



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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TUESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2012



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Fiona Simpson, Maroochydore) read prayers and took the chair.

For the sitting week, Madam Speaker acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land upon which this parliament is assembled.

ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable F. Simpson, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 21 September 2012

"A Bill for an Act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Liquor Act 1992, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Queensland Competition Authority Act 1997, the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, the Taxation Administration Act 2001 and the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000 for particular purposes, and to make consequential or minor amendments of other Acts as stated in the schedule"

"A Bill for an Act to amend the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 to ensure animal welfare obligations apply to acts done under Aboriginal tradition or Torres Strait Islander custom, and to make consequential amendments to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984, the Aurukun and Mornington Shire Leases Act 1978 and the Nature Conservation Act 1992"

"A Bill for an Act to amend the Queensland Art Gallery Act 1987 for particular purposes"

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

21 September 2012

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 September 2012, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker regarding assent to certain bills [1302].

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Intimidation of a Member



Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. Madam Speaker, as you would be aware, last week I wrote to you in relation to an alleged contempt of the parliament by Mr Caltabiano, the director-general of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Yesterday I received a letter from Mr Adrian Braithwaite from the legal practice Gilshenan and Luton on behalf of Mr Caltabiano and I now table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 29 October 2012, from Mr Adrian Braithwaite of Gilshenan and Luton Solicitors, to Ms Anastacia Palaszczuk MP regarding correspondence to the Speaker concerning Mr Michael Caltabiano [1303].

That letter does, in my opinion, constitute a prima facie case of contempt of the parliament on both the part of Mr Caltabiano and Mr Braithwaite in that it threatens and intimidates me in the discharge of my duty in clear breach of section 37 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and standing order 266 of the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly.

Madam Speaker, I will not be silenced. As Leader of the Opposition, I will not be threatened or intimidated when seeking to keep this government accountable. I will continue to raise issues. I will continue to speak out in this House on behalf of those who have no voice. I will not be silenced by someone who, as we heard yesterday in the media, is being funded by the taxpayers of Queensland. It is an affront to the parliament—

Madam SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I ask you to write to me in the normal manner on this matter.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take this opportunity to inform you, Madam Speaker, that I will be writing to you in relation to this matter and I will be asking you to refer this matter to the Ethics Committee for its consideration of whether the actions of Mr Caltabiano and Mr Braithwaite constitute a serious contempt of the Assembly.

REPORT

Auditor-General



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General Report to Parliament No. 2 of 2012-13. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Queensland Audit Office: Report to Parliament No. 2 for 2012-13—Follow-up of 2010 audit recommendations [1304].

REPORT

Integrity Commissioner



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Integrity Commissioner a report titled *Queensland Integrity Commissioner: Annual Report 2011-12*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Queensland Integrity Commissioner—Annual Report 2011-12 [1305].

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I inform the House that on 24 October 2012 I received correspondence from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads concerning the evidence given by the director-general of his department to the estimates hearing of the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee on 18 October 2012. This matter has been the subject of considerable public attention and I do not propose to go into the details of the matter except to say that, after considering the matter on 25 October 2012, I referred the matter to the Ethics Committee. Following my referral, I also received correspondence from the Leader of the Opposition regarding the same matter. I have forwarded this correspondence to the committee. I draw to the attention of members that, as this matter is now before the committee, standing order 271 now applies and the matter should not be referred to in the Assembly.

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have been advised by the Registrar of Members' Interests that he has received a complaint by the Leader of the Opposition against the Premier for failing to comply with schedule 2 of the standing rules and orders. In accordance with section 14 of schedule 2, a complaint by a member in accordance with this section is required to be forwarded to the Ethics Committee by the registrar. Given that this matter has been the subject of considerable public attention and has not been made in a confidential way, it is appropriate that the House be formally advised. Further, given that these matters do not arise frequently, I draw to the attention of members that standing order 271 now applies.

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Contempt of Parliament



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 9 October 2012 I received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition regarding an incident that occurred during the estimates process. In short, the Leader of the Opposition complained that a ministerial adviser accessed documents being printed from the printer dedicated to the opposition in the hearing room. Action was taken later that day to add signage to the opposition printer so that a recurrence would be made less likely. I do not intend to refer the matter

to the Ethics Committee. However, I believe it is important to inform or remind all members, their staff and others that members have individual rights and immunities regarding documents prepared for members for a parliamentary proceeding and, in some circumstances, a document being used by members for parliamentary proceedings. The rights may include the right of confidentiality in respect of a document. A breach of that right to confidentiality may constitute a breach of privilege and a contempt.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

National Week of Deaf People

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, each year since 2007 the parliament and Deaf Services Queensland have partnered to mark the National Week of Deaf People by bringing members of the deaf community and members of parliament together. This morning's parliamentary proceedings are being interpreted into Auslan sign language by interpreters from Deaf Services Queensland who are in the public gallery. It is my privilege to welcome members of the local deaf and hard of hearing communities who are here today.

Madam Speaker welcomed the deaf community using Auslan, Australian sign language.

Madam SPEAKER: I wish to thank the member for Gympie and the Leader of the Opposition for assisting in organising today's event. I also thank the member for Gympie for interpreting the Lord's Prayer earlier this morning.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

 **Madam SPEAKER:** I remind honourable members that the annual general meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Queensland Branch will be held in the Legislative Assembly chamber today at 1 pm.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

Somerset Region, Bus Service

Mr Choat, from 2,413 petitioners, requesting the House to take steps to ensure that the Somerset Region TransLink bus service 529 is retained and not cancelled [[1306](#)].

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3)—

WorkCover, Changes

7 petitioners, requesting the House to reject any changes to WorkCover that could or would adversely affect Queensland workers and/or their families covered by the scheme [[1307](#)].

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

Water Fluoridation

Mrs Cunningham, 1,566 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately cease the practice of water fluoridation in the State of Queensland [[1308](#)].

Collingwood Park, Goupong Park

Mrs Miller, 31 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate options for making Goupong Park (Collingwood Park) safer for local residents and families [[1309](#)].

Surrogacy Act 2010

Ms Trad, from 5,377 petitioners, requesting the House to not proceed with any proposals to amend the Surrogacy Act 2010 [[1310](#)].

Surrogacy Act 2010

Mr Watts, 10,003 petitioners, requesting the House to repeal all laws and amend any regulations that allow a single person or a same sex couple to obtain a child by surrogacy [[1311](#)].

Water Fluoridation

Mr Katter, 28 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that Mount Isa rate payers get a chance to express their opinion on fluoridation of the town's water supply [[1312](#)].

Holland Park Courthouse, Closure

Ms Palaszczuk, 65 petitioners, requesting the House to take all necessary action to stop the closure of the Holland Park Courthouse which would result in the removal of important services for the local community such as the JPs in the Community Program [[1313](#)].

Housing Tenants, Services

Mrs Miller, from 781 petitioners, requesting the House to compel the LNP Queensland Government to reinstate full funding to the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service, Queensland Tenants Union, Caravan and Manufactured Home Residents Association of Queensland Inc and the many other services that provide frontline advocacy for housing tenants [\[1314\]](#).

Old Gympie Road and Peachester Road, Intersection

Hon McArdle, 171 petitioners, requesting the House to review the intersection at the corner of Beerwah State School, Old Gympie Road and Peachester Road and immediately install traffic signals, a school pedestrian crossing and upgrade the intersection to cater for increased traffic [\[1315\]](#).

Labour Day Public Holiday

Ms Palaszczuk, 2,274 petitioners, requesting the House to keep the Labour Day public holiday in May [\[1316\]](#).

Townsville Biosecurity Unit

Mr Knuth, from 655 petitioners, requesting the House to retain the Townsville Biosecurity Unit (Tropical and Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory) and continue the service at a premises suitable to the requirements of this vital work [\[1317\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4)—

Carbrook, 559 Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road

35 petitioners, requesting the House to make the entrance to 559 Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road, Carbrook safer for all road users by adding road safety devices including turning lanes at this site [\[1318\]](#).

Firearm Legislation Review

402 petitioners, requesting the House to amend current State firearms law at the next firearms legislation review [\[1319\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

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

17 September 2012—

- [1080](#) Letter, dated 10 September 2012, from the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties to the Speaker, regarding a report tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament, Report No. 129: Treaties tabled on 19 and 26 June 2012
- [1081](#) Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia—Joint Standing Committee on Treaties: Report 129: Treaties tabled on 19 and 26 June 2012
- [1082](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 7—Report on Subordinate Legislation tabled between 20 June and 21 August 2012
- [1083](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 8—Annual Report 2011-2012
- [1084](#) QLeave: Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1085](#) President of the Industrial Court of Queensland (in respect of the Industrial Court of Queensland, Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and Queensland Industrial Registry)—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1086](#) Legal Aid Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1087](#) Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1088](#) Legal Practitioners Admission Board—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1089](#) Crime and Misconduct Commission—Annual Report 2011-12

20 September 2012—

- [1090](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Springborg) to a paper petition (1959-12) and an ePetition (1914-12) presented by Mr Bennett, from 584 and 441 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to reverse the requirement that the Bundaberg Regional Council add fluoride to its potable water supply
- [1091](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (1955-12) and an ePetition (1882-12) presented by Mr Wellington, from 19 and 206 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to revise the timetable currently set for the 2026-2031 rail duplication works from Beerburrum to Nambour and to resume the project as a matter of high priority
- [1092](#) The Public Trustee—Annual Report 2011-12

21 September 2012—

- [1093](#) Response from the Acting Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts (Dr Flegg) to a paper petition (1960-12) and an ePetition (1927-12) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and 119(4), from 486 and 548 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to direct Optus to not plan to install mobile phone antennas at 63 Kintyre Street, Brookfield
- [1094](#) Response from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade (Mr Nicholls) to a paper petition (1958-12) presented by Mr Curtis, from 2,481 petitioners, requesting the House to take all practical steps to support and encourage a strong and comprehensive finance industry in Queensland by ensuring jobs are not sent offshore to third party providers
- [1095](#) Brisbane Port Holdings Pty Ltd—Consolidated financial report for the year ended 30 June 2012
- [1096](#) DBCT Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial report for the year ended 30 June 2012
- [1097](#) Queensland Lottery Corporation Pty Ltd—Financial report for the year ended 30 June 2012

- [1098](#) Queensland Treasury Holdings Pty Ltd—Consolidated financial report for the year ended 30 June 2012
- [1099](#) Motor Accident Insurance Commission—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1100](#) Queensland Competition Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1101](#) Queensland Future Growth Corporation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1102](#) QIC—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1103](#) QIC—Annual financial statements and directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2012
- [1104](#) QIC—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1105](#) Queensland Treasury Corporation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1106](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works (Mr Flegg) to a paper petition (1948-12) presented by Mr Wellington, from 22 petitioners, requesting the House to request the House to stop the sale of the Monte Carlo Caravan Park at Cannon Hill, Woombye Gardens Caravan Park at Woombye and the Lazy Acres Caravan Park at Torquay
- [1107](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to two paper petitions (1953-12 and 1952-12) presented by Mrs Menkens, from 1,416 and 58 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to establish a Department of Transport and Main Roads office situated in the vicinity of Ayr/Home Hill
- [1108](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to a paper petition (1954-12) presented by Mr Knuth, from 95 petitioners, requesting the House to amend s.34 of the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 and allow a by-election for the Tablelands Regional Council Division 6
- 24 September 2012—
- [1109](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (1961-12) presented by Mr Woodforth, from 584 petitioners, requesting the House to work with TransLink to ensure the installation of a GoCard machine at Nextra Express newsagency at Chermiside
- [1110](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to an ePetition (1923-12) sponsored by Mr Kempton, from 149 petitioners, requesting the House to conduct a referendum on the de-amalgamation of the former Mareeba Shire from the current amalgamated Atherton Tablelands Council
- [1111](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to an ePetition (1935-12) sponsored by Mr Hopper, from 36 petitioners, requesting the House to de-amalgamate from Western Downs Regional Council by the creation of two distinct areas based on the townships of Dalby and Chinchilla
- [1112](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to an ePetition (1932-12) sponsored by Mr Driscoll, from 191 petitioners, requesting the House to conduct a referendum on the proposal to de-amalgamate the former Redcliffe City Council from the current amalgamated local government area known as Moreton Bay Regional Council
- [1113](#) Surveyors Board Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1114](#) Valuers Registration Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- 25 September 2012—
- [1115](#) WorkCover Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1116](#) Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1117](#) Queensland Ombudsman—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1118](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Regulation 2000
- [1119](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Nature Conservation (Dugong) Conservation Plan 1999
- [1120](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Conservation Plan 2000
- [1121](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Nature Conservation (Whales and Dolphins) Conservation Plan 1997
- [1122](#) Response from the Minister Housing and Public Works (Dr Flegg) to an ePetition (1943-12) sponsored by Mrs Miller, from 191 petitioners, requesting the House to stop the sale of the Monte Carlo Caravan Park, Woombye Gardens Caravan Park and Lazy Acres Caravan Park
- [1123](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Police and Community Safety (Mr Dempsey), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Police Powers and Responsibilities Regulation 2000, Police Service Administration Regulation 1990, Police Service Administration (Review of Decisions) Regulation 1990, Police Service (Discipline) Regulations 1990, Police Service (Ranks) Regulation 1991, Prostitution Regulation 2000 and the Weapons Regulation 1996
- 26 September 2012—
- [1124](#) Queensland Ombudsman—Report, dated September 2012, titled 'The Underground Coal Gasification Report—An investigation into the approval and oversight of the Kingaroy underground coal gasification project'
- [1125](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Mr McVeigh), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Agriculture Standards Regulation 1997, Apiaries Regulation 1998, Diseases in Timber Regulation 1997, Exotic Diseases in Animals Regulation 1998, Plant Protection Regulation 2002, Stock Regulation 1988, Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Regulation 1998, Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Regulation 1999 and the Veterinary Surgeons Regulation 2000
- [1126](#) Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1127](#) Dental Technicians Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12

- [1128](#) Speech Pathologists Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1129](#) Ipswich Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1130](#) The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1131](#) Bundaberg Health Services Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1132](#) Parklands Gold Coast—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1133](#) Mt Gravatt Showgrounds Trust—Annual Report—1 May 2011-30 April 2012
- [1134](#) National Trust of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- 27 September 2012—
- [1135](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (Mr Langbroek), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Education (Overseas Students) Regulation 1998
- [1136](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (Mr Langbroek), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Regulation 2000
- 28 September 2012—
- [1137](#) SunWater Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1138](#) SunWater Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1139](#) Energex Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1140](#) Energex Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1141](#) Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1142](#) Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Financial Statements 2011-12
- [1143](#) Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Subsidiary Financial Statements 2011-12
- [1144](#) Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1145](#) PowerLink Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1146](#) PowerLink Queensland—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1147](#) Stanwell Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1148](#) Stanwell Corporation Limited—Amended Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1149](#) CS Energy Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1150](#) CS Energy Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1151](#) Energy and Water Ombudsman—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1152](#) Queensland Urban Utilities—Annual Report 211-12
- [1153](#) Gladstone Area Water Board—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1154](#) Mount Isa Water Board—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1155](#) Seqwater: Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1156](#) LinkWater: Queensland Bulk Water Transport Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1157](#) SEQ Water Grid Manager—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1158](#) Unitywater: Northern SEQ Distributor-Retailer Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1159](#) Queensland Water Commission—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1160](#) Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1161](#) Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services: 2010-11 Child Protection Partnerships Report—Annual report on the operations of Queensland Government agencies relevant to child protection
- [1162](#) Department of Community Safety—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1163](#) Queensland Parliamentary Service—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1164](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1165](#) Stadiums Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1166](#) Gold Coast Institute of TAFE—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1167](#) Southbank Institute of Technology—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1168](#) Queensland Studies Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1169](#) Training and Employment Recognition Council: Final Report—1 July 2011 to 28 June 2012
- [1170](#) Non-State Schools Accreditation Board—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1171](#) Department of Education, Training and Employment—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1172](#) Office of the Training Ombudsman—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1173](#) Skills Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1174](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Health (Mr Springborg), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996, Health Regulation 1996, Private Health Facilities Regulation 2000 and the Private Health Facilities (Standards) Notice 2000
- [1175](#) Health Quality and Complaints Commission—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1176](#) Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland: Final Report 2011-12

- [1177](#) Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1178](#) Queensland Institute of Medical Research—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1179](#) Toowoomba Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1180](#) Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1181](#) Children's Health Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1182](#) Children's Health Foundation—Financial Statements for the period 10 November 2011 to 30 June 2012
- [1183](#) Gold Coast Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1184](#) Public Service Commission—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1185](#) Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1186](#) Queensland Audit Office—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1187](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 9—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1188](#) Office of the Governor—Annual Report 2011-12

2 October 2012—

- [1189](#) Medical Radiation Technologists Board of Queensland—Final Annual Report 2011-12
- [1190](#) Sunshine Coast Health Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1191](#) Redcliffe Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1192](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) to an ePetition (1962-12) and a paper petition (1976-12) presented by Mr Watts, from 1,751 and 1,156 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to refuse the LA Showgirls Application for a liquor licence, approved extended trading hours and an annual adult entertainment permit at Ground Floor, 368 Ruthven Street (Cnr Russell Street), Toowoomba
- [1193](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney) to a paper petition (1970-12) presented by Mr Dowling, from 53 petitioners, requesting the House to reconsider including the Worthing Road Precinct, located in Victoria Point, within the Urban Footprint of Redland City Council when reviewing the Redland Planning Scheme
- [1194](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Annual Report 2011-12, Volume 1
- [1195](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Annual Report 2011-12, Volume 2
- [1196](#) TransLink Transit Authority and TransLink Transit Authority Employing Office—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1197](#) Ports North: Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1198](#) Ports North: Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1199](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1200](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1201](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1202](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1203](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Employment and Industrial Relations Plan 2011-12
- [1204](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1205](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12
- [1206](#) Queensland Rail Limited—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1207](#) Queensland Rail Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2011-12

3 October 2012—

- [1208](#) Response from the Minister National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (Mr Dickson) to an ePetition (1963-12) sponsored by Mr Hart, from 282 petitioners, requesting the House to cancel the current tender for the catering at Tallebudgera Active Recreation Centre

4 October 2012—

- [1209](#) Professional Standards Councils—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1210](#) Professional Standards Councils—Financial Statements 2011-12
- [1211](#) Report by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney), pursuant to s 424 of the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, in relation to a Call In of a development application by Ridong (Gold Coast) Development Pty Ltd at 36-44 Old Burleigh Road, Surfers Paradise (the Jewel development) [Folder 6 of 6]: Erratum

10 October 2012—

- [1212](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to an ePetition (1947-12) sponsored by Mr Springborg, from 40 petitioners, requesting the House to ask the Minister for Local Government to refer the request to de-amalgamate Stanthorpe Shire to the Queensland Boundaries Commissioner for review and analysis
- [1213](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to an ePetition (1949-12) sponsored by Mr Springborg, from 6 petitioners, requesting the House to ask the Minister for Local Government to refer the request to de-amalgamate Warwick Shire to the Queensland Boundaries Commissioner for review and analysis
- [1214](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government (Mr Crisafulli) to a paper petition (1979-12) presented by Mr Young, from 92 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the need to install levee banks on Charles and Morris Streets, Yeppoon to protect residents and businesses adjacent to Fig Tree Creek and to carry out excavation of the main channel
- [1215](#) Response from the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Mr McVeigh) to a paper petition (1969-12) presented by Mr Kaye, from 334 petitioners, requesting the House to rescind all legislation which controls carp fishing in Queensland waterways and to allow non-invasive methods of fishing; and align the legislation with the legislation in New South Wales and Victoria

11 October 2012—

- [1216](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) to a paper petition (1971-12) presented by Mr Knuth, from 258 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the management and administration of the Biddi Biddi Community Advancement Co-operative Limited, Atherton
- [1217](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (1967-12) and an e-petition (1920-12) presented by Mr Ruthenberg from 1,530 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the Moreton Bay Rail Link project team work in partnership with local wildlife rescue organisations, research institutions and other relevant government bodies to minimise the impact to local wildlife populations during construction of the rail link
- [1218](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works (Dr Flegg) to a paper petition (1972-12) presented by Ms Miller, from 533 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately stop the planned closure of the Department of Housing office at 212 Bay Terrace, Wynnum
- [1219](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works (Mr Flegg) to a paper petition (1973-12) presented by Ms Palaszczuk, from 38 petitioners, requesting the House to guarantee that no tenants will be disadvantaged by the changes to public housing; rent rises will not place further pressure on families and individuals already struggling to pay bills; individuals and families living in the dwellings identified as under-occupied be allocated a suitable roof over their heads in the same community where they choose to live now; and that the changes will not result in the use of private-sector management of public housing

12 October 2012—

- [1220](#) Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health: Queensland Mines Inspectorate—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1221](#) Transmax Pty Ltd: General Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2012
- [1222](#) Response from the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (Mr Langbroek) to a paper petition (1974-12) and an ePetition (1931-12) presented by Ms Palaszczuk, from 7,207 petitioners, requesting the House to compel the government to continue its support and fully fund "Fanfare" and "MOST" music projects to ensure Queensland children have the best opportunity to excel in music if they desire

15 October 2012—

- [1223](#) Local Government Infrastructure Services Pty Ltd: Financial report for the year ended 30 June 2012
- [1224](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, sport and Racing (Mr Dickson) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Forestry Regulation 1998
- [1225](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Training (Mr Langbroek) to a paper petition (1980-12) presented by Mr Powell, from 152 petitioners, requesting the House to keep the Acting Principal of Maleny State School, Mr Adam Vlieg, as a permanent arrangement

16 October 2012—

- [1226](#) Final Report—Rail Safety Investigation—TMR 4292: Child passenger falls from 'Sunlander' train service, 21 December 2011

17 October 2012—

- [1227](#) Queensland Audit Office—Annual Report 2011-12: Erratum

18 October 2012—

- [1228](#) Queensland Law Society—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1229](#) Response from the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (Ms Davis) to three paper petitions (1968-12, 1977-12 and 1978-12) and an ePetition (1937-12) presented by Mrs Scott and sponsored by the Clerk from 8,285 petitioners, requesting the House to commit to funding Queensland's share of a National Disability Insurance Scheme in the interests of people with disability, their families and carers in Queensland

22 October 2012—

- [1230](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 6—Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012
- [1231](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 7—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1232](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 8—Inquiry into the Motorcycle Licensing Process in Queensland 2012
- [1233](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 8—Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

23 October 2012—

- [1234](#) Safe Food Production Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1235](#) QRAA—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1236](#) Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1237](#) Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1238](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 9—Multicultural Recognition Bill 2012
- [1239](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 9—Multicultural Recognition Bill 2012: Submissions received in relation to the inquiry
- [1240](#) Chicken Meat Industry Committee—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1241](#) Electoral Commission of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12

24 October 2012—

- [1242](#) Report to Members of Parliament regarding Breach of Media Access Conditions from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Ms Simpson), dated 24 October 2012
- [1243](#) Letter dated 24 October 2012, from the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) to the President of the Parliamentary Media Gallery (Mr Patrick Condren), regarding breach of media access conditions

- [1244](#) Letter dated 24 October 2012, from the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) to the Channel 10 Political Correspondent (Ms Cathy Border), regarding breach of media access conditions
- [1245](#) Letter dated 24 October 2012, from the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) to the Channel 9 Political Correspondent (Mr Spencer Jolly), regarding breach of media access conditions
- [1246](#) Letter dated 24 October 2012, from the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) to the Channel 7 Political Correspondent (Mr Patrick Condren), regarding breach of media access conditions
- [1247](#) Letter dated 24 October 2012, from the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) to the ABC Political Correspondent (Mr Chris O'Brien), regarding breach of media access conditions
- [1248](#) Letter dated 24 October 2012, from the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) to the Managing Editor Brisbane Times (Mr Simon Holt), regarding breach of media access conditions
- [1249](#) Media release dated 24 October 2012 by the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson) titled 'Peeping Cameras Issued with Show Cause'
- [1250](#) Document titled 'Media access to Parliamentary Precinct and the Legislative Assembly Chamber'
- [1251](#) Queensland Police Service—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1252](#) Queensland Police Service—Annual Statistical Review 2011-12
- [1253](#) Queensland's Category 2 Water Authorities—Summary of Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2011-12
- [1254](#) Queensland's River Improvement Trusts—Summary of Annual Reports and Financial Statements 2011-12
- [1255](#) Board of Examiners (Statutory certificates of competency for safe mine management)—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1256](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1257](#) Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1258](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Coal Mining Safety and Health Regulation 2001
- [1259](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Regulation 2001
- [1260](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the River Improvement Trust Regulation 1998
- [1261](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Soil Conservation Regulation 1998
- [1262](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Water Resource (Boyne River Basin) Plan 2000
- [1263](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Mr Cripps) pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Water Resource (Burnett Basin) Plan 2000
- 25 October 2012—
- [1264](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 11—Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2012
- [1265](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 11—Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2012: Submissions received in relation to the inquiry
- [1266](#) Queensland Health—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1267](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 10—Disability Services (Your Life Your Choice) Amendment Bill 2012
- [1268](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 10—Disability Services (Your Life Your Choice) Amendment Bill 2012: Submissions received in relation to the inquiry
- 26 October 2012—
- [1269](#) Board of Architects of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1270](#) Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1271](#) Department of Housing and Public Works—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1272](#) Building Services Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1273](#) Building and Construction Industry Payments Agency—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1274](#) Residential Tenancies Authority—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1275](#) Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1276](#) Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Financial Statements 2011-12
- [1277](#) Board of Trustees of Newstead House—Financial Statements 2011-12
- 29 October 2012—
- [1278](#) Department of the Premier and Cabinet—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1279](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 9—Surat Basin Rail (Infrastructure Development and Management) Bill 2012
- [1280](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 11—2012-13 Budget Estimates
- [1281](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1282](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 9—2012-13 Budget Estimates
- [1283](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1284](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 10—2012-13 Budget Estimates
- [1285](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information

- [1286](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 21—2012-13 Budget Estimates
- [1287](#) Finance and Administration Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1288](#) Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions—Annual Report 2011-12
- [1289](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 10—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Bill 2012
- [1290](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 10—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Bill 2012: Submissions received in relation to the inquiry
- [1291](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 10—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Bill 2012: Documents tabled at the hearing dated 18 October 2012
- [1292](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 11—2012-13 Budget Estimates
- [1293](#) Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1294](#) Health and Community Safety Services Committee: Report No. 12—2012-13 Budget Estimates
- [1295](#) Health and Community Safety Services Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1296](#) Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 5—Consideration of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2012
- [1297](#) Committee of the Legislative Assembly: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1298](#) Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 10—Consideration of 2012-13 Portfolio Budget Estimates
- [1299](#) Education and Innovation Committee: 2012-13 Budget Estimates: Volume of Additional Information
- [1300](#) Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 11—Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2012
- [1301](#) Department of Energy and Water Supply—Annual Report 2011-12

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Public Service Act 2008—

- [1320](#) Public Service Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 156
- [1321](#) Public Service Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 156, Explanatory Notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

- [1322](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 157
- [1323](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 157, Explanatory Notes

Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012—

- [1324](#) Domestic and Family Violence Protection Regulation 2012, No. 158
- [1325](#) Domestic and Family Violence Protection Regulation 2012, No. 158, Explanatory Notes

Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

- [1326](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 159
- [1327](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 159, Explanatory Notes

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994—

- [1328](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 160
- [1329](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 160, Explanatory Notes

Brands Act 1915—

- [1330](#) Brands Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 161
- [1331](#) Brands Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 161, Explanatory Notes

Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988—

- [1332](#) Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 162
- [1333](#) Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 162, Explanatory Notes

Fisheries Act 1994—

- [1334](#) Fisheries Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 163
- [1335](#) Fisheries Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 163, Explanatory Notes

Plant Protection Act 1989—

- [1336](#) Plant Protection (Approved Sugarcane Varieties) Amendment Declaration (No. 1) 2012, No. 164
- [1337](#) Plant Protection (Approved Sugarcane Varieties) Amendment Declaration (No. 1) 2012, No. 164, Explanatory Notes

Gaming Machine Act 1991—

- [1338](#) Gaming Machine Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 165
- [1339](#) Gaming Machine Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 165, Explanatory Notes

Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991—

- [1340](#) Queensland Building Services Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 166
- [1341](#) Queensland Building Services Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 166, Explanatory Notes

Building Act 1975, Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[1342](#) Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 167

[1343](#) Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 167, Explanatory Notes

South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009—

[1344](#) South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Legislation Repeal Regulation 2012, No. 168

[1345](#) South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Legislation Repeal Regulation 2012, No. 168, Explanatory Notes

Mineral Resources Act 1989, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999—

[1346](#) Resources Legislation and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 169

[1347](#) Resources Legislation and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 169, Explanatory Notes

Education and Training Legislation Amendment Act 2011—

[1348](#) Education and Training Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2012, No. 170

[1349](#) Education and Training Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2012, No. 170, Explanatory Notes

Food Production (Safety) Act 2000—

[1350](#) Food Production (Safety) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 171

[1351](#) Food Production (Safety) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 171, Explanatory Notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1352](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Amendment Conservation Plan (No. 1) 2012, No. 172

[1353](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Amendment Conservation Plan (No. 1) 2012, No. 172, Explanatory Notes

Aboriginal Land Act 1991—

[1354](#) Aboriginal Land Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, No. 173

[1355](#) Aboriginal Land Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, No. 173, Explanatory Notes

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[1356](#) Transport and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 174

[1357](#) Transport and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 174, Explanatory Notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012—

[1358](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 175

[1359](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 175, Explanatory Notes

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994—

[1360](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 7) 2012, No. 176

[1361](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 7) 2012, No. 176, Explanatory Notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1362](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, No. 177

[1363](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, No. 177, Explanatory Notes

Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007—

[1364](#) Urban Land Development Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 178

[1365](#) Urban Land Development Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 178, Explanatory Notes

Transport Infrastructure Act 1994—

[1366](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 179

[1367](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 179, Explanatory Notes

Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011—

[1368](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 180

[1369](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 180, Explanatory Notes

Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Act 2012—

[1370](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 181

[1371](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 181, Explanatory Notes

Mineral Resources Act 1989—

[1372](#) Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, No. 182

[1373](#) Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, No. 182, Explanatory Notes

Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011—

[1374](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling (Postponement) Regulation 2012, No. 183

[1375](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling (Postponement) Regulation 2012, No. 183, Explanatory Notes

Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990—

[1376](#) Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 184

[1377](#) Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 184, Explanatory Notes

Public Trustee Act 1978—

[1378](#) Public Trustee Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 2012, No. 185

[1379](#) Public Trustee Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 2012, No. 185, Explanatory Notes

Building Act 1975, Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[1380](#) Building and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 186

[1381](#) Building and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 186, Explanatory Notes

Weapons Act 1990—

[1382](#) Weapons Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 187

[1383](#) Weapons Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 187, Explanatory Notes

Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, Land Act 1994, Land Title Act 1994, Water Act 2000—

[1384](#) Land Title and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 188

[1385](#) Land Title and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 188, Explanatory Notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1386](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 189

[1387](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2012, No. 189, Explanatory Notes

Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2011—

[1388](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 190

[1389](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 190, Explanatory Notes

Electrical Safety Act 2002—

[1390](#) Electrical Safety Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 191

[1391](#) Electrical Safety Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2012, No. 191, Explanatory Notes

MEMBERS' PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Cleveland (Dr Robinson)—

[1392](#) Overseas travel report—Report on an overseas visit by the Deputy Speaker (Dr Robinson) to Colombo, Sri Lanka on 7—15 September 2012—Report to the Queensland Parliament on the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference & Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Meetings, Colombo, Sri Lanka on 7—15 September 2012

Member for Lockyer (Mr Rickuss)—

[1393](#) Non-conforming petition regarding Willowbank bus services

Member for Ipswich West (Mr Choat)—

[1394](#) Non-conforming petition regarding TransLink Service 529

NUTTALL, MR GR

 **The CLERK:** Honourable members, I advise that on 12 May 2011 the Legislative Assembly of the 53rd Parliament found Mr Gordon Nuttall guilty of 41 instances of contempt and ordered that Mr Nuttall be fined \$2,000 on each count and that the sum be paid within 12 months of 12 May 2011.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Ethics Committee, I advise that I have received from the Public Trustee, acting on behalf of Mr Nuttall, the sum of \$16,000 as a pro rata payment from the proceeds of Mr Nuttall's assets. The Public Trustee has advised that once settlement of other sales has been effected further payments will be considered.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Death of Soldier in Afghanistan, Motion to Take Note

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.42 am): It is with much regret and sadness that I rise to acknowledge in the House the recent death on active service of Corporal Scott James Smith on operations in Afghanistan on 21 October 2012. Corporal Smith was serving with the Special Operations Task Group when an improvised explosive device detonated during a clearance operation in southern Afghanistan.

Corporal Smith was born in the Barossa Valley, South Australia, in 1988 and is survived by his partner, Liv, his parents, Katrina Paterson and Murray Smith, and his sister, Roxanne. Corporal Smith was from the Special Operations Engineer Regiment based at Holsworthy Barracks in Sydney, having joined the Army in 2006. Corporal Smith's commanding officer has described Corporal Smith as an exceptional soldier who will be remembered as genuine, honest and dedicated.

Following the death of this fine young Australian, 39 members of the Australian Defence Force have tragically lost their lives in Afghanistan since 2002. This is again a terrible reminder to all Australians of the dangerous conditions our soldiers are operating under in Afghanistan.

On behalf of the House, I place on record our deepest regret for the death of Corporal Smith. I thank him and his family for his service to our nation. I also take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Corporal Smith's family and friends. I move—

1. That the House take note of the statement; and
2. That the House acknowledges agreement by observing one minute's silence as a mark of respect.

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.44 am): Early last week Australia awoke to terrible news that, unfortunately and tragically, is also becoming regrettably common. We were told that yet another Australian soldier had lost his life in the ongoing campaign to rebuild and give a new beginning to the country Afghanistan. Combat engineer Corporal Scott Smith was the 39th Australian soldier to die in Afghanistan and the seventh serviceman to lose his life this year. It is a sad fact that these fine young men have been killed while trying to make a big difference, while trying to take this country out of its dark past and equip it for a democratic future. As we confront that important mission, it is a tragedy that we continue to be confronted also by this terrible death toll.

Corporal Smith was remembered last week by his family and his colleagues as a dedicated soldier. He was described as someone everybody wanted as a mate. The 24-year-old highly respected man had amassed an impressive and enviable list of achievements through his tragically short life. For the benefit of the House I would like to place some of those achievements on record. Corporal Smith has been awarded honours and awards including the Australian Active Service Medal with clasp International Coalition Against Terrorism, the Afghan Campaign Medal, the Australian Service Medal with clasp Solomons 2, the Australian Defence Medal and the Army Soldiers Medallion. During Corporal Smith's service in the Australian Army he was deployed on several operations, including Operation Slipper in Afghanistan in February 2010 and Operation Norwich in Australia in November 2011.

My heart, and those of my opposition colleagues, goes out to Corporal Smith's family and the families of those 38 additional soldiers killed in their bid to restore this country. May God rest their souls.

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, will you show your agreement to the motion by rising for a minute's silence.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

Accountability and Transparency in Government

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.47 am): I rise to update the House on measures the government has taken to deliver on our election commitment of restoring accountable and transparent government in Queensland. We have already put ministers clearly in charge of their departments and set high standards for performance. We made lying to parliament illegal again. We published our election commitments and we are reporting to the community every six months. We are also releasing unprecedented information on hospital waiting lists. We are releasing crime statistics and flood maps. And there is more to come.

On 1 August 2012 I informed the House about the release of a draft Ministerial Code of Conduct which was provided to me by the Integrity Commissioner for a two-week period of consultation. I am pleased to advise the House that the submissions received by the government supported the draft code. All feedback on the draft code was provided to the Integrity Commissioner for review. The Integrity Commissioner then recommended a number of changes be incorporated into the final code, including that ministers and assistant ministers are not only required to advise the Premier if they have a conflict of interest but also required to advise how the conflict of interest will be managed. The Integrity Commissioner supports the finalised Ministerial Code of Conduct, which I now table.

Tabled paper: Ministerial Code of Conduct [[1395](#)].

The code provides an effective framework to hold ministers and assistant ministers to account and ensure their conduct continues to meet public expectations, and I commend it to the House. I also record my thanks to the Integrity Commissioner, Dr David Solomon AM, for his assistance in drafting and finalising the new code and also of course the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie.

Pursuant to section 1.3.1 of the *Members' Entitlements Handbook*, I lay upon the table of the House the annual report of the travel benefits afforded to former members of the Legislative Assembly for 2011-12 and the annual report of the daily travelling allowance claims by members of the Legislative Assembly for 2011-12.

Tabled paper: Daily Travelling Allowance Claims by Members of the Legislative Assembly—Annual Report 2011-12 [1425].

Tabled paper: Travel Benefits Afforded Former Members of the Legislative Assembly—Annual Report 2011-12 [1396].

I also table the Ministerial Gifts Register for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012.

Tabled paper: Ministerial Gifts Register Reportable Gifts 1/7/2011—30/6/2012 [1397].

The register includes gifts received by the former government and those received by the current government. Some 55 reportable gifts were received during 2011-12, 23 gifts to the current government and 32 gifts to the former government. As has occurred in past years, the majority of the gifts received were either held by Ministerial Services or placed on display.

I wish to advise the House that on 11 October 2012 in accordance with the Constitution of Queensland 2001 Her Excellency the Governor, acting by and with the advice of the Executive Council, appointed Raymond Alexander Stevens MP as Assistant Minister to the Premier on e-government, and I table an extract from the *Government Gazette* of 12 October 2012 for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government Gazette No. 37 regarding appointment of the Assistant Minister to the Premier on e-government [1398].

I also wish to advise the House that the member for Mermaid Beach, in addition to his appointment as an assistant minister, also continues in his role as Manager of Government Business or, as he will always be to me, the Leader of the House.

I now want to update the House on Queensland's open data revolution. The people of Queensland are the owners of government information and through our commitment to open data we will make as much data as possible available to them. We are opening our books to all Queenslanders by releasing data in the best formats to allow the private sector to develop new solutions to Queenslanders' problems. As mentioned earlier, I have appointed the member for Mermaid Beach as the state's first assistant minister for e-government. The assistant minister will drive the open data agenda towards our vision of releasing all government data except for where it is confidential or commercial-in-confidence or subject to legal professional privilege. The bottom line is that everything that we possibly can release we will.

The government has set up a website—data.qld.gov.au—where already we have made the last 15 years of crime data available, as well as detailed information on Queensland's demographic, economic and social makeup. Today I announce that data on all current vehicle, trailer and motorcycle registrations across Queensland is now available. This information includes the age of vehicles, make and model, fuel type and suburb of registration. This data can be used in practical ways to benefit Queenslanders. For example, if there is a number of a certain type of car in and around a suburb, then the manufacturer or the dealers may choose to open a new service centre in that particular area. Our new data site also provides access to state road traffic counts, travel times, vehicle occupancy, origin destination and bikeway survey data from across the metropolitan, north coast and south coast regions. More and more data will be added over the coming weeks and months as we enter this exciting open data revolution—all part of our commitment to being an open and accountable government.

Uranium Mining

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.53 am): Australia has the world's largest reserves of uranium. Uranium exports could earn tens of billions of dollars in exports for our country over the next two decades, providing thousands of jobs across rural and regional areas. Global demand for this energy will create enormous opportunities for Queensland and rural communities in Queensland over the coming years. Queensland must not miss out on the opportunities for jobs and investment. That is why today I am announcing my government has established an implementation committee to look at what needs to be done to recommence uranium mining in Queensland. This implementation committee will be chaired by Central Highlands Councillor Paul Bell AM, who has just retired after eight years as President of the Local Government Association of Queensland. Councillor Bell has spent decades representing the mining communities of Central Queensland and he understands the importance of creating jobs and opportunities in the regions. Also serving on the Uranium Implementation Committee will be Noeline Ikin, CEO of the Northern Gulf Resource Management Group; Frances Hayter, environmental director from the Queensland Resources Council; Dr Geoff Garrett, the Queensland government Chief Scientist; Dan Hunt, Acting Director-General of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines; and I stress subject to final confirmation—this is not confirmed but we hope that he can be involved—Mr Warren Mundine, well-known Indigenous leader and Director of the Australian Uranium Association.

This morning I am also releasing the terms of reference of the Uranium Implementation Committee, and I table these now.

Tabled paper: Terms of reference, Uranium Implementation Committee, to advise on the recommencement of uranium mining in Queensland [1399].

These will also be available on the Department of Natural Resources and Mines website today. The committee has been asked to establish a framework for how a uranium mining and export industry can develop and operate in Queensland. This framework will ensure that uranium mining recommences in Queensland with world's best practice environmental and safety standards while also creating an attractive environment for investment. During its investigations between now and mid-March next year, I have asked the committee to examine and make recommendations on a range of issues, including how the uranium industry works in other states, regional and community development opportunities, safety and logistics issues, approval processes, rehabilitation and royalties. Uranium mining and its export is providing jobs, royalties and crucial regional development in other areas of Australia. The LNP government believes it is time that Queenslanders shared in these benefits as well. Under my LNP government, Queensland is once again open for business.

Health, Budget

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.56 am): This year's state Health budget has increased by about \$800 million or 7.4 per cent. Community concern about years of Labor Health mismanagement in Queensland is driving us to work hard to rebuild a health system that is functional and efficient. The LNP's increased financial commitment to Health this year is bigger than any other state or territory in absolute dollars and in percentages. Using accepted interstate comparison methods that include areas of health administered in Queensland by the Department of Communities, our total Health expenditure is up by 8.3 per cent. By comparison, New South Wales Health is up by 5.4 per cent, Victoria by five per cent, Western Australia by 8.2 per cent and South Australia by 1.8 per cent. At the same time, the Commonwealth's contribution to Health was set to grow far slower than in any other mainland jurisdiction at just 0.3 per cent. Last month it emerged that the Commonwealth was trying to claw back \$40 million from funding it allocated to Queensland Health for last financial year, and that was before Wayne Swan produced his midyear economic and financial statement and pulled the rug right out from under Queensland Health, taking away another \$342 million.

In this statement Mr Swan took Labor's record on health mismanagement in his home state to a new low. He cooked the books. His cuts rely on claims that the state's population fell by 35,000 people in a period where Treasury reports put growth at 80,000 new people in Queensland. A \$342 million loss over four years will have an impact greater than collapsing the state-run Queensland children's health network piece by piece. The West Moreton Health Service District, which includes 2,600 staff and five local hospitals, serves a catchment of more than 220,000 people. Mr Swan's cuts would be much the same as collapsing that network area by area over four years. Its one-year effect is like an instant, lasting closure of all Queensland Health activity on Cape York. Already Queensland's hospitals have had to accommodate more than half a billion dollars in the five-year period of unfunded costs of Labor's bungled Health payroll system. Six weeks after the LNP government provided Queensland Health with a budgetary increase greater than any other state in the Commonwealth, Wayne Swan has plundered Queensland hospitals of \$342 million. They have lost national healthcare reform funding worth \$63 million this year, increasing to \$95 million in 2015-16.

That is a cost to the system of about 84,500 normal births, 15,500 hip replacements or more than 112,000 tonsillectomies. Labor's Health payroll system was a bungle that produced a financial black hole. This attack by Mr Swan is deliberate, malicious, punitive and destructive for Queensland patients and their families. Yet we have not heard a peep from those members opposite. Indeed, we need to send a strong bipartisan message to Canberra that this is not acceptable and that this money should remain untouched for Queensland patients and their families.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Health, Commonwealth Funding

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.59 am), by leave: I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes—

1. Health services and front-line Health jobs are threatened by the Commonwealth government's midyear budget review that proposes to strip \$63 million from Queensland national healthcare reform funding in 2012-13 alone, with total funding reduced by at least \$341.8 million over four years; and
2. That the funding cut is in addition to a \$40 million cut from the 2011-12 national healthcare special purpose payments owed to Queensland.

And urgently calls on the Commonwealth government, including the Queensland based federal Treasurer, to reverse the Commonwealth's health funding cuts to the state of Queensland.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.00 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

- That, notwithstanding standing order 63(4), the Minister for Health be permitted to move the motion, notice of which was provided by the minister earlier today; and further
- That the House debate the motion for one hour between 12 pm and 1 pm today, with each member having 10 minutes to speak to the motion.

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (10.01 am): I rise to oppose the comments made by the Manager of Government Business. This government has so many opportunities to put its messages across. We listen to propaganda during ministerial statements each morning in this House.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr PITT: I hear the member for Hinchinbrook laughing. However, I wonder whether he is laughing at the content of some of the ministerial statements that have been brought forward.

This is another opportunity for this government to show that it is flexing its muscles in terms of its parliamentary numbers as opposed to anything else. Let us not forget why they are moving this motion: this is all about diverting attention away from its failings. When the heat is on they are under pressure and they are saying to everybody, 'We don't want you to look here; we want you to look over here.' This is all about smoke and mirrors by this government. The pressure is on. They know they are in a bind. They know they are wedged.

This is not the sort of thing that we expect in this parliament. They want to throw out convention. They want to throw out the fact that maybe people in Queensland have a different opinion on what this government is putting forward. They keep mistaking that fact. We acknowledge that they had a resounding election win. We acknowledge that. But they are essentially saying that in every decision they make and every time they open their mouths collectively they are correct. That is really the failing of this government. Arrogance has crept in so early in the piece. I really cannot stress enough that essentially they are throwing out the opportunity for the opposition to put forward alternative views. As we have seen time and time again, they are running roughshod over this parliament.

We do not support the motion moved by the Minister for Health and certainly not the comments just made by the Manager of Government Business. This is again another opportunity for the government to bully its way into this parliament to get out its message. It has a massive media machine that it can use as a government, yet it is using this opportunity in parliament to distract attention from the fact that it is in strife. It knows it has been caught with its hands in the cookie jar. This is all about it saying that it will be able to do whatever it likes in this place at any time. If that is the way it chooses to run it, we will be opposing it every step of the way.

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

AYES, 76—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Blejje, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gully, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Kaye, Kempton, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.12 am): I wish to advise the House that the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts will be absent from the House this week due to ill health. Minister Langbroek is Acting Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts during Minister Bates's absence.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr HOPPER** (Condamine—LNP) (10.12 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 12, Annual Report 2011-12, of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. This report outlines activities of the committee in the reporting year from its establishment on 18 May 2012 to 30 June 2012.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 12—Annual Report 2011-2012 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee [[1400](#)].

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND MISCONDUCT COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (10.13 am): I lay upon the table of the House the PCMC's 2011-12 annual report. The report outlines the work and activities of the committee during 2011-12, including its legislated three-yearly review of the Crime and Misconduct Commission. As chair of the committee for only a short time during the reporting period, I wish to acknowledge the valuable input made by the current and former members and staff of the committee, particularly the former chair of the PCMC, Dr Alex Douglas MP. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee: Report No. 88—Annual Report 2011-12 [[1401](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Aged Care

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (10.13 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House:

- Notes the Premier's statement that his government plans to exit the provision of aged-care services;
- Condemns the Newman government's actions creating uncertainty and anxiety over the future of nursing home beds at Eventide Home, Ashworth House, Cooolinda House and the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit in Brisbane;
- Notes the actions of the government have occurred without a mandate and without any consultation being undertaken by the health minister;
- Acknowledges the distress the health minister's actions are causing aged and frail residents, their families and staff; and
- Directs the health minister to halt all such closures of nursing beds or health facilities including the Wynnum Hospital without first facing meetings of residents, relatives, patients and staff at each facility to provide detailed explanations of the LNP government's actions and to commit to genuine consultations.

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order. That motion has far in excess of 250 words. The member is aware of that.

Madam SPEAKER: When the motion is tabled I will consider that. Question time will be completed at 11.15 am.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Department of Transport and Main Roads, Staff

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.15 am): My question is for the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Minister, was the departmental liaison officer assigned to the minister's office at an AO6 level known to him personally or professionally prior to commencing employment?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. In terms of the DLOs in the department, some I may have met personally previously. I did not know any of them professionally.

Department of Transport and Main Roads, Staff

Ms PALASZCZUK: My next question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister confirm that this AO6 officer is or has been a tenant of the minister's rental property at St Lucia?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. What we see here again—

Ms Palaszczuk: No. Answer the question.

Mr EMERSON: I am about to do that, Leader of the Opposition. What we see here is the kind of smear you see from the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party with no basis of fact and no truth to it. We are an open and accountable government. We tell the truth. We do the right thing as opposed to those over there. Let us not forget what we are seeing over there. This is the party that changed the law to protect Gordon Nuttall. They are the government that did that. And, of course, who was there at the time? Who voted for it? There is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; he voted to protect Gordon Nuttall. There is the member for Bundamba; she voted to protect Gordon Nuttall. That is the reality. That is what we see. Who did they protect? Gordon Nuttall. What did they do about Merri Rose? Let us not forget Merri Rose. Let us not forget Pat Purcell.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I rise to a point of order. The question clearly was about the AO6 officer. Has the AO6 officer been a tenant of the minister's rental property at St Lucia? It is a very simple question. A very simple answer is needed.

Madam SPEAKER: I call the minister and I ask the minister to stay relevant to the question.

Mr EMERSON: I have two minutes to go, so I will answer the question first. No. The answer is no, no, no, no, no, no. That is the reality of it. No and no. Sorry, Bill: no. No, no, no, no.

Now, let us get back to the previous government's record. We are an open and accountable government. We will do the right thing always. The Premier will do the right thing and I will do the right thing, as opposed to the Labor Party which protects its own always. It is the party that voted to change the law to protect Gordon Nuttall. I see the member for Bundamba shaking her head, because she knows who she voted for. She voted to protect Gordon Nuttall. The member for Woodridge protected Gordon Nuttall. She is a member of the party that protected Gordon Nuttall. They are all members of the party that protected Gordon Nuttall. They changed the law to protect Gordon Nuttall.

Mr Seeney: Recalled parliament.

Mr EMERSON: They recalled parliament; thank you, Deputy Premier. They try to smear people because they are ashamed of their own appalling record as a government.

Uranium Mining

Mr JOHNSON: My question is to the honourable Premier. Can the Premier explain to the House why he has decided to lift Labor's ban on uranium mining in Queensland?

Ms Trad: Shameful.

Mr JOHNSON: It is a good question, if I can say so.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for his question. The honourable member represents people from regional Queensland and he knows how important jobs and investment are to regional parts of this state. That is exactly why we have done this. This government believes that there is no earthly reason why we should not be creating jobs and investment in regional parts of the state and uranium mining offers that potential. There are tens of billions of dollars worth of uranium resources in the soil across Australia and it is believed that there is at least \$10 billion worth in Queensland. Of course, there is considerable potential for more to be discovered.

In June this year, the federal Labor resources minister, Martin Ferguson, called on us to reverse the ban. I thought, 'What's going on here?' People such as the member for South Brisbane, who is interjecting right now, say they are against it. Our Prime Minister may support it, but I did not know. So I wrote to the Prime Minister, asking whether it was the policy of the federal government. The Prime Minister wrote back to me. She indicated—and I will be happy to table the letter later on—that she fully supported a uranium mining industry in this nation and it was a matter for the Queensland government to change any policy that may exist.

What happened then? It is a matter of record. We did nothing until the Prime Minister went to India, I think around 19 October. After hearing the Prime Minister announce that she was going to sell uranium to India, we said 'What's going on?' We have the federal Labor resources minister, we have the Prime Minister, we have Tony McGrady, the former Labor mines minister. The Leader of the Opposition used to work as a senior policy adviser to Tony McGrady. We have Tony McGrady. Who else do we have? We have John Mickel and we had Anna Bligh back in 2010 backing a nuclear power industry debate in this nation.

Ms Trad: Rubbish.

Mr NEWMAN: I will table that one, as well. I know that at the time down in West End they would have been sitting there, the member for South Brisbane—

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock.

Ms TRAD: The Premier has referred to documents that he wishes to table. I ask that he table them now.

Madam SPEAKER: They will be tabled. We will ensure that.

Mr NEWMAN: I would be happy to do that. I may not have quite enough time to find them here in my little book. Here we go: it is an article from the *Australian* newspaper, dated 24 December 2010, titled 'Bligh opens door to N-power'. One can imagine the scene down in West End with the current member for South Brisbane and the former member for South Brisbane. Jackie says to Anna, 'Oh dear, Anna, what have you done?' I table the document.

Tabled paper: Newspaper article titled 'Bligh opens door to N-power' [1402].

Department of Transport and Main Roads, Staff

Mr MULHERIN: My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Is one of the AO6 departmental liaison officers employed by the minister's office actually located in his office?

Mr EMERSON: Yes, they are.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of a Committee

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.24 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The response by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to the question just asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition basically contradicts evidence that was given at the estimates committee by his director-general. In response to a question from me about the role of the DLOs in the department, Mr Caltabiano's response included, as part—

In brief, the DLO is the primary point of contact between the minister's office and TMR and is located within the Government Services Branch, Corporate Governance Division.

Mr LANGBROEK: I rise to a point of order. Madam Speaker, I ask for your guidance as to whether this is a matter of privilege suddenly arising. They are very narrow. If it is a matter something to do with the debate, it is a different issue.

Madam SPEAKER: Education minister, it is a matter suddenly arising, a privilege issue. I will hear the issue.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you. I then asked—

Are the DLOs based physically in your office or the minister's office?

Mr Caltabiano replied—

I again refer to the policy. The DLOs, under the policy, are located in the department.

Madam Speaker, I will be writing to you about this matter, asking for it to be immediately referred to the Ethics Committee. Once again, the minister sat next to the director-general at the estimates table and had every opportunity to correct the issue.

Madam SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are now debating the issue. I ask you to write to me about that matter and I will consider it.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed.

Regional Queensland

Mr SHORTEN: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier explain the importance of regional development and the need for ministers to travel to regional Queensland?

Mr SEENEY: Anybody who understands Queensland knows the importance of regional Queensland and the importance of regional development to the entire Queensland economy. Part of the parliament fulfilling its role of ensuring that regional Queensland develops is to encourage not just ministers but all members of this parliament to travel to regional Queensland, to understand the issues in regional Queensland, to go and talk to people about things like the wild rivers legislation, the vegetation management legislation and the road issues that beset regional Queensland. One of the few things that I always agreed with former Premier Beattie about was the encouragement he gave to his ministers and his members to travel to regional Queensland and to understand those issues.

Therefore, it has been something of a surprise that, since the former government became the opposition, they have reversed that position. The Leader of the Opposition has been at the forefront in criticising people for travelling to regional Queensland and incurring travel costs. I had a bit of a look at the travel records of the previous government when the Leader of the Opposition was a minister. I found a couple of notable examples. On 8 March 2012, the now Leader of the Opposition, as minister, took the government jet to Townsville, as ministers should do. She travelled to Townsville and back on the same day. She criticised me for using charter flights when there were eight flights a week available. On that particular day, there were eight separate flights to Townsville—eight there and eight back. It was not eight flights a week; it was eight flights a day. That illustrates their hypocrisy and the way their position changes from government to opposition.

Of course, the Leader of the Opposition should travel to regional Queensland. Of course, ministers of this government should travel to regional Queensland. Of course, every member of this parliament should travel the length and breadth of Queensland to understand the issues that affect all of Queensland. It is a responsibility of every member of this parliament. For the Leader of the Opposition to take a different position now than she had in government is gross hypocrisy. As a government, we will be open and accountable about this issue as we are accountable about every other issue. We will make these figures available, just as the Premier has done this morning, and we will ensure that regional Queensland is properly represented in this parliament.

Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Mr PITT: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister outline to the House how many meetings, briefings, dinners or lunches he has attended with Mr Santo Santoro since taking up the Transport and Main Roads portfolio in April?

Mr EMERSON: Can I thank the member for the question. We have seen a series of questions from Labor today, and I suspect we will see a series more from Labor today. They keep getting it wrong and wrong and wrong and wrong and wrong. None. The answer is zero. I will say it to you again—none. Keep asking the questions. The answer is none. Just keep going and putting it out there.

Let me say once more to my colleagues: who is the open and accountable government, who is the government that changes a law to protect their mates? That is the reality. Those opposite changed the law to protect their mates. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition voted to change the law to protect Gordon Nuttall. He voted to change the law.

While we are an open and accountable government that will do the right thing, what we see from Labor is a party that will change the law to protect their mates. They recalled parliament to change the law to protect their mates. That is what we see from Labor. That is their complete lack of credibility. They changed the law to protect Gordon Nuttall. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook

Mr KAYE: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please inform the House how changes detailed in the federal government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook will impact Queensland and the Newman government's positive plans for Queensland?

Mr NICHOLLS: It is a pleasure to have a question from the member for Greenslopes about economics and about the state of Queensland's finances. In short, member for Greenslopes, the answer to your question is that the federal government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook will have a substantially bad effect on Queensland. One has to wonder whether Mr Swan does in fact want to still reside in Queensland or move somewhere else given the impacts of his decisions.

The budget cuts that Mr Swan has so carelessly thrown out there will remove more than \$1.5 billion from Queensland over the forward estimates. That is \$1.5 billion as a result of Labor's mismanagement that Queensland will not receive over the forward estimates. It is indeed the ongoing saga of Labor—saying one thing and delivering another.

These cuts and accounting tricks, including those mentioned by my friend the Minister for Health—a supposed decline in Queensland's population of 35,000 since the beginning of the year; contrary to reality, Mr Swan believes that Queensland has fewer people in it this year than it did the year before or the year before or the year before so it will be interesting to see how those opposite reconcile that—means that we will see a funding cut of \$756 million for national partnership payments and specific purpose payments. That includes a \$400 million cut to the education department's budget as well as at least \$340 million—

Mr PITT: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Madam Speaker, I seek your guidance in terms of the Treasurer's comments. I believe that they relate to a motion currently before the House.

Madam SPEAKER: I will ask the Treasurer to please be aware of the motion before the House in this regard.

Mr NICHOLLS: Indeed. I was just simply outlining the \$340 million in cuts that the Minister for Health had indicated have been made to health.

This year alone the GST cuts to Queensland will mean that we receive \$58 million less than was forecast. Queensland now receives on a per capita basis \$180 million less than it should. That is why we are very strongly arguing the case for a fairer redistribution of GST funds to Queensland.

These cuts beg the question: does Mr Swan, who apparently claims to barrack for Queensland, who dresses up in the colours when a State of Origin game is being held at Lang Park, truly support Queensland or does he truly support a failed federal Labor government that cannot and will not be able to deliver a surplus. Everyone knows Labor's financial mismanagement left Queensland with a structural deficit—a debt of \$62 billion heading to \$100 billion.

More importantly, rather than Mr Swan answer the question about what he is doing for Queensland, we have not heard a word from those opposite in relation to cuts that have seen \$1.5 billion stripped from Queensland's revenue. Where are they? They are silent as always.

(Time expired)

Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts

Mrs MILLER: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier advise which member of the ministry advised the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts not to attend parliament this week? Since he signed off on the minister's leave, has the Premier held any discussions with this minister?

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker. The minister's absence from the House has been clearly enunciated earlier. Reflections on absences from the House—

Madam SPEAKER: I will ask the Leader of Government Business to resume his seat. Has the member finished her question?

Mrs MILLER: Yes, I have.

Madam SPEAKER: With respect to question time, I will not rule that out of order. That particular precedent normally applies to members when they are not present during debates. I will allow the question.

Mr NEWMAN: In relation to the absence of Minister Ros Bates, I wish to advise the House that the minister is indeed quite ill and has been recovering from significant surgery. For the benefit of all members and the information of all members, and with the permission of the minister, I will provide some significant detail this morning.

On 13 September the minister was admitted to Pindara Private Hospital and underwent laparoscopic and open shoulder surgery for a very serious case of septic arthritis and osteomyelitis of her right shoulder. Surgery included removal of over a third of the collarbone and part of the shoulderblade. At the same time, she had an intravenous catheter inserted into her arm and threaded into the largest vein in her heart for intensive high-dose antibiotic therapy for a period of at least six weeks. On 19 September she was discharged from hospital and received daily treatment, which included intravenous infusions and dressings, from the hospital in the home nursing team from Allamanda Private Hospital up until Thursday, 26 October 2012.

The minister was under the care of two specialists, an orthopaedic surgeon whom she continued to visit weekly up until Wednesday, 24 October—

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

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr PITT: A question was asked about the advice provided by a minister. We accept what is being offered by the Premier and we are concerned for Ms Bates wellbeing.

Opposition members interjected.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn members on my left and my right. That is not a point of order. I call the Premier to finish the answer.

Mr NEWMAN: When former member Jim Pearce was ill our side of politics treated him with dignity and respect. What I am doing today goes to the issue—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I am answering the question and this is important background. The minister was under the care of an orthopaedic surgeon until Wednesday, 24 October and remains under the care of a microbiology and infectious diseases specialist, who is treating a significant infection, for the next three months. She has weekly blood tests, remains on a further three-month course of oral antibiotics and has been referred to a specialist rheumatologist given the severity of the infection.

Since the operation and up until Thursday, 25 October the minister had an intravenous drip she carried on her shoulder. I table a photograph for the benefit and information of honourable members.

Tabled paper: Photo of Minister Bates [\[1403\]](#).

With the recent advent of nursing in the home—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: These people are shameful. The minister has been seriously ill. The Deputy Premier, the Treasurer, the Attorney-General and I have wanted her to take leave. She very professionally and stoically tried to continue on, but frankly her health has deteriorated and she is not recovering. It is appropriate she not be here.

(Time expired)

Mr STEVENS: I move—

That the Premier be further heard.

Madam SPEAKER: The question is that the Premier be further heard. Those of that opinion say aye.

Government members: Aye.

Madam SPEAKER: To the contrary no.

An opposition member: No.

Madam SPEAKER: The ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

Mr NEWMAN: Madam Speaker, I heard an interjection 'No'. What a shameful display from this opposition. I would have thought that after, sadly, cases in the last 10 to 15 years around this nation where people were put under significant pressure while having illnesses at the same time the Labor Party would have learnt. I would have thought that they would have, could have, shown some compassion. I have outlined that the minister is seriously ill and is recovering from that illness. The operation was on 13 September. It is the 30th of October today. I have outlined that she is under the care of specialists. I have outlined that she has tried to continue with her duties. I think she has done a very good job of trying to continue on with that, but it is the view of myself—

Mrs MILLER: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. We are all concerned in relation to this. My question was I want to know whether the Premier has contacted her.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Take your seat.

Mrs MILLER: I want to know whether you care about her.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundamba, take your seat.

Mrs MILLER: Have you rung her?

A government member: Crocodile tears.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I will ask for order in the House. I warn the member for Bundamba under standing order 253A. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: They ask the questions but really what it is about is making shameful political points. That is what they are about. The Manager of Opposition Business can shake his head like that. The bottom line is that the minister is ill and we want her to get better. She made a statement yesterday which is frankly as much as she should have been required to say, but I have further amplified that today.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: If they want to stop interjecting and listen I will again provide an answer. The Deputy Premier, the Treasurer, the Attorney-General and her other colleagues have been concerned about her health and numbers of people have talked to her at various times. They have talked to her at various times about her condition and particularly the Deputy Premier has been the one—I stress this: the Deputy Premier has been the one—who has been saying to her, 'Take some leave, Minister Bates,' and we totally support that. Finally, there are two investigations underway. If she is required to answer any questions, she will do so.

Eventide Aged Care Facility

Ms MILLARD: My question is to the Minister for Health. Is the minister aware of any plans by the former Labor government to sell the land from the Brighton Health Campus, formerly known as Eventide Aged Care Facility, at Sandgate whilst the member for Bundamba was the apprentice to Gordon Nuttall when she was the parliamentary secretary for health?

Mr PITT: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is my understanding that the question just asked by the member for Sandgate relates to a motion before the House in terms of the Eventide home. I ask for your guidance.

Madam SPEAKER: I am reading the motion before the House. The question referred to actions during the previous government and not to actions current. I call the Minister for Health. I will ask the Minister for Health in answering this not to impinge upon the motion before the House.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Sandgate for her question. Obviously the honourable member for Sandgate is very concerned about the residents of Eventide. Certainly we have seen the emotions and crocodile tears of the opposition in recent times. When I saw the proposition being put forward by the federal Treasurer, Mr Swan, and also the member for Bundamba recently, it caused me to go back to the recesses of my memory. I remembered an article in the *Sunday Mail* on 19 July 2009 which says, 'So just how broke are we really, Anna?' One of the facilities across Queensland

that they had earmarked for sale was, believe it or not, Eventide—Eventide. That prompted an outburst of concern from Labor's godfather and controlling man Bill Ludwig, who wrote to the then health minister, Paul Lucas, asking him to debunk those particular concerns and either rule it in or rule it out. The then health minister, Paul Lucas, wrote back to Bill Ludwig and said—

There is currently no plan to sell the Eventide facility. Although the facility is one which could be re-orientated to provide a different mix of services including sub-acute care, transition care and slow stream rehabilitation, rather than traditional nursing home care, these plans are yet to be finalised.

A little bit of deja vu—that is exactly what the Metro North Hospital and Health Board is doing.

Then I thought I might dig a little bit deeper and so I looked at the briefing notes and approvals by the infamous Gordon Nuttall. I went back as far as 24 May 2005, when Gordon Nuttall approved the partial sale of Eventide—2.1 hectares for \$3.2 million. But guess who was the apprentice to Gordon Nuttall at that time? Guess who the parliamentary secretary was? Guess who the assistant minister was who sat side by side in the office with Gordon Nuttall? It was the member for Bundamba. She was the parliamentary secretary who was sitting there with Gordon Nuttall when they approved that sale. Lo and behold, that sale and approval started on 24 May 2005, right in the middle of the honourable member's time as the assistant minister. There are only two people who can tell this parliament the truth about what happened—one is actually in jail; the other one sits over there. So let's hear no more hypocrisy from those members opposite.

(Time expired)

Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts

Ms TRAD: My question without notice is to the Premier. Premier, given your comprehensive detailing of the Minister for Science and the Arts' illness and recovery regime, will you advise the House why you are making this minister travel to Kingaroy, as per your press release released earlier today, for the royal visit and the Melbourne Cup?

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 30 October, titled 'Queensland Cabinet comes to Kingaroy' [1404].

Mr NEWMAN: Before I go directly to the answer, I was listening intently to the answer to the last question. I wonder whether Mr Nuttall got a commission on the sale—a secret commission—and whether the member for Bundamba knew anything about any of those secret commissions and whether she would have supported that. But I move on.

Ms Trad: You didn't think Lawrence answered that well enough.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NEWMAN: They ask the questions and they get so worked up. In relation to the visit to Kingaroy, why are we going to Kingaroy? Because we care about regional Queensland and those opposite do not care about regional Queensland. They ground regional Queensland down. They neglected regional Queensland. Look what the member for Mackay did under his so-called stewardship of the agricultural colleges. We know that the agricultural colleges were on a knife edge of financial viability. Minister McVeigh is trying to bail them out. We have a message—

Madam SPEAKER: Premier, I refer you to the question and ask you to stay relevant to the question.

Mrs Miller: What fascinator are you going to wear?

Mr NEWMAN: In relation to the Melbourne Cup—

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bundamba and any further interjections and she will be taking leave from this House. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: If we were Labor politicians what we would do is use taxpayer funds and fly the government jet to Melbourne and go to the Melbourne Cup and we would be in a corporate marquee drinking Veuve Clicquot and telling everybody how we were such hard workers for the poor and disadvantaged. We would be saying how egalitarian we were. People like Jim Soorley and other Labor identities always used to love going to the Melbourne Cup and being in those corporate marquees. That is what we would be doing if we were Labor politicians; but we are not. We are the LNP and we support both regional communities and the big city. That is why we are going to a fantastic local country race meeting—the Kumbia races.

In relation to the press release and this thing about the 19 ministers, well maybe someone made a mistake. Minister Bates will not be there, but I will say this: it is a great race meeting at Kumbia. I know the local community in Kingaroy will be very excited that not only is there a cabinet meeting in Kingaroy but we will also be attending the Kumbia races. Let us hope this year that the judges see fit to back the Deputy Premier. Perhaps this year, unlike last year, the Deputy Premier will win Fashions on the Field.

Teachers, Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

Dr DOUGLAS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. Can the minister please outline to the House the progress of the teachers' enterprise bargaining agreement and union support for greater school autonomy?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am aware of his great interest in the enterprise bargaining agreement that we have struck with the Queensland Teachers Union and the teachers whom they represent. Honourable members are aware of the difficult financial circumstances that we inherited. We have had a series of negotiations that culminated in an offer that has been accepted by the Queensland Teachers Union in the ballot yesterday following negotiations and compromise on both sides. We have been able to achieve a fair pay increase but also a responsible financial outcome as we seek the fiscal repair that the Premier and the Treasurer have been directing us to do as ministers.

The Premier and I had always assured the Queensland Teachers Union that class size targets would be maintained. In order to secure an agreement and end the months of uncertainty, we have kept this in the enterprise bargaining agreement. The agreement itself, though, in line with getting rid of red tape has been reduced by a number of pages—I am advised from over 30 pages down to about 15. We have also kept significant issues in the enterprise bargaining agreement like the Remote Area Incentive Scheme and beginning teachers pay. So there was compromise from the government and there was also compromise from the Queensland Teachers Union. The fair pay increase is 2.7 per cent that we have been able to give to the hardworking teachers of Queensland.

I can advise the result of the ballot of teachers yesterday in which 23,000 teachers voted. Ninety-five per cent of those teachers voted in favour of the agreement. It is also important to note that this occurred without strike action, which is the first time in six years that has happened. What it points out is that we have been able to work constructively and professionally to come to an agreement that union members supported. When Labor were in power at the last EB they could not avoid strike action, but we can. That shows what happens when you do not play games and when you simply seek proper outcomes. This is a win for parents, teachers and students across the state.

The other part of the honourable member's question was about the union's support for greater school autonomy, which is of course about support for greater autonomy through our policy of independent public schools. It is important to note that the Leader of the Opposition has been running around the state telling everyone who was prepared to listen that IPSs—independent public schools—were a bad thing. As we can see from yesterday's ballot, do teachers agree? The answer is no. Yesterday 91 per cent of teachers voted to support IPSs. The Queensland Teachers Union supports IPSs. I now challenge the opposition leader to stand up in this place and put on the record her support for IPSs as well. She is either in favour of school autonomy or she isn't.

Gladstone, Diabetic Educator

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. We thank the Premier for his visit to Gladstone last week during which concerns were raised about the reduction of the diabetic educator's position from five days to two days in Gladstone, with the five-day position going to Rockhampton. Will the minister review this decision with a view to reinstating the five-day-a-week position to Gladstone in light of our population growth?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for her question. The way we are running health services in Queensland now is different from the way the previous government ran health services in this state. What we have done—and there has been a degree of bipartisan agreement—is establish local area health networks, as they were to be under the previous government, or local hospital and health boards under the LNP in Queensland. Part of that is to give them the autonomy to take a budget which has been set for them and expend that budget in accordance with local priorities in their particular area.

In the case of the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, that is something which it is very much responsible for doing. Indeed, I think that is an important part of national health reform and it is an important part of being able to understand that we need to have a system which far better responds to what is needed locally and is able to address some of the outstanding issues which accrue in some parts of Queensland, and most notably in this case in Gladstone which the honourable member has a very long and genuine concern for.

I mentioned earlier today that the Queensland Health budget has grown larger in percentage and dollar terms than any other Health budget around Australia. At the same time, the Commonwealth's budget has gone up by 0.3 per cent. Ours has gone up by 7.4 per cent when you adjust it to include disability services in this state. The national standard is about 8.4 per cent, so it is a significant increase. Each and every hospital service around Queensland has been given an increase in their budget this year.

This is a matter for the health and hospital board. I am more than happy to ask for further details from the board. When the Premier visited Gladstone he indicated that it is a matter for the health and hospital board. One of the caveats that I would place on that to the honourable member for Gladstone is that we all know there are some significant issues with regard to the attraction of specialists and medicos to her fine city. A significant amount of work has been done by the board to try to attract a whole range of other specialists into that area. There has been some more success in recent times. There has been an overreliance of locums in Gladstone for a long time. I have said to that board and to the other boards collectively that is something we need to reduce. We need to rebuild morale in the city of Gladstone and the surrounding community to attract people so that we can provide the services which are necessary for that community.

Bruce Highway Action Plan

Mr COX: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister please outline the Newman government's Bruce Highway Action Plan? Is he aware of any alternative views?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the member for the question because I know he is determined to get the Bruce Highway improved. Last week I had the great pleasure of joining the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Local Government and the member for Townsville to launch the Out of the Crisis plan to get the Bruce Highway working and to make it safe. Six months earlier in Townsville the Premier and I announced the Bruce Highway Crisis Management Group and our technical advisory group to develop a 10-year plan to work out what needed to be done for the Bruce Highway. On this side of the House at least the LNP is determined to get the Bruce Highway safer, more flood proofed and deal with those capacity issues that we all face. As part of the Out of the Crisis plan, we detailed more than 50 projects in terms of safety, flood mitigation and capacity projects that can be done over the next 10 years.

Let me remind the House about our election commitment because it is very clear. We will put an extra billion dollars on the table over the next decade to make improvements to the Bruce Highway—

Mr Nicholls: That's locked and loaded.

Mr EMERSON: That is locked and loaded in the budget, as the Treasurer just said, but only if the federal government is willing to match that on the historic basis of 80-20. Colleagues would understand that this is a federal road. Historically it is funded 80-20 in terms of the split. When we were in Townsville—and members are most welcome to have a look at the document on our website—we detailed a whole series of projects that can be done. First were the base projects—the normal base funding that would come from the state government and the federal government. Then there were additional projects—that is, additional projects that could be done with additional funding, as long as we put in our billion dollars and the federal government puts its money in on an 80-20 split.

The concern that everyone in this House should have is that, if the federal government walks away from that 80-20 split, we will not be able to afford so many vital projects—they cannot be delivered. It worries me that I have heard mutterings from Canberra—from Michael Mrdak, the head of Anthony Albanese's department—saying that they are considering walking away from that historic split. I urge all Queenslanders and everyone here in the LNP to make sure the federal government does not do that and that it keeps to its historic split of 80-20. I have concerns, but of course I expect nothing from Labor. We all know what Labor's policy at a state level is regarding the Bruce Highway. They have said it: they believe state money spent on the Bruce Highway is a waste of money; it is misspending—what a shame—on a road on which the RACQ says 300 to 400 people will be killed over the next decade if it is not fixed.

(Time expired)

Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Has the minister this week received a letter from the legal firm Gilshenan and Luton?

Mr EMERSON: No.

Tourism Industry

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Can the minister please outline what, if any, effect there will be on the Queensland tourism market from the federal government's increase in visa charges?

Mrs STUCKEY: I thank the honourable member for his question and I note his advocacy in the Burleigh electorate for small business and tourism, which is considerable and important to us. These visa charge increases will see the federal government make yet another cash grab on vulnerable businesses. The Queensland government is working very hard to restore our tourism industry to No. 1,

recognising it as one of the four pillars of our economy. On the other hand, we have a federal government that is doing everything it possibly can to tear it down, just like state Labor did over the last two decades.

As part of the Commonwealth's minibudget the Treasurer, Wayne Swan, has revealed that visa fees will increase from \$280 to \$350, generating a \$520 million per annum cash cow for Labor. I say: shame! The rise applies to skilled graduates, partners, temporary workers and those on working holidays. What was \$180 in 2005 will become a \$360 cash grab from 1 January 2013. Many tourism operators fear that this cash grab will turn away backpackers and lead to a shortage of seasonal workers. It is yet another slap in the face from Labor for a struggling tourism industry that is already having trouble finding workers.

Our two biggest competitors for this working holiday market are Canada and New Zealand, and they charge less than \$150 for their visas. The visa charge increase is on top of Labor's increase in the passenger movement charge from \$47 to \$55 per person. The CEO of Gold Coast Tourism, Martin Winter, described the increase as a direct blow for the international youth travel and working holiday sector. He said—

Already Australia is challenged by a high dollar and high cost disadvantage ...

It is plainly damaging to have the Government actively raising that barrier.

John Lee from the Tourism and Transport Forum said—

We thought our pain was over this year, and obviously not. This was without consultation, and without any regard for the tenuous state that we find ourselves in with regard to international visitors.

Further comments have been made by Aquarius Backpacker Hostel owner Jo-Anne Wilkie, who said that she had spoken to guests at the hostel and they all said that, faced with those prices and options, they would not come to Australia. Every dollar taken by the government from visitors before they arrive is a dollar less that they can spend boosting tourism. Nothing good will come of this for our industry. Labor has never supported small business.

(Time expired)

Departmental of Transport and Main Roads, Staff

Mrs SCOTT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister provide details of the qualifications possessed by the departmental liaison officer employed at AO6 level in the minister's office, and will he provide this employee's CV?

Mr EMERSON: I do not employ the DLOs; that is a matter for the department. If the member writes to the department, they will deal with it. Let us be very clear: I do not employ DLOs. Let me be very clear as we go throughout the day: all we have seen today is the opposition dealing in rumours. Where do they get this stuff from? Do they see it on toilet walls? This is the kind of pathetic question that we have seen from Labor over and over again. They get it wrong every time and they do not know anything. We see this from the shadow minister for transport, whose only research is gained from tweets. That is all it is—tweets. That is what she bases all her research on. That is the level of intellectual bankruptcy that we see from Labor.

What a pathetic effort we have seen from Labor today. They get it wrong again and again in terms of the questions they are asking. They have no idea. All they want to do is run away from their own appalling history in relation to this. Labor members, who defended Gordon Nuttall and who changed the law for Gordon Nuttall, come in here today spreading rumours and asking questions that have no truth or accuracy to them. That is what we get from Labor. That is all we have seen today: a pathetic performance. You are better than that. You should be better than that, but today you have shown you are not.

Racing Industry

Mr HATHAWAY: My question without notice is to the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. I refer to the LNP government's effort to rejuvenate racing in the state of Queensland. Could the minister please detail to the House how the Newman government's plan for racing will ensure there is greater accountability, oversight and industry participation in the running of the sport? Is the minister aware of any threats to the government's reform agenda?

Mr DICKSON: I thank the member for Townsville for the question. The Newman government is delivering on its promise to rejuvenate racing in Queensland. We have listened to what the industry has told us is needed and, accordingly, these changes will give industry members a real say. This government is moving forward. The Newman government is ushering in a new era of inclusiveness for all industry members which was sorely lacking under the previous administration. These changes will put the 30,000-strong racing sector back in control, giving participants a real voice through the creation of three three-member code-specific boards for thoroughbred, greyhound and harness racing. In short,

we are fulfilling our pledge to create the separate boards for each code in racing as well as appointing a new Queensland all codes racing industry board—or QACRIB—to represent the interests of the industry more broadly. The individual code-specific racing boards are designed to be operationally and race day focused and will be responsible for dealing with race day dates and prize money issues, advising of changes to the rules of racing and developing a five-year infrastructure plan for those codes. An independent recruitment process will be initiated to appoint the board members. Board appointees will only be able to serve a maximum of two three-year terms.

The QACRIB will be broadly responsible for dealing with specific issues impacting upon the racing industry as a whole. The QACRIB will be made up of five members, including the three chairs of the code-specific boards as well as another two suitably qualified members, who will be appointed using the same recruitment process as the code-specific boards. Importantly, the all codes board composition and structure ensures that it derives and retains its legitimacy and authority by virtue of the fact that it is truly representative of the industry. To ensure integrity functions are front and centre, the Racing Integrity Commission will be appointed to investigate and report integrity matters and a racing discipline board will be empanelled to handle appeals. I was asked: am I aware of any threat to the reform agenda? I can tell members that the only threat that I am aware of is from those opposite. In the not-too-distant future we will learn if those in the Labor Party get it or not—whether they will fully come to grips with the fact that they oversaw the greatest loss in confidence of the racing sector of any government this state has ever seen.

When inevitably our reforms are introduced into this parliament, the opposition will either back them or, if they do not do the right thing, the industry will sort it out. It is up to them. If they play politics and vote against this legislation, it will show that the people of Queensland were absolutely right on 24 March when they booted them out of government. This reform is sorely needed.

(Time expired)

Schools, Funding

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Education. Recently I attended a Woombye State School P&C association meeting at which the school principal tabled a report which compared the different funding formulas for state primary schools and state secondary schools in Queensland, especially when both have equal student enrolments. I ask: will the minister commence a plan to increase funding to state primary schools so that in the future there is a more equitable allocation of resources between state primary and state secondary schools? I table a copy of the principal's report.

Tabled paper: Principal's report tabled at a P&C meeting on 17 October 2012 [[1405](#)].

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. It is obviously a fair question when you look at it in a simplistic way. They are both schools but, of course, primary schools and secondary schools have very different offerings. We as a government are implementing A Flying Start, which involves year 7 moving into high school in 2015, because all the research has shown that it is appropriate that in their eighth year of schooling students have variety and access to the different sorts of experiences and the more specialised teaching offered in secondary schools. That is why year 7 will be moving to secondary school by 2015.

That is not to suggest that we do not support our primary school teachers. I regularly meet with the president of the Queensland Association of State School Principals and the president of the Queensland Secondary Principals Association. Of course, we do value the great work done by our primary school teachers with children in the early years, which we know are so important.

As the member for Nicklin has asked me about funding, we should have a discussion about funding. Whilst I am happy to look at anything we can do to improve the standards in our primary schools in terms of funding compared to secondary schools, we also need to look at what the federal government is doing. The federal government is responsible for the funding that we actually get and, of course, there has been much debate over the last year and a half about the Gonski model. The federal government has been very light on detail but big on rhetoric.

Yesterday another federal minister came out with his supposed plan. Craig Emerson, the rather strangely named 'Minister for the Asian Century (Not the Foreign Minister)', commented that the state system will have to start teaching Asian languages. So here we have a minister speaking about a portfolio for which he is not responsible—talking about money that they have not consulted with us about, that they have not given us any detail about and that, as I understand it, does not exist for programs in Queensland that we as a state government are responsible for delivering. I think Hindi was mentioned by the 'Minister for the Asian Century (Not the Foreign Minister)'. Hindi is not a language that we teach in Queensland schools. In fact, as I understand it, there are about 37 registered Hindi teachers in the whole nation.

What we need from the federal government—we also need it from those opposite, who should probably be named the ‘shadow ministers for Chinese whispers’ because that is all we have heard from them today—in light of the comments from the ‘Minister for the Asian Century’, is some detail about how they are going to provide us this funding so that we can look towards getting equity between primary schools and secondary schools—not the disgraceful behaviour we have seen from those opposite today and not from Craig Emerson, the ‘Minister for the Asian Century (Not the Foreign Minister)’.

Alcohol Management Plans

Mr HOBBS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs. I refer the minister to the government’s review of alcohol management plans in the 19 Indigenous communities, and I ask: is he aware of any alternative plan for the supply and control of alcohol into Indigenous communities?

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, you have two minutes.

Mr ELMES: When I first announced the details of the review some four weeks ago, one of the first people out of the blocks to criticise what the government was doing was my federal counterpart, Jenny Macklin. It is not surprising, because whatever the Newman government does Jenny Macklin comes straight out and opposes. What did surprise me was just how much it did expose her as the hypocrite she is. Back in November Jenny Macklin introduced into the federal parliament the stronger futures bill. During the introductory speech on that bill she said some great things. She said—

... if we are to break the back of alcohol abuse, we must empower individuals, families and communities to take control.

She also said—

This measure is designed to support communities get control of the drinking problem and forge their own path—to make the grog, the despair and the violence that comes with it a thing of the past.

They are a couple of lines that I could have used in the last four weeks or so to describe what the Newman government is doing so far as alcohol management plans are concerned.

Two important things happened in 2012. The first one was in March, when we consigned the socialists over there to the irrelevant rump that they are. The second one was a little bit later this year, when the Northern Territory government changed hands and the CLP became the government there and the Territory government and the state government started to talk about reforming alcohol management plans. Guess what? Jenny Macklin started to change what she said in November and she is now criticising the state government and the Territory government. In answer to the question asked by my friend Mr Hobbs, depending on the day of the week you will get some idea of the federal government’s position on this matter.

Madam SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question; Uranium Mining

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (11.16 am), by leave: I table some documents relating to uranium to which I referred earlier.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 14 June 2012, to Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard MP, from the Premier, the Hon. Campbell Newman MP, regarding comments made by the federal resources minister, the Hon. Martin Ferguson MP, relating to the AusIMM International Uranium Conference [[1406](#)].

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 July 2012, from the Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard MP, to the Premier, the Hon. Campbell Newman MP, in relation to the Australian government’s position on uranium development in Queensland [[1407](#)].

SPEAKER’S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Madam SPEAKER: I acknowledge the schools visiting today: Pallara State School in the electorate of Algeester, and Woodridge State School in the electorate of Woodridge.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Newman Government

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.16 am): On behalf of the opposition and all members of this parliament, I welcome members of the deaf community to Parliament House. It is a privilege to have you here and I welcome you.

What we saw yesterday was quite incredible. We saw the whole of the Queensland cabinet undertake summer emergency training. A media release states—

The Queensland Government has taken steps to ensure it is ready for the upcoming storm and cyclone season, with a full briefing of disaster management operations today.

It may well be said that they had a full briefing of disaster management operations, because we well know—and Queenslanders well know—that there is a political storm engulfing this government. This is a political storm that keeps growing and growing, day by day. Yet the Premier of Queensland had every opportunity to shut this down early on. What would it have taken? All the Premier had to do was pick up the phone, make some calls and clarify the situation once and for all. That is all the Premier had to do. That is what leadership is all about. That is what being the Premier of the state is all about. It is about taking control—making the cabinet accountable and making sure that Queenslanders know the truth.

As I stated earlier this morning, I was very concerned to receive a piece of legal correspondence, via a law firm, from the Director-General of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. I am also informed by media reports that he is being funded by taxpayers' funds. So what we now have is a situation where taxpayers' funds are being used by the Director-General of the Department of Transport and Main Roads to send me a threatening and intimidating letter. Never in my time in this House, to my knowledge, has a director-general sent a letter of this kind to a member of parliament. This is a matter of serious contempt. No member of parliament should be intimidated or threatened by the actions of a legal firm. Nor should a member of this House be intimidated or threatened by a director-general, who is part of the executive arm of government.

As that matter is now likely to go to the Speaker for referral to the Ethics Committee, I do not want to dwell on that. But as Leader of the Opposition I will not be silenced. I believe that I have a right to raise issues in this House, to be the voice of people who are not represented in this House, to raise issues of significance, to raise issues that are of concern to people in the community, to raise issues on behalf of those 14,000 people who have been sacked on behalf of this government, to raise issues about cuts to funding services to the health portfolio and the education portfolio. I have the right not to be silenced. I have the right to continue to perform my duties not only as the Leader of the Opposition but as a member of this parliament.

What we have seen today could constitute a very serious contempt in this parliament. What have we seen today from this government? We have seen yet another diversionary tactic—another diversionary tactic—because we know that its members are engulfed in this political storm and they cannot get out of it. They do not know their way out of it, so what do they want to do? At 12 o'clock they are going to cut down the right of members of the opposition to raise matters of public importance. They are going to cut down our right to raise matters of public importance because they want to create yet another diversion in this House because they know that there is a political storm that is engulfing their government that the Premier could solve immediately by making a few phone calls. But do we see this Premier making any phone calls trying to sort it out? What we see day by day is stories changing—stories changing by different ministers. We have been told that a particular minister was asked to contact the minister, but which minister made that contact? We still do not know. We then heard that perhaps the Attorney-General was somehow involved. This is very serious considering that the CMC reports to the Attorney-General. Why is the Attorney-General involved?

We then had another diversion last week which just came out of left field with no consultation with Queenslanders, no debate in this House, no release of environmental guidelines—that is, the decision in relation to uranium. The people of Queensland deserve better. They deserve better than what we have seen by this government. This government has made snap decisions overturning long-term Labor policy of no uranium mining in Queensland, and where is this going to lead? We already know that some federal LNP members are already talking about exploring nuclear power and going down the nuclear path. The Minister for Mines was not able to explain himself fully when questioned about this on radio programs. Where are the environmental guidelines? Once again this is another diversion. They want people to look over there, but we know what people are concerned about. They are concerned about accountability and integrity.

The people of Queensland deserve better. They are concerned about the accountability and integrity of this government. What we saw over the two weeks of the estimates committees was minister after minister come under fire, minister after minister not being across issues in their portfolios, not being able to explain their briefs, not being able to answer questions. This is a government that is under pressure. Do you know what, Mr Deputy Speaker? Being in government is tough work. Being in government holds responsibility. When you hold the high office of a minister in government, you need to be across the issues. The people of Queensland are smart. The people of Queensland know what they are doing at the moment—that is, let us have a shining light bulb over here when the main game is about the accountability and integrity issues that are engulfing this government.

Once again, do we hear from members of the government about the 14,000 people who have lost their jobs? No, we do not. Some 14,000 people have lost their jobs. On the weekend I was able to go to Eventide to attend the rally supporting the federal member and local members about this government that does not care. This is a government that wants to shut nursing homes in this state—close them down. What about the elderly people? What about the elderly and the frail? Where are they going to go? Where are they going to live out their twilight years? This is a government that simply does not care—does not care about the people that it was elected to represent in this House. We have a health minister sitting over there who has cut services, who is cutting front-line staff and who is cutting nurses. We are being told of cuts to services in maternity hospitals across this state and yet he says, 'It's not my responsibility. It's the responsibility of the boards.' That is what he says. That is what he is going around saying. He is going around saying, 'It's the hospital boards' fault.' Let us be very clear in this House: who do the hospital boards report to? Under the legislation, they report to the minister. The Minister for Health is responsible. So do not come into this House and say, 'Not my responsibility,' because those cuts are your responsibility. They are your responsibility, health minister, and all you are doing today is a big diversion from the main picture. We will remain focused and we will not give up, because the people of Queensland deserve much better. The people of Queensland want answers. They want the truth to come out, and the truth will come out.

Accountability and Transparency in Government

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.26 am): We are in a new era in Queensland—the open data revolution, a revolution that the people of Queensland deserve from their government. As the recently appointed Assistant Minister to the Premier on e-government, I have been given the greatest honour of being charged with the Premier's exciting agenda of open and accountable government for all Queenslanders. The former Labor government hid as much as it could from the public of Queensland, including the mismanagement of budget after budget, the payroll debacle, hospital waiting lists and the waiting lists to get on to the waiting lists and overspending and blow-outs on projects such as the Traveston Dam, the white elephant of the desalination plant at Tugun, the South-East Queensland water infrastructure plan failure, and the list goes on and on.

Data.qld.gov.au will be a concise, open and accessible information hub and website of government data that will be available to all Queenslanders and everyone at no cost. It will be an avenue for Queenslanders to obtain and access information that is relevant to them in any aspect of their lives. Totally open government, or e-government, is the model and it will make the need for freedom of information requests, as they were previously called, or even right to information requests virtually unnecessary. All of the information of government will go online except for commercial-in-confidence data and data covered by privacy regulations. All data will be accessible for the public to develop business opportunities, with an availability of data that has not been previously available with an easily accessible website that has information set out in a way to encourage usage and interactive development of apps for the effective dissemination of information for use. This model will create a cultural change across all Queensland government departments and will deliver open and transparent government that has eluded Queenslanders over the last 20 years. We want the people to know what the Queensland government has done, what the government has to offer and we are committed to developing business opportunities with the utilisation of this specific, focused data. The US, and in particular New York City, one of the largest cities in the world, has embraced the data revolution and we are basing our model on this one, with a priority intention of surpassing its benchmark for openness and accountability.

Currently in Queensland we have a population of over 4.5 million people. The open data revolution will place Queensland on the international stage by being able to engage the Queensland public and the business community through information readily available for their communities and for businesses to take a foothold to create opportunities that they would never have been able to dream of before. The Premier's fantastic initiative of this open data revolution and total commitment to its efficacy will benefit Queenslanders in a plethora of ways. I am particularly honoured to be chosen to make this data revolution a reality for all. We will be leading Australia in this new open data revolution. We will leave no stone unturned in exploring every opportunity to make the full set of Queensland data and statistics available to its owners, the Queensland public.

Licensing issues will have to be addressed as well as the issue of commercial-in-confidence and confidentiality matters. But these issues may be overcome with only information that is not subject to these terms being placed on the website. The opportunities are endless for business development and the development of apps for particular information areas, community engagement and the development of initiatives for community groups and associations. I call on the business community and the community at large to come forward and become involved in this revolution, which will embrace ideas from the wider community and provide a two-way information flow. We expect the community and business to come to us with better ways that we can provide information to them. We will be moving quickly in that direction to give a full and frank, open dissemination of data.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Premier for this exciting opportunity and assure him that the open data revolution will place Queensland on the world stage in open and accountable government and give enormous opportunities to the business community to use this new set of data and statistics. This is the new currency of this government for the business community to make money and go forward with new innovation for the Queensland community.

Thuringowa Electorate, Schools

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (11.31 am): Last week marked six months since I officially became the member for Thuringowa. Since then I have been hitting the roads and footpaths to catch up with the residents and to visit the businesses, community groups and schools of my electorate. As I visit the schools in my electorate of Thuringowa, I never cease to be amazed by the hard work and dedication of our principals, teachers, teacher aides and support staff.

The Newman government is committed to making Queensland one of Australia's leading states in literacy and numeracy. That is why over the past six months alone we have introduced many new initiatives and funding programs to assist school staff to deliver the best education possible for our children. Just last week we announced funding for our state primary schools to boost literacy and numeracy programs. The Newman government has provided \$26 million over the next four years for Getting the Basics Right—Literacy and Numeracy grants. Five state primary schools in Thuringowa will share in funding of about \$124,000. It is important that we get the basics right in early learning years—from prep to year 2. Schools will use this funding to tailor programs to the specific needs of their students and school communities. The first round of grants will be delivered to schools before the end of the school year.

Last month the Newman government introduced an Advancing Our Schools Maintenance Fund, which will provide \$200 million over two years to assist schools to fix existing priority maintenance issues. Each school can receive up to \$160,000. Parents and citizens associations will play an important role in helping to identify the maintenance issues that need to be dealt with as a matter of priority.

In my electorate of Thuringowa eight schools received funding. Kirwan State High School, Kirwan State School, Northern Beaches State High School, Rasmussen State School and The Willows State School received \$160,000 each. Thuringowa State High School was allocated almost \$140,000, Kelso State School was allocated almost \$81,000 and Weir State School was allocated \$57,000. This funding will be spent on maintenance, whether it is peeling paint, uneven footpaths, or just torn carpets. Why have in the past schools struggled to have minor maintenance attended to? Because the previous Labor government left our schools with a \$292 million maintenance backlog that saw schools in the Thuringowa electorate and across the state fall behind in their maintenance schedules. Another major advantage of this program is that it will generate business for local tradies, as schools now have an option to choose to continue to use QBuild or go directly to private providers to carry out the work.

The Newman government is aiming to lift education standards. Part of that process is giving schools greater control over their decision making by becoming an independent public school. This will allow schools to be free to hire directly and make other decisions independently. There were 26 schools chosen in the first round to start in 2013, with three from North Queensland, including Kirwan State High School in my electorate of Thuringowa. Kirwan State High School is the largest state high school in Queensland, with more than 2,000 students. It is a music excellence, sport excellence and academic excellence school. The school's executive principal, John Livingston, has welcomed the good news. He says that the ability of the school to hire its own staff will cut out a lot of unnecessary red tape and help the school to tailor staff better to its needs. Each school will receive \$50,000 to assist with the change and an extra \$50,000 in funding each year for administration purposes.

We know young people need stability and access to the best education that the government can provide to help them learn and achieve in not only school but also everyday life. There has been much research done on the environment of children as they grow up, whether that is the family unit or the school classroom, and how that influences the choices they make. Last week alarming statistics were released that showed a steep rise in juvenile crime across the state. Those statistics show that every day in the Police Service Northern Region more than three vehicles are stolen and, according to the Queensland Police Service annual statistical review, boys aged between 15 and 14 are the main culprits. That is why it is important that the state government provides the best opportunities for the youth of today and that includes providing our children with access to innovative educational practices.

But, of course, as the old saying goes you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink. And so it goes with education. Some students have extremely low attendance rates. That can be due to a number of reasons, including family commitments or simply because those students think that it is uncool to attend school and get good grades. Rasmussen State School in Thuringowa is leading the way in providing programs and incentives to improve attendance rates. When I visited the school earlier this year I met two of the six Indigenous staff who are part of the mentor program, which was an initiative that started this year. Under that program, mentors provide support for students and families who are

finding it difficult to get their children to school. They also assist with personalised learning plans and general communication between the home and the school. This program has proven to be successful in improving school attendance across all year levels, but particularly years 6 and 7.

As we all know, education lays the building blocks to put children in good stead to lead them into adulthood and entering the workforce. That is why the Newman government is investing more into school programs and initiatives.

Newman Government, Unemployment

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.36 am): On 11 October and 18 October the Australian Bureau of Statistics released data showing the damage that the LNP's first budget has done to the Queensland economy. Unemployment in Queensland has increased to the highest trend result in almost a decade—the highest since December 2003. Members should not just take my word for that; it is all detailed in Queensland Treasury's information paper. Seasonally adjusted, the unemployment rate in Queensland is now at 6.3 per cent—up from 5.5 per cent in March. In contrast, Labor oversaw the largest fall in unemployment in Australia—from 9.8 per cent when the LNP was last in office down to 5.5 per cent in March. Under Labor, more than 740,000 jobs were created in Queensland, with more than two-thirds of those full-time jobs.

On 11 October, a desperate media release was issued by the Treasurer, as he tried to blame everyone except himself for this result. Just two days earlier the Under Treasurer told an estimates hearing that Treasury's projections for the slowing employment growth this financial year is partly owing to the LNP's program of savage cuts to jobs and services, which are having a flow-on impact on Queensland's economy. We have been saying for months that the LNP's slash-and-burn budget strategy would increase unemployment. This has been confirmed by labour force figures and its own public servants.

There is no hiding for the Premier and the Treasurer. They are accountable for the highest unemployment rate in Queensland in nearly a decade—and higher than during the height of the global financial crisis. But these figures are not the product of a global financial crisis; rather, they are the product of the Newman financial crisis. The ABS figures show that over 20,800 Queensland jobs were lost in the month of the LNP budget, with more than half of those lost full-time jobs. This figure compares with Australia's total employment rising by 14,500 in September.

It is not just the opposition making this contrast. These figures are also detailed in a Queensland Treasury Corporation *Weekly market and economics review*. Thanks to an LNP government, there are now 19,494 more unemployed people in Queensland than there were in March this year. That is the result of a budget that the Premier has described as 'fun'. These figures are compelling. They show that the LNP's budget has permanently damaged Queensland's economy. The Treasurer himself admitted in the estimates hearing and in answer to a question on notice that the forced sackings of 14,000 government workers has been used to fund the LNP's election promises. This makes his desperate media release on 11 October all the more pathetic.

In that media statement the Treasurer attempts to cherry-pick from Treasury modelling undertaken under the previous government to try to blame the carbon tax, despite the same modelling showing that 474,000 jobs would be created in Queensland to 2020. The Treasurer also tried to blame a tax on mining. This is the very same Treasurer who has just introduced a \$1.64 billion royalty slug on the mining industry. Both the Treasurer and the Minister for Employment need to explain how the LNP's four per cent unemployment promise will be met and release the advice provided to party members that the jobless rate could skyrocket to 8.5 per cent as a result of the LNP's reckless program of cuts.

Most people know the Newman government's mass sackings and savage cuts to front-line services are to blame for the spike in unemployment we have seen so far under the LNP and that its first budget took away more than it gave to regional economies. It stands to reason that the tens of thousands of people who have been sacked by the LNP or those whose jobs are under threat will be drastically cutting back on their spending. That all flows through to local shops, tradies and tourism operators. In Far North Queensland unemployment increased to 9.7 per cent in September compared with 6.4 per cent in September last year. In the Darling Downs south-west statistical division it is 6.4 per cent, up from three per cent in September last year. In Ipswich it is six per cent, up from 4.2 at the election. On the Sunshine Coast the unemployment rate is 7.6 per cent, up from 6.3 per cent last year and in Brisbane the unemployment rate is at 6.1 per cent, up from 4.5 per cent in September last year.

While the economic impacts of the severe budget measures and mass sackings are there for all to see, the social cost is still not fully known. Leading up to Christmas, public servants will be battling with other public servants for jobs. They will also be battling school leavers, as well as school leavers from higher educational institutions. This is not a good climate, particularly leading up to Christmas. The Premier and Treasurer promised Queenslanders before the election that they would not engage on a program of mass sackings and cuts to front-line services to fund their election promises. It is clear that this promise to Queenslanders has been broken, along with so many others.

Education, National Partnership Agreement

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (11.40 am): Partnership is not a difficult word to understand. Under the Gillard government, the word ‘partnership’ has taken on a new meaning. No longer does it mean that two parties come to an agreement on a certain matter and reach an agreed course of action. To the Gillard government partnership means one party—they, the Australian government—comes up with a thought bubble or political whim and the other side—we, the Queensland government—is expected to accept it without question. When it comes to national partnerships, the Gillard government has shown it favours political point scoring over policy outcomes. In the *Australian* yesterday we saw very clearly how the Gillard government operates. The online headline read, ‘States to implement Asian white paper schools language teaching recommendation’. Naturally, as Minister for Education, Training and Employment, I was interested to read on and was more than a little uneasy when I read that he, the ‘Minister for the Asian Century’, Craig Emerson MP, said the states would have to supply the teachers needed to embark on the Asian languages blitz and those that refused would be denied education funding.

In this one article we see the disturbing tactics of the federal government, tactics that we have seen over and over again since LNP ministers walked into their first ministerial council meetings in April. As the Queensland minister responsible for education, I was not consulted as to the content of this policy, despite the fact that it would be rolled out in Queensland schools. My understanding of a partnership is that before you come to a resolution you have to at least discuss the subject with your potential partner. Not the Gillard government.

The teaching of Asian languages to school students occurs in schools. The federal government runs zero schools. At some point one would have thought the Prime Minister or any of her colleagues would have run the idea past us for no other reason than to fully ascertain what obstacles face the policy’s implementation. They have obviously not learnt from the school halls debacle or the pink bats fiasco. However, not one iota of consultation occurred. I read about the policy in the newspaper and the only detail I saw was when the Prime Minister and Minister Craig Emerson were forced to answer questions from journalists who professionally asked—who innocently asked—how it would be implemented. What was that detail? When pressed, the minister admitted it would be the state government that would have to supply the teachers.

So here it is again: the federal government comes up with the idea and the state government is forced to deliver it. How many times must state governments deliver the federal government’s policy ideas and deal with funding shortfalls? The Digital Education Revolution and the Building the Education Revolution were classic examples of where the feds came in, funded for a period and left. We have current national partnerships that have uncertain futures following this similar path of Commonwealth withdrawal. For example, while schools in Indigenous communities have benefited greatly from partnerships such as the Investing in Focus Schools initiatives, these are significant injections of funding for just a two-year period—again leaving communities with no certainty of funding and the likelihood of the states holding the bag.

Now they have reached a new low. Not only does the state know frightfully little about the Gonski funding model, not only are we being asked to sign up to something we know frightfully little about, but now other policies are being held hostage dependent on our Gonski signature. Even this morning in the paper David Gonski said that his review was not about the syllabus, it was about a funding model. Even the author of the very report on which the government is basing its findings is saying that what they are trying to do is flawed.

Every state is different. When the federal government wanted to sign us up to a national partnership in June that resulted in little more than Harvey Norman vouchers, we said to the federal government that we wanted to use the money to invest in masters programs or other teacher improvement mechanisms. Our suggestion was rejected. National partnerships should not be approached with a ‘my way or the highway’ mentality. If the Commonwealth was genuine it would sit down with its state colleagues and seek to spend money on things that really matter in a way that suits each state, not a lazy, one-size-fits-all approach that benefits no-one. All we saw yesterday from the ‘Minister for the Asian Century’—not the foreign minister—was a thought bubble of an idea, crossing over into the path of someone else’s portfolio, that of Peter Garrett, who is also having to deal with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on this issue, about an issue that is important for the people of Queensland and all the other states and that is the future of our children’s education. It is too important to play games with. They need to come to the teleconference the state ministers are having later this week and actually give us some details so that Queensland can stand up for our own state and make sure that we deliver a better future for our students.

Uranium Mining

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (11.45 am): I rise today to speak about another betrayal in what is becoming an increasingly obvious pattern of betrayal by this government in relation to its election commitments to the people of Queensland. Last week Queensland witnessed another shocking

display of this betrayal by Premier Newman and the LNP. Without any consultation—another hallmark of this government—Premier Newman declared Queensland open for uranium mining after stating repeatedly and uncategorically that his government had no intention of lifting the ban on uranium mining. The Premier has dishonoured the commitment he gave to the people of this state to maintain the ban on uranium mining and his protestations on the development of a nuclear industry in Queensland simply cannot be believed.

To say that the Premier's decision took Queensland by surprise would be an understatement. After all, on 16 November last year he stated, 'The LNP has no plans to approve the development of uranium in Queensland and the federal debate over exports to India changes nothing.' On 17 November last year he said, 'The LNP had no plans to approve uranium mining in Queensland.' Then on 25 November he said, 'The bottom line for us on uranium is there are more important and pressing issues.' Then on 13 June this year the Premier said, 'Our position hasn't changed, we have no plans to mine uranium.' On 20 June in this House he said, 'It is that we'—and I assume he means the LNP government—'have no plans to mine uranium in Queensland.' Then on 11 October he said, in a letter to the Australian Conservation Foundation—

I take this opportunity to reaffirm my statements, made before the last election, that the State Government has no plans to approve the development of uranium in Queensland. We consider that there are higher priorities in the resources and energy sector ...

I table a copy of the letter for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 11 October 2012, from the Hon. Campbell Newman MP, to Mr Don Henry regarding uranium mining in Queensland [1408].

The Premier would have us believe that the reason he lifted the ban, after stating he would not on at least six separate occasions in less than a year, including one only 11 days before the back flip, was because he was watching tele and, golly gosh, there is the PM in India and she is talking about uranium. 'This is crazy', he thought. 'The world's uranium hungry. Let's hop on board.' So he worked up a bit of a submission over the weekend and had a chat in cabinet on Monday. Then cabinet said, 'No, no, no, go further, Premier.' And he said, 'Gee whiz, why not.' Now we know the extent of their deliberative process. What was not part of the LNP's deliberative process? Well, the fact that nuclear power is declining as a global source of electricity, providing 13 per cent of electricity in 2010 compared with 18 per cent in 1996—a 30 per cent decline in its contribution to the global energy market in only 14 years. In terms of economic contributions to the GSP, I know the Premier likes to crow about the potential \$18 billion industry. Today he was talking about \$10 billion. Like the reason why the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts is on leave, he cannot get that figure straight either. We know that this figure is proffered by the Australian Uranium Association, which I might respectfully suggest has a slight interest in promoting that figure.

According to the September issue of *Nuclear Intelligence Weekly*, both BHP and Paladin Energy are holding off on new uranium developments. In fact, BHP has shelved the expansion of the Olympic Dam until the price reaches US\$85 per pound. Currently, uranium is at half the desired price, US\$48 per pound, which indicates that at least in the near future there will not be the economic motivators needed to drive investment in Queensland. Therefore, there is no economic analysis.

We know that uranium has a radioactive half-life of 713 million years. We know that rehabilitating old uranium mines is costly to taxpayers. We know there was no assessment of the transportation costs and issues associated with uranium mining. There was no assessment about where uranium is to be produced into yellowcake, but we did see the dusting off of an old Joh Bjelke-Petersen cabinet submission about Rockhampton being the capital for producing uranium. This government has made a decision based on television, not on scientific and economic assessments. This is an outrageous backflip from a government that is consistently betraying the people of Queensland. There are too many questions to be answered. This deserves to go back to the committee of the people and not the Premier's hand picked committee.

(Time expired)

International Brain Tumour Awareness Week

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (11.50 am): This week in parliament we are highlighting a number of significant events and causes. This morning in the chamber it is great to see so many members wearing red to mark Day for Daniel and it was good to see the deaf community represented in the public gallery. Yesterday, it was great to have the opportunity to raise money for the Pyjama Foundation through the parliamentary city versus country touch football match, which can only be described as a torturous way to raise money when you're not in peak physical condition. However, today I want to highlight a cause that does not often get a lot of attention.

This week is International Brain Tumour Awareness Week and, to mark this week, I am wearing a silver ribbon. I would like to thank my colleagues who are also wearing a silver ribbon today in the chamber. Until recently I knew very little about brain cancer. That was until I was contacted by constituents of mine, Katherine and Andrew Landers. In June last year, Katherine and Andrew, with their seven-year-old daughter and with Katherine pregnant with their second child, headed to Westfield

Chermside to do some shopping for their first home, which they had just purchased. After parking the car, they were going up the travelator when Andrew collapsed and had a massive seizure. He was taken to hospital where he had another bigger seizure. A CT scan was undertaken and a large tumour was discovered on his brain. Two days later he had surgery to remove the tumour, but that was only the start of his battle with brain cancer.

On that day, in that instant, the lives of Andrew, Katherine and their young family changed forever. Brain cancer is the only cancer that directly affects both the body and the mind. Because of the risk of further seizures, Andrew had to surrender his motor vehicle licence immediately. Because of that same risk, he could no longer stay home alone with his children. Andrew also had to give up his employment and go on a disability support pension, because it was no longer safe for him to work as a sheet metal engineer. Katherine can only work part time to allow her to care for Andrew and to take him to his on going medical appointments. Andrew has since been through a nine-month course of chemotherapy, which has had significant side effects. Every three months he needs an MRI to determine the progress of the tumour. His tumour is located in the emotional and speech area of the brain, which means he has issues with his speech, easily forgets tasks and can no longer multitask.

For Andrew, Katherine and their family, the hardest part of this invasive disease is the knowledge that the five-year survival rate for brain tumours is only 19 per cent. This compares with survival rates of 83 per cent for prostate cancer and 84 per cent for breast cancer. Let us think for a moment what a massive difference that is: a five-year survival rate is 19 per cent for brain tumour and 84-plus per cent for other types of cancer. Brain cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in people aged under 39 and almost 100 per cent of sufferers will succumb.

At this point in his life, Andrew's long-term goal is to see his 10-month-old son start school. Katherine has had to come to an acceptance that her marriage will end a lot sooner than she expected and that, at some point, she will be a single parent. Their seven-year-old daughter has had to learn that her family can't afford to buy her expensive Christmas presents and birthday presents, because the cost of treating brain cancer is 50 per cent higher than the next most expensive cancer. The Cancer Council NSW estimates the out-of-pocket cost to each sufferer at approximately \$149,000. At the age of seven, their daughter has had to understand also that her daddy probably will not be around to see her start high school.

To their credit, Andrew and Katherine are making the most of every day their family has together and are working hard to raise awareness of this disease. I would like to commend the Brain Tumour Alliance Australia and the Brain Tumour Support Service, run by Cancer Council Queensland, for the work they do in supporting sufferers of brain tumours and their families. Currently, brain tumour research funding is low in relation to the burden of the disease and I hope that this can be addressed in coming years. I urge each of my colleagues in this place to take an opportunity this week to raise awareness of this terrible disease. I am pleased to be able to support Brain Tumour Awareness Week and Andrew and Katherine, who are watching this speech via the parliamentary webcast, as they fight their very personal battle with brain cancer.

Southport

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (11.55 am): Today I rise to talk about Southport, one of the best places in Queensland, and a function hosted this morning at Parliament House at which the Hon. Tim Nicholls, Treasurer of Queensland, spoke. There is a new centre of gravity on the Gold Coast and it is Southport. This morning I was pleased to host representatives from the Committee for Southport, the Southport Chamber of Commerce, and over 80 local businesspeople who had travelled to Brisbane to see parliament for themselves and also to hear from the Treasurer about the future of Queensland.

Some great things are happening in Southport. In fact, I am sure some of my colleagues will be envious as I start to share just some of the incredible things that are going on within the electorate. Southport's early days date back to the early 1900s so, as we approach 2018 and the Commonwealth Games, Southport will celebrate its centenary. What a centenary celebration that will be, because by then the new light rail will be operating the length and breadth of Southport, running from Griffith University to Broadbeach. By 2018, the new Commonwealth Games village, aquatic centre and other facilities will be established within the electorate. The new hospital will be operating and many other great things will be going on within the electorate. I am very excited about what is happening in Southport, which will be home to Griffith University, one of the fastest growing universities in the world and recently listed in the top five per cent of universities worldwide. Currently, some 18,000 students have chosen to make the Southport campus of Griffith University their preferred place to study, to learn and also to recreate, because I am sure many young people enjoy the various benefits that the Gold Coast has to offer.

This morning, many people travelled to Brisbane from the Gold Coast. We had Councillor William Owen-Jones and Councillor Tozer; John Howe, the chair of the Committee for Southport; Laird Marshall, the president of the Southport Chamber of Commerce, and Colin Coverdale, the vice president of the Southport Chamber of Commerce; Nigel Chamier, the chair of the Commonwealth Games board; and

former mayor, Denis O'Connell, who has been a great supporter and a great friend, and who shares my passion to see the northern part of the Gold Coast flourish and take every opportunity from the future that lies ahead in respect of our progress towards the 2018 centenary.

We are excited not just about the new hospital, but also about the new private hospital that has been announced by Healthscope. It has announced a 250-bed hospital will be constructed across the road from the Griffith University and the new university hospital. Healthscope has also announced that when that is complete and the old Allamanda Private Hospital in Southport has been vacated, they are planning to fully renovate the old facility and create a nonacute care facility for the Gold Coast and South-East Queensland. All of those things will create wonderful employment opportunities and many great benefits for the Gold Coast. Above all that, we are also hearing that the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE is looking very vigorously towards expansion within the Southport precinct. Currently, some 3,000 students are studying allied health practices at the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE and there are apprenticeship training schemes and all manner of other education options. In this respect, there are some great opportunities ahead of us in the Southport electorate.

Australia Fair is currently looking at the redevelopment of the eastern side of its retail precinct and adjoining streets in partnership with council to develop a Chinatown precinct. This is already attracting significant interest from overseas, a lot of interest locally and is certainly sending out a very strong signal of welcome to those from overseas who want to do business in one of the most exciting, dynamic and flourishing cities in Queensland.

The Gold Coast airport continues to flourish. What great news when the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games welcomed the first Qantas flight to the Gold Coast airport on the weekend. It is great to have Qantas back on the Gold Coast bringing not just tourists but business visitors to the Gold Coast.

I am excited about Southport. I want to commend both the Committee for Southport and the Southport Chamber of Commerce and Industry for their efforts in advancing Southport as the capital of the Gold Coast and the new centre of gravity on the Gold Coast. I thank the 70 or 80 people who travelled up from the coast this morning to hear from the Treasurer and to network with leadership within southern Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The time for the matters of public interest debate has expired. I call the Minister for Health.

MOTION

Health, Commonwealth Funding



Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (12.00 pm): I move—

That this House notes—

1. Health services and front-line Health jobs are threatened by the Commonwealth government's midyear budget review that proposes to strip \$63 million from Queensland national healthcare reform funding in 2012-13 alone, with total funding reduced by at least \$341.8 million over four years; and
2. That the funding cut is in addition to a \$40 million cut from the 2011-12 national healthcare special purpose payments owed to Queensland.

And urgently calls on the Commonwealth government, including the Queensland based federal Treasurer, to reverse the Commonwealth's health funding cuts to the state of Queensland.

What we have heard from those members opposite today is them apologising for this malicious and punitive attack on the people of Queensland by the Commonwealth government. I do not know which rock they have been living under, but the federal budget papers clearly indicate and the midyear economic review clearly indicates that in health alone Queensland stands to lose \$341.8 million over the four years to 2015-16. That is actually on top of the \$40 million which Wayne Swan has already recalculated and is proposing to take out of moneys allocated in the 2011-12 year.

It would be great to know that we have bipartisan support from those members opposite when it comes to standing up to the Commonwealth government when it comes to issues affecting Queensland. As I said earlier today, the largest increase for all Australian states and territories in the area of healthcare expenditure this year has been in Queensland. When we add in the community sector, which is the standard across the nation, our expenditure has gone up by 8.3 per cent. If we take the health component alone, it is over \$800 million or 7.4 per cent.

Where are the hypocrites in Canberra? When we announced an increase to our budget a couple of months ago, Tanya Plibersek was running around the place and did not mention the fact that they were basically only putting a very modest increase of 0.3 per cent into their health budget. Not only that, they were proposing to sack two per cent of their workforce.

Where was the member for South Brisbane then? She was nowhere to be seen. Where was the member for South Brisbane when the federal Treasurer brought down his budget and proposed to sack thousands of public servants? Where was the member for South Brisbane only a few months ago when the Commonwealth government was putting out statements saying that they were going to get rid of more than 10,000 public servants based on their calculations at the time? We know full well that if the member for South Brisbane were the leader of the Labor Party she would actually show some credibility and moral fortitude by releasing the Health payroll legal advice that might help us save some of the 1,300 to 1,500 jobs that are going to be lost in Queensland Health alone this year because of the \$150 million unfunded component.

Where are they? They are still hiding. They have been talking about openness and accountability in this parliament today almost ad nauseam, but when it comes to something as basic as releasing that legal advice unfettered so that we can actually use it—not accompanied by a whole roll of gaffer tape which means that you cannot do anything with it; you have to put it over your eyes, over your ears and over your mouth—they will not do it. The contrast of course is that when I was Leader of the Opposition on a number of occasions I released advice that Premier Peter Beattie wanted in relation to matters that had been taken to cabinet by a previous government of a conservative nature.

What we have in Queensland is this malicious, punitive and offensive attack on patients and their families. On top of the \$40 million which the federal Labor government is taking off Queensland this year, it is taking another \$341.8 million off us over four years—\$63 million in this financial year which is basically equivalent to completely closing the Cape York health district and all of its associated services. It is equivalent to the expenditure that goes into the Royal Children's Hospital or the West Moreton health district in one year. But those opposite do not care about that in any way whatsoever. They only want to go out and play politics on other issues without dealing with the things that really matter—where the tyre meets the tar—such as money being taken off Queensland. The member for South Brisbane is an absolute apologist for that.

What do the member for South Brisbane, the shadow health minister and the Leader of the Opposition have to say to those 15,500 people in Queensland who might be able to get a hip operation if we had that funding? It is equivalent 15,500 hip operations. It is equivalent to 112,000 tonsillectomies. It is equivalent to 84,500 normal births. This is what \$341.8 million amounts to. But where are those opposite? They are absolutely nowhere. They are deaf and mute. They are trying to cobble together a defence around their failures and reorientation of aged care in Queensland. We have now well and truly had the lid lifted on that in this parliament this morning.

What we have in Canberra is a Treasurer who claims to be an advocate for Queensland. We have a Deputy Prime Minister who says that he wants to stand up for Queensland. As the Premier said, he is a traitor. We were told that there would be an enormous benefit to the state of Queensland from having not only a Treasurer but also a Deputy Prime Minister from Queensland. But what we have in Treasurer Wayne Swan is someone who has not only stabbed fellow Queenslanders Kevin Rudd in the back but is now stabbing—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting. The health minister has the call.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I repeat that. We were told there was an enormous benefit in having a Queenslanders as Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister and in cabinet in the federal parliament. What we have found out is that not only do we have a Treasurer who stabbed Kevin Rudd in the back when he was Prime Minister but we have a Treasurer who is now stabbing Queenslanders when it comes to health funding in this state. The so-called champion of Queensland Wayne Swan is not only stabbing Queenslanders in the back as he did Kevin Rudd, but is stabbing them in the heart when it comes to health funding. Some 4.4 million Queenslanders are going to lose out as a consequence.

Adjusting funding is difficult enough but adjusting to funding that is taken off you when it has already been spent—like that \$40 million—is very difficult. The Labor Party could never actually work within a budget anyway because during their time in government in Queensland they always ran deficits. In Health they always ran deficits. They went back to Treasury and Treasury tipped in more money. They did not change their habits. We have to adjust to the reality of \$40 million being taken away retrospectively. We will have to deal with some \$63 million which has been factored in this year and is now being taken away. What impact is that going to have on services?

Maybe members opposite are going to tell us how they would propose we should take that \$63 million away on top of their \$150 million for the Health payroll debacle this year and the other \$350-odd million over the next three or four years. Maybe they should tell us how that is going to impact. Maybe they should tell us how many hip operations, how many normal births, how many tonsillectomies in Queensland that will impact. Maybe they should tell us how that \$63 million might actually tie into their desire to keep open nursing homes that they themselves planned to actually close, as we will find out more about later on today. Maybe they should tell us about all of those things, but I suspect they will not because they do not have a clue.

One thing they can actually do is to stand up to Canberra. One thing they can do is to go to Wayne Swan and say, 'Wayne, this is unfair. This is not right for the people of Queensland.' Funding of \$341.8 million over four years on top of \$40 million retrospectively taken away is just too much for the Queensland health system to bear. It will impact on patient services. It will impact on patient care. Mr Deputy Speaker, I can assure you that we will be reminding Queenslanders as services are compromised that it is the fault of the Labor Party in Queensland that will not stand up to Canberra.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Before I call the next speaker, if I could just advise the person in the gallery who used the camera that taking photos in the chamber is not permissible, so please desist from that. I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MULHERIN (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.11 pm): The opposition will be opposing the motion moved by the health minister. The health minister's claims of cuts to health funding by the federal government are just more mean and tricky politics to hide his cuts to services. There is no cut to funding per Queensland. The minister is cherry picking figures in just another smokescreen to hide behind the facts.

The 2012-13 budget update released by the Commonwealth confirmed that funding for Health in Queensland will increase by 21 per cent over the next four years. In contrast the LNP is only increasing health spending by 12.9 per cent. So the federal government is increasing health funding by more than eight per cent more than the state government. The average annual increase in health funding from the Commonwealth government is 6.95 per cent compared with 4.3 per cent from the state government. The Commonwealth is providing health funding to Queensland of \$13.53 billion over the next four years, with the annual payment increasing by \$650 million over this time. Nobody can take anything this health minister says seriously any more. He just puts out more spin to hide his incompetence.

Further to the health minister's incorrect comments on federal health funding, the Treasurer today during question time also made a statement that overall Queensland had lost federal funding—this is wrong. Overall the Commonwealth's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook leaves Queensland coming out in the black with additional funding of \$246 million. National Partnership payments increase overall by \$303.9 per cent, more than offsetting a downward revision of GST revenue of \$57.6 million. In total, Queensland is receiving National Partnership payments of \$2.3 billion this financial year. So, despite the LNP government failing to meet obligations under a number of national cost-sharing programs, the federal Labor government continues to meet its obligations to the state.

Just like today's stunt about the federal funding, the health minister also uses his one-trick pony act to roll out the Health payroll when this government finds itself in a bind. The truth about the Health payroll was revealed during the estimates committee hearings a couple of weeks ago. The director-general, Dr O'Connell, advised that he had paraphrased for the minister previous legal advice on this matter and that the minister had obtained documents related to the original contract from the Department of Public Works. The health minister acknowledged that he and the Crown Solicitor did have access to this two-year-old legal advice and associated cabinet documents but it remained unclear whether he had made the effort to review these documents. This is despite the health minister having access to these documents for almost three months. The minister's continual assertion that he did not have access to the documents in question was at odds with the facts presented to the committee.

The Auditor-General is doing his annual financial audit of Queensland Health and in that he will look at the issues of the payroll. I also note that, pursuant to section 4.15.6 of the Queensland Cabinet Handbook, the Auditor-General when conducting an investigation under the Auditor-General Act 2009 is conferred with the authority to access the cabinet documents of previous governments. We hear the one-trick pony, the health minister, saying that he provided cabinet documents to the then Premier. Those documents were in relation to CMC investigations or Auditor-General investigations. Therefore, the Auditor-General has access to cabinet documents. So, if any further scrutiny is required of these documents, the appropriate auditor—the Auditor-General—has access to them.

But what is this stunt by the LNP really about? It is a diversion. It is obvious that this is a distraction. Every time the LNP back themselves into a corner, the health minister, the one-trick pony, brings out the Health payroll as an attempt to divert the media and public attention away from the latest scandal the LNP is embroiled in. As the latest diversion is before the Ethics Committee, unfortunately we cannot comment further on the Premier dragging his feet on this issue, burying his head in the sand and hoping it will go away. The Minister for Health was quick to go to the Queensland police to make a complaint against Nuttall. Why didn't he go to the police and make a complaint against the director-general of the Department of Transport and Main Roads?

So unfortunately, as I said, we cannot comment on the real reason for today's diversion. But there are plenty of other disgraces this LNP government is diverting attention away from. This is a government that has shown very, very quickly that it has no regard for the basic needs of our community and it certainly has no intention of living up to the high expectations Queensland had when it elected the Newman government. This is a government that has willingly sacked more than 14,000 people, many in regional Queensland which will have drastic consequences for regional communities and economies. This is a government that has launched a full-scale attack on community groups, on front-line services

and on organisations that look after the needy and the underprivileged. This is a government that is kicking residents out of caravan parks they have called home in many cases for decades. This is a government that has now set its sights on some of our most vulnerable citizens, the elderly and frail.

The health minister has a hide to talk about cuts to health funding when his government has slashed and burned across Queensland Health like nothing seen before. The LNP government etched its name in history as it ripped the heart out of the Queensland health system by slashing more than 2,700 jobs and axing services in a bid to cripple the state-wide system. In September, the disgraceful and merciless axing of health jobs and services told the real story of the Premier and his health minister, who had no intention of keeping their promise not to slash front-line services, including nurses and doctors and other critical health workers.

The Premier and his health minister have ripped the heart out of front-line health services across Queensland. You do not sack more than 2,700 people—including more than 1,500 people from hospitals and health services—without sacking front-line staff including nurses and doctors. This is a simple fact. We know that 130 jobs at Townsville Hospital have gone, including 45 nursing positions. Just last week we heard that 30 positions at the Mackay Base Hospital are going, including 15 nursing positions.

What the health minister has failed to acknowledge in his sackings is that those 2,750 staff are on top of the 3,000 fixed term appointments and casual positions that were terminated in June this year. Hundreds of other jobs were also lost in the community sector when the government closed grant funded projects and funding to non-government organisations. So that is almost 6,000 health workers on the unemployment queue in this wholesale axe through the heart of our state's health system.

The LNP government has now declared war on the people of Queensland through this wholesale axing of the health system. Queenslanders should now be under no illusions and make no mistake: the Premier is the front-line commander-in-chief of a heartless government that has declared war on the ordinary people of Queensland in every suburb, every town and every city across the state. The Premier should be ashamed of the diversionary tactics his government is using in a desperate attempt to keep his head above water.

Today we heard revelations about another departmental liaison officer in the transport minister's office and the transport minister's answer today about the physical location of the DLO and whether the officer was located in his office. The transport minister confirmed that the officer was located in his office. This is in direct contradiction to the director-general's answers during the estimates process about the physical location of DLOs. He said they were located in the department, not in the minister's office. The minister had the opportunity then to correct the record but he did not. Every day we are seeing the plot thicken on this story, as the government continues to weave a more and more intricate story to attempt to avoid scrutiny.

Today during question time we saw the Premier and his minister desperately try to talk about their integrity and accountability credentials. What a joke! In trying to prove how open and accountable this government is, the Premier resorted to spruiking the fact that he is paying the Leader of the House more money. So a pay rise and a title promotion for the member for Mermaid Beach constitutes integrity and accountability? Give me a break. This is a man who cannot pay a restaurant bill. The Premier's desperation in question time today to try to clear the air of the stench that is hanging over his government was pathetic and a depressing display for the people of Queensland. I know people will see this latest attempt at trickery for what it really is—a diversion away from the stench of cover-ups that surrounds this government.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (12.21 pm): It is a sad day when the Labor Party in Queensland gives up on delivery of health services. There was a time—and I remember it—when the Labor Party proudly stood for something. It did not have much credibility on anything but the shred of credibility it had was standing up and defending a health system—a health system that it was proud of and that it had implemented through the Medicare program. Labor had one shred of credibility left and that was around public health in Queensland, despite the many years of the provision by former coalition governments of free public health.

The Labor Party has abandoned even the pretence of looking after people in the public system who get ill. The once-proud Labor mantra is now abandoned on the shores of the fiscal incapacity of the federal Treasurer, Wayne Swan. We know Labor do not have any financial credentials. They never have had and never will have. In a desperate attempt to convince someone they might have credentials, the federal Treasurer is playing with the figures. He is making so-called parameter adjustments, pretending that Queensland's population is less this year than it was last year and doing those sorts of things. But they have abandoned education. They have abandoned the provision of a decent program for defence. They have spent \$45 million trying to get a seat on the United Nations Security Council—

Mr Stevens: For Kevin Rudd.

Mr NICHOLLS: For Kevin Rudd, but health—their final bastion—has now disappeared. They have certainly given up on health and the provision of public health services in Queensland.

We just heard the member for Mackay spend 6½ minutes trying to attack the Newman government, not trying to defend the actions of his federal colleague. Mr Swan and his actions have taken the heart out of the provision of public health services in Queensland and the delivery of front-line services. Instead of crying crocodile tears at Eventide, where he was on the weekend trying shamelessly to cause more worry to people, he could have spent more time finding some funds to make sure that his home state was properly funded to deliver front-line services.

When you compare what is being done in Queensland by this health minister versus what is being delivered by the federal government, you can clearly see the difference. You can clearly see that when it comes to delivering health services in Queensland there is only one party that is committed to providing appropriate funding. There is only one party that is committed to cleaning up the mess that was left by them. There is only one party that is taking the hard yards to make sure we have more and better front-line services available to Queenslanders.

We are doing that by delivering an extra \$800-plus million this financial year alone and putting \$1.3 billion into new facilities. The health minister has made it clear what his priorities are including additional funding to repair the long neglected rural and regional hospitals that have not been properly looked after over such a long period of time.

Mr Mulherin: Where was the LNP when the Howard government was making cuts to the state health system?

Mr NICHOLLS: I hear the lament of those opposite talking about the health system. Under the 11 years of the Howard coalition government, more funding was spent on public health in Australia than at any time in its past history, and more people had more jobs and more people were earning more on the way through. They were able to deliver all of that including the biggest increases in public education spending. I think these days people look back on the days of the Howard government—

Mr Mulherin interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mackay will cease interjecting.

Mr NICHOLLS: They look back on the days of the Howard government and—

Mr Newman: Wish that grown-ups were in charge.

Mr NICHOLLS: As the Premier says, they wish that grown-ups were back in charge—able to balance the budget, deliver tax cuts, deliver services and run a competent government. Certainly, as the health minister said, Mr Swan stabbed not only his best mate in the back but also Queensland on his way through within two years of an election. Unbelievable!

The cries from those opposite should be seen for what they are—a pathetic attempt to divert attention from their own failure to stand up for Queensland and to take the fight to Mr Swan. What has Mr Swan done? His trickery and creative accounting have seen a funding cut of \$756 million for National Partnership payments and specific purpose payments. Three-quarters of a billion dollars have been cut from the forward estimates as a result of Mr Swan's trickery, a \$400 million cut from education, as I mentioned early today, that the education minister will have to deal with and at least \$340 million cut from the Health budget on top of the \$40 million for parameter changes because apparently our population has declined by 35,000. You have to wonder how Mr Wayne Swan could call himself a Queenslanders.

Queensland is bearing 32 per cent of the overall reduction in Commonwealth payments to state governments despite comprising just over 20 per cent of the total population of Australia. Queensland is bearing one-third of the cuts despite having only one-fifth of the population—a disproportionate cut to the funding for Queensland. Despite the GST pool increasing by \$50 million, Queensland's share of GST will reduce by \$58 million. Queensland is now receiving about \$180 million less than its population share would entitle it to. These cuts in the MYEFO are in addition to the \$5.7 billion the Gillard government took from the states in 2012-13. Not only have they cut once to an extent of \$5.7 billion; they are now cutting again, taking almost a further \$1.5 billion out of Queensland over the forward estimates.

Instead of making the tough decisions to tighten its own belt and reduce wasteful Commonwealth spending, the Gillard government is expecting the states to foot the bill for Mr Swan's wafer-thin surplus. That surplus is built on an accounting trick that brings payments forward early and is completely and utterly unreliable. I do not think anyone is putting any money down on the actual delivery of a surplus next year. That is before they even begin thinking about paying for their unfunded promises like the NDIS, the dental health scheme and the Gonski review.

Queenslanders are well and truly aware of the financial ability of Labor governments. They know that they will make announcements. They know that they will say they will spend the money and they will dig their way deeper and deeper into debt and deficit like the debt and deficit that we are facing here in Queensland. Mr Swan has never delivered a budget surplus—not once. Despite riding the boom in 2009-10—the best terms of trade in a generation—he has still failed to deliver a budget surplus, and no one believes that he will be able to find another surplus.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I hear the member for Mulgrave say, 'What about the financial crisis? What about the GFC?', he says. The federal government was in power for two years before the GFC rocked across the shores. They were there for two years—the best terms of trade in a generation—and how much were they left by the Howard government? There was \$25 billion in the bank and no net debt. Where are we now? There has been not one surplus and we are \$220 billion in debt. That is the outcome of Labor governments. Despite being left a Future Fund with \$25 billion and no net debt, where have we ended up with Labor? We have ended up with \$220 billion worth of debt!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr Mulherin interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Mulgrave and the member for Mackay will cease interjecting or I will warn you.

Mr NICHOLLS: Under Mr Swan's watch, the Australian government went from earning \$1 billion in interest in 2007-08 to paying an estimated \$7.1 billion interest in 2012-13 and borrowings increased by 380 per cent. Is this a familiar sounding story? Does this sound like Queensland? It is just on the larger federal scale. We will be seeing the same things happening here: the cuts to front-line services as a result of Labor's incompetence and inability to manage a budget. Instead of getting the quality services they deserve, Queenslanders got Jayant Patel, Joel Barlow—the fake Tahitian prince—and a bungled Health payroll system. Workers were underpaid, overpaid and not paid at all and some for almost two years. Now the system will cost \$1.2 billion. Mr Swan—

(Time expired)

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (12.31 pm): This motion is nothing more than the politics of self-preservation from a government that has the stench of decay about it after only seven months in government. I believe that this government is rotten to the core. The Minister for Health has come into this House today and made statements about the federal government's health funding that are not the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The truth about health funding is that the state government has cut funding to health services across the length and breadth of this state and is now seeking to put the blame on the federal government for its own inability to provide services to some of Queensland's most vulnerable citizens. They are also seeking to hide behind the regional health boards, blaming them for the cuts to services and failing to take responsibility for the funding they have provided to the boards. Someone has to take responsibility in this House and that person is the Minister for Health. That is him. He sits above all of the hospital boards in Queensland. Maybe he needs to be reminded of that.

During the debate on the Health and Hospitals Network and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 we warned that this is exactly what would happen. We also said that we would not allow this government to get away with it—and let me tell honourable members we will not. Whether the minister likes it or not, the minister is responsible to this parliament for all of the decisions of the health boards. He is responsible to the people of Queensland.

The truth is that the federal government has actually increased health funding to Queensland this financial year. In fact, that increase is to the tune of \$107 million on last financial year's funding. That brings the federal government's health funding for Queensland to \$3.11 billion this financial year. So there is no cut to funding per Queensland. Of course, the population figures that the minister is using are very cleverly calculated to put his argument in the best light, but they are not consistent and they do not reflect reality. The reality is that Queensland's population is not growing; the rate is not what has been previously forecast and the federal government's figures have been revised accordingly. Let me advise that people have seen what this LNP government is like. They remember the Bjelke-Petersen years. They remember the days of corruption and they remember what it was like during all of those years of Queensland going backwards.

The Commonwealth's figures have also been reviewed because, as we are all aware, the Australian dollar has been at an all-time high and the cost of purchasing equipment is therefore cheaper. So the funding provided by the Commonwealth quite reasonably reflects this. Why would a government fund places for people who are not there? Why would a government pay for equipment at a price that does not reflect the current economic situation? If the federal government had done this, they would be

attacked and chastised by other state governments, including this government's LNP mates in New South Wales and Victoria because they would be complaining about the funding in relation to their own particular states.

The health minister has moved this motion to draw attention away from a government that is clearly in disarray. Ever since the estimates hearing, the government has been looking for distractions to draw the community's attention away from the failings. What a distraction we saw last week in the electorate of the member for Sandgate. The member for Sandgate put on the best Mavis Bramston performance I have seen since the sixties. There she was in her big hat with the gigantic sunglasses on hiding in the crowd as the Deputy Prime Minister was there standing up for the people of Eventide. There she was in the big hat doing the best Mavis Bramston impression I have ever seen. Where was the member for Lytton? Let me tell you where I reckon he was. He was contacting his casting agent so he could be in the new series of *Little Britain*. Maybe you were at the casting agents trying to be the new Jonah of *Summer Heights High*, because that will be the level that you will be at my friend—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will speak through the chair.

Mrs MILLER: When the people of Sandgate are finished with the temporary member for Sandgate and when the people of Wynnum are finished and get even with the temporary member for Wynnum, they will have nothing left to do but to put on performances on TV.

The people of Queensland can see a political trick for what it is. They are not duped by the sleight of hand. They are not duped by the shiny balls that are thrown into the air. Believe me, they smell a Gambian rat when they see or smell one. For the benefit of the members of this House, a Gambian rat is the largest breed of rat in the world and there was a plague of them in Florida Keys earlier this year. There they go—sniffing the rats on the LNP side.

Let us look at the facts. What did the federal government's midyear economic and fiscal outlook reveal? It revealed that Queensland receives health funding from both the federal and state governments; that the federal government's funding will increase by 21 per cent over the next four years of the forward estimates; the state government's funding will increase by only 12.9 per cent over the same period; the health funding provided by the Commonwealth government to Queensland over the forward estimates is \$13.53 billion; and the increase to the Commonwealth's health funding for Queensland over the forward estimates is \$650 million.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr Symes interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for South Brisbane and the member for Lytton will cease interjecting.

Mrs MILLER: Tell me if I am wrong, but an increase of \$650 million over four years and an increase of \$107 million this year cannot be a decrease. See what I have done there? It is really easy. I have compared last year's funding with this year's funding and worked out that there is a positive difference. So I have called that an increase. It is not hard, it is not tricky; it is just the facts.

While we are talking about the facts, let us talk about Eventide. Last week the member for Sandgate put on her best of Kath and Kim. Up the back of the audience she was at Eventide, hiding away in the crowd. No-one even knew she was there. What did she say? She repeated the mantra of the health minister: 'This is not a political decision. Oh, my dear, no.' Yeah, but she never went up the front with those poor bureaucrats who were there. Like lambs to the slaughter they were. No, you were hiding up the back. Shame on you, member for Sandgate! Shame on you!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundamba, I have already warned you about speaking through the chair. This is the last time I will.

Mrs MILLER: Shame on the member for Sandgate. Let us talk about the closure of the TB clinic. I am absolutely delighted that the health minister saw the light. That was because he had a lot of specialists bashing him around the head for closing it down. He had no choice but to reopen the TB clinic. I think it is good that he did it, because he knew that *Four Corners* last night would be talking about TB. Why are they pointing the sword at the head of the TB clinic, Dr Tom Konstantinos? It is absolutely shocking.

I will mention other failures. At the John Tonge Centre forensic chemists and forensic toxicologists have been sacked. In relation to breast cancer screening, I bet the health and hospital boards will decrease services. I also mention Wynnum Hospital. They have a vacant member for Wynnum here. Then there is the sacking of Queensland's public health nutritionists. It is a disgrace.

(Time expired)

Ms TRAD (South Brisbane—ALP) (12.41 pm): Well, what do we have here? We have another political stunt obviously—much like the Commission of Audit, which was set up so that this government could retreat from some core promises not to withdraw front-line services. Here we have a government that is ready, willing and able to close down front-line services, many of which have been referred to by my colleague the member for Bundamba. And they have the gall to come in here and talk about federal funding!

As previous speakers from the Labor opposition have done, I will outline how ridiculous is the position of the Premier, the Treasurer and the health minister. In doing that, I note that the health minister seems to be taking on additional roles in this parliament that should be duly acknowledged. He is, it appears, always the bovver boy and never the boss. Whenever there is an issue engulfing this government, what does he do? He comes in here and moves a motion as he wants this parliament to continue to discuss health. Let us not discuss any of the other issues surrounding this government! Let us not discuss any of the other problems or concerns involving the people of Queensland! Let us keep putting up the shiny balls—after all, Christmas is just around the corner—and distract people.

Let us talk about the facts. The facts are that funding has actually increased under this Commonwealth government, and it has increased for Queensland significantly. The average annual increase in health funding from the Commonwealth is 6.95 per cent compared with 4.3 per cent from the state government. I think that is a marked difference.

While on the issue of figures, I refer to something the Treasurer said during his speech. He basically asserted, I think, that the federal Treasurer was asserting that Queensland's population was in decline. These figures are not made up. They are not plucked out of the air. These figures are actually compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare. They show that Queensland's population growth is not as strong as it used to be. Quite frankly, why would it be, with so many people fleeing the state under the new LNP government? Why would people not leave a state where unemployment is set to reach eight per cent? Why would they not leave a state where front-line services are closing? Why would they not leave a state where people are demonised because of their sexuality? Why would they not leave a state where uranium is set to become the commodity of the future? Why would they not leave that state?

The Commonwealth is providing \$13.53 billion over the next four years, with annual payments increasing by \$650 million per annum. This is a big funding lift. For the LNP government to claim otherwise is completely and utterly misleading. The Treasurer tried to claim in question time that Queensland had lost funding overall. This is simply wrong. Overall, the Commonwealth Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook leaves Queensland coming out in the black, with additional funding of \$246 million. National partnership payments increase overall by \$303.9 million—more than offsetting a downward revision of GST revenue of \$57.6 million. In total, Queensland is receiving national partnership payments of \$2.3 billion this financial year alone.

The funding that the health minister is complaining about is in accordance with arrangements of the national partnership and the National Health Reform Agreement. The federal funding reflects the changes in the rate of growth of the population and the purchasing power of the Australian dollar. What is more, the health minister should have been made aware of these details months ago, as they came in at the change of the financial year. Does the health minister seriously have such little understanding of his own Health budget? Is he only ever really looking over the horizon for the next opportunity to be the LNP's bovver boy such that he does not understand the basic details of the national funding agreement and that he raises this issue now? It is simply implausible. It is simply another stunt.

Does the Treasurer have so little idea about basic funding models that he does not know the difference between reductions and changes in growth forecasts? Does he seriously think that a reduction of growth rate is the same thing as a reduction to base figures? The Treasurer's own budget papers revised down Queensland's projected population growth on page 44 of Budget Paper No. 2. So it is good enough for the Queensland Treasurer but, quite simply, it is not good enough for the federal Treasurer. I find the inconsistency hypocritical.

The Treasurer's own budget papers show population growth this financial year projected at 1¼ per cent—a revision down from two per cent at the midyear review. The Premier, Treasurer and health minister either have little idea about basic budgeting measures or they are just crying out as part of a big, shiny distraction, as has already been indicated by previous speakers on this side of the House.

This is an LNP government that promised to boost front-line services but it is sacking nurses and it is closing aged-care facilities. This is an LNP government that preaches transparency and accountability but has a health minister who hides behind hospital boards to cut jobs and reduce services. This is a government that is happy to sack tens of thousands of workers and then wonder why the unemployment rate is rising. The Premier declared that no front-line services would be affected while hospitals are losing staff, services are being cut and beds are being closed. Does the Premier seriously suggest that aged-care beds providing specialist medical and mental health care for elderly Queenslanders are not front-line services?

But the Premier is not the only one deluded by their own arguments. I go back to the details of the federal funding and changes to population growth projections. If the Treasurer is so concerned about changes in population growth in Queensland, perhaps, as he said earlier, he could consider the effect that sacking tens of thousands of workers and destroying consumer confidence has had on growth. Perhaps the Treasurer could consider how many families have been forced to look interstate for work

because thousands of workers have been left on dole queues with many others with similar skill sets at the very same time. This is a government that proclaims that it cannot afford front-line workers or to provide front-line services, but it is so infatuated by its No. 1 infrastructure project, which is a new executive building for the Premier and his top ministers—the inner sanctum.

Everybody in this House, everybody in the gallery and everybody listening at home knows the blatant truth of the LNP's moves today. This is nothing but a stunt to distract from the serious questions being raised about LNP ministers and their hand-picked appointments. The only thing transparent about this government is the transparent political stunts to avoid scrutiny and deny proper debate in this House. Tens of thousands of Health staff across the state must wonder every time they hear the health minister talk, 'When, oh when, will the minister actually discuss improving health outcomes for the Queensland population?' When will he have the guts to step out from behind his only two positions—his claim that the only thing going on in Health is the payroll and when cuts occur in front-line services it was 'the board's fault', 'it was the fault of the boards'.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Ms TRAD: Go speak to the boards; do not speak to me. The people of Queensland see straight through his stunt. The minister should accept that he is in fact responsible for supporting public health care in Queensland, yet he is presiding over its decline.

Dr DAVIS (Stafford—LNP) (12.50 pm): At a time when we are still feeling the legacy of the previous Labor government which brought Queensland to its economic knees and also Queensland Health, the federal Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister is determined to add injury to insult by draining the lifeblood from clinical critical front-line services. Let us quickly review why Queensland Health is already on the economic ropes. There was the notorious payroll system—a \$1.25 billion black hole—and the opposition continues to refuse the critical documents that might assist the people of Queensland to get their money back. In last Saturday's *Courier-Mail* noted journalist Des Houghton quoted Dr David Slaughter, recently retired Medical Superintendent of the Royal Children's Hospital, who said that the hospital industry believes the real cost of the new Queensland Children's Hospital will eclipse \$2 billion after land resumptions, roadworks and necessary upgrades to satellite hospitals are factored in. Some \$2 billion later and all we have, and I quote from Dr Slaughter, 'is just a bad plan'. Some \$2 billion later we have a hospital built for purely political reasons. So thanks to Labor we have a payroll system that has wasted well over \$1 billion and a bad plan for children's health services that is effectively up to a \$2 billion waste.

One would have thought federal Labor should be saying sorry—putting its money in to say sorry for what Labor has wasted at enormous cost to Queenslanders, the health of Queenslanders and the jobs of Queenslanders. But, no! At a time when the Newman Queensland government is leading the country in injecting money into Queensland Health and our public hospital system, Wayne Swan has deserted the people of Queensland by pulling the plug on the state's health system. One can talk about statistics until the cows come home. I am reminded of the old story that statistics are like prisoners: you can torture them and in the end they will spill the beans. What we have heard from those opposite today is an attempt to actually squeeze statistics to deny the people of Queensland the health services that they so desperately need. The specifics of what Mr Swan has squeezed from the people of Queensland is that, when we look at the 2012-13 Commonwealth budget brought down in May 2012, Queensland's national health reform funding has been reduced by the federal Treasurer to the tune of \$63.3 million in the forthcoming financial year and the size of Wayne Swan's national health reform cuts increased to \$95 million in 2015-16, with total funding to be reduced by at least \$342 million over four years.

Adjustments to national health reform funding are due to the federal Treasurer's desperate attempt to balance the federal budget by tinkering with the figures. The Commonwealth is rebasing the population estimates for the 2011 census and using updated Australian Institute of Health and Welfare measures of growth in health costs. This sneaky reduction in national health reform funding by the federal Labor government is made worse as the federal government is taking an additional \$40 million reduction to the National Healthcare Special Purpose Payment in 2011-12. This is also caused by the Commonwealth rebasing the 2011 census population figures and using updated Australian Institute of Health and Welfare growth in health cost measures. Fortunately, we have a health minister who is going to take this federal Treasurer to task. Indeed, a number of states and territories, including Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, have identified concerns with the methodology used to recalculate the population estimates and it is likely the Victorian Minister for Health will initiate an agenda item for discussion at the next Standing Council on Health meeting on 9 November 2012. This move will be supported by Minister Springborg as he is concerned about a situation where the federal Treasurer can seem to retrospectively cut millions of dollars out of the Queensland Health budget.

As if this was not bad enough, Treasurer Swan has also announced sneaky changes to the Medicare Benefits Schedule to restrict eligibility to telehealth services to those patients for whom distance is the most significant barrier to accessing specialist care. In particular, patients living in outer metropolitan areas and major cities will no longer be eligible. This is outrageous in a decentralised state such as Queensland. And if the attacks on health in our public hospital system were not enough, not just

public health was given a touch-up but private health as well. Treasurer Swan has announced two measures to reduce the cost of the private health insurance rebate by recalculating the indexation method and removing the rebate on the lifetime health cover loading component of private health insurance premiums. Such changes could have a potential impact in reducing private health insurance coverage and increasing demand on the public health system. I commend the motion to the House.

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

AYES, 72—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Sitting suspended from 1.05 pm to 2.30 pm.

COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for the conduct of commercial arbitration, to repeal the Commercial Arbitration Act 1990 and to make consequential amendments to the acts mentioned in schedule 1. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Commercial Arbitration Bill 2012 [[1409](#)].

Tabled paper: Commercial Arbitration Bill 2012, explanatory notes [[1410](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Commercial Arbitration Bill 2012. The Newman government is committed to updating and modernising Queensland's commercial arbitration law in line with national and international best practice. Arbitration is intended to provide parties to disputes with cost-effective, expedient access to an enforceable determination as an alternative to lengthy, expensive and public court proceedings. Industry frequently uses commercial arbitration to settle disputes, with resolution taking the form of an award which is enforceable by the court.

The bill adopts the provisions of a model bill developed by the former Standing Committee of Attorneys-General—SCAG. The model bill combines the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration and domestic commercial arbitration provisions. By replicating the model bill, Queensland's domestic commercial arbitration law and practice will align with all other Australian jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory and with the Commonwealth International Arbitration Act 1974. Progressing these reforms may also increase opportunities for Queensland arbitrators and arbitration facilities to compete for and facilitate the resolution of commercial disputes with flow-on effects to the local economy.

There is strong stakeholder support for the passage of the bill. Broadly, the bill applies to domestic commercial arbitration only and expressly recognises that the Commonwealth act governs international commercial arbitrations; defines the form and scope of arbitration agreements; provides for the selection, appointment and challenge of arbitrators; sets out an arbitrator's powers; contains procedural provisions; applies a confidentiality regime to the parties and arbitral tribunal alike but contains a consensual opt-out provision; addresses the making of awards and termination of proceedings, including costs and settlement; outlines preconditions for applications to a court to have an award set aside or to appeal on a question of law; and recognises interstate awards as binding and allows applications to a court for their enforcement.

The bill promotes autonomy and participation of parties, finality of binding awards, protection of confidentiality and access to alternative methods of dispute resolution. Parties can have a greater say in how proceedings are structured. If they cannot agree, the decision about procedures defaults to the arbitrator. Concerns about an arbitrator's impartiality, independence or qualifications can found a challenge to his or her appointment to be resolved by agreement or in default by the court. Interim-measure powers allow arbitrators to make decisions about discovery, the preservation of evidence and provision of security for costs. They are binding and enforceable upon application to the court.

The finality and binding nature of awards is strengthened through confining the grounds for court challenges. An optional appeals mechanism on questions of law cannot operate without the parties' consent and court's leave. Applications to set aside awards are restricted to specific grounds. They include incapacity, invalidity, breaches of natural justice, public policy or the arbitration agreement as it concerns the award or tribunal's composition and court decisions regarding the legality of arbitrating a

particular dispute's subject matter. The bill protects the finality of awards made interstate by recognising them as binding and providing for applications to court for enforcement of such awards. A statutory duty of confidence protects confidentiality of arbitration and award information. The parties can opt out and specific exceptions also apply. Arbitrators can allow disclosure after parties have been heard on the issue and a court can make decisions on disclosure in some circumstances.

The bill provides for procedural matters not present in the existing act, such as a requirement that parties provide statements of claim and defence in commencing proceedings and powers for arbitrators to make an award on settlement and to appoint an expert.

In conclusion to this exciting introduction of this exciting piece of legislation, I would like to respond to the matters raised by the former Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee in its report of 16 February 2012 recommending the passage of the lapsed Commercial Arbitration Bill 2011. I support the former government's recommendation that in future agreements of the Standing Council on Law and Justice and all proposed uniform legislation be tabled in the Legislative Assembly either immediately following the relevant agreement or at the time of the introduction of the relevant bill at the latest. I note that such documents pertaining to uniform commercial arbitration legislation were tabled before the former committee reported.

I also note the former committee's recommendation that the former Attorney-General should review the effectiveness of clause 5 of the bill, which states that the court must not intervene in the arbitration process unless expressly allowed under the act. In line with the former committee's recommendations, the department sought the Solicitor-General's advice on this clause. I am satisfied that the provision is appropriate from a constitutional perspective. I commend this bill to the House.

First Reading

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (2.36 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

GOLD COAST WATERWAYS AUTHORITY BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.37 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for the establishment of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, and to amend this act, the Public Service Act 2008, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995, the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Gold Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2012 [[1411](#)].

Tabled paper: Gold Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2012, explanatory notes [[1412](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2012. This bill will re-establish a Gold Coast Waterways Authority, which was abolished in 1990. Its re-establishment will deliver on the government's commitment to return control back to the local community. Through its re-establishment, the Gold Coast Broadwater and nearby waterways will no longer suffer from the previous Labor government's neglect. The Newman government will act to improve access to Gold Coast waterways by investing \$30 million to re-establish the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. The overarching goal is to help restore the Broadwater and surrounding Gold Coast waterways as a hub for recreational and tourist activity.

The operation of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority is essential to support tourism as one of Queensland's four economic pillars. The former authority was established under the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 1979 to manage and control the waterways and all harbour works within its legislated area. Following its abolition, a range of new planning and environmental arrangements emerged. The former authority's functions were dispersed across state and local government, with

some of these functions subject to more red tape and regulation. The purpose of re-establishing the Gold Coast Waterways Authority is to provide the best possible navigational access, boating infrastructure and waterways management for the people in the area.

The authority will operate at a reasonable cost to the community and government. The authority will act as a local waterways manager. It will oversee the sustainable use and development of waterways. It will achieve this without burdensome costs and excessive bureaucratic red tape which burdens local businesses and the community.

The Gold Coast is recognised as a key national centre for production of recreational craft. Much of this advantage derives from extensive waterways and accessibility to the ocean. Recreational boating has a strong appeal to the Gold Coast; some 40,000 of the state's 240,000 registered recreational vessels are held by Gold Coast residents with more than half of our registered recreational vessels in the state's south-east region. Water temperature and a perfect boating climate are not only attractive for recreation but highly suitable for fibre-glassing which further supports the Gold Coast's national and international profile as a producer of pleasure craft. The location makes it an ideal place for storing, servicing and enjoying such vessels. Much of this industry is concentrated around the Gold Coast marine precinct, Coomera River, Sanctuary Cove and the Broadwater.

A recent survey identified almost 650 actively trading marine industry businesses on the Gold Coast. It also estimated these businesses generated almost \$420 million in annual revenue. It is estimated that last year tourism generated annual revenue of almost \$1.4 billion. This was created through almost 2,500 actively trading businesses identified in the local tourism industry. We are working to deliver better Gold Coast waterways and provide certainty for local businesses, recreational users and those concerned with the sustainability of the Broadwater. This requires improving access to Gold Coast waterways, whether it is planning for the commercial use of the waterways or revitalising it as an attraction for tourists or the tens of thousands of registered recreational boats.

The authority's key areas of work will be reflected in the delivery of improved access and boating infrastructure, planning for the future management and use of Gold Coast waterways and promotion of marine recreational and tourism activities. However, these ambitions cannot be achieved without a firm legal foundation from which the authority can operate to deliver its responsibilities. This is why the new act is required to re-establish the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. Much has already been set in order to realise our election commitment. On 26 June the Premier approved the appointment of Gary Baildon as chair-designate of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Board. Mr Baildon was the Gold Coast mayor for eight years and served as the deputy mayor of the Gold Coast and Surfers Paradise councillor for six years. He has been widely involved in the local community and understands the needs of the area, having served as a member of the Gold Coast City Council Water, Beaches and Foreshores Committee for several years.

It is proposed that the board members of the new authority be appointed by the Governor in Council for a specified term, which will be no longer than three years. The board will comprise of seven members, including the independent chairperson, mayor of the Gold Coast City Council and five others. Importantly, in accordance with the government's view, the authority should make decisions and function autonomously from the Department of Transport and Main Roads. There are no plans for a departmental representative on this board. Public nominations have closed for interested community members to apply for a place on the board. The successful applicants have been drawn from people with marine, coastal or waterways planning or development backgrounds as well as from those with infrastructure engineering, commercial and marketing development experience. Their ultimate task will be to deliver positive outcomes for one of the Gold Coast's most important assets.

The board will be responsible for developing a 10-year strategy for the waterways and advising the government on how best to improve navigational access, availability of boating infrastructure and promote marine tourism and recreational activities. This strategic plan will consider a range of community, environmental and social needs and interests. The authority and its board will promote partnerships between government and the Gold Coast community to improve waterway access and infrastructure. These partnerships will be built on localised decision-making which will ensure government programs are aligned with community needs and expectations. The Gold Coast community will be represented in determining the priorities for the delivery of navigational access and boating infrastructure projects and the development of waterways management policies and legislation.

The authority will be responsible for waterways within the Gold Coast City Council local government area which reflects the area of responsibility of the former body. Its powers will stretch from the Logan River in the north to the Queensland-New South Wales border, including the inland waterways of the Gold Coast and out to the entrances of the Gold Coast Seaway and Tallebudgera and Currumbin Creeks. The authority will have a chief executive officer responsible for determining how to best use the \$30 million committed for the operation of the authority. Funds will be used to carry out dredging and boating infrastructure projects to improve access to Gold Coast waterways over the next four years. Operating from a local office, the chief executive officer will report to the new authority board

and will oversee the day-to-day operation, maintenance and management of Gold Coast waterways. All other access and boating infrastructure needs for waterways outside the authority's area of responsibility will continue to be a state responsibility.

The Gold Coast Waterways Authority will also operate and maintain key coastal engineering assets. These include the Gold Coast Seaway, Wavebreak Island and the sand bypassing system, which were built by the former authority to stabilise the local waterways. These assets have a major influence on dredging activities. The Gold Coast Seaway was built in 1986 and is hugely popular for water activities. As part of its responsibilities to maintain the whole Gold Coast waterway network, the authority will install and maintain aids to navigation such as beacons, buoys and leads to mark navigation channels and ensure the smooth and safe passage of vessels along these waterways. The authority will also manage and regulate on-water activities, including marine tourism activities like jet boat thrill rides, buoy moorings and anchoring areas, as well as associated amenity and on-water congestion issues.

Funding and delivery of navigational access and boating infrastructure projects to improve access to Gold Coast waterways will be included in the authority's portfolio. It will also undertake marine technical services such as hydrographic survey, coastal engineering and environmental assessments, to support the delivery of those projects. However, the re-established authority will not be responsible for development assessments which was a role undertaken by the former authority. This role will remain with the Gold Coast City Council and the Coordinator-General in accordance with the current state government planning framework. However, it will have a concurrence agency role for planning and development matters to implement the 10-year management strategy. By advising on the future use of their local waterways, the authority will be able to influence these matters without displacing existing state and local government planning and environmental responsibilities.

When it comes to wider matters which affect all Queensland waterways, the Department of Transport and Main Roads will continue to have regulatory responsibility. This will primarily relate to marine safety and marine pollution, responsibilities which remain a state-wide function. As a statutory entity, the authority will report to me with its operations and functions separate from the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

The re-establishment of the authority will be derived primarily from a re-organisation of existing departmental resources. Current office arrangements at the department's Gold Coast marine facility will be utilised to allow all authority and remaining transport staff to be housed in the existing building. This will minimise costs and facilitate good working relationships. The operational functions that would be transferred from the department to the Gold Coast Waterways Authority include sand bypassing, dredging and infrastructure delivery and maintenance, waterways management regulation, finance, media and communications, correspondence and other corporate functions. To achieve this, relevant program funding will be redirected to the authority along with relevant staff. The existing functions, funding and assets for navigational access, boating infrastructure, aids to navigation and waterways management within Maritime Safety Queensland will be transferred to establish the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. A service level agreement for corporate support with the Corporate Administration Agency will be established. This is the best option to ensure the authority is appropriately supported and operates efficiently and effectively while providing maximum independence from the department.

The authority will be funded via regular grants from the Department of Transport and Main Roads, similar to the way other statutory entities operate. Once funds are granted, they will have direct control over how these are used. However, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority will remain accountable to me as Minister for Transport and Main Roads and will be required to provide quarterly revenue and expenditure reporting. The relevant provisions of the Financial Accountability Act 2009 and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982 will apply. Quarterly performance reporting will include addressing access and boating infrastructure improvements, waterways management issues and compliance as well as revenue and expenditure reporting. There will be annual financial statements which will be audited by the Auditor-General, or delegate, as required by the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

The authority will be reviewed every four years to ensure it remains relevant and effective in improving the management of the Gold Coast waterways. The authority will also use existing transport legislation as part of its responsibilities to better manage the waterways, rather than duplicating existing legislative powers and requirements, creating unnecessary layers of bureaucracy and red tape. The authority will continue the practice of applying for the appropriate approvals before dredging or marine infrastructure works can be delivered. This ensures the environmental and planning impacts associated with those works are appropriately assessed. The establishment and work of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Board is part of our six-month action plan and I want to see the authority starting to deliver for the people of the Gold Coast by early 2013.

Additionally, the bill also amends the definition of 'bicycle' in the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 and inserts a new definition of 'power assisted bicycle'. The changes will allow regulations to specify types of power assisted bicycles that can be used in Queensland, pending

passage of the bill. After the bill is passed, it is proposed that a regulation will be made to allow a new type of power assisted bicycle that meets European standard 15194, known as a Pedalec. Those bicycles, with a maximum power output of 250 watts, are more powerful than existing power assisted bicycles, but also have more stringent safety features. The regulation will also continue to prohibit bicycles with petrol engines and allow those with electric motors with a maximum power output of 200 watts that do not have the benefit of additional safety features required under the European standard.

Finally, the bill contributes to the ongoing work my department undertakes for regulatory reform and repeals two obsolete pieces of legislation from the transport statute book; namely, the Australian Shipping Commission Authorization Act 1977 and the Brisbane River Tidal Lands Improvement Act 1927. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.50 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 21 August (see p. 1533).

Second Reading

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (2.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill has been the subject of much debate and attention since it was introduced in August this year. From the outset, I reiterate that the Newman government is committed to ensuring that Queensland workers have a more even split of public holidays throughout the year. The objective of the bill is to return the Queen's Birthday public holiday to its original date on the second Monday in June and relocate the Labour Day public holiday from May to the first Monday in October. Those changes will occur from 2013 onwards.

The bill also contains a number of consequential and clarifying amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and state awards and agreements. These amendments specify that a reference to 'Labour Day' in an award or agreement made under the IR Act means the day observed as the public holiday for that day under the Holidays Act and amend the definition of 'public holiday' in the IR Act to reflect the amended dates of observance of the Labour Day and Queen's Birthday public holidays.

At this point, I inform the House that I will be moving an amendment to the bill during consideration in detail. The bill now also makes a minor and technical amendment to the Oaths Act 1867. The objective of this amendment is to include a provision in the Oaths Act to require industrial commissioners to take the oath of allegiance and office that applies to members of the Industrial Court. Swearing an oath of this nature recognises the importance of the role commissioners undertake.

In returning to the bill, I note that the committee tabled its report on the bill on 6 September 2012. I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. In particular, I thank the members of the committee and its chair, the member for Condamine. I know that the committee is particularly busy with all the bills from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. I thank the committee for its patience in that regard. I now table the Queensland government's response to that report.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 9 on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, government response [\[1413\]](#).

The committee made three recommendations. I will address each of those recommendations in turn. The committee's first recommendation, that the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be passed, is welcomed.

The committee's second recommendation is that the bill be amended to delay the commencement of the bill until 2014, to lessen the impact, both socially and financially, on those community groups and other organisations that have already committed to activities over the currently scheduled 2013 Labour Day long weekend. The Queensland government does not support that recommendation. Delaying implementation of the public holiday arrangements proposed in the bill contributes to the continuation of the issues at the heart of these changes. These include the lack of consistency with public holiday arrangements in other states and territories and frequent disruptions to production and services for business and industry from the concentration of public holidays in the April-May period under the current arrangements. Delaying the proposed amendments will also lead to increased uncertainty in the community during 2013.

The committee's third recommendation is that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, in my response to the committee's report, provide the details of any cost-benefit analysis carried out by the department to the overall state of Queensland, and whether this has taken into account the impact on communities such as Charters Towers and Barcaldine, which have long-standing annual events scheduled over the Labour Day long weekend. There has been no cost-benefit analysis, either generally or in respect of those particular events. The policy of the Queensland government in proposing the movement of the relevant public holidays is nevertheless considered to be justified by the advantages those movements give to industry and the community. Those advantages are: uniformity with the majority of other states and territories; diminished disruptions to production and services for business and industry that result from the concentration of public holidays falling in quick succession in the April-May period—Anzac Day, three Easter public holidays and Labour Day—and moving the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in May will break up that concentration of public holidays; additional respite and rest to workers as a result of a more even spread of public holidays across the year; and reinstatement of the Queen's Birthday public holiday long weekend in June will help the Queensland tourism industry in general, because this is a traditionally quieter time of the year. The Queensland government notes that the committee has accepted the advantages in its report at page 13. In relation to this recommendation, the Queensland government repeats the comments made in response to recommendation 2 that, despite any impacts on particular groups or organisations, it is considered that the advantages to communities and businesses across the state outweigh any disadvantage suffered by individual events.

I would like to acknowledge those who have made submissions on the bill to the committee and address the key issues raised. I note that the committee received a number of submissions supporting the amendments made by the bill. These submissions were from individuals as well as organisations, including the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, the Australian Sugar Milling Council, the North Burnett Regional Council and the National Retail Association Ltd. I also note the submissions that have opposed moving the Labour Day public holiday on various grounds, including the significance of the current May date of the Labour Day public holiday to the labour movement in Queensland; the inconvenience that will be experienced for events already planned for the current Labour Day public holiday in May and/or the long weekend it creates at that time, particularly in the western districts; and the perceived lack of consultation and evidence in support of moving Labour Day.

While moving a public holiday from the first to the second half of the year has wide support, there is debate about which public holiday is most appropriate. Generally, the public holidays considered most appropriate to move are either Labour Day or the Queen's Birthday, because other public holidays are strongly linked to significant religious festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, or the commemoration of events of particular significance to Australia on or around particular dates, such as Australia Day and Anzac Day. Although the former government chose to move the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the second half of the year, in proposing to move Labour Day the policy of this government is justified by the increased advantages to industry and the community at large. I note the submission by the National Retail Association to the committee, which states—

A better alignment of public holidays across Australia will generate cost reductions and efficiencies for business. Currently on holidays unique to Brisbane, my organisation needs to roster staff to work to enable us to service our interstate clients (where no holiday is being celebrated). Given the current level of public holiday penalties, significant additional labour costs are incurred. I am sure this position is representative of many businesses located across the south-east corner in particular.

Consequently the improved alignment of public holidays that will result from the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will deliver reduced costs for many Queensland businesses and is supported by NRA.

This statement supports and leads into another advantage of the proposed amendment—that is, the diminished disruptions to production and services for business and industry that result from the concentration of public holidays falling in quick succession in the first half of the year. Moving the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in May will break up the concentration of public holidays that occur in the April-May period—Anzac Day, three Easter public holidays and Labour Day. The committee notes that the decision by the former government to move the Queen's Birthday public holiday from its original date in June did nothing to improve the disruptions caused by the clustering of public holidays at that time. Two further advantages to industry and the community include: additional respite and rest for

workers during the second half of the year as a result of a more even spread of public holidays across the year; and the reinstatement of the Queen's Birthday public holiday long weekend in June will help the Queensland tourism industry because this is a traditionally quieter time of the year.

I am aware of the inconvenience that will be experienced for events already planned around the May Labour Day long weekend in 2013 and for that reason the government has moved on the recommended amendments so as to provide maximum prior notice to the community of the changed arrangements. In relation to the perceived lack of consultation, the earlier consultation in the preparation of the 2011 amendments demonstrated that there is community and business support for the movement of the Labour Day holiday to the second half of the year.

Concerns have also been raised about the frequency of changes to public holiday arrangements in recent times. I acknowledge that changes to public holiday arrangements were only recently made by the former government. However, it is the policy position of this government that those changes did not sufficiently address the uneven distribution of public holidays throughout the year and the inconsistencies with the public holiday arrangements in the other Australian states and territories, which continue to hamper the realisation of the previously highlighted advantages that can result from properly adjusted public holiday arrangements. The changes proposed by this government are intended to achieve that objective.

There has also been a suggestion in the submission to the committee from the Local Government Association to consider delaying the changes proposed in the current bill until 2014. The government does not intend, however, to delay implementation of the public holiday arrangements proposed in the bill as to do so contributes to the continuation of the problems caused by the current arrangements.

Finally, submissions from the Shopping Centre Council of Australia and the Australian Sugar Milling Council raised two matters relating to other legislation, including: the removal of the status of the Labour Day public holiday as a closed day for large retail shops in South-East Queensland; and if a holiday such as Labour Day or the Queen's Birthday is to be moved to a later date, then the relevant legislation should make it clear that the holiday may be observed on any other date, in an enterprise, in circumstances where that is appropriate for the operational requirements of an affected business.

In relation to the first matter, Labour Day is a closed day for large retail shops throughout the state under both the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 and the various trading hours orders. There is no intention that this bill should alter those trading hours arrangements. With regard to the second matter, given that employers and employees in the private sector are subject to the Commonwealth industrial relations jurisdiction, this is a matter that is more appropriately addressed in the negotiation of a federal modern award or enterprise bargaining agreement.

As mentioned, the bill also seeks to make a late, minor technical amendment to the Oaths Act. The objective of this amendment is to include a provision in the Oaths Act to require industrial commissioners to take the oath of allegiance and office that applies to members of the Industrial Court. The amendment is considered necessary as it will formalise an ongoing practice. In addition, swearing an oath of this nature recognises the importance of the role commissioners undertake.

It is not unusual for tribunal members to swear an oath when taking up duties. For instance, members of the QIRC's federal counterpart, Fair Work Australia, are required to take an oath or affirmation before discharging the duties of their office. Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal members are also required to take or make an oath before they perform any function of the office.

This amendment is considered necessary as three commissioners have recently been appointed to the QIRC. To enable oaths to be taken as part of the welcome ceremonies for the new commissioners, an urgent legislative amendment is required and, as a consequence, this amendment has been attached to the holidays bill. The introduction of a late amendment in this manner is justified on the grounds that it is minor and of a technical nature and merely concerns the internal practices of a tribunal. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (3.04 pm): I rise in opposition to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This bill is another example of the LNP government's obsession with attacking working Queenslanders. It is a sad indictment that the LNP government would come into this House and attack a public holiday that has been commemorated in May by Queenslanders since 1891, and declared a public holiday by the Queensland parliament in 1901. It has been celebrated in May in Queensland since that time.

Labour Day is an important day for working people: to gather together to advance important issues; to celebrate hard won advancements; and to pay tribute to the people who made those advancements possible over previous generations. These include important advancements that many of us take for granted these days.

What are some of the issues that Labour Day represents? What are the advancements that the Premier has such disdain for? I will list just a few. Some are: the eight-hour day; the right to negotiate as a group rather than be left out on one's own; basic and fundamental workplace health and safety; the

minimum wage—the living wage as it became known; and the basic notion that men and women deserve a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. I think it is telling that the LNP has such little respect for the public holiday that represents these important milestones in Queensland's history and its core elements which have become the fabric of our society.

The significance of Labour Day being celebrated in Queensland in May was outlined by the Queensland government itself as part of the 2011 review, with its submission stating—

Labour Day has special significance for Queensland because of its link to events in the labour movement of the late nineteenth century.

One of the first Labour Day processions in the world was in Barcaldine on 1 May 1891 and the public holiday has been celebrated in Queensland on the first Monday in May since 1901.

Labour Day is celebrated by workers across the state and May 1 is deeply ingrained in Queensland's history as a day to recognise workers' rights.

As the committee report shows, this significance was also outlined in the submission by the Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Do you want to stand up and speak? You can speak.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! I call the member for Inala and ask that members listen to her in silence.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As the committee report shows, this significance was also outlined in the submission by the Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union. I want to share part of that submission with members now. It stated—

3. Labour Day, also referred to as "May Day" is well known to be the celebration of the achievement of the 8 hour day as well as the recognition of the role of workers in the broader economy. The terms Labour Day and May day are used interchangeably given the historical significance.
4. May Day has been celebrated in Queensland for over 100 years commemorating the first march of its kind in this state if not the country, occurring on the 1st of May 1891. Reference to the significance of this event is found in the works of many including Henry Lawson. His poem "Freedom's on the Wallaby" was written as a comment on the march itself.
5. The movement of May Day to October would ignore the historical significance of the event.

The Queensland Council of Unions also reflected on the significance of the event. It stated—

The Labour Day celebration in May each year is of special significance to workers and the labour movement as it recognises the first ever Labour Day procession held in Barcaldine on May 1, 1891. Further, the Labour Day public holiday is an important annual event that commemorates the granting of the eight-hour day for Australian workers and remembers those who struggled and succeeded to ensure decent and fair working conditions for Queensland and Australian workers.

Whilst Labour Day is of special significance to workers it also forms part of Queensland's history. The battles undertaken by workers in the late 1800's and early 1900's to achieve better working conditions are recorded as major events in the history of this state.

Moving the public holiday from May will take away the relevance of commemorating our industrial and general history on or around the anniversary of the first Labour day procession. For this historical reason the Labour Day public holiday should occur in May each year.

Further evidence of the significance of the day has been compiled by the Australian Council of Trade Unions. An extract from the ACTU website entitled 'History of Labour Day' provides further insight into the history of Labour Day. It states—

The linking of Labour Day to May Day occurred in Barcaldine, when on 1 May 1891 the first "May Day" procession in Queensland was held at the height of the pastoral strike. Brisbane held its first May Day March on 1 May 1893. In 1901 the day of the march was changed to the first Monday in May when it became a public holiday.

So from 1901—1901—this day became a public holiday in Queensland. What you want to do is rip that all apart and change it, and what for? For the sake of ideology.

Mr Bleijie: Joe Blow wouldn't even know what May Day is. They just like the public holiday.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Madam Deputy Speaker, I was completely silent during the Attorney-General's speech.

Mr Bleijie: I wish you weren't.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! That is fine but both sides need to be silent as well then.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you. The extract goes on to say—

Since the early part of this—

the 20th—

century Labour Day has continued to grow in significance in Queensland. It is now an occasion when unions, community groups, ethnic organisations and other people join in celebration.

Queensland is the only state in which the trade union movement recognises the day with major marches and activities—

not just in Brisbane but—

around the state.

It is a shame that this historic significance has not been recognised by the Premier or the Attorney-General in their positions on this bill. Nor it seems have the views of many sections of the Queensland community been taken into account. The Premier and the Attorney-General would do well to heed the concerns of some of their own backbench who recognise the importance of Labour Day to their own communities. The member for Gregory, for example, took the extraordinary step of lodging his own submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee—

Mr Crandon: How come union numbers are shrinking?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Condamine, I ask you to desist—sorry, member for Coomera. I apologise.

Mr Bleijie: I've got the latest stats.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You do not even want to hear what your member has said.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member for Gregory, for example, lodged his own submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee opposing the government's plans to move the Labour Day public holiday. Why did he do this? Because he knows what a negative impact this decision will have in his own region. What the member for Gregory has shown in this place—and perhaps, I think, following the example set by honourable men who preceded him—is that it is possible to be a passionate advocate for your own beliefs as well as showing humility, dignity and grace to others.

The member shows us that even those people who oppose the views of the Australian Labor Party and the labour movement can still respect the role of workers throughout our history. Even those who over the years disagreed with organised Labor can still celebrate the extraordinary advancement that the union movement has brought about in our society for their members and the broader community. As the member for Gregory points out in his submission—

This date in May is so much more than just a celebration of labour day to these dedicated people in the west. It is the weekend of a much organised and well planned Labour Day Festival.

This festival in Barcaldine is a much bigger event than the local agricultural show and showcases many things. There are many forms of racing held over this weekend. With country horse races and drag racing. Not to mention the very much anticipated goat races. There are many additional activities held over these few days concluding with the Labour Day parade on the Monday. In the small western communities of my electorate, these parades are supported by many organisations. The local kindergarten, schools, senior citizens, football and sporting groups to name a few. They are very much a carnival like event. Residents of close surrounding communities converge on Barcaldine to partake and be witnesses to this spectacular.

The views of the member for Gregory are shared by the Barcaldine Regional Council. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and I had the opportunity to hear firsthand the concerns of the council when we visited Barcaldine and central-western Queensland in late August. The mayor and his council make some very good points to support the retention of the Labour Day public holiday in May. Some of the points they made in their submission to the committee include—

- The event is scheduled around other Outback events.
- There is a huge spend in other communities as people extend their holiday.
- Sponsors have done their money cold—

and the council goes on to list the businesses that have sponsored the event. They continue—

- The event is scheduled around the peak Tourist season. Motels and airfares are booked from year to year. All neighbouring communities benefit from the accommodation demand.
- The May Day parade is for all community groups ie. Senior citizens, kids, kindergarten, aged care, rugby league etc.
- The event has created a date claimer for weddings, reunions etc.
- It is recognised on Queensland Tourism's "100 Things to Do" list.

I think the facts speak loud and clear. The council does not support the change. The member for Gregory, a member of this government, does not support the change. The impact will be felt very hard in western and regional communities.

Has anyone thought for a moment why the people out in the west cannot march in October? Has anyone given that any due consideration? Because its too hot. For anyone who understands, you cannot march. Let me make it very clear to this House: the union movement, the Labor Party, the members of the opposition here will be marching in May. We will continue to march in May. We will not march in October. We will honour Queensland's history and we will march in May. We will be there in May. In force we will be there.

Mr Bleijie: Well it's a Sunday. They won't be getting paid, so that's fine. They can march in October.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let's just call what the Attorney-General just said—'It's okay to march on a Sunday; that's fine because they won't be paid'?

Mr Bleijie: Absolutely. They can march every day of the week.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You're a disgrace.

Mr Bleijie: As long as they have leave from their employer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You're an absolute disgrace.

Mr Bleijie: I'm giving them October to march and they will get paid in October to march and they will march in October.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You are arrogant and you are a disgrace. These submissions highlight one undeniable point about this legislation. The government has shown a breathtaking disregard for community consultation in relation to this change. That has become a pattern. When the government weakened the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, took away the rights of workers and destroyed job security with the flick of a pen, there was no consultation. And the LNP continues to show no regard for the impact on real people and no hint of embarrassment or admission that they did not mention this once before the election. In fact, the LNP supported the public holiday arrangements put in place by the former government just some 10 months ago.

Mr Crandon: Because it was wrong 10 months ago. That's why.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Compare the current moves with the vigorous and genuine public consultation—

Mr Crandon: Your legislation was wrong.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—conducted by the former Labor government in 2011.

Mr Crandon: We're changing it now.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Coomera. You have a lot of contribution to make. I suggest you put your name on the list and get it out then. I call the member for Inala.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Hear, hear, Madam Deputy Speaker! Six weeks of consultation back then and public debate saw 24,505 Queenslanders respond to the public survey. The changes—which were outlined in a detailed discussion paper—were well considered, were part of broader changes to holidays and involved the introduction of transition provisions that Queenslanders are enjoying this year. I will not go into the discussion around changes to student-free days which formed part of the survey conducted by the government last year. But, in relation to the sensible suggestion that the Queen's Birthday holiday be moved to later in the year, 85 per cent of people supported that notion.

Mr Watts: That was a loaded question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: At least they were offered the chance to respond to a question.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me recap that for members because I do not think they quite grasp the concept: 24,505 people responded. In addition, 82 per cent supported the specific idea to move the Queen's Birthday holiday to a Monday in October. The approach of the former government was inclusive and brought the community with them. The result was a sensible solution for public holidays that had overwhelming public support. The support for Labor's changes and our position on this bill is evident for the parliament. In roughly the six weeks which the Labour Day petition was online, over 2,200 Queenslanders added their name to keep Labour Day in May. But we have seen no such support for the position of the Attorney-General.

The Attorney-General confirmed under questioning in estimates that the decision to move Labour Day from its historical connection in May was not borne out of widespread consultation. The Attorney-General admitted that it was his own decision to force this change through. He effectively admitted that this is nothing but an ideological move from an Attorney-General who does the reputation of the important role of first legal officer no favours with his approach. What is even more disturbing than not consulting the people of Queensland is that the Attorney-General did not even consult his own colleagues.

I have already referenced the position of the member for Gregory, but in estimates the Minister for Local Government also admitted that he was out of the loop in relation to the change to Labour Day. In an effort to distract the public from the debacle that is the Caltabiano affair, the Attorney-General went on a weekend media blitz informing Queenslanders that Labour Day would be changed next year despite the fact that the legislation has not yet been debated in this chamber nor have the recommendations of the committee been considered—a committee dominated by LNP members.

The arrogance of the LNP on this issue was further evidenced last week when a caller to Spencer Howson's program on ABC Radio inquired about what was happening with public holidays next year—and rightly so because a lot of people including people in my electorate are calling and asking what the situation is. Mr Howson made contact with the Attorney-General's office and was advised that Labour Day would be in October next year and that the Queen's Birthday holiday would revert back to June. Once again, there was no consideration from the government that the legislation was still before this parliament and had yet to be passed. It is also clear the government must be intending to ignore the

recommendations, as the Attorney-General has already outlined, of its own committee members which are contained in the committee report on this bill. This is further evidence that the LNP with its massive majority is treating this parliament with contempt. It is time the government admitted that this is nothing but a petty and ideological move by the Attorney-General and a Premier who hates anything and everything that contains the word 'l-a-b-o-u-r'.

Everybody knows that the Queen's Birthday weekend does not celebrate Queen Elizabeth's actual birthday. The move of the Queen's Birthday holiday was supported by the LNP last year and passed just 10 months ago. There is fundamentally no legitimate or compelling reason to make these changes. It dismisses the history of decent, everyday men and women who have gone before us who spent their lives fighting for a better, fairer society. Ironically, the LNP's position particularly hurts regional and rural communities. It hurts in particular rural and regional communities who proudly celebrate their history and have built up community and regional activities around this historical date. The only reason left as to why the Premier and his Attorney-General have taken this action is their attempt to stamp on the symbolism of Labour Day itself.

It reflects the incapacity of the Premier to recognise the value of those who have gone before us and his ability to be generous in spirit. As the Electrical Trades Union said so succinctly in a recent full-page advert in the *Courier-Mail*, 'Leave May Day in May, Newman. It is simply not yours to give away.' As I said before, it seems the Premier and his Attorney-General have confused their large majority with a monopoly on wisdom. Unfortunately, communities across the state are paying the price, and working men and women are suffering.

In conclusion, and as I said in my speech, the labour movement and people in Queensland will continue to March in May. We will not be marching in October. We will only be marching in May and we should leave the holiday here in May. When a Labor government returns to this place, Labour Day will be restored to its rightful place. I urge the House to oppose the bill.

 **Mr HOPPER** (Condamine—LNP) (3.25 pm): As chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, our committee has examined this bill in detail. The committee's task was to consider the policy outcomes to be achieved by this legislation as well as the application of fundamental legislative principles—that is, to consider whether the bill had sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of parliament.

The committee notes that the bill will achieve a better uniformity than currently exists by aligning the observance of the Queen's Birthday holiday with other states and territories and relocating Labour Day. The committee also noted that the number of public holidays observed in October in Australia will not change under this proposal as under the current arrangements. The date on which Queensland is to observe the Queen's Birthday holiday is the same day that New South Wales, the ACT and South Australia observe their Labour Day holiday. It could be considered that adequate uniformity currently exists in relation to actual days on which public holidays fall when not considering the reason for the holiday.

The committee also acknowledges that other states or territories may—like Queensland is doing now—choose to amend their own schedule of public holidays and this is beyond the control of the Queensland government. The committee considers that this would be unlikely as other states and territories currently achieve a greater level of uniformity with each other.

The committee acknowledges that there is a long and proud history associated with Labour Day being celebrated in May. However, given that the proposal is to achieve uniformity with other jurisdictions, the proposal in this bill, rather than the 2011 bill, best achieves these goals—that is, having a public holiday to observe the birthday of the sovereign in June and allowing Labour Day celebrations of the rights of workers to occur in October.

The committee notes the submission of the Electrical Trades Union of Employees, which submitted—

ANZAC Day, another public holiday in the first half of the year, is also a day of great significance because of what it stands for. On ANZAC Day we commemorate the dedication and sacrifices of the men and women who have served in the armed forces. You can imagine the public outrage that would ensue, and justifiably so, if there was a change to the date for observance of ANZAC Day. It would be unthinkable to consider moving the ANZAC Day public holiday, and for clarity, this is *not* what the ETU proposes. However for many working people, Labour Day assumes a similar significance, and to move the Labour Day holiday to October as proposed in the Bill would cause hurt and dismay to many people.

The committee does not consider, however, that by relocating the Labour Day holiday to October, as envisaged by this bill, it would cause wide scale disruption to celebrating Labour Day in October. It could be considered that it would allow greater national celebrations to occur and may even strengthen the significance of the day across the whole of Australia.

On balance, the committee considers there will be a long-term benefit in achieving greater opportunity of public holidays with other states and territories. In examining the proposed spread of public holidays throughout the year and how this would affect business and industry, the committee considered that the alignment of the Queen's Birthday and Labour Day public holidays with other states, as proposed under the bill, would cause the least disruption to business and industry. The committee

noted the main disruption occurs when the Easter weekend takes place in April coupled with Anzac Day in the same month and followed quickly by Labour Day in the first week of May. As stated above, when considering the issues of uniformity, there are only two public holidays which are not nationally observed which can readily be moved. It seems clear to the committee that by moving Labour Day, which is the closer of the two holidays, it will reduce the impact of the cluster of public holidays which is causing disruption to business.

The committee does not accept that the current position of the Queen's Birthday being observed in October satisfactorily alleviates the April-May concentration of public holidays. In relation to the distribution of public holidays throughout the year and additional respite and rest for workers in the second half of the year, as mentioned before, when considering the issue of uniformity, the committee noted that under the proposal contained in the bill there will be no actual change to the existing number of, or dates, on which public holidays are observed in Queensland during the second half of the year. The first Monday in October will be a public holiday in Queensland in 2013 and thereafter whether or not the bill is passed. The committee therefore does not consider this to be a relevant consideration in the examination of the bill.

The committee also recommended that an amendment to delay the commencement of the bill until 2014 would lessen the impact both socially and financially on those community groups and other organisations that have already committed to activities over the currently scheduled 2013, and we heard the Attorney address that earlier in his speech. He will not be putting forward that amendment. However, we also heard the argument from the Leader of the Opposition. In some respects we can understand some of those arguments as well.

There was also a recommendation that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, in his response to the committee's report, provide details of a cost-benefit analysis carried out—his department will not be doing that—to the overall state of Queensland and whether this has taken into account the impact on communities such as Charters Towers and Barcaldine. The committee examined this closely. Those communities no doubt would be impacted. That is why the committee asked for a slight delay in the implementation of this legislation. However, after a couple of years, no doubt the date will be taken in its due course. I think people will soon get used to it. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (3.31 pm): I rise to speak on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Newman government's decision to move Labour Day to October is an ideological attack—pure and simple. It is an attack on Queensland workers and it is one of many attacks that have been focused on Queensland workers since this LNP government came to power. Moving Labour Day is symbolic of this LNP government's disgust for the rights of working people and their disgust for their right to organise and to represent themselves through trade unions. This government is not content with simply sacking thousands of workers—Queensland workers—or taking away their job security or freezing their wages. Those opposite now want to trample on the one day that workers in Queensland have to celebrate their achievements—and have traditionally done so—for over a hundred years.

Let me remind the House of this government's track record on protecting the rights of hardworking Queenslanders. In just over seven months the Newman government has sacked 14,000 workers—and there are more to come; we know that—watered down the independence of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission; forced the Industrial Relations Commission to consider the government's fiscal strategy during pay deliberations; introduced laws allowing the government to bypass unions during pay negotiations and deal directly with employees; changed laws to require ballots for protected industrial action, making it much harder for workers to stand up for their rights and withdraw their labour; allowed the industrial relations minister to intervene in matters before the Industrial Relations Commission and unilaterally end industrial action at his whim; allowed legal representation for a broader range of Industrial Relations Commission matters, removing the level playing field and favouring the Queensland government and employer organisations; stripped away employee entitlements from industrial agreements, allowing more outsourcing and contracting out—that is, more job losses; and removed job security provisions for all government workers except police. Make no mistake: these moves are an ideological attack on the wages and conditions of teachers, nurses, drivers, firefighters, teacher aides, cleaners, council staff and their families.

Mr Bleijie: Ninety-five per cent of teachers signed up to it. Ninety-five per cent of teachers voted yes, no strike.

Ms TRAD: I will take that interjection from the Attorney-General because finally the government actually conceded to some of the demands of the Queensland Teachers Union. If the government had not entered into negotiations with the Queensland Teachers Union they would not—

Mr Bleijie: No strike under the Labor Party! No strike for us!

Ms TRAD: Yes, I know, and that is the point. The point is that the organisation of trade unions has come to the table and provided—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Member for Coomera! I call the member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: The point I was trying to make before being so rudely interrupted was that the trade unions have been playing a role in terms of delivering services and improving the wages and conditions of the members they represent in this state. The Attorney-General is trying to nobble trade unions and Queensland workers in this state and he knows it. This is purely an ideological attack and it is one that those opposite relished for the years that they languished on the opposition benches, and every Queensland worker knows it. For years it has been the labour movement, the trade union movement, that has fought for and won rights for working Queenslanders including—and I list them—workplace health and safety protection—tick! And what is happening now? I think the LNP government is looking at reforming that in some way, shape or form, but I am pretty sure the dice will be stacked against workers in this state. There is also the eight-hour working day, compensation for injuries, superannuation, weekends, paid annual leave, paid maternity leave. As I have discussed in this House previously, Labour Day has significant historical importance.

Mr Bleijie: You can't talk about superannuation. You don't believe in independent retirees. Everyone should be on the dole!

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Attorney-General! I call the member for South Brisbane.

Ms TRAD: It behoves the Attorney-General to actually embrace a level of maturity that should accompany his position as the chief law officer of this state instead of pretending that he is still at the school council in his home—

Mr Bleijie: I am just setting the facts straight.

Ms Palaszczuk: You know what they say about you down the courts.

Mr Bleijie: I know what they say about you down the courts and the seven of you opposite.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General—

Mr Bleijie: Bring back Cameron Dick!

Ms TRAD: Why, when there are so many in this House?

Mr Bleijie: Seven?

Ms TRAD: Dicks.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask you to withdraw that.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw that.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members that this is a place that is supposed to be respected.

Ms TRAD: The first Labour Day took place in Brisbane on 16 March 1861.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn the Attorney-General under standing order 253A.

Ms TRAD: The first Labour Day took place in Brisbane on 16 March 1861. The celebrations were limited to building workers, who had already secured an eight-hour working day, with the majority of workers excluded from the celebrations. However, the example set by Brisbane workers sparked similar international actions, with workers in the United States declaring 1 May to be the day of universal work stoppage. Historically, Labour Day and May Day in Queensland have gone hand in hand, recognising the international and local significance of the day and celebrating this solidarity with workers around the world.

Make no mistake, with the recent unprecedented attacks on workers in Queensland and despite the change in date, next year's Labour Day will be the biggest and most vocal this state has seen in years. In the LNP's rush to proclaim this as a move towards uniformity and despite the fact that on so many other issues they lag behind in terms of national uniformity and uniformity in respect of other categories, this is very much an attack on tradition; this is a disrespectful attack on Queensland workers and their representative organisations, the trade union movements; and it is an attack on decency in this state. With the LNP in power, workers have so much to protect. Workers have so much to fight for, as we have seen with thousands and thousands demonstrating across the state since the LNP took power. And they will continue to fight alongside the Labor Party to stand up for their rights in this state, including the right to celebrate May Day on 1 May.

Miss BARTON (Broadwater—LNP) (3.39 pm): I am not quite sure if I will be able to follow that interesting contribution. It is certainly a hard act to follow. I am not quite sure I can find an adequate adjective to describe that contribution. But I do rise today to speak to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I start by thanking my colleagues on the committee. We all put a lot of hard work into this particular bill and this particular report and I would like to thank them for their work. As always, I would like to thank the committee secretariat, because we would not be able to prepare the submissions that we prepare if it were not for the great work they do. I put on the record my thanks to them. I always say this, but I also acknowledge those people who made submissions to the committee.

As has been outlined by both the Attorney-General and my colleague the member for Condamine, the aim of this bill is to return the Queen's Birthday holiday to June and to move the Labour Day holiday to October. There are three reasons that have been outlined by the government for this. They are: we are seeking uniformity with other states that have a public holiday in the second half of the year; we are seeking to reduce and diminish the disruptions to production and services for business; and we are looking to add additional respite for workers—hardworking Queenslanders—during the second half of the year.

I certainly appreciate that the decision this government has taken has touched a nerve with those opposite. I appreciate the history of Labour Day and its links to the eight-hour-day movement. I know that for more than 100 years Labour Day has been celebrated on the first Monday of May. But surely one of the greatest advances of workers' rights is our ability to have a discussion on the issue of public holidays, with respite for workers a key factor in the debate and paramount in our minds.

We are an evolving society. The Queensland of 2012 is very different from the Queensland of more than 100 years ago. It is a great shame that the Labor Party and the union movement will not evolve with workers and will not evolve with the government. As I said, Queensland has evolved over the past 100 years. The fact that many Queensland workers more often than not work in excess of eight hours per day to support their families is key evidence of that. I would have thought that the union movement and the Labor Party would be happy to celebrate their achievements at any time of the year, but perhaps they are more concerned with petty politics than with the lives of hardworking Queenslanders.

There were many submissions received by the committee on this bill. We received submissions from many unions, but we also received many submissions from Queenslanders who felt so strongly on this issue that they were compelled to write to our committee. The Queensland Teachers Union said that the government had an obligation to ensure that the longest standing public holiday in Queensland is maintained in May. With all due respect to the Queensland Teachers Union, my understanding of the obligation of the government is to govern for all of Queensland and with the best interests of Queenslanders paramount in its mind. I would have thought that a decision that was supporting workers and supporting business was governing for all of Queensland with the best interests of the state in mind.

Mr Minnikin: The 85 per cent that are not in unions.

Miss BARTON: I take that interjection from the member for Chatsworth. The Rail, Tram and Bus Union suggested in its submission that the Queensland government is ignoring the historical significance of the first Monday in May. I personally believe that the significance of the event that is Labour Day is not lost by changing the date. It is a petty argument. The significance of the event would surely be the fellowship that our comrades in the opposition and the union movement are able to freely enjoy on the first Monday in October, alongside their Labor and union colleagues in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria.

The Electrical Trades Union made a startling comparison, where they sought to compare Labour Day and the sacrifices made by the early union movement to Anzac Day and the great sacrifices made by Australian sons on the battlefield of Europe in the Great War and the great men who have followed them and have been inspired by their service and their dedication to our country. As someone whose grandfather served this great nation in the Second World War and who is a strong supporter of the Returned and Services League and Legacy, I was personally very offended by this comparison. There is, in my opinion, no such comparison that can be made. The ETU argued that to move Labour Day from May to October would cause hurt and dismay to many people. However, I would argue that uniformity across the eastern seaboard of Australia would increase the fellowship of union comrades. They would be able to celebrate with their comrade colleagues in the ACT, in Victoria and in New South Wales.

One of the main achievements of this bill is to better align Queensland's public holidays with those observed interstate. Currently New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory all observe the Queen's Birthday public holiday in June, and until this year Queensland did also. The Northern Territory is the only other state or territory in Australia that observes Labour Day in May. Once the Queen's Birthday holiday is moved back to its rightful place in June, we can as a country, with the exception of Western Australia, come together to recognise the sovereign and the great contribution that the Queen makes to Australia and its community as its head of state.

The committee noted that the outcomes to be achieved by this bill increase uniformity across Australia more so than currently exists. The committee received five submissions on this bill that in particular supported it on the basis of uniformity, including from the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, the National Retail Association and the Local Government Association of Queensland. The National Retail Association's submission stated that a better alignment of public holidays across Australia will generate cost reductions and efficiencies for business, and the Shopping Centre Council called the alignment with southern states a sensible move.

As it currently stands in Queensland, there is much disruption to Queensland business in the first half of the year and very little respite for hardworking Queenslanders in the second half of the year. One of the key outcomes of this bill will be the decreased disturbance for businesses. Another key outcome will be the additional relief that workers will experience in the second half of the year. It is another chance for them to take a break with their families so they might travel across the length and breadth of this great state, or even stay at home and complete that long list of tasks that they keep saying they will finish. This move by this government has been heralded by the Shopping Centre Council of Australia as a sensible move, and I wholeheartedly agree.

I commend the Attorney-General. It pains me to say this, but I actually agree with the member for South Brisbane when she calls him a fine man. I think I might have to read *Hansard* and double-check what she said, because I must admit that I am not a great fan of agreeing with too many things the member for South Brisbane has to say. However, I wholeheartedly endorse her comment that the Attorney-General is a fine man, and I would go further and commend him as a great man who has done some fantastic work for the people of Queensland. I appreciate that this change has caused some consternation across some sectors of the Queensland community but, ultimately, this is a move that has been made by a government concerned with workers and their lifestyle and with business.

If I might make one final comment, the opposition have indicated that they intend to not support this bill. I would suggest that it is an indictment on the modern Australian Labor Party that they stand for unions and petty politics and that they do not stand for Australian and Queensland workers. I say shame on them and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (3.48 pm): It is a fact that Australians work longer and harder than workers in many other developed countries. Celebrating the gains that have been made since the uprising in Chicago with workers seeking an eight-hour day, right up to the present time, with many other hard-earned conditions, is an important tradition here in Queensland. Unfortunately, this LNP government is systematically attempting to reduce workers' rights and conditions in many ways and many sectors are now awakening to the mean-spirited and job-destroying soul of the LNP. Now with this bill before the House, the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, this government is attempting to break this most important link to past history, with international May Day celebrated in more than 80 countries around the world. Queensland's proud history since the shearers' strike in 1891, when the modern Australian Labor Party was born, is a very powerful symbolism for those of us on this side of the House and for many in our labour movement to keep these important links with our past.

Several years ago my husband and I enjoyed a journey on the *Spirit of the Outback* to take my parents, and my dad in particular, back to his birthplace of Longreach. Indeed, my grandfather was also born there and my great-grandmother, as one of the unsung heroes, is registered in the Stockman's Hall of Fame. She raised her large family of eight children following the death of my great-grandfather and was generally known in the district for her kind and friendly ways. My dad was in his early 90s when we took this journey—still quite spritely—and, having left the district with his family when he was eight, he was eager to return to his birthplace. His memory was still sharp and we had a great time visiting some older members of the family, visiting Winton and many of the surrounding districts, including Barcaldine.

This beautiful and historic ghost gum was still standing beside the railway station. It was a very special time for me to stand beside that place and recall the proud history and the struggles that workers have faced during these past decades. A visit to the Workers Heritage Centre was next on our itinerary and there we spent time with the legendary Pat Ogden. We should never turn our back on our history and on the memory of those who have forged so many gains for all workers, whether they are unionists or not. Every single worker in this country has benefited from their struggles. Thus the Labour Day celebration in Barcaldine is one of great significance. Many of our union members, workers and indeed members of our party make a pilgrimage to Barcy each year for this special time of significance and celebration. The temperature one would normally experience in Barcaldine in October would be in the vicinity of 40 degrees, and that would be so for other centres such as Mount Isa, Longreach, Emerald and so on. To envisage a public march and celebrations at that time of year is simply impossible. So I say to our Attorney-General, who has simply arbitrarily decided to move this significant date without considered direction and consultation, that it is a slap in the face to so many Queenslanders.

Let us be very clear: Queen Elizabeth II was born on 21 April. She actually shares her birthday with my husband. The significance of that date to celebrate her birth has no tradition, no basis and seems to be celebrated around the Commonwealth on many different days. When one measures up a day of huge significance for workers, and not just those in the Labor Party—remember, it is L-A-B-O-U-R Day, not L-A-B-O-R—this government is trampling on the symbolism of hard-won workers' rights and conditions gained over many years. The camaraderie of workers marching with their colleagues, the colourful shirts, balloons and placards with messages and those watching along the route, some with messages to convey—and they are not always in a positive way—are all part of what is an entire day of celebration. At the end of the march it is time for a drink with mates, catching up with friends, listening to a few speeches and lots of fun and rides for the children. Indeed, it is a great family day out.

I want to commend the Queensland Council of Unions for its decision to retain the Labour Day march in May. Even though it could mean travel may be limited without the Monday holiday, nonetheless the holiday weekend in October will never hold any real symbolic relevance for workers who wish to hold on to this important tradition. By changing these holidays, the government has also caused great difficulty for some who have organised events and celebrations for the Labour Day weekend in 2013. This is very late notice for events and accommodation which need to be booked a long way ahead and also for those who need to look to other events which may clash, causing difficulties with accommodation. In short, I believe this change has been undertaken with careless disregard for workers, and this is also displayed in their negotiations on wages and conditions in recent times. We have seen mass sackings, conditions lost and workers' rights being trampled upon. The government simply does not care for workers nor their families. I will not support such destruction of our workers' traditions.

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (3.54 pm): I rise in the House today to make a brief contribution in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I congratulate the Attorney-General for bringing forth this bill to rectify the changes the previous Labor government made to the public holiday arrangements in Queensland. In 2011 the Bligh government reviewed the Holidays Act 1983 and brought in the movement of the Queen's Birthday holiday to the first Monday in October. The aim was to more evenly distribute public holidays throughout the year, which was rendered ineffective with the choice to move the Queen's Birthday holiday instead of Labour Day.

In the review of the Holidays Act 1983 in December last year, a discussion paper titled *Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland* was put forward for public consideration and noted that the majority of public holidays fall with particular concentration in March to June, with no state-wide public holidays between June and December. However, Labor failed once again to get the balance right, with the Queen's Birthday holiday move to October doing little to ease this density early in the year. Easter holidays, Anzac Day and Labour Day remained in close timing proximity to each other from late March to early May. The attempt to link May Day and Labour Day has been largely dismissed across Australia in that Queensland's unions are almost alone in celebrating Labour Day on or around May Day. The date change of Labour Day is, and always has been, clearly the logical choice here. It creates a more even distribution of public holidays and allows the Queen's Birthday holiday and Labour Day to be consistent with New South Wales and other states.

As the member for Bulimba, I am representative of many schools, small businesses and workers, all of whom are prominent stakeholders of this bill. From feedback received from schools, this bill has been supported, as it will increase teaching days during the second term. Term 2 has been known for its continuous disruptions to the school week from the current cluster of public holidays. Public holidays are also a window of opportunity for many small businesses such as restaurants, cinemas and cafes like those located in the Oxford Street precinct in Bulimba, amongst many others in my electorate. Many members of the business community take advantage of workers visiting this area on that day in that local businesses greatly benefit from the influx of customers. By moving Labour Day to October, this will help maximise the business of these enterprises by significantly marginalising the dates of Anzac Day and Labour Day from one another. It will also strengthen profits at a point later in the year. Additionally, it will deliver reduced costs to businesses that deal with interstate clientele. Because Queensland is currently inconsistent with other Australian states, businesses such as these have to pay penalty rates to employees to continue business operations on public holidays.

Following the Easter break and with Anzac Day and Labour Day usually only a week or two apart, workers, particularly tradesmen, are caught in a chasm between holiday and work. This disruption to the working week continuously for up to four weeks is not practical for industry and trade. Not only would workers benefit from a reprieve later in the year; it would allow them to continue to trade smoothly during the May period. Therefore, the date change of Labour Day is obviously preferable. The other major achievement that this bill will bring about is creating a degree of consistency across the states of Australia, aligning Queensland with New South Wales, South Australia and ACT on both dates. This would be an advantage in terms of industry and business. For example, the Australian Securities Exchange is closed on Labour Day in New South Wales, South Australia, the ACT and WA on 1 October. On the first Monday in May, Queensland is the only Australian state for which the ASX is closed, so whilst the rest of the country is continuing to trade and invest Queensland is left behind.

Mr Crandon: Huge economic benefit then.

Mr DILLAWAY: The LNP government is committed to boosting Queensland's economy in all possible aspects. Moving Labour Day will ensure that the Queensland economy is maximised for operating business and industry at the same time as the majority of Australia, minimising interstate disruptions as a result of this irregularity. For a better future for Queensland's industries, communities and families, I stand in considerable favour for the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. Once again, I congratulate the Attorney-General on a commendable and logical amendment.

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.59 pm): I sometimes wonder why these types of bills are referred to a committee given the failure of the government to recognise the sound recommendations made by the committee to the Attorney-General. I am disappointed to have to make a contribution to

this debate and give voice to my increasing cynicism regarding the motives and substance of this government. Unusually, as a committee member I have been obliged to express my dissent within the report provided by the committee to the parliament. So without labouring the point, I certainly do not commend this bill to the House. As I said in my short statement of dissent, the government has provided no convincing justification for introducing the bill nor any coherent rationale for amending the schedule of public holidays contained in the Holidays Act 1983 that was amended only in November 2011. That was only 10 months ago—and I say that again: 10 months ago.

What I find most astounding is that at the time those amendments went through this parliament no member of the opposition, now the government, voted against it. In fact, when that legislation went through it put out a press release in support of it. I find it simply incredible that such a reversal of temperament and ideas is all of a sudden embraced with such new-found courage and determination by members of the government. Is it now only the fact that it has 78 members that this government is prepared to awake from its slumber and take any interest in this issue or make any contribution or, in this particular case, to actually have members present in the chamber? We all know that during the last debate nobody in the then opposition fronted up for it.

There were substantial reservations expressed by the members of the committee. Some of those reservations are reflected in the recommendations that were made by the committee. So I must express some recognition of the evident common sense of those members of the committee. It is indeed unfortunate that their influence is not greater within this government.

I turn now to the justification for the bill. The objective of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is to relocate the Labour Day public holiday from May to the first Monday in October. This is presently the date for the Queen's Birthday public holiday, which, as I have said, was established by the parliament less than a year ago. The changes that are to take effect in 2013 have not been supported by any rational argument. The explanations for the change provided by the Attorney-General are so shallow and weak that they embarrass this parliament.

I can recall my surprise when listening to the maiden speeches of so many new LNP members of this parliament. An extraordinary percentage of them stood in this chamber and declared their heartfelt and absolute loyalty to the Queen of Great Britain. I remember thinking to myself, 'Of all the issues that our communities are confronting, this issue is considered to be so significant by so many within the LNP as to be specifically highlighted in their maiden speeches.' Nobody in this chamber is in any doubt or in any way, shape or form unaware of the Attorney-General's enthusiasm for the Crown. This bill is two things: firstly, it provides the tory royalists the opportunity to restate their undying fidelity to the British monarch and, secondly—and more importantly—it provides those parties with the opportunity to assail and belittle the labour movement. As if this government has not done enough of that already in this term. Who is not aware of this government's general hostility to the union movement as demonstrated in principle and practice?

The committee did not hold public meetings when considering this bill. That is certainly regrettable. The committee received 20 submissions on the bill and I will reflect on the content of some of those as I proceed. I will start from the beginning of the process. The former government undertook a very lengthy review of the spread and allocation of public holidays in Queensland. In September 2011 a discussion paper titled *Getting the balance right: a proposal on holidays in Queensland* was produced and released for comment. Surprising as it may seem to those opposite, that is part of consultation. There was very substantial consultation associated with the paper and the subsequent recommendations made to the government reflected that consultation. That widely consulted outcome was to move the Queen's Birthday holiday in Queensland to the second half of the year from 2012, ideally September or October. As I said, this was a widely consulted position that resulted in the bill that was put to the parliament last year. As part of the development of that bill, nearly 25,000 people responded to surveys and 85 per cent of those supported moving the Queen's Birthday holiday to the second half of the year. In 2011, that bill went through this House without debate and was reported as receiving bipartisan support. So what has changed? The one thing that has changed is that we have a bunch of parliamentarians who seem to spend their lives fawning over the monarch.

This bill is nothing short of an attack on the labour movement and the traditions associated with it. For many Queenslanders, Labour Day in May is as significant as Australia Day and Anzac Day. As has been pointed out, the Queen's Birthday celebration in June has nothing to do with the Queen's actual birthday. Many submissions made to the committee reflected on the history of Labour Day and the extreme importance of it being connected to May Day. Who in Queensland is unaware of the strong connection between the eight-hour day, the struggle for the minimum wage, the rights to bargain collectively and the celebration of Labour Day? Australia set the progressive agenda in the late 19th century, but in Queensland that date is particularly important, because one of the first Labour Day processions in the world occurred in Barcaldine on 1 May 1891 and the public holiday has been celebrated in Queensland on the first Monday in May since 1901.

This disrespectful government is prepared to go to any lengths to stick it to the labour movement. In the same fashion that this government has treated its own workers, it intends to treat all Queenslanders who respect the effort of their forebears. What is even more incredible to me is that this

government is prepared to pull down the May Labour Day, this state's oldest surviving public holiday. Not even Joh and his cronies were stupid enough to stir the ants' nest in such a disrespectful, insensitive and arrogant fashion, which is what this bill reeks of.

There are other reasons this bill in its current form should not be supported. One of those is the incredibly short notice provided for the transition to the new dates. The committee made certain recommendations that, as I have said, have been rejected that would address some of those matters. However, to my mind these are quite secondary issues. It is enough to say that I found some of the submissions to the committee to be positively lightweight. It was difficult to find the thinnest thread of logic in some of the positions put and I reject them out of hand.

I cannot stress loudly enough my total opposition to the premise of this bill. I insist that all the evidence supports my assertion that this bill is nothing more than the result of a bunch of royalist Tories sticking it to the labour movement. Every government member with any decency and with any respect for their fellow Australians and Queenslanders should hang their head in shame. I will conclude with a simple statement of fact: working people in Queensland will not forget this period of insult piled on insult. They will never forget this and neither will I. What goes around comes around. I oppose this bill absolutely, because it has no merit whatsoever. The consideration of this bill was a waste of the committee's time and it is a waste of this parliament's time. The bill is deliberately intended to insult working people. This bill is no more than another shameful example of the small-minded, childish motives of this government. For members of this government who often tout their decency and sense of honour, this bill represents another compromise of their values. If those members opposite do not realise that this bill is unprincipled, there is little hope of them ever reaching the commanding height of adult behaviour. I will not be supporting the bill.

 **Mr GRIMWADE** (Morayfield—LNP) (4.09 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This bill proposes to relocate the Labour Day public holiday from May to the first Monday in October and to return the Queen's Birthday public holiday to its original date, the second Monday in June. Members of this parliament will understand that a review of Queensland public holidays was conducted by the previous government in 2011. This review revealed an overwhelming level of support to move a public holiday from the beginning of the calendar year to the end of the calendar year.

After reviewing the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's report on this legislation it became apparent that the review provided questions that were biased and loaded towards the direction the then government was heading rather than looking for an open review and seeking the thoughts of the community. To give members an idea of what I am referring to, one of the questions in the survey specifically stated, 'Do you agree with moving the Queen's Birthday public holiday from June to the second half of the year?' This clearly gives the survey participants only one option: to agree with this statement rather than provide feedback on the possibility of moving another public holiday further to the end of the year.

Participants in the 2011 review were able to make general comments on a whole range of issues being dealt with under the review in addition to answering the specific questions. There was no specific requirement to provide comments though in addition to answering those specific questions. However, on further review of the committee's work, it reported and revealed that 1,038 respondents chose to make comments in that review. It was interesting to note, as I further investigated through the committee's report, that the majority of those who chose to make comments on their survey indicated that they would prefer that they move the Labour Day public holiday rather than the Queen's Birthday public holiday if given that option. The committee's report also noted that there were 53 submissions received by the committee and, of those, 23 nominated the preference of Labour Day being moved and only 12 supported the move of the Queen's Birthday.

There is no doubt about it, the Australian way is to enjoy public holidays and spend some time with your family. Everyone looks forward to a long weekend, so to speak. Moving a public holiday from the beginning of the year to the rear would help assist the spread of public holidays we observe throughout the year. It would also have a number of other advantages, such as: providing uniformity with the majority of other states and territories where a public holiday is observed in October or early November; assist business and industry by breaking apart the concentration of public holidays that fall in close proximity to each other at the beginning of the year, which cause major disruptions and cash flow issues to business; and more evenly spread the public holidays and long weekends for families here in Queensland. Under the previous government, the decision was made to move the Queen's Birthday to the end of the year and leave the Labour Day holiday in May. Unfortunately, this did not fully address the concerns of evenly spreading the public holidays throughout the year. Moving the Labour Day public holiday from the first Monday in May and relocating this to the rear of the calendar year will assist in breaking up the cluster of public holidays that regularly occur around the April and May period. The decision to move the Queen's Birthday holiday from June to October by the previous government merely put the state of Queensland out of sync twice with the rest of the nation in a six-week period because most other eastern states celebrate a June holiday and not a May holiday. This bill means that

the Labour Day public holiday in Queensland will now be at the same time as New South Wales, South Australia and the ACT. It also means the Queen's Birthday holiday will be consistent with all other states and territories across Australia excluding Western Australia.

The syncing of these dates across the state and territories actually assists business and industry that operate across this nation. The review of the 2011 amendment to the Holidays Act 1983 showed strong community support to move the Labour Day public holiday as opposed to moving the Queen's Birthday public holiday. The move was also supported by a *Courier-Mail* survey earlier this year where more than 70 per cent of voters wanted the Labour Day holiday moved rather than the Queen's Birthday. It is important that, as we make decisions in this place on behalf of the people who we represent, we take their views into consideration. It is with this in mind and for the reasons I have outlined today during this debate that I will be supporting this bill tonight. I congratulate the Attorney for bringing it to the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (4.13 pm): I join the Leader of the Opposition in opposing this bill. It highlights the characteristics that are fast becoming the hallmark of the Newman LNP government: they fail to be upfront with the people of Queensland, they make decisions without consultation or consideration of their impact and they try to rewrite history by making claims that are completely at odds with their previous position on issues. Let us explore these characteristics in further detail. We are here today under false pretences thanks to the sneaky Newman government. Why? Because we are debating a bill that should not even be before the House. That is because these legislative amendments were never part of the LNP's plans until they gained a massive majority in the chamber and decided they could run roughshod over the wishes of Queenslanders.

Changing public holidays was not part of Campbell Newman's so-called can-do policies before the election. It was not part of his seven-day plan, his 30-day plan or even his 100-day plan. The fact is that there was no mention of this before or immediately after the election. It seems that the Premier is drunk on the power of this majority. He continues to go well beyond the mandate he was given on 24 March. So much for governing with humility, dignity and grace! Of course, this is not the first time this has been done. The list of significant legislative and social changes being made by the LNP that were not mentioned before the election is growing longer and longer. For example, there was no mention of mass changes to Queensland's industrial relations landscape; or scrapping civil union ceremonies; or removing the job security of virtually all government workers, such as nurses, teachers, fires and ambos; or re-criminalising altruistic surrogacy; or abolishing the Sentencing Advisory Council; or axing funding for the Queensland Working Women's Service; or sacking the Queensland Workplace Rights Ombudsman; or, recently, lifting the longstanding ban on uranium mining in Queensland. It is a pretty long list, but there is more. Before the election the Premier made no mention of sacking 14,000 government workers; or removing hard-won rights of teachers such as limits on class sizes; or closing the tuberculosis clinic at the PA Hospital; or scrapping the Cairns CBD upgrade; or scrapping the tenancy advisory service; or selling caravan parks that are home for hundreds of social housing tenants; or closing the Darling Downs Correctional Centre; or building a flash new building for himself and his ministers. And let us not forget that the Premier was silent about winding back Fitzgerald inquiry reforms to improve police training and reduce the risk of corruption; about shutting down Goprint; imposing extra taxes on the mining industry; and selling numerous government assets in the Brisbane CBD. It is a very long list for just six months in office.

The one thing that links virtually all of these cuts is the fact that there is no real policy basis for any of them; rather they are ideological. The Newman LNP government is just like every other tory government before it, implementing its ideological preference for small government and demonstrating its lack of compassion for workers and the disadvantaged. With two and a half years still to go, who knows what other nasty surprises are likely to be sprung on the people of Queensland by this callous and cold-hearted government.

Another feature of the Newman government's brief but disruptive administration is its failure to consult on significant reforms and changes such as these holiday amendments. As outlined in the explanatory notes for this bill, the government did not conduct any community consultation on the legislation. Instead, it refers to consultation conducted by the previous Labor government in 2011 as justification. Unfortunately, this is somewhat misleading from the Attorney-General as the results of last year's consultation do not provide the support he claims. We will say more on that later. At this point I want to concentrate on consultation—or lack thereof.

The Newman government is becoming a serial offender when it comes to failing to consult properly. Let us go back to the last sitting of parliament where we debated the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. That bill was introduced on Tuesday, 31 July 2012. An email calling for public submissions on the bill was released on Wednesday, 1 August 2012 with a closing date of Monday, 6 August, allowing just three working days for stakeholders to consider the bill and provide responses. A public briefing was then convened on Wednesday, 8 August 2012. The committee report was tabled three working days later, on Monday, 13 August. These time frames were implemented despite the government conceding in the explanatory notes that, just like this bill, no community consultation had occurred. Despite the short time frames, five stakeholders provided the committee with

submissions. It should be noted that the Queensland Law Society pointed out that it was possible the bill could have unintended consequences, but the short time frame had not allowed a proper and thorough analysis of the bill. The committee comments in the report state that it has become apparent to the committee from the comments made in submissions and the subsequent departmental response that lack of consultation on the bill had resulted in the misunderstanding by stakeholders of the intention of some aspects of the proposed amendments. The committee considered that this could have been prevented had appropriate consultation occurred. This lack of consultation is part of a distinct pattern of behaviour from the Newman government.

Short time frames have specifically been mentioned in reports by the government dominated portfolio committees on the following pieces of legislation introduced since the 2012 state election: the Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, which included the Finance and Administration Committee comment that realistic consultation time frames should be set; the Penalties and Sentences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, on which the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee commented that the bill would have been greatly enhanced if more time was allowed for consultation; and the Electricity (Early Termination) Amendment Bill 2012, on which the Finance and Administration Committee commented that the government should set realistic time frames for consultation. Let us not forget that the LNP government avoided committee scrutiny of the Parliament of Queensland and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2012 and the Treasury (Cost of Living) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This behaviour makes a mockery of the Premier's commitment to open and accountable government.

As mentioned before, I want to address the LNP's capacity to say one thing at a particular time and then completely change its view without even the slightest hint of embarrassment. In doing some research to speak on the bill I decided to see what the LNP's position had been on the amendments introduced by Labor less than a year ago. My first stop was *Hansard*, but there was nothing there—no speakers from the LNP. Then I recalled why. That was because it was the famous LNP no-show, or as one of my former colleagues described it, the great LNP canteen stampede. For those who are new to this House I will elaborate. It was around lunchtime of 29 November 2011, that disgraceful day when the entire LNP failed to show up to vote in this chamber not once, not twice, but three times. Three bills went through the House during a half-hour period and the lazy LNP was nowhere to be seen.

Of course, this abrogation of duty came as something of a surprise to the LNP candidate for Ashgrove, who was quizzed about it at a media conference. What was his take on the situation? The ABC quoted him as saying—

The fact that people weren't in the chamber disturbs me of course, but the bottom line is that these bills were going to go through and we supported them.

And further—

We were going to support these bills, so the fact they have gone through this way is ultimately immaterial.

Here we are, less than a year later, and the LNP has completely changed its position. Suddenly, the changes that it supported last year now have to be amended. Why? Once again it is ideology. The conservative LNP government is hell-bent on attacking anything and everything implemented by Labor. That includes attacking the Labour Day public holiday, because of its significance to workers and its link to the Labor Party here in Queensland.

The Attorney-General claims that last year's consultation supports this shift. He contends that the views expressed by some 500 respondents that the Labour Day holiday should be shifted to October justifies the LNP's decision. However, he conveniently fails to point out that the consultation attracted not 500 responses, not 5,000 responses, but 24,505 responses. Of those responses, a massive 85.3 per cent, or about 20,800 respondents, supported shifting the Queen's Birthday public holiday to October. So it appears that the Attorney-General has considered the views of 500 against those of more than 20,000 and decided that the views of 500 carry more weight. It is no wonder that the Attorney-General lists Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen as one of his idols. That sort of arithmetic and logic would have gone down well in Joh's gerrymander. I oppose the bill.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (4.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate. In the great state of Queensland, we enjoy the majority of our public holidays in the first half of the calendar year, predominantly around April and May. Those public holidays include the important and sacred Anzac Day, the Christian holiday for Easter and the acknowledged Labour Day holiday. The amendments proposed in the bill reverse the previous government's decision to move the Queen's Birthday public holiday from the second Monday in June to the first Monday in October and, instead, move Labour Day from May to this date.

The decision to keep the Queen's Birthday public holiday is consistent with all other states and territories, with the exception of Western Australia. The Queen's official birthday is the selected day on which the birthday of the monarch of the Commonwealth, currently Queen Elizabeth II, is officially celebrated. The sovereign's birthday was first officially marked in the United Kingdom in 1748. Since then, the date of the King's or the Queen's birthday has been determined throughout the British Empire and later the Commonwealth according to either different royal proclamations issued by the sovereign

or governor, or statute laws passed by the local parliament. The exact date of the celebration varies from country to country and, except for coincidence, does not fall on the date of the monarch's actual birthday. In the case of the present monarch, that date is 21 April 1926.

The changes to the Queensland public holiday schedule will come into effect in 2013. Moving the Labour Day public holiday to October will break up the concentration of public holidays that generally fall in the April-May period and provide a break to workers during the second half of the year, because of a more even spread of public holidays. The October date falls almost halfway between the dates of the Brisbane RNA holiday and Christmas Day. Therefore, moving Labour Day to the October date would result in a very even spread of the three public holidays between Anzac Day and Christmas, with seven weeks to the Queen's Birthday, nine weeks to the Brisbane RNA Show holiday, six and a half weeks to Labour Day and 11 and nine and a half weeks to Christmas. In Queensland, the Labour Day public holiday now will be at the same time as it is in New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. A review of the 2011 amendment to the Holiday Act 1983 found that most people were in favour of Labour Day being moved to the latter part of the year instead of the Queen's Birthday public holiday. In the review, 95 per cent of the respondents supported the move of the public holiday to the second half of the year.

The reinstatement of the Queen's Birthday public holiday to June will boost tourism at a traditionally quiet time of year. Having the Queen's Birthday long weekend in early June makes sense from a tourism perspective as it will encourage people to make the most of the extra day. This supports the government's objective of boosting one of our four pillars of the economy, tourism, which is very important to my electorate. This change should result in little, if any, additional costs to businesses in relation to penalty rates or paid days off, as the number of public holidays per year has not increased. It is simply changing the time of year during which Labour Day is observed.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry has welcomed and supported the state government in creating a more even spread of public holidays. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland is also supportive of the national consistency in regard to public holidays to ensure minimal disruption to Queensland businesses, particularly for those who operate across the state and territory borders. Ultimately, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland takes the view that the economy and jobs should take precedence over the timing of a specific public holiday.

Previously, unions have argued that Labour Day should remain on the traditional day as Queensland's first Labour Day was held on 1 May 1891 in Barcaldine. The first Labour Day parade in Australia was held in Barcy in the state's west, when striking shearers gathered under the Tree of Knowledge in 1891. The Queensland Council of Unions President, John Battams, has labelled the government's changes as 'petty', saying that in Queensland Labour Day has been celebrated on that day for more than a century. I feel that, unfortunately, unlike those opposite and the unions, few people recall what this day is about. While most of us enjoy the statutory holiday and miss work or school, few are even aware, much less remember, the importance of rituals and traditions associated with this event. In Queensland, the traditions began with the shearers' strike, which was one of Australia's earliest industrial disputes. The dispute was primarily between union and non-union workers. It resulted in the formation of a large camp of striking workers and there were minor incidents of sabotage and violence on both sides. The strike was poorly timed and when union workers ran out of food they were forced to come to terms. The outcome is credited as being one of the factors in the formation of the Labor Party.

Labour Day commemorates the achievements of the Australian labour movement. The celebration of Labour Day has its origins in the eight-hour day, as spoken about here today, which advocates eight hours of work, eight hours of recreation and eight hours of rest. In 1856, stonemasons and building workers on building sites in Melbourne stopped work and marched from the University of Melbourne to Parliament House to achieve an eight-hour day. Their direct action protest was a success and they are noted as the first organised workers in the world to achieve an eight-hour day with no loss of pay, which subsequently inspired the celebration of Labour Day and May Day. With all that said, I congratulate the minister on the legislation, I congratulate my colleagues who have spoken on the legislation and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. Basically, the bill sets out uniformity of public holidays across Australia, bringing Queensland into line with other jurisdictions to reduce disruption for retail business, hospitality business, tourism business and other such ventures, which are very important, and to spread out our public holidays that currently are bunched up. A lot has been said here about history and other things. Some have said that we should not move things. Anzac Day is absolutely immovable. If you are going to have a public holiday on the first Monday of May, it will always be within one or two weeks of Anzac Day. Therefore, it will always cause disruption, it will always cause problems for business and it will always cause difficulties when rostering people, because you will have two public holidays within, at best, a 14-day period. The only logical thing to do is, in fact, move Labour Day, because of how it currently lines up with Anzac Day.

Obviously, in Queensland there is a history to Labour Day and a lot has been spoken about that. However, let us look at why in Queensland Labour Day was originally held on 1 May and why in other jurisdictions it is held on 1 May. People talk about tradition and history. In the northern hemisphere, May Day was a spring festival dating back to Roman times. It has been brought up to date in different jurisdictions and it has been legislated for, but it has always been celebrated as a pagan holiday. The suggestion is that Labour Day should always be tied to May Day. However, in the northern hemisphere Labour Day has been celebrated in May because there was already a May Day celebration. It is not the other way around. It is not that Labour Day had to be in May; it has been celebrated in May because it was already a public holiday in many jurisdictions and there was a call for an international march to celebrate eight-hour movements and other movements such as that.

In Australia that is not the case because many states celebrate Labour Day at other times. There has been some discussion that the Northern Territory celebrates Labour Day in May. That is actually not true. The Northern Territory actually does not celebrate Labour Day. They have May Day in May. Labour Day is celebrated in New South Wales in October and in South Australia in October. The Eight-Hour Day in Tasmania is in March, in Victoria it is in March, in Western Australia it moves around a little bit but generally it is in March. Conversely, the Queen's Birthday holiday is held in New South Wales in June, in South Australia in June, in Tasmania in June, in Victoria in June, in Western Australia usually in June, in the ACT in June and in the Northern Territory in June.

People have suggested that we move one holiday or the other. We cannot move Anzac Day and it will always collide with Labour Day if it is held in May. The only reason it was held in May is that it was the May Day holiday in many jurisdictions around the world. The obvious thing to do is exactly what has been put forward—that is to move the Queen's Birthday holiday back to June to line us up with all other jurisdictions and to move Labour Day to October.

It is not an attack on workers' rights. It is just bringing it into the modern world and lining the holiday up with jurisdictions across Australia. In actual fact, to get unionists up from other states will be much easier because they too will have a long weekend on that weekend in October. To suggest that it is an attack on peoples' rights and all of the other things that have been suggested in the chamber today is an absolute nonsense. We are not taking it away.

We are not going to do what the Northern Territory does and not have a Labour Day. We are just saying that we will move it to October because it makes good sense for the people of Queensland. It makes good sense for people who run small businesses. It makes good sense for people who are in tourism. It certainly makes good sense for people who have been so used to having so many holidays at the start of the year and then have the long haul to Christmas after the Queen's Birthday holiday that has been in June historically.

Those of us who have children have had to deal with the situation where the public holidays do not line up with pupil-free days. For schools trying to do their scheduling around the public holidays of Easter it has always been difficult. I think it is a very sensible proposal. It has been done to help business. It has been done to unite us across the country with some public holiday weekends. I think, Attorney-General, that it is a good suggestion. Benefits will come to business operators and other people. I am sure that in a few years time the labour movement will be happily marching in October.

The people of Barcaldine always have the opportunity to have a local public holiday by moving a show day or something else. They are probably the only people who I think deserve some consideration in this. For them it is a historical event that happened in their township. They do deserve some consideration. It is an event for them. I can see how people would travel to Barcaldine for that event. But as for the rest of Queensland, I think the Attorney-General's proposal of moving the holidays to the proposed dates absolutely makes sense. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (4.33 pm): I rise to speak on the Holiday and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The long weekend is a great Aussie tradition and one that Queenslanders warmly embrace. There is nothing better than after a hard week of work to pack up the car and the kids, put the surfboards on the roof racks and travel to the coast to enjoy our beautiful beaches or alternatively to go inland to enjoy the serenity of the bush.

One of the issues we have in this state, and which previous speakers have mentioned, is that all these long weekend opportunities happen in the first half of the year—Australia Day, Easter, Anzac Day, Labour Day and the Queen's Birthday. The proliferation of holidays in the first half of the year is not a good thing. It is not a good thing for business. It is not a good thing for the public when it means we do not have a long weekend between June and Christmas. Going the last six months of the year without a break, especially as the year grinds on, is something that should be remedied.

The question then is which day we move to actually remedy the situation. Moving the Labour Day holiday to October makes absolute sense. It is the public holiday which has the greatest portability. It is the holiday that will have the least impact on the community. It is the holiday that will provide the best spacing between the public holidays throughout the year.

Members of the opposition and leaders of trade unions must accept the fact that unions are organisations that are quickly losing their relevance. The membership of unions has declined markedly over the last two decades. In 1992 some 43 per cent of males and 35 per cent of females were members of a union. Today that figure is 18 per cent. They have lost over half their membership in 20 years. Most of the unionists today come from the nursing, teaching and public sectors.

I know many people in those sectors who do not want to be part of the union but feel they have to. I was told by many teachers that they did not want to strike during the recent dispute. If teachers could get some form of insurance cover to protect themselves against vexatious claims of abuse, the membership of the Teachers Union would plummet overnight. The number of active unionists is getting so low that during the recent marches on state parliament, supposedly by the public sector, building and construction workers were ordered to down their tools by union heavies and join the protest marches. Again, I know people in the construction industry who did that under pressure and with disgust.

Why are they losing their relevance? Why? Because the average Queensland worker has no interest in left wing ideology that belongs to the 1950s. They recoil in disgust when they hear about the fraud that has taken place in many unions, typified best by the shenanigans currently occurring in the Health Services Union. They laugh when they hear union members refer to each other as comrade and are embarrassed when they hear union conferences singing the communist war cry, solidarity. If this trend of dwindling membership continues, those opposite will have more to worry about than when the public holiday should be. They will be more concerned about Labour Day becoming a remembrance day rather than a celebration.

The amendments suggested by the Attorney-General make good sense for a whole range of different reasons. Moving the Labour Day holiday means that our long weekends will be more evenly spaced throughout the year. It is good for tourism as the public holiday in October will usually fall within the school holidays. The tourism industry made mention of the fact that that was a boon for their industry this year. Moving the Labour Day holiday, as has already been mentioned, will bring us into line with three other states and territories—New South Wales, South Australia and the ACT.

Even more significantly, and which the Attorney-General may not appreciate, the holiday in October will mean that the NRL grand final which is on the Sunday night can now be enjoyed by families. They do not have to be worried about getting up and going to work the next day. That has been a real bane for Queensland supporters of rugby league.

This bill is a no-brainer. The feedback from the public is overwhelmingly in favour of it. This bill makes good common sense. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (4.38 pm): In speaking to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I will read a letter from the Charters Towers Country Music Inc. with regard to this bill and the proposed changes. It states—

This festival of 35 years is the largest amateur music competition in Australia. It has established itself as an iconic event on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the Labour Day weekend. It is also the final and by far the largest event in 10 Days in the Towers which brings together a diverse range of activities for visitors and locals to enjoy. Both the Charters Towers Country Music Festival and 10 Days in the Towers are reliant on the public holiday or holidays, and the autumn timing for several reasons.

1. April-May was chosen as that period offers milder weather. The main stage is outdoors, and the other venues are large, non-airconditioned sheds. October would be too hot, with an average maximum daily temperature of 32.4 degrees C, compared with 27.2 degrees C in May.
2. The start of milder weather heralds the arrival of the travelling public on which the Festival relies. Numbers of visitors to the Charters Towers Visitor Information Centre from outside the local area peak during the autumn and winter, and are down by 42% by October. eg. October 2011: 2053 visitors, May 2012: 2912 visitors. The visitor numbers also reflect the importance of the festival, but the same positive impact on the festival and local business cannot be expected in October.
3. Judges, guest artists, technicians and stall operators are drawn from all over Australia. Time to travel is important, and for competitors in particular, who also come from all over Australia, the decision whether or not to attend often comes down to how much time off work is involved. The present arrangement by which the Grand Final occurs on Sunday night and people can travel on Monday has proven to be very popular. The premise of the festival is for competitors to progress through the heats on Saturday and Sunday to the Grand Final on Sunday night. Saturday night is set aside for a cabaret with well-known guest artists, and is the main money-earner, aided by the fact additional Townsville people attend the cabaret and return home on the Sunday. The festival cannot withstand the financial impact if it is shortened to two days.
4. The Festival is run by volunteers. Setting up and pulling down the venues at the Charters Towers Showground are time-consuming tasks, and public holidays greatly help with the availability of volunteers and community groups. In fact, the Monday holiday is crucial to the capacity of volunteers to disassemble everything, clean-up and put things into storage for another year. Some local community groups are paid to assist, and for them this is one of their main fund-raising opportunities made possible because of the public holiday.
5. The next public holiday in the autumn-winter period is the Queens Birthday weekend. The Charters Towers Showgrounds are unavailable at this time because the Charters Towers Motor Show and Swap Meet occurs there on that weekend—another iconic and long-standing event. In fact, Phil Jones, from that Committee was quoted in the local newspaper The Northern Miner as stating, "News that the Queens Birthday would remain in June was good news to the club. It makes it a lot easier for people to travel."

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Lyn Verra

Secretary, Charters Towers Country Music Inc.

Those issues are the same across the state and that is what will happen by changing this holiday period. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House. I feel that there are much more important issues out there such as the Townsville Biosecurity Unit being transferred to Brisbane, and I have tabled petitions from up to 4,000 people about that. That is a more important issue that we should be looking at.

Mr PUCCI (Logan—LNP) (4.42 pm): I rise today in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This bill sets out to streamline the Labour Day public holiday with the bulk of the states in Australia by moving it from May to October and returning the celebrations of Her Majesty's birthday to June, where it rightfully belongs.

As a Queenslander, I know that one of the core values we embrace is tradition. Tradition forms our character. It forms our identity. Since the passing of His Majesty King George V in 1936, Queenslanders have honoured the birth of our monarch in June. This tradition is more than just a public holiday; it is a day that is part of our national identity. In the United Kingdom the Queen's Birthday is a national day of celebration, celebrating not just the birth of our sovereign but decades of patriotism and service to a nation and the Commonwealth. It is a tradition that we here in Queensland should continue.

Queenslanders deserve to rightly celebrate our monarch's birthday like those in our fellow states. Last year the former government deemed it prudent to move the Queen's Birthday holiday for nothing more than the sake of it—yet another endeavour the tired old Bligh government embarked upon with no legitimate purpose or thought. Preservation of tradition is essential for the development of our society. We must be able to pass on and instil a sense of national pride within our youth. By restoring the Queen's Birthday holiday to its rightful place, the national identity for Queenslanders will be in keeping with those in other states in Australia.

I must point out that many groups in Australia work tirelessly to maintain and preserve our traditional observances like the Queen's Birthday. I single out efforts of the Australian Monarchist League and their Queensland branch, whose dedication in promoting and celebrating our monarch's diamond jubilee and the response it gained from the public demonstrates why our sovereign's birthday holiday must be returned to June. On the eve of the royal visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, the connections to Australia and Queensland's heritage are firmer than ever. A commitment to that connection is to align our state with our sister states and solidify the traditions of our great state.

Besides the preservation and restoration of traditional observances, this bill sets out to generate a reasonable balance in public holidays by appropriately distributing them throughout the calendar year. This will see a reprieve for businesses and industries that are significantly impacted by the high rate of public holidays within the April-May period which currently disrupt their operational effectiveness. Our government is about supporting small business. It is about supporting the everyday Queenslander and their ability to thrive in a commercially challenging economy.

With ailments such as the carbon tax, the rise in the cost of living and various other economic burdens, some businesses specialising in hospitality within my electorate of Logan say it would be more financially viable to remain closed than operate during the April-May period when public holidays are bountiful. Restoring Her Majesty's birthday holiday to June and by moving the Labour Day holiday to October and having an even distribution of public holidays across the year will undoubtedly ease the burden on small traders.

Furthermore, a public holiday is a welcome reprieve for Queenslanders. It is to be enjoyed. It is a day that one looks forward to. It is a day that should boost our economy, not be a hindrance to it. How many Queenslanders plan short holidays on these occasions? How many host friends and family barbecues and the like? How many hit the outdoors and enjoy what our great state has to offer? We must return a sense of structure and compatibility with our sister states. We must give our small businesses in the hospitality industry a chance to earn a profit, to generate revenue as well as providing our workforce with a gentle reprieve from time to time. I am proud of our traditions. I understand the fight that our local businesses undertake every day to turn a profit in tough times, and that is why I am proud to commend this bill to the House.

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (4.47 pm): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise to participate in the debate on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. As I have listened to members' contributions and after studying the parliamentary committee report No. 9, I have had an opportunity to reflect on the bills which this new government has introduced and to consider the importance of not just this bill but a range of other bills which the government has deemed to be of paramount importance that they must be debated and finalised before Christmas 2012. I cast my mind back to only November last year when the previous government introduced a similar bill but with different dates. I cast my mind to the submissions that were made during that debate.

I certainly do not intend to go over matters that have already been raised by members from both sides of this chamber. Suffice it to say that I think there is more important legislation that is worthy of being debated. My view is that this is simply an attempt by the government to send a strong message, which they certainly have the power to do. I will not be supporting the bill. I think it is simply an attempt

by the government to show the Labor Party and the labour movement that there is a change of government in Queensland. I look forward to the next bill being introduced for debate later this afternoon.

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (4.48 pm): In the estimates committee hearing in this parliament we heard the Attorney-General admit, under some duress of course as usual, that he ignored the views of Queenslanders and did not go out for public consultation in relation to Labour Day. Why is this? Why are they being ignored? Because of this childish, ideologically driven Attorney-General and the arrogant LNP government. The Attorney-General did not even consult with the people sitting beside him or the people sitting around him. So what hope does the Queensland public have? None.

This arrogant government has dismissed 110 years of Queensland history, and why? Why would they do it? That is because of their arrogance and their petty attitude towards the workers of Queensland. The workers of Queensland want to celebrate the achievements of their forebears—workers who stood up against the childish bullies that this LNP government wishes to emulate. They stood up for their rights. They stood up for their fellow workers. They stood up for their families and they stood up for future generations. Their sacrifice brought us a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. Their sacrifice brought us holidays and also sick leave. Of course, sick leave seems to be so cherished these days by LNP ministers opposite. Their sacrifice brought us safer workplaces and laws to protect them from injury. Their sacrifice brought us the living conditions we have today. They were not given to us by previous generations of bosses. No way! They were hard fought for by generations of Queenslanders and workers throughout the world.

Labour Day is an important day to recognise these achievements and the struggles workers face in the present and also in the future—something clearly shown by this LNP government, which hunts in packs like killer whales plucking off at will public servants and workers' rights across the state. The attacks by this LNP government on workers compensation is right in the front of every worker's mind in Queensland. Their ridiculous and outrageous attack on ambulance officers and firefighters throughout this state—the mind simply boggles. This government takes away the consultation with firefighters and ambulance officers about government purchases of important equipment that they use for their own safety and that of the people whom they are employed to help. This government aims to take meal allowances off paramedics who work right through their shifts saving lives.

This is why Labour Day is so important to Queenslanders. This is why standing up with them, standing up for them and appreciating their work is so important. Everybody in Queensland can show their support by going to www.standingwithus.com and helping us to help those in the community in need in any emergency. The website Stand for Queensland is another site where information about the petty, mean and tricky attacks by this LNP government on workers, their families and all of our rights can be found. It is a place for workers who believe that it is not the LNP Newman government's place to make decisions like this—moving a sacred day for many Queenslanders—without consultation. So much for the farce that this government pretends to be open and accountable! What a joke! There was no consultation at all. Of course, we have this 'P-plate' Attorney-General, who claims that union membership is not growing. Mr 'P-plate' Attorney-General, you are wrong, wrong, wrong yet again. Yet again you show your complete and utter ignorance of workers in Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Member for Bundamba, please address your comments through the chair.

Mrs MILLER: The Attorney-General shows a complete ignorance of the issues in his portfolio. He bases his decisions on wrong information and on what his tory mates want to think, but that is not what happens in the real world. In the real world union membership increased by 46,900 workers in Australia in the last 12 months. That is 46,900 people who have seen the benefits of working together for a better world for all of them. These are ABS statistics. Is the Attorney-General going to tell us that he does not believe the Australian Bureau of Statistics? The increase was 46,900 union members. That is about the size of the entire population of Gladstone. That is a huge number of people. In the last 12 months union membership rose, and it rose by four per cent, which is more than this miserable lot offered in relation to the EBA increases. Four seems to be a bit of an odd number for the LNP; they cannot seem to quite count that far. Again, this Attorney-General is wrong, wrong, wrong. Worker representation through the union movement is going up, up, up and we cannot wait to run some of them in the seats against the members opposite. Unions have been on a growing trend of continued growth of membership in Queensland for the last five years. Despite the false claims of this LNP, there has been continual growth. Union numbers are up, credibility of the government is down—way down. That is factual information from the union movement.

Queensland is leading the way with the growth of membership because of the workers' side of politics. In Queensland we do not just fall in line with other states. We do not toe the Sydney and Melbourne lines; we stand up for Queensland and we lead the way. We aim to do better than the rest of Queensland. We strive to get more people protected by unions and we strive for better laws to protect their rights and working conditions. This 'P-plate' Attorney-General just wants to fall in line with the other states. That is his argument. It is a pretty weak argument.

Queenslanders have celebrated Labour Day in Queensland since 1891. It has been a public holiday since 1901. The labour movement, workers, unions and Labor Party members will continue to celebrate Labour Day in Queensland in May just as we have done since well before this Attorney-General was even born and just as we will continue to do after he has left this place. It is not just a public holiday to us; it is a mark, it is a reflection, it is a symbol of the sacrifices made for the things that are most important to us. Certainly it is very important to Ipswich. In Ipswich Labour Day has been run year in, year out. We have marched on a Saturday. We have also marched on the Monday in Brisbane. Many, many workers from Ipswich travel by train down to Brisbane to march. For the last few years we have run the second most successful race day at the Bundamba racetrack. It is called the Ipswich Labour Day race day. Thousands and thousands of workers and their families come to the racetrack to celebrate Labour Day in Queensland.

This Attorney-General will go down in the history of this state as the most shameful person due to moving Labour Day—or trying to move it. It is a great attempt at ideological warfare against workers. That is what this is about. We will be there marching in May because it is Labour Day and nothing that this government will do will stop any one of us. We will also be holding our Ipswich Labour Day race day as well. You try to change things, but you will never change our heart. You will never change our soul. You will never change our minds. You will not change any of that. You will not do it. You will never do it. You think that you can just put a line through it and that is it. But once it is in your heart and in your soul, you are proud. I am a proud worker and I am a proud unionist.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.58 pm), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The bill will, from 2013, result in a permanent move of the Labour Day public holiday, which is currently celebrated in May, to the first Monday in October.

Mrs Miller: Only until we get back in.

Mr BLEIJIE: And let it be a long, long time before you get back in, member for Bundamba. Then the workers will have forgotten her great contribution to this debate today.

This bill will result in the permanent move of the Labour Day public holiday, currently celebrated in May, to the first Monday in October and it will reinstate the Queen's Birthday public holiday to the second Monday in June. Consequential and clarifying amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and state awards and agreements are also made to specify that a reference to Labour Day in an award or agreement made under the IR Act means the day observed as the public holiday for that day under the Holidays Act. Secondly, it will amend the definition of 'public holiday' in the IR Act to reflect the amended dates of observance of the Labour Day and Queen's Birthday public holidays.

I remind the House that, as I stated in my earlier speech, I will be moving a late amendment to the bill during consideration in detail. This amendment involves a minor and technical amendment to the Oaths Act 1867. The purpose of that amendment is to extend the arrangement by which Industrial Court members take the oath of allegiance and of office before commencing to hold office as members of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

The proposed changes in respect of the public holiday arrangements are intended to address the continued concerns of and issues for businesses and the community as a result of the uneven distribution of public holidays throughout the year; the lack of a public holiday in June, which is particularly problematic for the tourism industry; and the inconsistency with the public holiday arrangements in the other states and territories. The proposed changes will help to achieve the advantages of properly aligned and distributed public holidays, which relates to reduced business costs; respite and rest for workers; and opportunities for the tourism industry. It is unfortunate that these changes must follow so closely the changes made by the former government and potentially cause some disruptions where events have already been planned for the Labour Day long weekend in 2013. However, this government does not want to delay the proposed changes as to do so would allow the continuation of the problems with the existing public holiday arrangements.

I would like to assure the House that the effect of the amendments proposed in this bill is to relocate the dates of existing public holidays and the long weekends created by them. The proposed amendments will not create extra public holidays, so there will be no general rise in the cost to business through requirements to fund penalty rates or paid days off on additional public holidays.

The proposed changes to the Oaths Act are to include a provision to require industrial commissioners to take the oath of allegiance and of office that applies to members of the Industrial Court. It is considered appropriate that industrial commissioners take the same oath. The amendment is necessary as three commissioners have recently been appointed to the QIRC. However, there is currently no legislative power to administer an oath to industrial commissioners—something you would think the Labor Party would have picked up in the last 14 years in office. It took us only six months.

Protocol associated with commissioners commencing their duties involves the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission hosting a welcome ceremony for new commissioners. The QIRC would like to afford the courtesy of a formal public swearing-in to the recently appointed members at this time.

To enable oaths to be taken as part of the welcome ceremonies and for the ceremonies to occur before the end of this year, an urgent legislative amendment is required. Due to the urgency of this situation, it was decided to attach this amendment to the holidays bill. The amendment is justified on the grounds that it is minor and of a technical nature related to internal practices of a tribunal.

I will now address some of the issues raised by members during the course of the debate. I thank all members for their contributions to the debate, particularly the more sane contributions from members of the Liberal National Party government.

The opposition leader started out, as she does with every speech in this place now, saying that the LNP is attacking workers in Queensland. I think it is a stock standard speech from the Leader of the Opposition. Everything we do, apparently, is an attack on the workers of Queensland. The workers of Queensland will still have a public holiday. They will still have Labour Day. They will still celebrate Labour Day; they will just celebrate it on a different day of the year. Nothing has been taken away in terms of celebrating Labour Day. Nothing has been taken away in terms of giving the great workers of Queensland a public holiday. They will have a paid public holiday and they will have the capacity to march or do whatever they want to do on that particular day, and it will be Labour Day in October.

The Leader of the Opposition tries to form the argument that we are getting rid of it. As I said, we are not getting rid of it. She relies on expert evidence provided by the Rail, Tram and Bus Union, the Queensland Council of Unions and the Australian Council of Trade Unions. She relies—as Labor Party members always do, because their preselections are based on it—on the expert advice of the unions and no-one else. If the unions have not said it then the Labor Party does not believe it. We know that preselections in the Labor Party are tied up with how many mentions the unions, and individual unions, get in this place. The opposition leader succeeded today: she mentioned the Rail, Tram and Bus Union, the Queensland Council of Unions and the Australian Council of Trade Unions and their 'expert evidence'.

The opposition leader and a couple of the other members said that, despite this change, they will continue to march in May. I say: all power to them. Let them march in May. The Labour Day holiday is due to fall on a Sunday next year. I am happy for them to march on a Sunday. It is their weekend; they can do whatever they please on a Sunday. I am sure that they will apply for the appropriate approvals necessary to engage in that sort of activity, but what we are saying is that we will give them a paid day to march in October.

Based on this new law, if the Labour Day public holiday had been held in October this year it would have already taken place, and the weather outside is pleasant. One of the members—I think it was the member for Woodridge—said that it was 40 degrees in Western Queensland. The temperature for Barcaldine today is not 40 degrees; it is 31.2 degrees. That is a good October day. I think they could participate outside in this pleasant October weather.

The opposition leader, again, tries to ignore the facts of the situation by saying that we are getting rid of the public holiday. We are not. I and the government are completely open to people marching on the Sunday, which is when the next Labour Day will fall. They can continue to do that if they wish. If they want to march on a day that is not a weekend and not a public holiday, they will have to work that out with their employer. If the employer gives them time off, I say all power to them and let the marches continue right across the state, if they so wish.

I thank the member for Condamine, the chair of the committee, for the contribution of the committee. The government may not always agree with a committee's recommendations, but I think that shows that the process works. It shows that we let committees do their work, despite those seven opposite saying that because we have a huge mandate we are controlling everything that happens. Governments do not need a huge majority in this place to pass legislation; they need a majority of one. As the Labor Party knows, you need the support of the member for Nicklin to form a minority government and that forms a majority—a majority of one. Whatever side of politics is in government, if they have one member—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: In case the Labor Party and the member for Bundamba have forgotten, the red chamber closed down some time ago when the 'suicide squad' of the Labor Party walked in there. We do not have a red chamber; we have this chamber. The electorate decided that they would give a large majority to the Liberal National Party. We are dealing with that. But the laws would be changed despite the majority we have in this place. If we are the government we will come into this place with our legislation, and if we have the majority it will pass. That is what the people elected us to do.

It was remiss of me not to say that today in her contribution the Leader of the Opposition made a big announcement. For seven months we have been waiting for the Leader of the Opposition to make an announcement—on anything. Today we heard a great announcement from the Leader of the Opposition. She said that the next time the Labor Party is elected it will restore the Labour Day public holiday to May. That is the biggest contribution the Labor Party opposition can make to the people of Queensland at the moment. In seven months, despite going through a budget and all the issues

associated with the budget, the Labor Party says that its biggest priority in Queensland is to restore the Labour Day public holiday to May. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that their priorities are wrong. If they think that the Labor Party will get re-elected with a position of one policy announcement in seven months, I think they are kidding themselves.

The member for Condamine also raised the ETU submission, as did the member for Broadwater. The ETU submission, I think quite shamefully, talked about Anzac Day. The ETU submission states—

ANZAC Day, another public holiday in the first half of the year, is also a day of great significance because of what it stands for. On ANZAC Day we commemorate the dedication and sacrifices of the men and women who have served in the armed forces. You can imagine the public outrage that would ensue, and justifiably so, if there was a change to the date for observance of ANZAC Day. It would be unthinkable to consider moving the ANZAC Day public holiday, and for clarity, this is *not* what the ETU proposes. However for many working people, Labour Day assumes a similar significance, and to move ... Labour Day ... to October as proposed in the Bill would cause hurt and dismay to many people.

I never thought I would have seen the day that someone would stand in this place together with the ETU and say that we should not do this because Labour Day should be on the same pedestal as Anzac Day. I think that is shameful and disgraceful to the men and women who have served and died under our flag of Australia and our flag of Queensland. Using that as an example as to why we should not move it is a disgrace. For the Labor Party to uphold that position by coming in here and referring to these submissions is shameful and clearly shows that the Labor Party does believe that Labour Day should be put on the same pedestal as Anzac Day, which is in honour of our men and women who have served in our armed forces.

The member for South Brisbane talked about quite a lot—not anything really specifically in relation to the bill. Again she said that the Liberal-National government is attacking workers' rights—the same sort of drivel that we hear from the member for South Brisbane on a daily basis—but then she had the hide to start talking about teachers, the Teachers Union and the bad Liberal National Party government. I was interjecting on her at that point, so much so that the independent Deputy Speaker nearly threw me out of the chamber, because I was reminding the member for South Brisbane that it was not the Labor Party that just signed a great deal with the teachers with a 95 per cent success rate and vote from the teachers. It was the Liberal-National government.

Mr Cripps: And no strike.

Mr BLEIJIE: And no strike. I take the minister's interjection. The Labor Party could not negotiate a deal without teacher strikes. We did. Our education minister did. That was the process of negotiation, and that is what negotiation is all about. People go in with a going-in position and you negotiate. The member for South Brisbane says that it is only because we changed our mind. That is what negotiation is all about. You have a going-in position and you come out with a position that you can shake hands on and an agreement has been reached. The union supported it. It put it to the teachers and 95 per cent of the teachers supported it. If anything riles the Labor Party more than this bill, it is the fact that 95 per cent of teachers, who they claim are all members of the Teachers Union and therefore support the Labor Party, actually voted for this. Yesterday those opposite went to bed wishing that the teachers would not vote for this change to the EB negotiated outcome. That was the Labor Party's wish. Little did those opposite think, little did they know and little did they hope that they would wake up and there would be a 95 per cent success rate in the vote.

I think that that is what gets the member for South Brisbane so upset—so upset that she had to revert to her standard style of potty mouthed behaviour in this parliament and call us all sorts of names that should not be mentioned in this parliament, but she did. She did because that is the attitude, that is the Peel Street attitude, that is the Labor Party way. We have seen it today. We have seen them trying to denigrate a mother who is on sick leave with a son who is depressed. We saw the Labor Party try it today. Can members imagine if any of us in the Liberal National Party tried that against one of the Labor Party members? Can members imagine? They would be marching in the streets! They would have every organisation that looks after people with depression marching on parliament.

We never do that to the Labor Party. We are decent. We would never do that and we respect the privacy of the individual. We believe in the individual and respect the privacy of the individual. They can all look down in absolute shame because what they attempted to do today with a friend and colleague of ours, Minister Bates, while she is on genuine sick leave and with her son is quite shameful—absolutely shameful, even for the Labor Party, who at times you would think would not even stoop that low. But of course it is all politics for them. They do not care who they hurt. They do not care who gets in the way. They do not care about the families that are wrecked and the depression it causes to people. That is what those in the Labor Party do, and they love it! That is so shameful. People who aspire right around Queensland to be politicians should never aspire for that attitude, should never aspire to believe in what the Labor Party believes in, because we should at all points try to make sure that those sorts of illnesses do not happen to anyone. No-one deserves what the Labor Party is doing, but, again, what would you expect from the member for South Brisbane? She came from Peel Street. She was the assistant director of the campaign. We saw what she did to the Premier. We saw what she did to Mrs Lisa Newman. What would one expect from the member for South Brisbane? It is in her DNA. It is in her politics. It is how she

was raised. It is the political drive that she has just to hate people—just to hate people who do not believe and fit in with her ideology, and she looks down in shame! She looks down in absolute shame at herself!

I thank the member for Broadwater for her great contribution to the debate today. Thank you for reminding us that we are a government for all Queenslanders. If we walked out of this chamber and asked Joe Blow on the street what Labour Day means to them and why they get a public holiday in May, I would bet that a high proportion of Queenslanders have no idea. We have moved on. Queensland has moved on, but we are not moving on in that we are getting rid of Labour Day. We are continuing Labour Day and people can continue to have their celebrations and march in October. It is fine weather in October. It is beautiful weather outside. The member for Woodridge talked about the temperature in Barcaldine in October. She said that it is 40 degrees. It is not. I have had it checked. It is 31.4 degrees out there today—beautiful walking weather. In fact, a week earlier it probably might have been a little colder. So that is beautiful walking weather in Barcaldine with 31.4 degrees—probably not in a suit and tie but the appropriate attire would suffice. The member for Woodridge also said—and this really sums it up; this sums up the attitude of the Labor Party—that the modern Australian Labor Party was formed. It is about the Labor Party. That is what this is about to the Labor Party. It is not about some philosophical—

Mrs Miller: You don't like it, do you?

Mr BLEIJIE: I hit a nerve! I knew it! I went fishing. I love a bit of fishing. I went fishing and I got it. I did not even need a bit of bait on that! It was a lure! This issue for the Labor Party is not about a date. It is not about the name of it. It is not about what we are doing. It is not about the Tories in the government in Queensland. This is about the Labor Party—not Labour Day but the Labor Party.

Mr Stevens: 'Labour' with a 'u'.

Mr BLEIJIE: This is what it should be about—labour with a 'u'. But the Labor without a 'u' over there thinks only about themselves. They probably wish they had a 'u', but they think only of themselves in these types of debates. The member for Woodridge wrapped up the whole basis of their opposition: this is about the Australian Labor Party—L-a-b-o-r. It is not about the labour movement, it is not about the workers of Queensland; it is about those seven opposite who rely on all sorts of unions across Queensland for their preselections. So their opposition to this bill is not about the workers, as they protest; it is about the Labor Party.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: This is about the Labor Party branch members in Bundamba. This is about the member for Bundamba securing preselection, because the word in town is that she is out. Her new attitude in this place is getting them in all sorts of trouble.

Mr Stevens: 'Big Bill' is coming for Jo.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection from the Leader of the House. 'Big Bill' is coming for her. I know that the member for South Brisbane is circling the Leader of the Opposition like that shark in that new Australian movie that is very popular in China—I think it is called *Bait*. But I would reflect more on Sir Humphrey in *Yes Minister*, who said something along the lines, 'You first have to get behind someone before you can stab them in the back.' The member for South Brisbane is here with the opposition leader but, as we know from Sir Humphrey in *Yes Minister*, you have to get behind someone before you can stab them in the back. We know that the Labor Party is—

A government member: Right behind the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr BLEIJIE: She is literally right behind the Leader of the Opposition not only in this chamber but also out on the street—all the way to Peel Street.

The member for Rockhampton—and I will check *Hansard*—I am sure if my notes serve me correctly said that this bill is all about the LNP, or me particularly, falling for the monarchy. I fell for the monarchy a long time before today, colleagues. I need not remind the member for Rockhampton that he also swore an allegiance to Her Majesty. I can reliably inform the member for Rockhampton that Her Majesty, the great Queen Elizabeth II, did not call me personally and ask me to change the Queen's Birthday holiday back to June. I did not receive anything official from the palace. This change stemmed from a great concern in the community for the workers of Queensland. It is common sense.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: No, the member thinks this change is about the Labor Party—L-a-b-o-r. It is common sense. We only have to look at where the holidays in Queensland occur currently. We have Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Australia Day, three days in Easter, Anzac Day and then Labour Day. The Labor Party was going to get rid of any public holidays between June and October. So the workers would go for months without a holiday. We are saying that this change is beneficial to the workers of Queensland. The Labor Party—the L-a-b-o-r over there—does not think that the workers will like this at all. The workers will love it because we are freeing up a day in a conglomerate of holidays in the beginning of the year and we are saying, 'Spend a day with your family in October and get paid for it.' So we are saying—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my left! The Attorney-General is not attacking you. He shall be heard.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. For the benefit of the workers of this state we are saying, 'We are going to get rid of the congestion of holidays at the start of the year. We are going to give you back your June holiday so you get a break in the middle of the year. Not only that, you can then have the October holiday to spend with your families away from your workplace on paid leave.' So throughout Queensland there will be a good spread of public holidays for those good hardworking Queenslanders who deserve a holiday. If they choose to march on the holiday, they can. It is a free country. If anyone wants to march at any particular time, they can.

The member for Mulgrave talked about those 24,000 submissions that were received. It was in answer to a loaded question. I think the member for Morayfield mentioned this. The question asked, 'Do you support moving the Queen's Birthday holiday from June to October?' I submit that through Labor's campaign with the unions it received a huge swell of support out of those 24,000 submissions. I reject that argument completely. I looked at the inquiry into the previous bill and the submissions that were received and note the 24,000 but, as I said, it was in answer to a loaded question and Labor probably ran a big campaign through the unions. The Labor Party just wants to talk about ideology. It would never move Labour Day from May. So it is going to take this government to sort out public holidays in Queensland once and for all, and we are.

The member for Dalrymple talked about the Charters Towers country music association—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bundamba has been warned. Should the member for Bundamba interject at all until the Attorney-General is finished, the member will be leaving the chamber.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Dalrymple talked about the Charters Towers country music association, which has its celebration on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I have to say to the member for Dalrymple that the public holiday is on the Monday. So that association can still hold its celebration on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This bill does not impact on that association.

Mr Knuth interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I have read their submission. For goodness sake, we cannot give everyone a week off to plan and pack up after a country music festival. They can hold the festival on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There is no change. They can continue to hold it on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The member for Bundamba also talked about the LNP cherishing sick leave so much. Yes, we do. As I said, shame on the member for Bundamba for what she said this morning in question time about sick leave. Minister Bates is legitimately on sick leave. She has a son who was in hospital with depression. The member shakes her head now as though it was of no significance at all. What she did in the chamber this morning was of great significance and was disgusting. I think the people of Queensland would be disgusted by what she said. Imagine if we did that to a worker who the member for Bundamba so claims to protect. She would be out there marching. She would be calling for ministers to be sacked. In fact, I think the Leader of the Opposition called for Minister Bates to be sacked because she is sick. So you cannot get sick in Queensland now because the Labor Party thinks that, if you are, you should be sacked.

A government member: Remember Jim Pearce. Jim Pearce was ill for a long time.

Mr BLEIJIE: Jim Pearce was ill. We never went there because we have integrity, we have ethics and we would not go down that line. But the members of the Labor Party do, because they are just sick to the guts with that sort of politics. They should be ashamed of the type of politics that they engage in when people are legitimately sick and are away from this place. Of course, that argument was led by the member for Bundamba, who stands up to protect the rights of workers, to protect their sick leave. She does not want Labour Day moved because of the sick leave entitlements. Yet the member for Bundamba has the hide to come into this place and attack a member of this parliament because they are legitimately on sick leave and have the Premier of Queensland table a photo of the minister showing how sick she is so that the member for Bundamba can get that through her head. I do not think she did because the Labor Party will continue with that line.

I thank the LNP members for their support for the bill. It is a great win for Queensland workers. They will have holidays all throughout the year. I thank them for their support.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.

MOTION

Aged Care



Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (5.30 pm): I move—

That this House:

- Notes the Premier's statement that his government plans to exit the provision of aged-care services;
- Condemns the Newman government's actions creating uncertainty and anxiety over the future of nursing home beds at Eventide Home, Ashworth House, Cooinda House and the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit in Brisbane;
- Notes the actions of the government have occurred without a mandate and without any consultation being undertaken by the health minister;
- Acknowledges the distress the health minister's actions are causing aged and frail residents, their families and staff; and
- Directs the health minister to halt all such closures of nursing beds or health facilities including the Wynnum Hospital without first facing meetings of residents, relatives, patients and staff at each facility to provide detailed explanations of the LNP government's actions and to commit to genuine consultations.

This cruel and heartless LNP government is waging a war on the poor, the vulnerable and the aged people of this state. The government is destroying the communities of people who have lived in state owned caravan parks for many years. Many of these people are old and many of them are frail. These low-cost forms of social housing meet the needs of older Queenslanders living within their means, doing the very best they can on limited incomes. Now they are being thrown out so that this government can sell a public asset out from under them. That is what it is, purely and simply asset sales, so that the older people get thrown out onto the streets. Residents of Cannon Hill's Monte Carlo Caravan Park, Woombye Gardens Caravan Park and the Lazy Acres Caravan Park at Hervey Bay know that this government treats them very poorly. They are very vulnerable people, many of them aged. We now have 'Landlord Minister' Dr Flegg evicting long-term residents of public housing because they do not fit his profile of need. I have been approached by a constituent, a resident of public housing who has care of an adult daughter with an intellectual disability, who only this week has received what can only be known as an eviction notice from the home she has lived in for many years. Shame on this LNP government, shame!

Like thousands of Queenslanders, I was shocked by the announcement that 80 residents of Eventide at Brighton are to be evicted by June next year, with 20 to go before Christmas. What a Christmas gift for these frail aged from this LNP government. Out you go; that is your happy Christmas present from this mob. Places are supposed to be found in other aged-care facilities, but anyone who has tried to find suitable care for their parents in the community and also in the private sector knows how difficult this can be. The anger, frustration and fear felt by residents and families in meeting with Queensland Health executives at Eventide last Wednesday afternoon was nothing short of heart-rending. The staff, praised by all, were crying. They were in tears. Their work is more than just a job. It is more than a pay packet. They are part of the Eventide community and now they are being evicted as well. Seventy health workers face being sacked by this cruel and heartless government. Let us not pretend that they are voluntary separations. They are going to be sacked.

It is understandable that the Premier, as a newly arrived Queenslander, does not know the history of Eventide and its role in the Queensland community. The Minister for Health should know better. Eventide aged-care facilities have been part of the social fabric of this state for some 60 years. The Premier has said himself that aged-care is not the business of his government. The last conservative government in Queensland was firmly committed to supporting and expanding state run aged-care facilities. Perhaps the Premier should have a quiet chat with the chair of the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service Board, Mike Horan, because he knows the history. But I bet the Premier is too arrogant to pick up the phone.

Perhaps he should also be looking over his shoulder at backbenchers wondering if their local hospital and health service board now see the green light to close aged-care beds in their electorates. Well, let me say to the LNP backbench 'You better check what's happening locally.' The voters will be bashing your doors down soon because it is only a matter of time before these local hospital and health service boards close down the aged-care beds in your electorate. Just ask the soon-to-be former members for Sandgate and Lytton. Their own government has cut them loose just as they are going to cut the rest of the members of the government loose. As a former minister in the Borbidge-Sheldon government, Mr Horan was a fervent supporter of Eventide and good on him. He has also recently stated that there will be no reduction in state provided aged-care beds in the hospital and health service that he is in charge of. Good on Mike Horan, but I wonder how long that will last.

The CEO of Metro North Hospital and Health Service, Professor Keith McNeil, has apologised to the residents of Ashworth House at Zillmere for the stuff up in the letters sent out last Wednesday stating 'aged care beds will be incrementally closed.' If you were 86 years old and received a letter like

this how would you feel? I can tell members how they feel. Those old people feel angry and they feel betrayed by this terrible LNP government. It now appears that Ashworth House is not to close high-care beds, but this is what was said, 'There will be a progressive closure of non-complex residential aged-care beds only' elsewhere in Metro North Hospital and Health Service, meaning two facilities within the Eventide campus at Brighton.

Moving aged-care patients is very traumatic for those high-care patients. It is traumatic to the point, we believe, of hastening death. Even if this is not the intention of the government's decision, it is a possible outcome. This is a cruel, cold reality. The famous green light of the Bjelke-Petersen government seems to be switched back on and it is switched back on not only for corruption but also for axing services to the poorest and most vulnerable members in our community, the frail aged. Terry White and Richard Ashby, the board chair and CEO of the Metropolitan South Hospital and Health Service have taken the opportunity to flick the green light against the Moreton Bay aged-care unit and, who would believe it, the entire Wynnum Hospital. Local community members could not believe their ears when they turned up at a public meeting to discuss the expansion of the emergency department at the local hospital only to be told—cruelly, callously and coldly—that the entire hospital is to be scrapped. This is community consultation under the LNP government. It was a community ambush. Shame on you! Members opposite should squirm in their seats. Does your local hospital board now have the green light to close aged-care beds? Well, let us wait for the screams to come.

I have been approached by family members of residents at Eventide who have explained to me their fears about the impact of these poorly planned bed closures on residents directly affected and on the broader community of residents. Mrs Waite asked me to attend the public meeting because she was fearful that any attempt to move her mother would have dire consequences. She was frightened that just the uncertainty of these proposed changes had worsened her mother's already precarious health. I also met with patients in wheelchairs with advanced MS and muscular dystrophy. These residents were equally fearful that closures of the facilities may be the beginning of the closure of the entire Eventide campus at Brighton.

For many residents, we must remember, and the LNP must remember, this is their last home. They know that they have lived a long life. They have raised their families and contributed to their communities. They know their lives are coming to an end. They know that their family visit them and they love them. Some residents are able to respond to family and friends, but others simply cannot. They are loved and cared for by not only their families but also the workers at Eventide. What sort of society are we when we cannot let our frail and elderly citizens live out their remaining days in peace and some degree of comfort? LNP government, shame, shame, shame on every one of you!

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (5.40 pm): I rise to second the motion. A society can be judged by how well it cares for its elderly citizens. This government will be judged by the people of Queensland and it will be judged on decisions made about the provision of care to the frail and to the aged. I suggest that the members for Sandgate and for Lytton pay particular attention to the concerns of their constituents in this regard.

I am appalled by the actions of the boards of the metro north and metro south hospital and health services in threatening to close state-run aged-care facilities. I know that this has been caused by the funding cuts, the so-called efficiency dividends, applied to those hospital services in the first LNP budget. What offends most is the total lack of community consultation with those affected, the patients and their families. Holding public meetings when decisions to close facilities have already been made is not consultation. The people attending meetings with hospital executives and Queensland Health staff have rightfully been angry at the way that they have been ambushed. Writing letters to elderly people and people with diminished ability to read and understand bureaucratic language can only cause fear and confusion. The decisions to move people out of the facilities that are for many the only real option for a dignified death have been poorly considered and poorly communicated.

The Premier has said that aged care is not the business of his government. He is distorting our 60-year history of providing state-run aged-care facilities for the poor. He knows nothing of the history of Eventide and its role in local communities across the state. Aged care has always been a partnership between the community organisations that have grown out of our churches, the private businesses that have provided supported accommodation and government. The federal government has been a late entrant into this area of public policy. Fortunately, Labor federal governments have progressively increased funding support for the aged-care sector. Some state governments have been more engaged with aged-care provision than others. This LNP government clearly has an agenda of walking away from its responsibilities.

For most people, aged care is not about retirement villages around marinas and golf courses. Aged care involves the work of federally funded general practitioners, state and federally funded public hospitals, a range of community organisations that benefit from public charity and grant funding from state and local governments. Aged care is about families who do the best they can with the resources they have. However, this is not a level playing field. Some people have the advantage of a lifetime of executive salaries and perks like superannuation. Many of our elderly citizens never had the opportunity to access superannuation. If you worked in a low-paid job, you were lucky to save for your own home.

We need to ask ourselves, every one of us, if you are poor do you have a right to live in an aged-care facility? Does government have a responsibility to organise aged care for every citizen, aged care that they can afford? I argue that we do have this responsibility. I argue that our state government must partner with the community sector, with the commercial aged-care industry, with local councils and with the federal government to ensure that every older Australian can live and die with dignity.

If I may speak from my own experience, I know that to move an elderly resident even from one unit or room to another can cause untold anguish. The facility is their home and the staff become their extended family. Often my mother has said to me, 'Growing old, dear, is not fun'. It is a very difficult time for families and sometimes it can be a very scary thing for elderly people. I believe that the government is showing cruel, cruel policy in this way.

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (5.45 pm): I move—

That all words after 'services' be deleted and the following words inserted:

- Notes the position is also consistent with the policy of Queensland Labor Party that has previously stated 'The Commonwealth Government is responsible for funding aged care';
- Notes the 2005 Forster report, officially titled the Queensland Health Systems Review, commissioned by the previous Labor government recommended 'Queensland Health should sell its residential aged care places and where appropriate associated facilities'; and
- Notes that in 2005 land from Eventide Aged Care Facility was sold by the previous Labor government while the current member for Bundamba was Parliamentary Secretary for Health to Gordon Nuttall.

The motion presented to the parliament today by the member for Bundamba wins a gold star for hypocrisy. This is a five-part motion about aged-care services, but it seeks to perpetuate a long-running Labor falsehood. At the weekend, the Labor federal Treasurer, the member for Lilley, was promoting this mistruth in his electorate and across Queensland. At its core, the false proposition is that residents of state-run aged-care facilities can rely on Labor to keep them in their current accommodation and maintain the land they live on, no matter what circumstances apply there. However, Mr Swan and the author of this motion are just following a well-worn path to Labor hypocrisy. Those vows of support for Eventide and those cries for government endorsement of them are false. For confirmation, aged-care residents and Queenslanders in general need look no further than the parliamentary statements of that Labor figurehead, the former member for Sandgate, Gordon Nuttall.

Gordon Nuttall is the former Beattie government health minister whose apprentice as parliamentary secretary, the member for Bundamba, presented this motion to the House. Nuttall was busted for receiving a secret commission and today is in jail as a consequence of his crimes. That part of his place in Queensland history is well known. Another story of Gordon Nuttall, how he misled parliament and how the Labor government changed the laws to exonerate him, is also well known and must be considered in light of this motion and the false premise it contains.

For more than six years, Labor members of parliament have kept a secret about Mr Nuttall and a previously undisclosed deal he signed in 2005 to sell 2.1 hectares of the Eventide site that is the central issue canvassed in this motion. Members should note that this motion wants us all to assume that this entire site is available for sale by the government. It is not. In fact, a significant part of the Eventide site, enough to accommodate a 90-bed nursing home, was sold by Gordon Nuttall in 2005 and handed over to the new owners by Labor in November last year. I table the relevant ministerial correspondence.

Tabled paper: Queensland Health ministerial submission, received 18 May 2005, titled 'Disposal of Surplus Land—Part of the site at Eventide Sandgate' [1414].

The sale of the land discussed in this motion went ahead under Labor. It proceeded under the member for Bundamba as parliamentary secretary and it occurred in the electorate of the federal Treasurer, Mr Swan. In six years, none of those people have revealed the facts of this sale to the state parliament. When they discuss this motion, MPs need to know that 2.1 hectares of the Eventide site that the member for Bundamba wants the government to own is, in fact, leased back by Queensland Health from the private owners who bought it from Labor last year. They should know that after a comprehensive search of *Hansard*, only one person can be found speaking in parliament about the sale and that is Gordon Nuttall. Guess what? When Gordon Nuttall spoke about the sale of the site in parliament, he told a mistruth. As a result, on the record in the parliament for seven years has been an entirely false claim by the member for Bundamba's then parliamentary mentor, Gordon Nuttall, that he was involved not in selling the site at all but in buying adjacent land on behalf of a non-government aged-care provider. I table the relevant extract of *Hansard*. I challenge members opposite to produce any piece of the *Hansard* record to show that they ever corrected it.

Tabled paper: Extract from *Record of Proceedings*, dated 23 May 2006, pages 1863-64, regarding Yallambee Lodge [1415].

In this amendment I referred to the Forster review which was tabled in 2005 by the Beattie Labor government. In its pages at 6.7 is the clear instruction that drove the Labor agenda on aged care. It states—

Queensland Health should sell its residential aged care places and where appropriate associated facilities.

This is why under Labor the Eventide site was converted to provide occupational health and rehabilitation services and why Nuttall proceeded to sell such a large portion of the associated land. This cynical effort by Labor to reorientate public perception of their own approach to aged care does not help aged-care residents or the wider Queensland community.

 **Dr DAVIS** (Stafford—LNP) (5.50 pm): I rise to second the amendment moved by the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. Indeed, my support is for the plans as announced by this government that will appropriately allow Queensland Health to refocus its finite resources on its core healthcare responsibilities. As the minister has just mentioned, over seven years ago the Queensland Health Systems Review, also known as the Forster review, was released with bipartisan support. On pages 10 and 11 of that report there is reference to aged-care services. It states—

The appropriateness of Queensland Health as provider of aged care facilities is questioned. Opportunities to sell these facilities to private sector providers with appropriate safeguards for residents and staff should be assessed and if favourable sold.

I have a strong affinity to the Forster report as on page 378 of that report my name appears together with that of Professor Ken Donald from the School of Medicine at the University of Queensland; Dr Bill Glasson, the former national president of the AMA; and Ms Janelle Taylor, the Queensland Nurses Union representative. We were all involved in supporting that report.

What has happened over seven years? In fairness, the reason Eventide has remained a provider of complex aged-care services is due to the difficulties in accessing these in the not-for-profit sector and charitable sector, whose ability to provide such complexity in particularly dementia care and palliative care is as a direct result of the failure of the federal government to provide adequate funding to ensure the financial sustainability of such services. This in turn has required the state government to not only provide the services but to cross-subsidise them at the expense of core acute and subacute services that the state government has a responsibility for providing.

How ironic is it that the federal Treasurer, Mr Wayne Swan, is leading the charge in criticising the state government for needing to pull out of cross-subsidising the federal responsibility of aged care when the blame for the issue can be fully sheeted home to his government for not properly funding complex aged care. This failure by Mr Swan and the former Labor Queensland government not only made the operating budget unworkable but also left nothing in the kitty to provide for capital replacement. So we have a situation where there is no money to bring the approximately 30-year-old Bramble and Flinders buildings at Eventide up to current building and fire code standards. We know from tragedies elsewhere the enormous risk to older people from not complying with such standards. An August 2012 assessment determined that these buildings are at end of life.

Fortunately, there is a solution. There are not-for-profit and charitable providers in the Brighton, Sandgate and adjacent areas. Mr Swan should shift his focus to ensuring that they are funded to offer complex residential care in modern buildings as well as ensuring sufficient community packages for those who would benefit from them. As befits Queensland healthcare responsibilities, Eventide will in fact continue to provide on-site rehabilitation and other subacute healthcare interventions. The majority of the beneficiaries of such services will indeed be the elderly. Such interventions will allow many of them to return home, which is ultimately the best solution for both themselves and their families.

The Minister for Health has stressed that there is no proposal to sell Eventide, but even should that become necessary it will be entirely due to the massive waste incurred by the former Labor state government with its frightful legacy in that area. As the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services has stressed, the potential sale was certainly something canvassed by Labor governments.

The Newman government is committed to sorting out the mess left by the previous government. This decision taken by the Metro North Health and Hospital Board is certainly consistent with that. Queensland Health must get on and focus its core health responsibilities for health and leave residential care to the experts in that field. All that is required now is for the current member for Lilley to discharge his responsibilities to fund the system properly. It is indeed time for Mr Wayne Swan to close his mouth and open his chequebook. I commend the amendment to the House.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (5.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the opposition and against the government's amendment to the motion. This private member's motion has been prompted by the recent announcement of the closure of two public residential units at the Eventide aged-care campus at Brighton on Brisbane's north side and the Wynnum Hospital and aged-care facilities on Brisbane's bayside. The closures will impact on many residents directly, and let us not forget the staff who it can be assumed are likely to lose their jobs as well. I suppose it is not an unusual phenomena for this government or its agents.

What I find quite incredible is that the spokesman for the health minister has deferred all responsibility to local health board chairman Dr Paul Alexander in one of these circumstances. It has often been suggested to me that the government would use the new health boards in a manner that would allow them to claim ignorance of decisions. I suppose it is a version of plausible deniability in effect. Plausible deniability was a term coined by the intelligence community many years ago in the United States when they deliberately withheld information from senior officials in order to protect those officials from exposure to blame if illegal or unpopular activities were exposed.

I hate to rock the boat, but I guess the minister is accountable and people should accept that. No amount of delegated decision making or decentralisation that I, in fact, favour in principle divests the minister of personal accountability for all the decisions that are made. That is why we have ministers in this parliament. That is what the community expects.

There seems to be some recognition of this from the minister because I note that he is reported in the media as requesting that Dr Alexander give some substance to the board's intentions, though I find that simply incredible. I believe that Dr Alexander served many decades ago as a regimental medical officer in the 3rd Battalion where our service overlapped briefly. He went on to become a senior Army officer. I cannot imagine a man of his experience being so naive as to fly this proposal without first alerting the minister's office. I cannot believe a military and medical professional of his standing would take such steps unannounced and in complete isolation from the minister's office. If that were the case then the board has displayed extraordinary ineptitude and insensitivity or the minister is deliberately seeking to detach himself from some of the more unpalatable, poorly constructed decisions that are clearly evident. Either way, it is a symptom of systems failure.

Let me put it to the minister like this. If you were to tell the board to reverse those closures, what would they do? Of course they would be redirected and the decisions would be voided. This government promised many things and ministerial accountability for all decisions within their portfolios remains a centrepiece of ethical decision making and transparency. This is not evident in the recent events and the minister's detachment from such decisions is frankly unacceptable.

This government possesses an overwhelming majority in this chamber. At no stage in the lead-up to the 24 March election or at any time up to the present, including during estimates, did the government seek a mandate to walk away from its aged-care responsibilities. I understand that recently the Premier has made comments suggesting that the Queensland government was not in aged-care business or was seeking to remove itself from the aged-care business. This is an incredible statement.

For many years I had a friend who was a two-term conservative mayor of Rockhampton. We would meet from time to time and inevitably discuss all things political. One of the things that he repeatedly raised with me and mentioned to me was the poor form Labor had in terms of dealing with aged-care facilities and the one shining light in his period as mayor was the period of the Borbidge government. He would reinforce to me often the successful outcomes delivered in aged care in Rockhampton when he worked in collaboration with the Borbidge government.

I can assume that he would not be deliberately misleading me or overplaying his hand. I do not know what has changed within conservative politics to take this path. It is clearly evident to me and to anyone who understands the issue and the geography of Queensland that the effective response to this burgeoning issue of aged care in our communities can only be delivered by all three tiers of government working collaboratively in a transparent and cooperative manner. It is simply unacceptable to our communities for any particular tier to attempt to shift their responsibilities elsewhere. By the way, such moves will certainly result in the rapid decline of services across regional and remote Queensland. I would think that many members of the LNP in this House understand this and should be gravely concerned by the messages being sent out presently. Shame on this government. Shame on your insensitivity and your lack of compassion. Shame on your appalling corporate communication.

 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (6.00 pm): I rise tonight in support of the government's motion. I ask the honourable member for Bundamba: how long has the LNP been in power compared to the former Labor government? Seven months. The Wynnum Hospital is 31 years old and under Labor in the last decade they spent an average of \$970 a week.

Mr Watts: How much?

Mr SYMES: \$970 a week, and this included equipment and maintenance on the site. The Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit facility on Wynnum Road, Wynnum West, is run down, with rotting walls and other structural problems. The federal government has highlighted that under the new national regulations the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit needs between \$10 million and \$12 million and the Wynnum Hospital needs \$8 million just to comply with the federal government regulations. That does not include expansions.

The former member for Lytton, Mr Paul Lucas, threw \$1.25 billion down the Health payroll debacle drain. Do you know how many brand-new hospitals could have been built in Queensland and on the Brisbane bayside for that? 6.25 hospitals.

Ms Trad: Did you research that yourself, Neil?

Mr SYMES: I did actually, yes. I am committed to providing the best health services in the Lytton electorate which will include, as the Metro South Hospital and Health Board has outlined, a brand-new state-of-the-art facility on the corner of Wynnum and New Lindum roads in the heart of the electorate, which is highly accessible to bus routes and train lines. I table a briefing paper from the previous Labor government which shows that the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit was on their hit list to be shut down and no doubt the land to be sold.

Tabled paper: Queensland Health—Brief for meeting, dated 30 April 2009, regarding a meeting to discuss state issues in the Wynnum Manly District [1416].

How do you spell hypocrisy? A-L-P. The tabled briefing paper shows that the former health minister, Mr Paul Lucas, met with representatives of the Queensland Health department regarding the health services on the bayside on 30 April 2009. On 16 February 2009, cabinet, which included members opposite, endorsed a proposal to re-orientate five aged-care facilities of which Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit in Wynnum West was earmarked to be re-orientated. Also, in the brief, Mr Peter Forster in his 2005 final report on reviewing the Queensland health system recommended to cabinet that the state government should no longer provide nursing home care as it was a Commonwealth government responsibility under the Aged Care Act 1997. That has already been tabled by the minister.

I will work with the health minister, the Premier and the Metro South Hospital and Health Board to provide the very best health services to the residents on Brisbane's bayside with state-of-the-art facilities in the heart of Wynnum to help make the district vibrant again. This new health precinct will provide services such as a SuperGP clinic, an in-house pharmacy and specialist rooms to help residents who currently travel to the inner city for appointments. This new proposal will help in building a four-pillar economy for the Lytton electorate.

Mr Ruthenberg: Caring for your families—well done.

Mr SYMES: Absolutely! We are the party that cares for families. Unlike the former member for Lytton, who squandered over \$1 billion, the Newman government is committed to spend every dollar in the Health budget wisely and efficiently. I would like to also put on the record that, contrary to the view of the Wynnum Chapter of the Socialist Alliance, it was a conservative government that built the Wynnum Hospital under Sir Joh and the health minister at the time, Mr Brian Austin, not the Labor Party. The Labor Party's role was to maintain the hospital to a sufficient standard and it dropped the ball for over two decades.

Mr Ruthenberg: Again!

Mr SYMES: Again. It will be a Liberal National Party government, which I am honoured to be part of, that will restore accountability and high standards in health delivery in Queensland.

 **Mr MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.05 pm): We have heard from a number of speakers tonight, but what this motion boils down to is that there is no good reason for this heartless government to be acting in this way. There is no good reason for treating the citizens it was elected to represent in this heartless manner. What they are doing is saying to elderly Queenslanders, 'You don't matter.' They are effectively kicking the elderly out of their homes saying, 'Fend for yourselves now.' It is probably one of the most callous, cold-blooded acts I have witnessed during my time in this House. It frankly defies belief.

If you spend a life working, raising your family and contributing to your community, we should be dedicating ourselves to caring for you in your twilight years. We have an obligation to ensure that your later years are as comfortable as possible. That is a basic human right. It is basic dignity. But what we have seen is this Premier washing his hands of responsibility to deliver aged-care services such as nursing homes. Last Thursday on radio while trying to blame the health boards for service cuts, Mr Newman was asked directly, 'So you are wanting to get out of aged care?' He answered, '... yes, exactly.' In just six months the LNP government has earned a reputation for sacking nurses and other front-line support staff, closing hospitals and reducing nursing home bed numbers. This is the same LNP government that declared it would protect and improve front-line services before the election.

The Premier said on radio his government is abandoning the delivery of aged-care services such as nursing homes. Yet the health minister is still pretending the slashing of nursing home bed numbers is a matter for the regional health boards to consider case by case. The minister has clearly not been telling the truth. The minister must stop hiding behind his regional health boards or else he should hand over his job and salary to someone who is willing to take responsibility. If the health minister continues to fail Queenslanders and take no responsibility for the board's decision, he will simply prove how useless he is as Minister for Health and how ineffective the LNP MPs are.

As long as the health minister hides behind the boards, he and his LNP colleagues, such as the member for Lytton and the member for Redcliffe, cannot give any guarantees to local communities about the future of their health facilities. This government has shown that it has little regard for dignity.

This is a government that has shown very, very quickly that it has no regard for the basic needs of our community and certainly has no intention of living up to the high expectations Queensland had when it elected this Newman government. This is a government that has willingly sacked 14,000 people. This is a government that has launched a full-scale attack on community groups, on front-line services and on organisations that look after the needy and the underprivileged in our community. This is a government that is kicking residents out of caravan parks they have called home in many cases for decades. And this is a government that has now set its sights on some of our most vulnerable citizens, the elderly and the frail.

This callous Newman government has created uncertainty and anxiety over the future of nursing home beds at Eventide, Ashworth House, Cooina House and the Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit in Brisbane. They have also alarmed and distressed the elderly and their families in state-run residential nursing homes across Queensland. The future for residents at these facilities at Jondaryan, Charters Towers, Rockhampton, Kingaroy, Wondai, Nambour, Dalby, Murilla, Toowoomba, Kirwan, Warwick, Murweh, Roma and Maryborough is now uncertain. It is the cruellest and most distressing move to kick the elderly out on to the streets, but this cold-hearted LNP government have shown that even this disgraceful move is not below them.

I urge concerned residents, their family and staff at these residential facilities to contact their local members of parliament and ask those people who have been trusted to represent them where they stand on the issue. What does the member for Sandgate have to say on the closure of Eventide? What does the member for Redcliffe have to say? What does the member for Lytton have to say? Simply nothing! Their silence is deafening. How disgraceful!

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—LNP) (6.09 pm): I support the revised motion put forward by the member for Aspley and obviously I am speaking against the Labor motion moved tonight. There is never a good way to say that the time has come to move from your home to a new or a different one. I know because, as a GP, I have had to do it many times in my professional life—that is 25 years as a GP. It is news that no-one wants to hear for their home is their castle, whether they are a nursing home resident or a proud homeowner. This motion being debated tonight is not because a small group of largely elderly people are being transitioned from one home to another—or being transitioned at all. This debate is occurring because the movement of elderly or powerless people can be used as a political weapon against those who have to take these justified steps. We therefore are directly challenging the ability of the newly charged hospital boards to practically deliver the necessary services to a standard that stands as best practice for all. Too many good people on Metro North and Metro South boards are being unfairly condemned tonight in absentia, and that is wrong.

The motion is very detailed but, essentially, opposes the transition of residents from Eventide Home, Ashworth House, Cooina House and Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit in Brisbane. It wants to chastise the health minister and direct him to halt such activities, including at the Wynnum Hospital, before any consultation or explanations and commit to what they describe as genuine consultations. I want to highlight the changes to the motion proposed by the LNP. Critically, the revised motion addresses the land sale of Eventide in 2005 by the former disgraced health minister, Gordon Nuttall. Once that land at Eventide was sold and the facility leased back to Queensland Health there was an effective countdown from that date—now seven years ago—to when the facility would close, redevelop or upgrade. Irrespective of which of these was going to occur, it was inevitable that at some point residents would be transitioned to another facility. It is not new information that this would occur, nor is this an abnormal situation. This is the norm these days.

Every speaker has made strong statements about the reasons—everything from budgets through to building age. They have talked about having to continuously upgrade buildings with regard to fire demands, which are very important, and philosophies regarding ownership/operator status. The nuts and bolts of a nursing care facility involve much more than it being located on the best beachside real estate block. Too many times the obsession with prime real estate location as opposed to quality of care combined with quality of dwellings and commitment to continuous improvement and safety has led to the most dreadful of all outcomes. I am not saying this will happen at Eventide or Wynnum, but this argument has become grossly distorted by an obsession with quality real estate position and sentimentality and has ignored modern standards of care and accommodation and the provision of services.

I put it to honourable members that, with the new aged health group being 90-plus, most spend their days looking in, not out. They have windows, natural light, trees et cetera, but what they need most dearly is contact with the real world—children, the movement of people, some noise of metropolitan life, pets et cetera—and it needs to be in modern surroundings that are safe. Never assume that all the former ideas of placing our elderly on bayside lots with little or no contact with the real world enriches their lives before their lives end. The evidence is that it does not. Modern nursing care facilities are of a very high standard that require real world fire control systems and are very close to the centres of modern life, such as shopping centres. The Labor argument is all wrong. It is based on false assumptions and is all about emotion. It basically says that the welfare of those whose health care is all

our responsibility and about whom we care is not their responsibility. I know that the health minister does care about their welfare and I know that the health boards do also; that is what they were chartered to do. By basically failing for 20 years to maintain properties such as Eventide there is little alternative to what is occurring now. We must not deny that we need to do these things and we need to support the people as they do them. To start speeches by condemning the people who actually have to make the decisions about these people and using stories which are possibly made up about intellectually disabled people being evicted is wrong.

(Time expired)

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.14 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Bundamba and debated in this House this evening. I note once again the government's lack of consultation when it comes to issues regarding people. This is a government that simply does not care. On Saturday, I was out there with the shadow health minister and the Deputy Prime Minister talking to the residents of Brighton and Sandgate about what this government had decided to do. What do they want to do? They want to close down Eventide. They want to close down aged-care facilities across this state. There has been no consultation with the community about their actions; they just want to close them down. There has been no explanation. All we hear from the health minister is that it was the health board's decision. We all know that the health boards report to one person. If honourable members do not believe me, look at the legislation. It is very clearly written in the legislation that the health boards report to the health minister. The health minister is clearly responsible for the distress that is occurring out there in the community. I want to talk about that distress because I was out there talking to the families, who are feeling betrayed, about how they feel about what is going to happen to their loved ones.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They can interject all they like, but out there on the ground there is a harsh reality and that is that this is a government that shows no compassion, a government that does not care and a government that is happy to abandon its constituents with no explanation. Where does the member for Sandgate stand tonight on this debate? The member for Sandgate was there on Saturday but is not prepared to stand up for her community. I notice that the member for Lytton was here tonight.

Madam SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I remind you in respect—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw. The member for Lytton got up and spoke in this House tonight. The member for Lytton is going to be in for a rude shock when the next election comes around because his constituents care about what is happening and they care about the future of that hospital. If he does not start standing up for his constituents, his time in this House may be well and truly brief.

I was there on Saturday talking to a family whose father had passed away at Eventide. They said to me that the care that was shown to their father was out of this world. They commended the work of the nurses. They commended the care that was shown to the father. Now they are all concerned about where these people are going to go.

Mr Ruthenberg: Fantastic!

Ms PALASZCZUK: What are your plans about where these people are going to go? This is your decision. The Labor government did not close down these aged-care homes. This is clearly a decision of the health minister, and every single person in this House who is a member of the LNP government needs to share the responsibility for that decision that has been made by the health minister and the government.

As I said, this is a government that has no heart—a government that does not care, a government that does not consult, a government that does not understand the communities its members represent. If government members did care about the communities they represent, they would be pounding on the door of the health minister and saying, 'What you are doing is simply not right.' We have seen time and time again cuts to services and cuts to people's jobs. We do not know what is going to happen to the people who are employed at these nursing homes. This is a government that has not consulted and is taking people's lives into its own hands. The distress that is causing to those people is something we have not seen in this state before.

(Time expired)

 **Mr DOWLING** (Redlands—LNP) (6.20 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the honourable the minister. After listening to the contributions to the debate tonight I can say that there is no other area in which there will be such a broad array of contributions. The complete lack of credibility in the contributions of those opposite was nothing short of unsavoury. It was smear. It was a fear campaign led by the member for Bundamba—causing fear and uncertainty in our aged community. It is absolutely obscene. Those opposite know no shame. They will exploit anyone to further their line of argument.

I thank the honourable the minister for moving the amendment, which recognises the hollow promises that Labor have thrived on—the hollow words they used over 20 years. We were reminded of the paper trail of hypocrisy that leads all the way back to Labor—from the former member for Sandgate, Gordon Nuttall, and the then member for Bulimba and her complicity—and that just screams out when you do a little bit of research.

Then we heard the contribution of my friend the member for Stafford. He mentioned the Queensland Health Systems Review back in 2005 and the recommendation that we should sell. That had bipartisan support. We knew that this was an opportunity for better outcomes. It all stems from the lack of funding from the federal government—a failure by the federal government to subsidise appropriately, forcing Queensland Health to cross-subsidise. The very culprit, who was marching in the streets of Queensland over the weekend, is Treasurer Wayne Swan due to his failure to provide appropriate funding. What hypocrisy! Shame, Labor, shame! The member for Stafford also highlighted the better models of delivery and our genuine commitment to and compassion for health.

I remind those in the chamber of the contribution by the member for Lytton. He may well be the youngest member of this place, but the wisdom he shared here tonight was well beyond his years. He reminded us of the neglect of the facility in his electorate of Lytton and of the hypocrisy. He said that the average spending on maintenance and the running of that establishment was \$970 per week. That was the contribution by the former government. That is obscene and absurd. People wonder why these buildings are in a dilapidated condition—why they are falling down, run down and neglected. My friend the member for Lytton also reminded us of the payroll waste and what good that could have done in this space.

Mr Symes: \$1.25 billion.

Mr DOWLING: I take that interjection. From our youngest member and one of our newest members we also got a spelling lesson. How do you spell 'hypocrisy'?

Government members: A-L-P.

Mr DOWLING: Thank you. We were all listening—and how valid and appropriate that is. We have seen 20 years of neglect, 20 years of failing to plan, 20 years of failure to actually deliver what a government should deliver. As I say, our youngest member demonstrated once again not only his wisdom but also his commitment to his constituency. I can see an increased margin for him at the next election if he continues in the same way he has started.

Then we heard the member for Mackay. Talk about cold and callous! That description that was used by the member actually best describes Labor's performance and their failure in health over almost 20 years in office.

The member for Gaven spoke about end-of-life decisions—how important they are and how sensitively they need to be treated—and about how those opposite will stop at nothing to exploit whomever they need to. He also reminded us that the fuse for where we find ourselves was lit seven years ago, when the land was sold. He also reminded us of the cost of service and the need for new and modern facilities, not the run-down, broken-down, cancer-ridden buildings falling down around people's ears. The requirements are for new and modern, safe facilities. I take on board that contribution by the member.

Then we heard the Leader of the Opposition. What an absolutely shameful thing. Did she secure funding from the Treasurer while out street marching on the weekend? I do not think so.

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 54—Bennett, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Minnikin, Molhoek, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Stevens, Stewart, Symes, Watts, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 11—Byrne, Cunningham, Katter, Knuth, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 54—Bennett, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Minnikin, Molhoek, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Stevens, Stewart, Symes, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 11—Byrne, Cunningham, Katter, Knuth, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

- Notes the Premier's statement that his government plans to exit the provision of aged care services
- Notes the position is also consistent with the policy of Queensland Labor Party that has previously stated 'The Commonwealth Government is responsible for funding aged care';
- Notes the 2005 Forster report, officially titled the Queensland Health Systems Review, commissioned by the previous Labor government recommended 'Queensland Health should sell its residential aged care places and where appropriate associated facilities'; and
- Notes that in 2005 land from Eventide Aged Care Facility was sold by the previous Labor government while the current member for Bundamba was Parliamentary Secretary for Health to Gordon Nuttall.

Sitting suspended from 6.41 pm to 7.40 pm.

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2214, on motion of Mr Bleijie—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The question is that the bill be now read a second time.

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

AYES, 48—Bennett, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, T Davis, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Hart, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Shorten, Stevens, Symes, Walker, Watts, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 10—Byrne, Katter, Knuth, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 7—

Mr BLEIJIE (7.50 pm): As minister I am taking the extraordinary step tonight in speaking to the clauses, which I know is generally reserved for the opposition or the crossbenches. However, I ran out of time but there were a couple of issues that I really needed to respond to with respect to the government's intention for the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Labor Party would have us believe again that this is an attack on the workers of Queensland. This is for the workers of Queensland. This is to give the workers of Queensland an October holiday and not have them congested at the start of the year. This is all for the benefit of the workers of Queensland, so the Labor Party cannot come in here and raise an argument that we are attacking the workers by decongesting the first quarter of the year with the holidays and giving a holiday in October. The Leader of the Opposition again rabbit on that, firstly, we are attacking workers' rights and, secondly, that we were somehow getting rid of Labour Day. We are not. We are just moving it. There will be a Labour Day. There will be a Labour Day; it is just going to be in October, not May from next year. And guess what? They can march on Labour Day. As I said, this is a free country, this is a free state. They can march every day of the week, if they so choose. When they want to march on Labour Day—

Mr Rickuss: Russia doesn't even have Labour Day anymore since Solidarity.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the very honourable member for Lockyer, who advises me that Russia does not even have Labour Day anymore. It is okay for the Labor Party to come in here, but, as I said to my honourable colleagues before, make no mistake: this for those seven opposite. It is not about l-a-b-o-u-r; it is about what is in the best interests for L-a-b-o-r—the Queensland division of the Australian Labor Party. That is what their debate is about tonight. That is what the debate is tonight for the member for Bundamba, as she walks around the House. That was her argument.

The member for Bundamba came in and gave this great drivel about membership of the unions having increased. Membership has skyrocketed from events of late and unions are living this new life of luxury with new members. The member referred to some ABS statistics, so let me refer to some ABS statistics. Trade union density for Queensland and Australia between 1990 and 2011 is this: in 1990, Queensland's percentage of density was 38 per cent for the unions; in 1995 it was 33 per cent density; in 2000 it decreased to 25 per cent density; in 2005 it decreased to 23 per cent density; in 2010 it decreased to 19 per cent density; and in 2011 it decreased to 18 per cent density. These figures from

the ABS showed that the density of the union movement to 2011 is on the decrease. It is on the decrease because people are rightly questioning the role that trade unions play in Queensland. We on this side of the House know that the major role the trade unions play in Queensland is to provide the preselection numbers to those seven members opposite. We know that the whole reason for the Labor Party's continual support and undying love and affection for the trade union movement in Queensland is for the member for South Brisbane. I point out to honourable members who were not in the House prior to the dinner break—and the honourable member for Hinchinbrook was here at the time—that I said that it was not like the shark circling in that great Australian movie that is popular in China but not so much in Queensland called *The Beat*—not *The Beat, Bait*—

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Beat is that famous nightclub in Brisbane. It is not like the shark in *Bait*. As I said, Sir Humphrey in *Yes Minister* said that you have to get behind someone before you can stab them in the back. We know that the member for South Brisbane is doing the numbers in Peel Street. We know that the Leader of the Opposition's time will come in the not-too-distant future. We know that the member for South Brisbane, as she builds her profile around the state, as the *Courier-Mail* puts her in more editions of *Qweekend* rather than the opposition leader, who has not appeared in *Qweekend* yet, literally sits behind the honourable Leader of the Opposition. But you have to get behind someone in a big way before you can stab them in the back. That is what we are going to see in the Queensland opposition, because the word around town is that they are not entirely happy with the opposition leader's performance in holding the government to account.

Mr Byrne interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Rockhampton can laugh all he wants. I have heard that he is in line for the deputy leadership of the Queensland division of the Labor Party. I cannot speak for all members on this side of the House, but my money is on the member for Rockhampton. I support the member for Rockhampton all the way. I will provide a letter of reference if he wishes.

The member for South Brisbane said that we were attacking workers, we were attacking unions and used all sorts of statistics from the unions. For the benefit of the member for South Brisbane, let me again use the statistic created in only the last 24 hours. Ninety-five per cent of teachers in the Queensland Teachers' Union gave a big tick to this government's proposal for EB negotiations. We negotiated with the teachers. The teachers did not strike. When was the last time the teachers went on strike in Queensland? When the Labor government was in.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I can hear the member for South Brisbane rabbiting on over there. She cannot deny the fact that the teachers strike under the Labor Party government not the Liberal National Party government, because we sit down, we take this business seriously and we negotiate these outcomes always in the best interest of the workers of Queensland. If members were wondering what that had to do with my contribution tonight, I say that that is why we are moving public holidays. We are always looking at what is in the best interest of the workers.

The opposition leader talked about the contributions of the ETU, the tram and bus union, the council union—all the expert union advice that she relied on.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: But hang on, members, the opposition leader did not refer to an article by Robyn Ironside that appeared in the *Courier-Mail* on 21 August 2012 at 12 am. It is not generally my business to quote comments by unions in this place, but in this instance I will because it really supports my argument.

Alex Scott from the public sector union Together Queensland also expressed surprise that the government would be concerned with rearranging public holidays but then he says, 'But the fact that Labour Day occurs, is more important than when it occurs.' That is direct from the union. I see the performance of the stunt men and women opposite. I see the shadow Treasurer pick up the *Financial Review*. That would be the first time he has read the *Financial Review*, I can assure members of that. The member for Woodridge is probably in the comic section at the back reading about the seven opposite. If this is what they come into this place for, to read the comic section of the newspaper, then I question why they are here at all. In fact, I would like them to table the copies of the documents they are reading right now so that we can enjoy, as immensely as they are, what they are heavily engaged and involved in. The opposition are overresourced, with 22 staff sitting out the back. I know when a newspaper has not been read before. We are heading towards eight o'clock at night. I can tell that those newspapers have not been read today at all.

Mr Cripps: That is where they got their questions from this morning.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the minister's interjection that that is where they got their questions in parliament from this morning. Members will have seen the performance yesterday in the media of the Leader of the Opposition. She was thrown a heap of questions, 'Will you be asking about this?', 'Will you be asking about that?' Members would have seen the Leader of the Opposition saying, 'Oh yes, we are going to go strong in about that.', 'Oh yes, we are going to go strong in about that.' There was no idea, no plan of attack, only what the media could tell them to do. The media were doing the job of the Australian Labor Party. I see that they are so interested in what they are reading. One of the articles that I guarantee the member for South Brisbane has not given the Leader of the Opposition would be the *Qweekend* magazine. We know that the opposition leader complained at the time and asked why she did not get a little profile piece in the *Courier-Mail*. I will tell members why. They are not interested in the opposition leader, they are interested in the leader who will be the opposition leader and that is the member for South Brisbane.

The overresourced opposition can get their 22 staff to bring in seven rolls of unused newspapers. They can pretend to understand what they are reading. They can pretend to have the competence to read a newspaper. The shadow Treasurer, who aspires to be Peter Costello one day—

Mr Cripps: You were listening.

Mr BLEIJIE: He is intently listening, despite trying to be heavily engaged in the *Financial Review*. When he heard his name his ears pricked up. That would be the first time I have seen the shadow Treasurer read the *Financial Review* in this place or around this place ever. I read the *Financial Review* every day. Do members know why? We on this side can understand what is in the *Financial Review*. When it talks about fiscal accountability, responsibility and paying down debt, the Labor Party would not have a clue what any of that means. All they are interested in is imparting the socialist values that they have onto Queenslanders.

As the members opposite are so interested in reading tonight can I table a *Courier-Mail* article where Alex Scott from the public sector union said the fact that Labour Day occurs is more important than when it occurs. That particular union is saying it is going to march in October, but apparently not the Labor Party. For members who were not here, the opposition came in after we had just gone through a budget—

Tabled paper: Courier-Mail article from news.com.au, dated 21 August 2012, titled 'Queensland's Labour Day public holiday moved to October' [1417].

Mr Cripps: What clause is this?

Mr BLEIJIE: These are all clauses with respect to the bill. The opposition leader came into this place and made a major announcement. She said if the Labor Party is re-elected to government in Queensland it will restore Labour Day to May. In two years if the Labor Party wins that is its biggest priority coming into government. It is only its priority because it needs the preselectors that the union thugs provide to their preselections. That is why it is on the agenda now as its first piece of policy.

As I have indicated, this is a common-sense solution to the problem of congested holidays in the first quarter of the year. We are moving Labour Day to October. We are restoring Her Majesty's birthday holiday to June. Workers in Queensland will have the ability to have good holidays at the start, they will have a holiday in the middle of the year and they will have a holiday at the end of the year. This is something that the Labor Party never gave them, but we will. This bill is all about the workers of Queensland. This bill is about ensuring that we get rid of the complications that arise. As members here know, tourism is one of the key pillars of our four-pillar economy. By restoring the public holiday for the Queen's Birthday to June and having the holiday in the middle of the year, which is a traditionally quiet period of time for the tourism sector, it should give a boost to the tourism industry. All round this is a common-sense outcome.

Can I finish on the issue with respect to the ETU and the shameful contribution it made to the committee where it referred to Labour Day as having the same significance as Anzac Day. As I have said in this place earlier tonight, I will never, over my dead body, put Labour Day marches ahead of the diggers who fought and died for the free democratic society that we enjoy today.

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (8.06 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr BLEIJIE: I move the following amendment—

1 **After clause 7**

Page 5, after line 23—

insert—

'Part 4 Amendment of Oaths Act 1867

'8 Act amended

'This part amends the Oaths Act 1867.

9 Amendment of s 3 (Oaths for justices of the peace and others)

- (1) Section 3(2), 'and wardens appointed under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*'—
omit, insert—
'wardens appointed under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* and commissioners of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission appointed after the passing of the *Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012*'.
- (2) Section 3—
insert—
- (3) Commissioners of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission appointed before the passing of the *Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012* may take the oath of allegiance and the oath of office mentioned in subsection (1) with the necessary adaptations.'

Mr BLEIJIE: I table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

Tabled paper: Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes to the Hon. Jarrod Bleijie's amendments [1418].

This amendment deals with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. We have two operations in Queensland. We have the Industrial Court with President Hall and we have the QIRC, where matters of arbitration and EB negotiations take place before commissioners. Government members will know that we have recently appointed three additional full-time commissioners to the QIRC. Because we have changed some of their functions we have given them more capacity. It has been an anomaly that we have seen that when the commissioners take office and they have a nice ceremony, which they ought to and they deserve, legislation does not require them to either take an oath of office or swear allegiance to Her Majesty like every judicial officer and every member of parliament. We are pleased that this amendment will correct that prior to the swearing in of the three new officers. This is why I have added it to the holiday bill. It is not essentially relevant to the holiday bill, but it is an urgent amendment that I need in legislation to effectively put in place that the QIRC commissioners from henceforth can swear allegiance to our sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia and Her other realms and territories and Head of the Commonwealth and Her heirs and successors and also the fact that they have an oath of office. It is a minor and technical amendment in nature. In Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee year I think it is appropriate. As we have named the courts the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law I think it is appropriate that we fix this anomaly.

We have been in government for just over six months, we have seen the anomaly and we have fixed it. The mob over there were in for 14 years, they put commissioners through the QIRC and never fixed this anomaly. I am very happy that I am the Attorney-General who will fix this and we can restore some integrity, accountability and order into the commission, as commissioners will now swear allegiance and take an oath of office. I am particularly pleased to move that amendment in my name.

Amendment agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (8.10 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

AYES, 53—Bennett, Bleijie, Cavallucci, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Hart, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Shorten, Stevens, Symes, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 8—Byrne, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (8.18 pm): Prior to moving an amendment to the long title, I welcome to the public gallery members from Kawana and Caloundra. They are my biggest fan club and I thank them for coming to Parliament House.

Mrs Miller: They're too old; they're over 80.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Bundamba that they look like they are all over 80. I think that is the most disrespectful thing I have ever heard in my life. She is a disgrace to this parliament and she should walk out. The member for Bundamba does not like sick people and she does not like people who may be older than she is. She is a disgrace to this parliament. She is an absolute disgrace.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The Attorney-General has the call.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Bundamba should do the decent thing and walk out of the parliament. She should apologise. In fact, I call on the member for Bundamba to apologise.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am personally offended by the comments of the member for Bundamba and I ask that they be withdrawn according to standing orders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I listened to what was being said. I am not certain that there was a personal reflection on the member. However, I may not have heard everything that was said. It would help the House if the member were to withdraw.

Mrs MILLER: At the will of the Deputy Speaker, I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Bundamba.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting. The member has withdrawn. The Attorney-General has the call.

Mr BLEIJIE: The public gallery has witnessed the Labor Party in full swing. I move the following amendment—

2 Long title

Long title, after *'Holidays Act 1983'*—

insert—

'and the Oaths Act 1867'.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (8.21 pm): I advise the House that, in accordance with standing order 136, the Committee of the Legislative Assembly has fixed reporting dates for two bills currently before committees as follows: for the Commercial Arbitration Bill, referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, the reporting date shall be by 4 February 2013; for the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Bill, referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, the reporting date shall be by 22 November 2012.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the Clerk to read the next order of the day, it has been brought to my attention that someone in the gallery was taking a photo. A flash went off. I make it known to those in the gallery that taking photographs is not allowed. It is not permissible in the parliament. Please desist from doing that. Thank you.

WATER LEGISLATION (DAM SAFETY AND WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 12 September (see p. 1845).

Second Reading

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (8.23 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Before the debate on the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill commences, I wish to acknowledge that the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee conducted an inquiry into the bill and received three stakeholder submissions. The Department of Energy and Water Supply has reviewed the bill in light of these submissions and provided additional information back to the committee.

The bill deals with a number of important policy issues and government commitments. Shortly after being elected, the government committed to implementing all 177 recommendations in the final report of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry for which it is responsible. The bill implements nine of the commission's recommendations relating to dam safety that will ensure dam owners, government agencies and communities are prepared for and able to respond to future floods and similar disasters.

Similarly, the government moved quickly to freeze the standard electricity tariff, tariff 11, for 2011-13 and announced changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme to prevent higher power costs for people without solar power. The bill makes the required changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme to manage the escalating costs of the scheme. The government has also committed to reducing unrequired regulation and red tape wherever possible. The bill contains a number of measures to reduce the burden of regulation on the water sector.

The committee's report was tabled on 22 October 2012. The committee recommends that the bill be passed. I table the government's response to the committee report.

Tabled paper: State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 8—Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, government response [\[1419\]](#).

I thank the committee and stakeholders for their contributions to the inquiry and for their careful examination of the bill. In this regard, the committee called for public submissions on the bill to be made by 3 October 2012. It received three submissions by this date. These were from Seqwater, the Queensland Farmers Federation and the Queensland Conservation Council. The committee also invited the submitters to attend a public hearing held on 11 October 2012 to discuss the issues raised in their submissions. I note the constructive input of the three parties on the provisions of the bill.

I also note the committee made three recommendations for possible amendment of the bill. Although I do not propose to move amendments to the bill during the consideration in detail stage, I will address a number of the issues raised in the submissions and in the committee's report relating to flood mitigation manuals, requirements for emergency action plans and emergency event reports, the content and timing of interim emergency event reports and interim flood event reports and declaring temporary full supply levels for relevant dams in South-East Queensland. I will deal with these issues in turn.

Firstly, I will deal with flood mitigation manuals. Seqwater cited new powers in the bill for the chief executive to issue a notice specifying required qualification, experience and training requirements for the key flood engineers, suggesting there is a need for consultation before the chief executive exercises these powers. Noncompliance with the notice attracts a maximum financial penalty of 1,665 penalty units. Seqwater advised that there are limited candidates qualified to fill the role of flood engineer and compliance with the notice might, at times, be difficult. The Department of Energy and Water Supply advised us that it intends to consult dam owners before a notice is issued and to allow a reasonable time to comply.

Secondly, I will deal with emergency action plans and emergency event reports. The Queensland Farmers Federation expressed some concern about the burden of preparing emergency action plans for owners of farm dams. Only a few owners of referable farm dams where the whole of the population at risk is located on the property have not previously had to prepare emergency action plans. The Department of Energy and Water Supply will provide guidelines for all dam owners on how to prepare emergency action plans and the subsequent emergency event reports. The burden of preparing a plan and active monitoring for emergency situations identified in the plan will be proportional to the risks posed by each dam and its location.

Seqwater also raised the issue of potential duplication between emergency event reports and flood event reports and was also concerned an emergency event report could be triggered by controlled releases or spills over ungated dams because of the definition of 'downstream release hazard'. The Department of Energy and Water Supply advises it is not intended to capture every routine spillway release and that the definition limits the events that need to be reported on. I accept that for Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams both an emergency event report and flood event report may be triggered if there is a flood event.

While the two reports are similar in content, they address different situations and are triggered by an emergency event or a flood event respectfully. In such a situation, the Department of Energy and Water Supply would accept a single report that meets the requirements of both reports. The committee noted the Department of Energy and Water Supply's response to these matters and is satisfied with the proposal.

Seqwater also raised a concern with the requirement to notify some 'relevant entities' as specified in the bill when an emergency event occurs. As defined, relevant entities include 'the persons whose safety or property may be threatened by the emergency condition'.

In its interim report, the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry noted that 'the general rule is that dam owners are not responsible for providing warnings directly to the community', with the exception being residents living immediately downstream of dams because of their proximity and immediate risk. It is not intended that this category of persons include communities at considerable distance from the dam who can be adequately alerted indirectly by the emergency services and disaster management arrangements. The specific plan for each dam should identify who should be notified, how they will be notified and in what order of priority. This approach is consistent with the Australian government's guidelines for *Emergency Management Planning for Floods Affected By Dams*, which states—

The dam owner should notify downstream residents directly of flood releases if the available warning times to those residents are less than those available through the emergency management system.

In relation to this issue, the committee recommends that Seqwater be consulted during the development of the guidelines on emergency action plans so that the guidelines clearly outline the responsibilities and obligations in relation to the notification of relevant entities in an emergency. I can report that Seqwater is already a member of the working group which will be developing the guidelines.

The third issue is content and timing of interim emergency event and interim flood event reports. The committee recommended that consideration be given to amending the bill to limit the content of interim reports and to provide flexibility in the time frames for dam owners preparing the reports. The intention is that an interim report—either an interim emergency event report or an interim flood event report—would be required when an event is protracted. