovals—to no avail, due to some belief of council that shared use is somehow unacceptable. Yet it is acceptable in many other council areas across Queensland. Education Queensland has many agreements with local councils. If these schools are not built when planned, not built due to the intransigence of council, then the blame can be shouldered by the Ipswich City Council and the developers. It can be shouldered by one or the other or both, and they will be guilty of playing with the educational future of our children. They have held up the planning and delivery of the schools already. This must be clearly known by the people of Springfield Lakes.

I have been furiously lobbying our Labor government for our fair share of funding since I was re-elected for a fifth term this year. I am very pleased that our electorate has received a huge injection of funds locally, which is remarkable in these tough times. However, it is my job to raise all the issues—the good, the bad and the ugly—and to tell it the way it is.

This budget will have an effect on family budgets. Families will feel the pinch at the petrol bowser. They will have to find the money for increased registration and other charges. Unemployment is predicted to rise. This is, in my view, a human tragedy, a family tragedy and a financial tragedy. I know that many families are already doing it tough. I know that many are finding it difficult paying their mortgages, paying rent, paying school fees and paying for food on the table. I know that many families have already cut back, some to the point where there is simply no more slack in their family budget. Even budgeting is a new skill for some families.

Businesses are finding it hard, shops are shutting in our area and families have cut back on spending money on clothes and shoes. I want to assure our families that I am very well aware of their difficulties and hope that as a community we can support each other; help those who are unemployed to get back into training and work; keep our children at school, TAFE and university; and assist the sick and elderly.

In these bleak times we have to pull together, not push apart. Even a smile, a kind word or a prayer can help in these tough economic times. By looking out for each other, looking after our families as best as we can, I am sure that we will get through these rough economic times, just as our parents and grandparents before us survived when confronted with difficult economic circumstances.

Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (9.56 pm): I rise to support the appropriation bills 2009 and express my gratitude to the residents of Brisbane Central. I thank them, following the recent state election, for giving me the opportunity to deliver my second budget speech.

As others have said before me, this is the toughest Queensland budget for decades—a response to the global economic crisis—and I commend both the Premier and Treasurer for delivering a budget that does not abandon the workers of Queensland and their families and that is determined to fund core services and help battlers through challenging economic times. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 23(1) states—

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

Although the global financial crisis is not of our making, we are not immune from its impact. It is imperative that the Bligh government best cushion its effects, and I believe this budget is doing this in the Labor way. My electorate of Brisbane Central will benefit from millions of dollars for infrastructure projects delivered as part of an unprecedented \$18.2 billion infrastructure investment and massive Capital Works Program, which will support 127,000 jobs. Our commitment to protecting jobs fits neatly with article 23(1) of the UN declaration, which states the protection against unemployment as a value to strive for regardless of the economic circumstances.

This state budget focuses on creating and sustaining jobs, supporting families, meeting election commitments and positioning our economy for future growth. The alternative would be devastating. Now is not the time for cutting back. Government spending in times of need makes perfectly good sense because it means jobs for Queenslanders. When unemployment is on the rise and when private investment stops, it is the role of government to create jobs, to stimulate local economies and to provide job opportunities. I welcome the continuing work on the Airport Link road project, with much of the work occurring in my electorate, helping to create around 10,000 jobs over the life of the project.

Despite the tough economic times and the loss of billions of dollars in revenue during the next four years, I am pleased that this budget is determined to keep our economy moving while ensuring that we continue to hire the extra teachers, doctors and police officers we need in our communities and the electorate of Brisbane Central. During the last budget, I welcomed the funding of over \$7.6 million, at a total cost of \$13.2 million, to complete the Fortitude Valley Police Station. I am extremely pleased to report that the new station is now complete and functioning, and I further welcome this year's budget allocation of \$2.24 million for the refurbishment of the old police station, at a total cost of \$2.8 million, which is currently underway. The refurbishment of the heritage listed station, complete with the new building, will have a great boost to the police presence in the very busy inner-city suburbs and will allow a better delivery of essential police services.

Further, job-busting building works—such as the \$152 million to continue construction of the new Brisbane Supreme Court and District Court complex, at a total cost of \$600 million—are also well received for the CBD, as is the near \$1 million for the major refurbishment and upgrade of the Brisbane Children's Court, with a total cost of \$5.21 million. These two projects together will support almost 5,000 jobs in total and be a great stimulus for the surrounding businesses in the CBD.

It is once again pleasing to refer to a number of key measures in this budget that I know will greatly benefit the residents of Brisbane Central. About 12 months ago, the cry from business leaders and retailers was the issue surrounding skills shortages, and indeed it was an issue that needed to be addressed. However, to drop the ball in tough times is not the answer and that is why I fully endorse and support the \$613.71 million for vocational education and training and the \$28.1 million for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, including Queensland's Green Army, to create 3,560 jobs for young people and those disadvantaged in the labour market and in my electorate.

Now is not the time to cease the training agenda. Now is not the time to cease skilling Queenslanders and preparing them for job readiness. Training, skills and qualifications are essential for job prospects, and I know many constituents of mine are taking advantage of these training opportunities. I am very glad they are continuing. Employers will also benefit from a 25 per cent payroll tax rebate on the wages of apprentices and trainees, as well as exempting eligible wages from payroll tax. These are incentives targeted in the right area and strengthen everyone's right to work.

I also know many businesses in my electorate will benefit from the extension of the terms for land tax payments for 2009-10 which will pave the way for the introduction of an instalment payments regime the following year. We all know that in the inner city land values have risen substantially, and these measures will go a long way to assisting those businesses affected.

The new Fortitude Valley station looks great, following the facelift at a total cost of \$30 million, and it is great to have the last finishing touches taking place with this year's allocation of \$1.92 million to complete the upgrade. In addition, I warmly welcome the millions of dollars being spent on transport and main roads in my electorate which will provide vital maintenance upgrades on roads, bridges, boardwalks, expressways and busways, all creating jobs and ensuring the safety of our commuters.

Record spending on health and education is also very much welcomed. I particularly note the total amount of nearly \$1.7 million in funding for additional classrooms and maintenance work at the Windsor, Brisbane Central, Kelvin Grove and New Farm state schools. Together with the Building the Education Revolution moneys being spent on these schools and other schools in my electorate, a transformation is taking place which has been unprecedented in recent times and is delivering real and lasting benefits for our children. Investing in our schools is one of my highest priorities, and I have worked keenly with all of my schools, government and non-government, in ensuring they get the much needed funds to equip them to deliver the outcomes for our future generations.

The community sector in my electorate is both large and much needed, providing essential and often critical services throughout the inner city. Therefore, it is particularly pleasing to find that not only will most of the community organisations continue to receive their funding but that in most cases they will receive an increase. For example, I welcome the \$827,000 for the Palliative Care Program in Brisbane Central for funding to provide the much needed range of palliative care services, at a total cost of \$2.64 million. In addition, it is great to see that \$568,609 has also been provided to the Seniors Legal and Support Service to continue their good work in the community, and I particularly refer to the excellent assistance they are providing to the residents of Gleneagles.

As my electorate has a high percentage of older Queenslanders, I also welcome the subsidy increase of 15.67 per cent for electricity bills to assist with the increased costs of electricity. This covers the increased costs in electricity expenses, which I know will assist in making ends meet for those who qualify for this assistance.

A total spend of \$1.45 billion for social housing, which includes Australian government Nation Building and Jobs Plan money, will greatly benefit the additional social housing that will be built in my electorate. For example, I look forward to the near total amount of \$8 million being provided to the Brisbane Housing Co. and other community organisations to build and provide much needed affordable accommodation for those most in need, particularly in the electorate of Brisbane Central.

There is no doubt that the workers in the community sector are hardworking and carry out their duties in a dedicated manner throughout the community. This is why I am particularly pleased to note that the single biggest allocation of additional resources in this budget—some \$414 million across four years—is being provided to support the community sector to continue their essential work and meet their recently awarded wage increases. These increases are much deserved, and it is the Labor way to ensure they fully benefit from the favourable decision.

This year Queensland celebrates its 150th birthday, and unfortunately in its 150th year we are facing the toughest economic circumstances as part of the global economic recession. It was also indeed a pleasure and very humbling to have been re-elected by the people of Brisbane Central during our sesquicentennial celebrations.

Budgets are never easy, but this budget in particular involves making a number of hard decisions which, despite the global recession, allow Queensland to remain well placed for a strong recovery with growth again expected to stay ahead of the nation. I know that in the long run all Queenslanders will benefit, even though it may get worse before it gets better—as although this is a difficult and far-reaching budget, it goes a long way to charting the course to recovery. That is the difference between this side of the House and those opposite. This budget makes tough decisions, charts a course to recovery, is jobs focused and aims for a strong recovery—unlike the opposition reply speech which was long on rhetoric but short on substance and any real alternative, an opportunity that will not be lost on the people of Queensland.

When tough decisions are made on this side of the House, we engage with those affected. We negotiate with the union movement and we ensure that all workers are looked after. This is the Labor way. That is why unions, which those opposite intended to destroy with their anti-union Work Choices legislation, trust us to do the right thing. Call unions any name you want, but when it comes to integrity on looking after workers and their families and trust on delivering outcomes for workers it is Labor that unions turn to, not the hypocritical, anti-worker organisation that is the LNP.

I conclude by commending the hard work of the Premier, the Treasurer and their staff in delivering a tough budget in what would have to be the worst economic conditions I can remember. However, in spite of the global recession, this government is able to meet the values I hold so dear which are contained in article 23(1) of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The values contained in this article include, and I state them again, the protection against unemployment, and this budget is aimed at achieving exactly this outcome—concentrating on creating jobs, jobs and jobs. Families are doing it tough. Now is not the time to cut back. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (10.09 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation Bill for 2009-10, the Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill and the Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The debate ought to be focused on the merits or otherwise of the appropriations in the budget proposed by the state government for the coming financial year. Instead it has been thrown in with other extremely important debates that ought to have been held separately and distinctly in this parliament, namely debate on the Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill, which facilitates the fire sale of state owned assets at the bottom of the market, and the Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which imposes a new fuel tax on the people of Queensland for the first time, courtesy of the Bligh Labor government. In doing so, the state Labor government is trying to hide from proper scrutiny of the parliament.

As the representative of the people of Hinchinbrook, I ought to have had separate opportunities to address the state budget, the fire sale of state owned assets and the decision of the Bligh Labor government to impose a new fuel tax on Queenslanders in separate contributions as significant as all three of the issues are for my constituents. I understand why the government is hiding and trying to minimise the scrutiny of its decision. It is because of the total mess that it has made of the finances of the state of Queensland and the perilous implications that that has for this and future generations of Queenslanders.

My constituents are anxious about the level of debt being incurred by the state Labor government. They are worried about how much their families and businesses will have to pay in higher taxes, fees and charges to prop up the bottom line of the budget for years to come. The Bligh government has condemned Queenslanders to a decade of debt as a result of its financial incompetence, with state government debt projected to blow-out to \$85.5 billion. That is a diabolical figure and it is hard for a lot of Queenslanders to understand. It equates to about \$78,000 in state debt for a typical Queensland household of four people.

When the budget was handed down Queenslanders found out the real reasons why the Premier dashed to the polls six months early. The mess the Bligh Labor government has made of the state budget is abysmal. The budget papers project deficits totalling \$13.4 billion over the next four years without any plan to restore Queensland's AAA credit rating. The Bligh government will have to pay a \$14 million interest bill on its debt every day before it even starts to pay back any of it and starts employing additional police officers, teachers, nurses and ambulance officers across Queensland.

The introduction of a new fuel tax, the increase in motor vehicle registration and the increase in the electricity tariff are all examples of the Bligh government kicking Queenslanders when they are already down, struggling with the economic downturn. Every Queenslander will pay for Labor's reckless spending for years to come. When we fill up our cars, when we buy food at the supermarket and when we turn on the lights it will be more expensive come 1 July 2009.

The Bligh Labor government has its hand in the pocket of every Queenslander to try to prop up the government's budget bottom line. Premier Bligh and Treasurer Fraser cannot blame the world economic downturn for their decision to mislead the people of Queensland and break their election promises in relation to the sale of government owned assets and the removal of the fuel subsidy. The reality is that the state government racked up \$64 billion of debt before the global financial crisis arrived. The state government has been spending like there is no tomorrow during the boom times. Now that there is an economic downturn, Premier Bligh and Treasurer Fraser have been caught short, and Queensland families and businesses will pay the price for Labor having sent the state broke during a boom.

I welcome the budget allocations that have been made for my electorate of Hinchinbrook, few that they are. Some schools in and servicing communities in my electorate have secured some capital funding. It is important that the state government deliver adequate funding to ensure all Queensland schools are well maintained, safe and provide a modern learning environment to maximise future opportunities for all Queensland students. Bohlevale State School has secured \$635,000 for the construction of additional amenities at the school. The 2009-10 budget papers indicate that \$550,000 will be spent in the forthcoming financial year. Bohlevale State School has a growing student population. The school is located in the rapidly expanding suburb of Burdell in my electorate on the northern beaches of Townsville city. These new amenities are really needed by the school.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Member for Everton!

Mr CRIPPS: The 2009-10 budget papers confirm that previously announced funding for \$32.2 million for the relocation of the Innisfail State High School to the Innisfail TAFE campus, with \$16.9 million to be spent in the coming financial year. The budget papers indicate that about \$15.3 million has already been spent on this project with a further \$16.9 million to be spent over the next 12 months to complete this new learning facility, which will co-locate with Innisfail TAFE.

While I am pleased to see that the \$508,000 contribution by Education Queensland for the new Tully multipurpose centre at Tully State High School is still in the budget, I welcome the new allocation for the school for additional amenities. The 2009-10 budget includes a new allocation for Tully State High School of \$488,000 for additional amenities. The budget indicates that these funds will be spent in the forthcoming year at my old alma mater, Tully High.

I welcome advice in the 2009-10 state budget that Stanwell Corporation and Ergon Energy will make investments in energy generation and distribution infrastructure in the Hinchinbrook electorate.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Everton!

Mr CRIPPS: I am pleased to see Stanwell Corporation, which owns and operates the Kareeya hydroelectric power station on the Tully River, will continue its ongoing commitment to regular allocations for maintenance and upgrades of that station.

Mr Reeves: How are you going to pay for all this?

Mr CRIPPS: Stanwell Corporation is paying for it. It has allocated \$1.9 million for minor works at Kareeya. Stanwell is an important employer in the Tully district and maintains a positive relationship with Tully State High School, supporting bursaries and encouraging potential career paths. The power station is also an important strategic asset in Far North Queensland. Ergon Energy has indicated that it will spend a further \$8 million reinforcing the supply of electricity to the Black River area near Townsville in my electorate of Hinchinbrook.

As I mentioned earlier, the northern beaches area of the city of Townsville from Burdell to Bluewater is a rapidly growing area. It is important that services and facilities expand to meet the requirements of the people who live in those communities. So I am pleased to see the investment by Ergon Energy in improving the supply of electricity out to Black River.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the member for Everton please cease interjecting.

Mr CRIPPS: I am confused about advice in the 2009-10 state budget papers that funding for the Jubilee Bridge in Innisfail has been increased by \$18 million. I was surprised to find the main roads department capital statement for 2009-10 showing an \$18 million allocation for the replacement of the Jubilee Bridge in Innisfail, with \$6 million due to be spent in the next financial year and \$12 million projected to be spent subsequent to that, given that the state government had previously only committed \$12 million to that project. It may very well be that that might be an error in the budget papers. I would be grateful if the Minister for Main Roads would clarify that in the near future.

Mr Reeves: It's not a Harbour Bridge.

Mr CRIPPS: I think that is a question that the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport should be asking the Minister for Main Roads because I think it might be an error in the budget papers. Assistance for the Jubilee Bridge is just one of the recommendations by the Orion report to secure the financial sustainability of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council. I want to remind the state Labor government that the Orion report made four core recommendations designed to secure the future financial sustainability of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council. Funding for the Jubilee Bridge, be it \$12 million or \$18 million, is just one of those recommendations. The other three involve funding for the upgrade of the Geraldton Bridge following the relocation of Innisfail State High School—and it was a decision that the government made to move that school—and increased rates of subsidy for the urgently needed upgrade of the reticulated water system and the sewage treatment service in Innisfail.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn the member for Everton.

Mr CRIPPS: While the \$18 million or the \$12 million—whatever it turns out to be—for the Jubilee Bridge is a good start, it is just one piece of the puzzle for the Cassowary Coast Regional Council to have a chance at achieving financial sustainability. This has been outlined by the Orion report, but the state Labor government has not yet committed to implementing the four recommendations in full.

I will continue to press the government to provide substantial financial assistance to the Cassowary Coast Regional Council—

Mr Reeves: You're not going to sell the assets off?

Mr CRIPPS:—because those recommendations were made by the Local Government Reform Commission in recognition of the error that was made by the Queensland Treasury Corporation in assessing the financial position of the former Johnstone Shire Council. The Cassowary Coast Regional Council badly needs the assistance that I have outlined in this place on several occasions since it was created—

Mr Reeves: No answers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister for Child Safety will cease interjecting.

Mr CRIPPS:—and the ratepayers really need that support. I will continue to advocate on their behalf.

Some of the measures in the 2009-10 state budget were recycled commitments from last year's budget. The government has failed to deliver the \$2 million Queensland Ambulance Service station in Tully that was promised in the previous budget. The government has also failed to deliver the new \$620,000 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service ranger base in Cardwell that was promised in the last state budget. The capital expenditure statements for those departments indicate that they were supposed to be delivered during the current financial year but they have now been held over to the next financial year. I understand that some progress has been made towards delivering those projects. It just goes to show that we cannot trust the government to do what it says it is going to do. When these types of projects are delayed and carried over in subsequent years it makes a mockery of the budget process.

The redevelopments of the Ingham and Innisfail hospitals have received their final allocations in this year's budget. I am pleased that the budget confirms the remaining financial contributions for the Ingham Hospital project and the final contributions for the Innisfail Hospital redevelopment. Stage 2 of the new Ingham Hospital will involve the demolition of the old hospital and the redevelopment of off-street car parking and the installation of an emergency helicopter pad. The state budget papers indicate that \$570,000 will be spent on completing the Innisfail Hospital redevelopment this coming financial year.

I am very disappointed that the state government has failed to recognise that many regional and rural Queenslanders continue to be disadvantaged by its failure to increase the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme. There is no mention in the budget papers of any increased support for regional and rural patients who have to travel to access health services because more and more services are being withdrawn from smaller regional hospitals like Ingham and Tully. They have to travel longer distances to access health services like renal dialysis.

It is not just the cents per kilometre that is the problem; it is the accommodation subsidy that is inadequate. The process for applying for the subsidy is very complicated. It poses a lot of difficulties for the people for whom the subsidy is important to be able to afford the treatment itself. This is especially the case for those on low and fixed incomes. The removal of the fuel tax rebate by the Bligh government will mean transport costs will go up for these patients. The problem is getting worse instead of better. The government needs to act accordingly.

I note that the Minister for Natural Resources put out a press release boasting about the size of the almost \$1 billion budget of his department. In doing so, he has announced that he is going to declare more wild river areas. Minister Robertson indicated that the government intends to declare another 12 basins in Queensland wild river areas over the next two years. But it has not even properly looked after the ones that it has already declared.

I have been asking the government for over 12 months to tell me when the Indigenous wild rivers ranger program will be rolled out on Hinchinbrook Island, given that Hinchinbrook Island was one of the original areas declared under the wild rivers legislation. I see in this budget that it intends to start thinking about it in the coming financial year. The state government has really been treating Hinchinbrook Island like a second-class wild river area up until now.

I am very concerned about the state government continuing its tradition of inflicting budget cuts on the primary industries and fisheries portfolio, which will be reduced substantially in the coming financial year. The budget handed down on Tuesday indicates that the primary industries and fisheries portfolio will suffer an overall operating budget cut of 7.4 per cent, with funding for services to stakeholders particularly badly affected.

Funding for services is down \$25 million, or 23 per cent, to \$82.4 million. We will see a whole range of front-line services wound back, withdrawn or axed across the state. The minister is offering some sort of political spin about a fresh initiative by putting more of the services online. But in reality it is just part of the same old story of the government cutting primary industries and fisheries budgets and reducing the on-the-ground services to the rural sector.

I turn to my shadow ministerial responsibility, disability services and multiculturalism. Before I make some remarks about the budget papers pertaining to the portfolio, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to my predecessor in the portfolio, my friend and colleague the member for Burdekin, Rosemary Menkens. The member for Burdekin was a very committed advocate for people with disabilities and consistently demonstrated a real concern for their welfare and their circumstances. The member for Burdekin also strongly supported those who cared for people with a disability. Indeed, the member for Burdekin introduced a private member's bill—the Carers (Recognition) Bill—which was historically supported by the government. That is a lasting achievement of the member for Burdekin in the disability services portfolio of which she can be proud.

I would firstly like to deal with a couple of matters related to disabilities. The capital statement for disability services in the 2009-10 budget increased significantly to \$108.7 million, up from \$71.6 million in 2008-09. This represents an additional \$37.1 million in funding to disability services. More than half of the increase—\$21.7 million—is attributable to allocations made to property, plant and equipment. I cautiously welcome this increase. I am reluctant to get excited about it because, as the member for Burdekin pointed out during her speech in the budget debate last year, the state government has an unfortunate record of consistently underspending budget allocations in this area.

The member for Burdekin, during her speech in the budget debate last year, detailed this record of consistent underspending in the portfolio since 2002. Despite increased budget allocations in the disability services portfolio, the policies of the government that are intended to support people with disabilities are satisfying fewer and fewer people who receive them. I welcome and acknowledge the increased funding in this budget for disability services across-the-board, but the reality is that these increases do not appear to be resulting in better outcomes as satisfaction levels, which are reported in the budget papers, continue to fall.

This year the levels of satisfaction among clients of disability services accommodation support services dropped nine per cent, while 13 per cent more community support service users were dissatisfied. That is a significant drop which I do not think we can overlook. The government needs to start asking itself why the figures are consistently falling. We cannot always just throw money at a problem and expect to find a solution.

The government's increased allocation for disability support services in Queensland is not necessarily resulting in better outcomes from the point of view of people with disabilities. Obviously DSQ needs to do some listening. There are real and urgent requirements in the community and a pressing need to listen to people with disabilities and their families.

I turn now to allocations in the budget concerning multiculturalism in Queensland. I endorse the \$2 million that will be spent each year for three years as part of the Local Area Multicultural Partnership and Community Action for a Multicultural Society programs. These funding initiatives will support local governments and community organisations to undertake projects that promote multiculturalism, improve community relations and increase the capacity of people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

As a representative of a very culturally diverse electorate, I think it is appropriate for these efforts to be pursued at the local level. So I will not be critical of the community based approach to promoting multiculturalism. However, the state budget has failed to deliver some much needed services for multiculturalism.

Language is often the biggest single barrier facing migrants and refugees. Yet the budget papers do not indicate any support for linguistic services in the form of either tutoring or translations. Without the ability to communicate, simple day-to-day tasks such as going to the shops can become really difficult for people. This is particularly pronounced for people who have fled terrifying situations in their own countries and who are required to make very quick transitions to new communities and cultures. Language is a key skill to ensure Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds can make the most of the opportunities in our communities and equally give them an opportunity to make contributions to ours.

This budget sets Queensland on a course to a record \$85.5 billion worth of debt, \$64 billion of which was run up before the Bligh government started to talk about and blame the current economic downturn. Queenslanders want to know how under Labor the government went broke.

Mr Watt: Here we go!

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (10.29 pm): 'Here we go,' says the member for Everton. Madam Deputy Speaker O'Neill, I had your protection last time; I seek your shield this time from the member for Everton. I rise this evening to contribute to the cognate debate on the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill, the Appropriation Bill, the Infrastructure Investment (Asset Restructuring and Disposal) Bill—or, for the benefit of the member for Everton, the fire sale bill—and the Fuel Subsidy Repeal and Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill—or, for the benefit of the members opposite, the 'kick 'em when they're down fuel tax bill'. It is in disgust that as a member of this great parliament I have only 20 minutes to talk on these bills tonight. If this government was fair dinkum, I would have had the opportunity to debate the appropriation bills, the fuel tax bill and—

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: There you go! That is not the case, but what can I say? I am not surprised. So much to talk about in so little time. But let us start—

A government member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I have got much to say. Let us start with the budget—the budget that will condemn every Queenslander to a decade of debt because of the Bligh government's financial incompetence, a budget that will see every Queenslander pay more for their fuel, a budget that will see every Queenslander pay more for their car registration, a budget that will see every Queenslander slogged with the interest bill accrued by this incompetent government, a budget that will see more Queenslanders unemployed, a budget that will see Queenslanders paying more every time they turn on the tap, a budget that will see every Queenslander paying more for their food and, finally, a budget that will see every Queenslander pay more for electricity.

But I am reminded of a movie made in 2000 starring Laura Linney. I refer to this movie because there has been much talk about movies and singing this week by the Premier and those on the other side, and here is the plot: as children, Sammy and Terry Prescott lost their parents in a car accident. Years later, Sammy, a single mother, still lives in her childhood home while Terry has drifted around the country scraping by—

A government member: What's it called?

Mr BLEIJIE: I will tell the member what it is called. After months of no communication with his sister, Terry is desperate for money and comes to visit her. Upset with Terry's situation, Sammy lends him the money. How sweet. I ask my colleagues on this side of the chamber: what is the name of this movie? What is the name? Have a guess! Do you know what? *You Can Count on Me!* That is it, and where have I heard this before? Where have I heard this before? On election night! 'Queensland, you can count on me. Queensland, you can count on me.'

An honourable member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes, it is a fiction and fortunately there was a happy ending. But unfortunately this is not Hollywood, and this Queensland budget does not have a happy ending. I ask the Premier: what on earth have the Queensland public got to be thankful for? A record debt? Higher groceries? Higher fuel costs or electricity costs? And to kick them even further, the Premier has the audacity to stand in this place and tell Queensland that her government has a mandate for these taxes.

Mr Watt: Hear, hear!

Mr BLEIJIE: 'Hear, hear!' Hansard will note the member for Everton saying, 'Hear, hear!' when I said it has a mandate for higher taxes. 'Hear, hear!' he says. Madam Deputy Speaker—this will really get them cracking—I said in this place in my inaugural speech that one of my political heroes was Sir Robert Menzies.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Hinchinbrook.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms O'Neill): Order! A little less, if you please.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you for your shield, Madam Deputy Speaker. I said Sir Robert Menzies was one of my political heroes, and this is why—I will remind members; it was in my maiden speech—

What may be before us we do not know, nor how long the journey. But this we do know, that Truth is our companion on that journey; that Truth is with us in the battle, and that Truth must win.

I submit to this House that, God willing, the truth will win this battle in 2½ to three years time.

In terms of the budget, I want to discuss what is not in it for the Sunshine Coast, and I can preface this debate by saying that if the Premier and the Treasurer were planning a trip to my electorate any time soon—which I would doubt because they could not get there during the campaign—

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will get to the Minister for Child Safety, and I have got all good acknowledgements for the Minister for Child Safety. If the Premier and Treasurer came to my electorate they would be met with angst from the Kawana voters, and not just people who voted for the LNP or the Greens but ALP voters as well. The Kawana branch of the ALP came out—

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: This is important, children. Listen! That has been withdrawn if I have offended anyone—withdrawn if I have offended the government. The Kawana branch of the ALP came out this week as if it had been stabbed in the back by a close friend and, of course, this was true. I am of course talking about the inept decision to delay the Sunshine Coast University Hospital by two to three years.

It is interesting that I was attacked by ALP supporters in the last election campaign who said that I would not ensure that the Sunshine Coast University Hospital in Kawana was delivered on time. Little did anyone know that the government never intended to go ahead with the original plan anyway. We have a situation where a Labor Party candidate who ran against me serves on the board planning this very hospital, and this particular person came out this week attacking the government over its ludicrous decision. For the record, I phoned her two nights ago and congratulated her on taking a stance against this government. If only the members for Bundamba and Waterford were more vocal in their opposition to aspects of this budget! In fact, I would love to see the media releases coming from the new members of parliament opposite to explain to their constituents all of these extra taxes—or have they been silenced?

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Absolutely. The new member for Chatsworth certainly has not been silenced, from listening to his rabble tonight. What surprised me was the member discussing the buying of strategic assets to increase in value. I would hope that the member for Chatsworth does not consider the government's decision to sell these assets amidst a global financial crisis as wise. That is not strategic asset selling; that is stupidity! It distresses me that the Treasurer and the government do not take seriously the health of Queenslanders. The Sunshine Coast University Hospital is a major piece of infrastructure that is required now. This budget is the biggest slap in the face to Sunshine Coast residents that I have ever seen. The Treasurer was recently discussing the Queensland economy with Michael Smith on 4BC when he said—

Mr Kilburn: Now, there's the voice of wisdom!

Mr BLEIJIE: If he is not a voice of wisdom, why does the member's government continue to be interviewed by him? The Treasurer said—

Why are we doing all of this? It's not about the next five minutes; it's about protecting jobs. It's about building an infrastructure program that supports an economy that is reeling from the effects of the global financial crisis.

Apparently, the government wants to protect jobs and build infrastructure—but just not on the Sunshine Coast! The history of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital is quite extraordinary. One minute we had it being built at Sippy Downs and then it was moved to Kawana Waters. The budget, like most things this government touches, always blows out of control. On 27 August 2008 the health minister at the time answered a question without notice put to him by my colleague the member for Maroochydore. This was the minister's answer—

I would back our response to growth pressures on the Sunshine Coast before the opposition's any day of the week. What are we doing on the Sunshine Coast? We are getting on and building the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital, which will have 650 beds.

Now, members opposite, listen carefully to this part—

It would have been very easy for us to just announce a brand-new tertiary hospital for the Sunshine Coast and do nothing between now and when it opens.

That is exactly what has happened: nothing has happened and it has now been delayed by three years. It gets better. On 11 February this year, the health minister then advised the House—

... the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and the Queensland Children's Hospital—all remain on track. These major projects will create the equivalent of more than 25,600 full-time jobs over their construction life.

Now we are faced with years of delay. Perhaps the new Minister for Health will have to advise the Treasurer to take the 25,000-plus jobs off the 100,000 jobs creation target. In April this year, a spokesman for Queensland Health confirmed to the *Sunshine Coast Daily* that the hospital would be built by 2014. The health minister in the same article, which I will table, said—

The LNP's Brisbane centric view would jeopardise hospital construction elsewhere in Queensland.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, dated 25 April 2009, titled 'Bleijie cast doubt on Kawana hospital' [443].

Can I say to the members of the House that it is not the LNP that jeopardised this hospital; it is the Labor Party. What concerns me and what I still cannot work out is what has changed in the past 21 days since I asked the minister a question on notice with respect to the hospital. This would have been an ideal time to tell the people of the Sunshine Coast what the delay was. It was only 21 days ago. The minister did not explain it and I want to know why the government could not explain it. Surely, the Minister for Health does not get rolled by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee weekend meetings, as happened to the transport minister.

During the election campaign, and even in the House today, the term 'DNA' was raised often. Political DNA refers to the values and beliefs of an individual. What the government failed to tell the people of Queensland during the election campaign was, of course, that its DNA was to jeopardise the health of Queenslanders, to delay much needed infrastructure like the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and to put the jobs of Queenslanders at risk by selling off vital government assets. These assets seem to be regarded by the government as subsidiary. Whilst they cost money to run, they make a return on the capital investment as well.

The members of the Australian Labor Party regard themselves as the champion of workers and working families. Yes, this is when it suits them. They have set quite an ambitious target of 100,000 jobs to be created in this term. The opposition will hold them to that promise. The government will try to create these jobs through infrastructure projects. But now these jobs are being delayed. The Sunshine Coast University Hospital at Kawana is a prime example. On the one hand we have the government promising to invest in public works programs but on the other hand we see the delays in vital health projects and cuts to other projects. In my electorate, these include the relocation of the Kawana water police, the only water police facility on the Sunshine Coast. There was \$3 million budgeted for the relocation of this facility last year and that allocation has been deleted and replaced with \$100,000. Where has the \$2.9 million gone? The water police deserve an explanation from this government as to why it would make the relocation virtually an impossibility.

Quite surprisingly, I find in the budget an allocation for the Sippy Downs Police Station. The allocation for this station was in last year's budget. It is not new funding, but the government seems to have chopped in half the estimated cost of this project. The original estimated budget for this police station was \$5.5 million. Now it is down to \$2.4 million. The government must come clean and explain to the people of Sippy Downs how their police station will be impacted by this reduction.

I am also disappointed that the government did not put any money on the table for the Sunshine Coast Regional Council Stockland Park grandstand. The federal government has contributed to this project, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council has contributed to this project but, as yet, we have not seen anything from the state government. I would, however—

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member wanted some thanks; I am going to give some thanks here, so he should settle down. I would, however, like to thank the Minister for Sport for visiting the electorate recently on a tour of the site. The Sunshine Coast does not have any stadiums, it does not have any grandstands, but it has a large population that continues to grow. For the information of the member for Everton, I recall—

Mr O'Brien interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! The member for Cook will resume his seat and cease interjecting from the floor.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Let us look at the track record of Labor governments in this state. When the state was booming owing to an increase in mining royalties and rising property markets, this government went bust. Instead of putting money back into the bank like the federal Costello-Howard government did, what did this government do? It squandered it. Quite simply, this government went bust in a boom. Then we had the broken promises. Electricity prices have tripled. The government said they would not. 'No taxes will be introduced,' said the Treasurer earlier this year. Now we see the fuel tax. We see an increase in registration costs for Queensland motorists. The only DNA Labor governments have is to mislead the constituents. We have seen it with federal Labor governments and we see it with this government.

A government member: What is the solution?

Mr BLEIJIE: Here is the solution. I think that sometimes the Labor Party forgets what is actually in its DNA of today. 'D' equals debt, 'N' equals negligence and 'A' equals arrogance. For the benefit of the members opposite, I table a copy—

Mr O'Brien interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet. The member for Cook will return to his seat if he wishes to interject.

Mr BLEIJIE: For the benefit of the members opposite, I table a copy of Labor's DNA today: 'D' for debt, because it always happens; 'N' for negligence, because they should and will be held responsibility for letting it happen; and 'A' for arrogance, because it is never their fault.

Tabled paper: A document showing an image and bearing the words 'D=Debt, N=negligent and A=Arrogance' [444].

I will use this opportunity to speak about the fire sale of assets by this Bligh Labor government. This decision is one reeking of desperation. The government has introduced legislation that goes against the very principles of its party. One of the core values of the Labor Party is that the privatisation of public enterprises should not be used to solve revenue problems. The ALP statement of beliefs states—

Privatisation of public enterprises should not be used to solve revenue problems.

Members of parliament, this government has some huge revenue problems and the fire sale of these assets should not be used to pay those debts.

This government is out of ideas. The Premier says that they have a plan. They clearly do not. I might add that, of all the members opposite who have spoken tonight, not many have raised Queensland Rail, not many have spoken about the fuel tax, not many have spoken about the sale of the biggest assets in Queensland. I ask the member for Hinchinbrook: I wonder why that is? Wasn't the ALP state conference disappointing! As the member for Southern Downs aptly indicated on Wednesday, the QCU wilted like a punnet of pansies. The Premier had to ensure that the vote passed by demanding that 45 members of her branch abstain from the vote to limit the embarrassment. Unfortunately, the QCU has the same contempt for Queensland jobs as does the Queensland government.

Every government has a legacy by which it will be known by the people. This government's legacy will clearly be one of debt, debt and more debt and its inability to pay back that debt. We were once the envy of Australia with our economy. We cannot say that anymore. The fuel tax that will be imposed by this government will increase inflation by over one per cent. This effect will be felt immediately. At a time when the economy is struggling and the world's financial markets are down, governments should be trying to extend an olive branch to their people, not hitting them over the head with it.

It seems the norm this week to quote songs, and particularly for government members to quote songs.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: No, that was a movie. Being the amateur karaoke performer that I am, this pleases me immensely. It also gives me an opportunity to quote one of my favourite songs. The song is aptly titled *What about me?*

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I hear a challenge to sing it—

What about me? It isn't fair

I've had enough. Now I want my share

Can't you see? I wanna live

But you just take more than you give.

This is what the Queensland public want to know. They want to know why this government takes more than it gives. They want to know: what about me? They want a fair share.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind all members that that is unparliamentary.

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—LNP) (10.49 pm): That is a very hard act to follow. I have heard a lot of members opposite talking about how tough this budget was. Many people have got their lines from the latest spin doctors saying, 'This is tough, this is tough.' The only tough thing about this budget is actually getting close enough to it to read it. This budget and this cognate debate stinks. In the words of Kenny, this cognate Appropriation Bill has a smell attached to it that will outlast religion. Five bills are being rolled up and smuggled through this people's place without proper scrutiny—another poke in the eye for democracy, another poke in the eye for accountability.

This year's budget is the answer to the question of why we had an election five months early despite the Premier's promise that she would take her government full term. This year's budget is proof of why the Queensland Labor Party had to force an early election on my constituents during cyclone season. This year's budget, the accompanying record deficit and panicked and desperate fire sale of iconic public places and assets is proof that the Labor Party has lost control of our public finances and abandoned all of its principles. The Treasurer has actually passed me a note saying I am right.

Mr O'Brien: Shut up!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would like the member for Cook to withdraw that comment.

Mr O'BRIEN: I withdraw.

Mr MESSENGER: If the true state of Queensland's finances had been known before the last state election then I have no doubt that the people of Queensland would have overwhelmingly rejected those opposite. I have a message for those people who live in South-East Queensland. I bring this message to the chamber from Queenslanders who live north of Brisbane: you are pampered and spoilt, you take a disproportionate share of our state's wealth, you take more than your fair share of the state's wealth, the majority of which is created outside the south-east corner in the real Queensland, the real Australia. You need to learn to share more. This message was reinforced when I had the opportunity to have a conversation with a gentleman from Townsville RSL. He was an RSL advocate. He said to me, 'Robert, don't forget that in World War II they drew a line north of Brisbane, just north of Caboolture, and above that line they were prepared to see Australians and Queenslanders bashed, buried and burnt.' This message is what I bring to the people in this chamber tonight and the people who live outside the south-east corner: you have not learned to share and you are prepared to see the rest of Queensland bashed, buried and burnt. We are not getting our fair share.

Labor's increase in fuel taxes, rego and electricity will hit people who live north of Caboolture harder than those who do not. There is a right way and a wrong way to cope with the state's financial crisis. The right way is to be honest and acknowledge how we landed in this financial mess. Let us remind ourselves of what this financial mess is. Our overall state borrowings have increased from \$64 billion before the election to \$85.5 billion after the election. Even with the \$15 billion state asset sell-off, that still leaves an overall state debt of around \$70 billion and fewer income-producing assets to service the \$2 billion a year interest bill. The right way is to chart a course for our state's finances which is achievable and sustainable. The wrong way is to deny history and put the blame on the global financial crisis and conveniently forget the 11 years of waste and the last few spectacular years of spending more than we earned. That is being dishonest with the people of Queensland and ensuring that the mistakes of the past are guaranteed to be repeated while the lessons are forgotten.

This budget is not sustainable. We have a government that has an income of \$37 billion and has chosen to spend \$39 billion driving our state into a \$2 billion red hole. It is worthwhile to reflect on the fact that almost \$2 billion is the cost of one year's worth of interest payments for Queensland at the moment. If we did not have the \$74 billion of Labor debt going into the global financial meltdown then this year's budget would have been almost balanced.

One of the most amazing charts that this year's budget papers has produced is the 'returning budget to surplus' chart. I draw it to the attention of the House. It is appropriate that the Premier and Treasurer are using metaphors and stories from fairy tales. This is the fairy tale chart, this little one here. The red line starts with Queensland plunging into deficit in 2008-09, the red line continues plunging past this year's \$2 billion, next year's \$3 billion and then hits \$4 billion in 2011-12. Then happily it rises again to break even in 2016-17. It is even in the shape of a smile. It has this nice little smiley face on it. It leaves us with a warm inner glow to know that by 2016-17 we can all have a happy ending. The red is even in the shade of the Premier's lipstick. I will suggest to my constituents who are losing their jobs, waiting to get on operation lists, paying extra for fuel for their cars, paying extra for their water rates, paying extra for their electricity and those stuck in traffic jams that every time they see a glossy government TV ad or brochure that shows the Premier's smile they close their eyes and think of the happy ending that the Premier has drawn on our state's deficit chart. The only problem with this deficit happy ending is that one has to trust Labor to deliver on its promises. If there is one lesson that Queenslanders have learned from the last 11 years it is that if the Premier's mouth is moving, smile or no smile, what is coming out is either a falsehood, a fiction, a fabrication, a deceit, or a fib. That goes for the Treasurer, only doubly so, because he is not only good at it, he enjoys it.

Where has all the money gone? How did we get into the situation where we have to sell off our state's assets to pay for Labor's credit card bill? What would we do differently? That is what I hear from the other side: what would we do differently? Here is a plan: I would examine every deal and contract this lazy, corrupt, arrogant, dysfunctional Labor rabble has ever entered into. I would hire an army of forensic accountants with bulletproof vests, calculators, a year's supply of batteries, guarded by big hairy men—and hairy women if you really want to be gender equal—armed with shotguns and handcuffs to inspect every piece of paper that shows a Labor government expenditure over \$5. Why? Let me remind members of the toxic health waste water report that I presented to this chamber before the last budget. The toxic health waste water report was a document that Queensland Health paid

\$2.6 million for. Guess how much the scientists and the people who crawled around the insides of 30 hospitals and risked life and limb looking for flesh-eating bugs were paid for this report? They were paid \$100,000. But between the scientists, the workers and the Queensland Health people who signed off on the \$2.6 million cheque there were two companies linked back. Guess who? Labor mates. They skimmed off \$2.5 million and added five pages to that original 278 page report.

The CMC investigated this. It questioned the scientists who told me about it, and a reporter with the Bundaberg *NewsMail* then questioned this government about this report. We have not really had much confirmation from the government, but apparently the CMC has referred this matter to the DPP, the Attorney-General's Department. The Attorney-General has acted like there are crickets out there—there has been absolute silence. The Attorney-General has not even told this place what he intends to do about the CMC's referral of this report to his department. He has failed to explain to this place and the Queensland people, whose money could have been skimmed off—and it could have been skimmed off to Labor mates—what he is going to do with the report that the CMC has obviously decided is serious enough to refer to him after it completed its investigation.

Is this government going to try to bury an investigation which in a strange twist of fate could have affected the former member for Greenslopes? I often wonder whether the former member for Greenslopes would have retired prematurely if this issue had not been tabled and reported in this chamber before the last election. The moral of the story is: if you want to find out where all the money has gone, just follow the breadcrumb trail to the Labor mates and have a look at their consultancy and success fees—\$500,000 comes to mind with Terry Mackenroth. That would be a nice place to start if the government wanted to try to save some money.

Would government members like me to give them some more examples of how they could save some money? Here is another example. What would we do differently? We would not allow \$15 million of this year's budget—\$30 million in total—to be spent on a project that is not wanted and not needed on the Discovery Coast. It is a project that risks the health of the Great Barrier Reef corals and marine life and it is a project that threatens nesting sites of not one officially endangered species of turtle but two—the loggerhead turtle and the leatherback turtle. I have personally counted 30 new turtle nesting sites on the beach where this stupid desal plant is about to be built. Col Limpus, renowned turtle expert, confirmed that the site is a known loggerhead turtle nesting area.

It is a project that will ensure that Agnes Water and 1770, which has a worldwide reputation as a tourist destination with pristine beaches, is damaged. It is a project that will guarantee that residents will pay the most expensive price per kilolitre for water in Australia. It is a project that will ensure that \$40 million is spent on the supply of desalinated water to only 700 ratepayers, while there is plenty of underground water to supplement tank water use for the next 20 years. It is a project that will be privatised as soon as it is built.

I have written to Garrett and Brown and I have not heard a squeak. They are like this environment minister and this Premier: they pick and choose when they are green and when they are not. They constantly talk about protecting the environment but are happy to destroy pristine beaches and threaten endangered species with a \$30 million spend of taxpayers' money—\$15 million from this budget. This project has the smell of a Labor rot all over it. I ask the Treasurer tonight to give me a guarantee please that the \$15 million from the Burnett budget will not find its way to some Labor mate as a success fee or an ongoing fee or in some other way.

There is a serious matter that has been brought to my attention and also to the attention of the Queensland health minister and to the Queensland civil courts by a Queensland Health nurse whistleblower who has contacted me. I spoke with this gentleman tonight. After carefully reading standing order 233, the sub judge rule, complying with conditions laid down in standing order 233, I will share with this House some of details and facts of this matter. I believe that I am entitled to under the rules because, while standing order 233(3) states that members should not refer in this House to civil cases in courts where a jury is to be empanelled within the period of four weeks preceding the date fixed for trial, standing order 233(4) states—

The sub judge rule does not apply to civil proceedings other than those referred to in (3).

In simpler language, the sub judge rule does not apply to civil proceedings being heard by a magistrate or judge. This civil matter is being heard by an industrial magistrate, not an empanelled jury. Therefore, I bring to the attention of the House some of the serious claims and issues detailed by the Queensland Health employee. The friend of the worker, the Bligh government, tonight hand-delivered a note to nurse Tony Bott saying that he had been sacked. Nurse Bott has rejected an offer of \$65,000 from this health department. Because it had a confidentiality clause attached to it, he chose to reject this government offer.

In summary, Nurse Bott has brought to me, and also to the judicial system, strong evidence that Queensland Health has failed for many years, possibly decades, to have in place a set protocol for the prescription and administering of insulin in all Queensland public hospitals. This failure very simply means that diabetic patients while in the care of Queensland Health may have received too much or too little insulin with the resulting fatal or life-threatening consequences—the first being unnecessary

diabetic comas resulting in death to the patient and the second being dramatically increased infections in wounds resulting in a higher likelihood of amputations and other adverse health effects. This failure to have in place a set protocol for the prescription and administering of insulin was discovered by Nurse Bott while he served at Queensland Health facilities in the Torres Strait Islands, which have an extremely high incidence of diabetes in their patients and general population.

As a result of Mr Bott's long fight to draw this very serious matter to the attention of his superiors and the government, he has suffered significant damage to his career and his health, both physical and psychological. Now he is before our courts self-representing, trying to salvage what he can of his life and career and receive just compensation for what I believe to be appalling treatment by this government.

If only Queensland Health had used as much energy and resources in investigating Mr Bott's warnings as it had in vindictively pursuing him, smearing him, besmirching his good name and covering up facts, then we might have a public health system that is better equipped to care for diabetic patients. Today, along with Mr Bott, I call on this government to resource an independent, credible, comprehensive, transparent investigation into the care of diabetic patients in the Torres Strait Islands and at other Queensland Health facilities.

Last year the government promised to spend \$1 million of \$17.5 million over three years to improve oral health facilities at the Bundaberg and Hervey Bay hospitals. The expenditure of that money is not itemised or noted in this year's budget.

My community and health workers have also forced this government to allocate \$2 million to providing an upgrade to the mental health unit. That is very welcome. However, it has been caught out again failing to spend last year's promised amount and reannouncing it again this year. According to the budget papers, the expenditure to date on the mental health upgrade has been zero. Mental health is a very important issue for many families in the Burnett, and it is comforting to know that we have mental health in-patient beds available locally. My job for this year will be to ensure that the government keeps its promises and spends the \$2 million on the mental health upgrade.

There are dialysis patients living at Baffle Creek and in other areas of the Burnett who are being denied travel assistance by the Bundaberg Base Hospital under a legalistic and bureaucratic interpretation of the laws governing the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme. Two inconsistencies in the scheme have been highlighted after I investigated my constituents' complaints. Other patients living in Gin Gin and Childers, which are similar distances from Bundaberg Base Hospital, receive the travel subsidy. My constituents who do not qualify for travel to Bundaberg Base Hospital for the dialysis treatment will qualify for travel subsidy if they travel to a Brisbane hospital. That is the craziness of the system. I ask the health minister immediately to fix this unfair interpretation of patient travel rules. Also, the health minister and members opposite must increase the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme for all Queensland patients. In the light of Labor's petrol price increase, a 15c per kilometre and a \$30 per night subsidy is an absolute insult.

Debate, on motion of Mr Messenger, adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (11.09 pm): I move—
That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Friday, 19 June 2009.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (11.09 pm): I move—
That the House do now adjourn.

Indooroopilly Electorate, St Lucia Police Beat

Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (11.10 pm): I rise to call for a police beat to be established in the suburb of St Lucia in my electorate of Indooroopilly. St Lucia has an outstanding case for a police beat. While St Lucia has a residential population of around 12,000 people, this is daily swelled by as many as 25,000 by the people who are studying and working at the University of Queensland. Given that many areas across Queensland and in Brisbane with far smaller populations have a dedicated police presence, St Lucia clearly deserves a police beat.

Currently, St Lucia is served by the Indooroopilly Police Station, but limited police numbers and increasing demands on policing resources mean it is a challenge to provide the visible police presence St Lucia deserves. A police beat in St Lucia would have a number of significant benefits. Residents in St Lucia have long had to deal with issues of noise and vandalism associated with the large population it accommodates weekly. The presence of a police beat would provide a visible deterrent to such criminal activities. It would also encourage a greater flow of information from the community to the police to assist them in their investigations and develop their strategies to deal with the problem.

Break-ins continue to be a problem in St Lucia, and this situation worsened after the opening of the Eleanor Schonell Bridge, when there was a 30 per cent increase in crime. While break-ins are serious for all residents, they can be particularly devastating for the many students who live in St Lucia who are often unable to afford insurance and are left without the financial means to replace stolen goods.

While St Lucia is often characterised by its younger population attracted to the university, a significant and valued proportion of its residential population are older Australians who moved into the electorate after World War II. Having worked with the local community for many years, I am aware of the concerns among some of these older residents about their physical safety which makes them often reluctant to leave their homes. The visible and permanent police presence that a police beat provides would give these older residents greater confidence to continue to be active members of the local community, something that adds to their wellbeing as well as enriching community life in general.

The local community association has indicated that it would prefer that a police beat be based in the St Lucia village shopping precinct on Hawken Drive rather than on the university campus to provide easier access for residents. The St Lucia community deserves and expects a more front-line, visible police presence. A police beat would provide it and it is something that is well overdue.

Greenslopes Electorate, Coorparoo Quilters

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (11.12 pm): In every community, there are special groups of people whose work makes an immeasurable difference at the most basic level to the lives of others—people who give of their time and energy for the sole purpose of helping someone else in need. The impact of what these people do is so valuable and remarkable that it can best be seen in the faces of those people who are affected.

In my community, in the electorate of Greenslopes, one such group is the Coorparoo Quilters. Founded in 1984, this group of around 90 patchwork enthusiasts embodies the very essence of community spirit. Through their volunteer work making beautiful quilts to raffle for charity organisations, such as the Cancer Council and the Multiple Sclerosis Society, this group has for the past 25 years raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for people in need. In the past two years alone, they have raised \$65,000 for cancer research.

But the most significant part of their work which has had and continues to have a lasting effect on the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our community is the quilts that they make for children with serious, long-term illnesses. Linus Quilts, as they are named, in reference to the *Peanuts* cartoon character who constantly carried a comfort blanket, are provided to the Mater Hospital every time they advise the Coorparoo Quilters of a newly admitted child who has a serious, long-term illness. For these children, who are often frightened and confused, the blankets are a special gift, providing them with comfort and making them feel special. The Coorparoo Quilters have made more than 150 of these quilts this year alone. Considering the amount of effort that goes into making quilts, that is an incredible contribution, and the smiles on the faces of the children who receive them prove just how important this work is.

Last month I had the pleasure of joining the Coorparoo Quilters for their 25th anniversary celebrations. The event included the unveiling of a special heritage quilt, which was hand-dyed and quilted by the members of the Coorparoo Quilters as a lasting legacy of their history and of Queensland's history in this the year of the state's 150th birthday. The quilt was made to represent the unique architectural features of the historic Queen Alexandra Home in Coorparoo. The quilt's theme—Reflections of our Past—is especially relevant this year, and I am very pleased the group is donating the quilt to the Queensland Library as a keepsake for future generations. The Bligh government was very pleased to provide almost \$2,600 for the project as part of our Q150 Legacy Infrastructure Program, which is a program that supports projects that will provide Queensland with a lasting reminder of the year's Q150 festivities.

If people want to see evidence of community spirit in action, they need look no further than the generosity of the Coorparoo Quilters. From their first humble gathering in a home 25 years ago, the Coorparoo Quilters, through the friendships they have forged, have created a legacy that will be felt for many generations to come. The work of the Coorparoo Quilters is a tremendous example of the great things we can achieve when we stay connected to the people around us. The group's efforts have made a great difference to the lives of so many people in the electorate of Greenslopes and beyond.

Kawana Electorate, Order of Australia Medal Recipients

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (11.15 pm): I would like to use this opportunity to pay tribute to the recent recipients of the Order of Australia Medal in my electorate. These awards, which were announced on the Queen's Birthday public holiday, are a gesture of thanks and appreciation for the level of community service, goodwill and personal generosity contributed by people in our communities.

Mr Barrie Woods co-founded the Red Cross Singers some 25 years ago. In over 1,000 shows, Mr Woods has never missed a performance of the Singers, which performs at nursing homes and hostels across the Sunshine Coast. Perhaps one day I will join him. Mr Woods has provided entertainment and brought some joy to the lives of so many people who sometimes quite simply need a bit of cheering up. I was very pleased to see Mr Barrie Woods receive this award, and now he joins his wife, Therese, who also was acknowledged with this award in 1996.

Mr Leslie Pontin is also well known in Caloundra and Kawana for his dedication to community service. He was duly acknowledged on 8 June with an Order of Australia Medal. Upon receiving his award, Mr Pontin was quoted as saying, 'The world would not be the place it is if it was not for our volunteers.' This only further demonstrates the selfless commitment Mr Pontin has made to the community. He volunteers as a driver for Meals on Wheels in Caloundra and for Kawana Companions.

The third gentleman to receive an Order of Australia Medal in my electorate was Mr Don Aldous. Mr Aldous is of course well known across the Sunshine Coast, but particularly in Caloundra. He served on the Caloundra City Council, which encompassed most of my electorate, as the mayor for 11 years and was a local government representative for a total of 14 years until his retirement as mayor in 2008. His service to local government, the community and youth employment has enabled the former city of Caloundra to be a destination of choice for tourists right around the world.

On a personal level, I would like to thank Mr Aldous for his support and guidance over the past 10 years. Mr Aldous is currently enjoying a nine-month trek around Australia with his wife, Heather, and recently caught his first barramundi near Broome, although I am advised that it was a few centimetres short. From one keen fisherman to another, I congratulate him on his magnificent feat and pay tribute to him for his community service deeds over the past 20 years.

Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools

Mr WENDT (Ipswich West—ALP) (11.18 pm): I think it is sometimes too easy for the media and some commentators to bag our Queensland state school system. As such, I think it would be appropriate for me to take the opportunity tonight to alert the House to two schools in my electorate which have shown how innovative and leading edge they can be. These two schools, I should point out, are two of only 84 from across the state which were acknowledged and recognised recently for excellence in teaching and learning as part of the state's Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools, announced only a couple of weeks ago.

As many in this House would know, these awards are the Queensland government's most prestigious awards for educational programs, and the winners have been recognised for the difference they are making in their students' lives. In addition, the schools which enter get a chance of sharing in over \$370,000 in development grants.

These awards were designed with the intention of shining a spotlight on the innovative programs being conducted in some of our state schools throughout Queensland. As honourable members know, these are schools that are required to cater for all types of students, and this ties in nicely with the Bligh government's commitment to providing a world-class education system for all. The best way our schools can do this, of course, is by lifting literacy, numeracy and science standards across all Queensland schools. As such, the awards aim to recognise, celebrate and reward excellent practice in state schools, foster a learning culture that supports sharing excellent practices, create professional development opportunities and, of course, promote public education in general. As honourable members can imagine, the Queensland government cannot do this alone. We can only achieve our goals with the help of dedicated teachers and support staff running diverse and engaging programs.

The local winners in our region were the Lowood State High School for its program, Pathways at Lowood, which received the RACQ Showcase Award for Excellence in the Senior Phase of Learning, and the Rosewood State High School for its program, Leadership and Lifeskills, which received the Queensland University of Technology Showcase Award for Excellence in Leadership. A judging panel has decided that these two schools are only two of 84 from across the state that will now receive a \$1,000 grant each. But better still, they have now gone through the first round and they move on to the next round to compete for one of 24 state finalist positions, each of which will give them an opportunity to win \$5,000 each in grants. Finally, eight state winners will be named at the Showcase Gala Dinner in October, with each school winning another \$20,000 in development grants.

I cannot speak highly enough of the teachers and support staff who encouraged and worked closely with the students at these two schools to win these awards. As such, I think it is only fitting to acknowledge Wayne Webster, Lyn Culverhouse and Greg Hanrahan for the great work they have done and, I am sure, will continue to do into the future. Well done to all.

Recreational Fishing, Koala Habitat

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (11.20 pm): I rise to speak about two recent developments relevant to the environment in Cleveland and the broader Redland City, that is, recreational fishing and koalas.

I recently attended the annual Moreton Bay Fishing Challenge at Redland Bay, along with my Redlands colleague, Peter Dowling, and the Federal member for Bowman, Andrew Laming. It was noticeable that no-one attended from the Labor Party or the Greens Party. They obviously do not care about the recreational fishers, particularly since Labor and the Greens deserted fishers at the last election with the Greens' preference deal. We joined many hundreds of people—fishing mates, mum and dad fishers, children and grandpas. It was a great family event.

I want to acknowledge the great work of the local amateur fishing clubs in Redland City. The fact that so many people attended the event shows how popular recreational fishing is among other recreational uses of the bay. It is also interesting to note that these recreational fishers—young, middle-age and old-age—are being educated in such clubs to be responsible fishers and to protect the environment. I welcome the growth in environmentally friendly recreational fishing practice, despite the attempts of this Labor government and extreme green groups to demonise all Queensland recreational fishers as environmental vandals. Sustainability of fishing is considered important by the vast majority of recreational fishers. I note also that for some fishing groups, for example ECOfishers, sustainability is a core value. ECOfishers is a community based family fishing organisation committed to enjoying fishing while protecting the environment. However, can I suggest that ecofishing itself is more than a club; it is a movement inspired by the ideal of environmentally friendly and sustainable fishing. Ecofishing is growing as a movement in Cleveland and the Moreton Bay Marine Park.

This state government could take a leaf out of the ecofishing book when it comes to practising conservation in Cleveland and the Redland City area. I refer to the plight of the koala in the Redlands. Recent reports by several wildlife groups raise the tragic possibility that the koalas of Redland City could become extinct in the next few years. I make the point that this rapid koala decline is happening right under the nose of this government.

Further, this government has not only failed to protect the koalas, but has directly contributed to the problem. I refer to the clearing of the koala habitat at the site of the future Thornlands South State School. Between late 2008 and late April 2009 this government sent in the bulldozers and completely cleared the site, despite submissions from the council to stop the bulldozing and retain some of the koala habitat. In spite of the government's conservationist rhetoric to freeze clearing of such koala habitat, it continued to bulldoze ahead. The Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability and the Minister for Education and Training could have prevented it at any time but chose not to. They have not explained their actions. This government's environmental credentials are shot.

(Time expired)

Milpera State High School

Mrs SCOTT (Woodridge—ALP) (11.24 pm): To many thousands of former refugees and migrant students, Milpera is a place of caring and nurture, a place where they were first welcomed as students in their new homeland. Many have come with no English language from strife-torn countries where they have experienced trauma and deprivation and viewed scenes which no child should be exposed to. At Milpera they have learned not only English but so many life skills and so much about life in Australia. Music and art are particularly important, as is the wide range of practical events, programs and excursions they undertake. Many of the refugee students in my electorate have spent their earlier schooling at Milpera and then transferred to local schools.

On Friday evening of 29 May, it was my very great privilege to attend as an official guest, representing the Premier and the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, a special celebration to mark the 25th anniversary of the school at the Chelmer site. To mark this occasion as well as to celebrate Queensland's 150th birthday, funding was obtained under the Q150 program to produce a 45-minute DVD entitled *Milpera—The Beginning of a New Journey*. Produced under the inspirational direction of Julie Romaniuk, the DVD depicts the history of the school told so personally by the founding and present principal, Adele Rice, as well as so many of the journeys their students have taken over the years. The recollection of students reflected the special place that Milpera holds in each one of their hearts. Milpera students now fill so many professional roles in our community and many returned to give thanks to teachers and particularly their principal, Adele Rice, who has steered this school through its early development to the very impressive and nurturing place it has become.

It was a wonderful evening where past and present staff, students, parents and friends were able to reconnect, view an amazing picture gallery taken over the 25 years and then enjoy a very meaningful ceremony. Friend of Milpera Uncle Des Sandy gave a welcome to country and a video message was played from the Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, who has had a close association with the school. Musical tributes included an original song by music teacher Taciana Balil-Lozoya as well as

instrumentals, dance and songs by past and present students. Guest speaker, the Hon. Laurie Ferguson, federal Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs, spoke of the unique role Milpera plays in the lives of refugee students and the strong program assisting with the settlement of refugees. It was a privilege for me to give a short tribute and vote of thanks at the end of the program.

Adele Rice is a truly inspirational principal with a very deep understanding of her students. I pay tribute to her for her leadership and guidance in bringing Milpera through its first 25 years and wish them much success in the future.

Gold Coast, Tourism Industry

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—LNP) (11.27 pm): Tourism is the lifeblood of the Gold Coast. With the downturn in the property industry, tourism is crucial to our regional, state and national income. Many in my electorate have been affected by the recent downturn in the economy. Last year alone the numbers were static at nine million visitors. At its peak in 2003-04, over 9.8 million visitors were hosted on the Gold Coast. Domestic visitors numbered 3.5 million with 16.1 million nights and international visitors numbered 752,900 with 6.4 million nights. There were 6.3 million day visitors.

In 2007-08 international visitors spent over \$1 billion. They came from Japan, New Zealand, UK, China, Europe and Korea in that order. Sixty per cent of the day trip visitors were within three hours driving distance of the Gold Coast. The increased price of fuel is going to severely affect this market. For those who are unaware, New South Wales is also lifting its fuel subsidy. So we will lose our southern tourists—at least a proportion of them. Our transport costs for food and service are going to rise. A fuel tax is an unfair impost at this time when things are getting tough.

The critical number of tourists to the Gold Coast is nine million visitors per year to make things work. Interstate visitors account for 51 per cent of domestic visitor numbers. In 2003 the long distance cost of transport and other costs were \$2.6 billion with an annual uplift factor of four per cent, roughly in line with inflation.

I am very concerned at the direction our government is taking with regard to tourism on the Gold Coast. It appears to be tempting to be all things for all regions. In reality, the Gold Coast is the key, or crown jewel. It needs to be given priority, just as some areas of economic endeavour, such as mining, are a priority.

Gold Coast tourism has taken a massive hit as international tourist numbers contract and the government tells the market it has lost confidence. The AAP on 11 June 2009 stated that, for the year to March, 60,000, fewer international tourists had visited here. That is a fall of 7.8 per cent on the previous year, according to Tourism Australia.

I am deeply concerned that Tourism Queensland is downgrading its involvement in Japan. People cannot get a brochure on the Gold Coast at the railway stations where they purchase their tours. We on the Gold Coast will fight for every tourist. We want every Queenslanders and every parliamentarian for the sake of our state to do the same.

Brischke, Mr T

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.30 pm): Members of the Australian Workers Union were shocked and deeply saddened by the sudden passing of recently retired far northern district secretary, Ted Brischke. Ted and his wife, Cecilee, were involved in a car accident and tragically killed as they travelled to a birthday party for their granddaughters on Sunday, 7 June 2009.

Ted was the face of the Australian Workers Union in Cairns. He spent more than 40 years as a member of the AWU, fighting for members as a delegate, organiser and district secretary. As Ted himself once said, 'It is hard to remember unionism not being a part of my working life.'

Ted first joined the AWU when working as a bridge carpenter at the Cairns Port Authority. A short time later he was elected as the AWU representative and Ted expanded his involvement in the union as he was interested in how delegates could enforce the entitlements previously won by members. Ted became an AWU organiser in 1975, a position he did not accept right away but decided to have a go at after discussions with his family. After 10 years as an organiser he was appointed far northern district secretary in 1985, where he worked until his retirement at the end of last year.

During his service as an official, Ted represented members in many disputes and campaigns, including the World Heritage campaign, the South Johnstone sugar mill lockout in 1998 and, most recently, the Your Rights at Work campaign fighting the Howard government's draconian workplace relations system.

Ted loved the work of a union official and the contact with members, and the members could not have asked for a more loyal, dedicated and hardworking official to represent them in their fight to get what they were entitled to. In all of his endeavours Ted was characterised by his doggedness in protecting and improving the conditions of workers. He was determined to leave no stone unturned in ensuring that AWU members received the representation that they deserved, as many of his former

officials and staff will attest to. Tough in negotiations and at work, but generous and courteous once the job was done, Ted has contributed greatly to the rich history of the AWU. He was rightly proud to be among the list of the longest serving AWU employees and the longest serving far northern district secretary.

My sister Dionne Berry worked as an organiser under Ted in Cairns and, like everyone else at the AWU, was rightly proud to have worked alongside him. It is with regret that I am not able to attend the service for Ted and Cecilee to be held tomorrow. On behalf of the Pitt family, the member for Cairns, Desley Boyle, and my other parliamentary colleagues, our thoughts and best wishes are with Wayne, Allan and Shannon and their families at this time. Ted and Cecilee Brischke will be greatly missed by all who had the good fortune to know them.

Queensland Racing

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.33 pm): It is with extreme disappointment that I have to rise again in this House to highlight the failings of Queensland Racing to the racing industry, which has been on another wild goose chase led by its recalcitrant leader, 'Cowboy' Bob Bentley. I am particularly disappointed, because after my appointment as the shadow racing minister almost three months ago I rang Mr Bentley to request a synopsis of the direction he saw Queensland Racing taking for the years ahead, and he promised me a written expose on his vision for the direction of Queensland Racing. Nothing has arrived.

At the time he had a written contract on the Wadam Park racing complex for somewhere in the vicinity of \$20 million of racing industry funds. I sought the details of the decision-making process behind this left-field acquisition process for a new training facility for the racing industry in greenfield territory. This is the fourth dream scheme that Bob Bentley has been involved with, following on from his very unsuccessful supertrack at Wacol, his very expensive sell-off of Doomben proposal, his proposal for a supertrack at the Gold Coast and now his failure at Wadam Park in the Beaudesert hinterland.

How much of valuable racing industry funds has been spent on these wild and fanciful failed QR investigations? When will the message finally get through to QR that all the racing industry wants to do is get on with the serious business of racing and stop the shadow sparring of the current board in relation to dream schemes that come to nought after millions of dollars of racing industry funds are spent on these reality aberrations?

I note that the \$20 million the QR chairman said he would be chasing for an upgrade of the Gold Coast Turf Club facilities is missing from the budget papers in terms of a government contribution. I endorse the government's decision to not put any money into the upgrade of the Gold Coast Turf Club facilities until the Magic Millions company commits to a long-term contract for the conduct of this race on the fabulous Gold Coast.

We on the Gold Coast we will not be held hostage by some Sydney city, white-shoe-brigade spivs who think they can bludgeon the Gold Coast Turf Club and the government into submission to extract more money for their very successful enterprise, established not by them but by more Queensland-friendly breeding identities. The government currently puts \$700,000 of taxpayers' money directly into the pockets of three of the richest people in Australia running the Magic Millions. I question the right of those people to complain about the standard of their own saleyard facility when they are completely in control of any upgrade they feel is appropriate to their own facility.

I await my report from the unelected, unanswerable chairman of Queensland Racing. In the meantime, I am expecting to see sale proposals for Deagon, Cairns and possibly even his beloved Ipswich. But I doubt even an unchallengeable ex-chairman of Ipswich Turf Club would be game to proffer the sale of a Labor heartland icon such as the Ipswich Turf Club.

(Time expired)

Chatsworth Electorate, Schools

Mr KILBURN (Chatsworth—ALP) (11.36 pm): I would like to talk about a number of events at schools in my electorate that I have been privileged to attend. On 22 May I was glad to attend the Carindale learning groups' sports awards. I was proud to sponsor two awards on that day.

A number of schools in my electorate—Belmont, Carina, Camp Hill, Whites Hill and Mayfield—get together each year and have a sports competition. Camp Hill had a presentation of aerobics. Some 60 students at Camp Hill participate in 10 aerobics teams. I am glad to say that two of those teams were teams of young men. I was happy to see that. The aerobics teams at Camp Hill had great success at the State School Aerobic Championships. It has won a stage 1 category event every year since 2002. They have also qualified to compete at a national level every year. In 2007 they were awarded the gold medal for the stage 1 category, becoming the national champions. They achieved a silver medal in 2008. I congratulate the teachers—Mrs Genevieve Clark, Mrs Shelley Edwards and Miss Fiona Shepard—for the great work they do coaching those young children.

On 29 May I was glad to participate in Principal for the Day at Gumdale State School. Whilst I was at Gumdale State School the students were very proud to show me the system of solar panelling and water collection that they have. The solar panels generate enough power to run the school and put power back into the state grid.

Mr Choi interjected.

Mr KILBURN: It is a great school. The students in 5M wrote me a letter, which I was happy to receive. They spoke about how proud they were of the contribution their school makes to decreasing the carbon footprint.

I am also very happy to be involved with San Sisto College. On 27 May they opened their reconciliation garden and bush tucker trail. It was designed by Mrs Lesley Van Moolenbroek-Anderson, a mother of one of the girls at the school and an Indigenous person. The children developed the garden and on the day they read out statements about reconciliation on behalf of the student body, the staff and the parents. The St James Indigenous Dance Group performed. The trail leads to a yarnning circle, which will be used by all the young women at the school well into the future. I congratulate the teachers and staff of San Sisto College for their contribution to the reconciliation process.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.39 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Attwood, Bates, Bleijie, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Crandon, Cripps, Croft, Cunningham, Darling, Davis, Dempsey, Dick, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Finn, Flegg, Foley, Fraser, Gibson, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hobbs, Hoolihan, Hopper, Horan, Jarratt, Johnson, Johnstone, Jones, Keech, Kiernan, Kilburn, Knuth, Langbroek, Lawlor, Lucas, McArdle, McLindon, Male, Malone, Menkens, Messenger, Mickel, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nicholls, Nolan, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pratt, Reeves, Rickuss, Robertson, Robinson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Seeney, Shine, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Spence, Springborg, Stevens, Stone, Struthers, Stuckey, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson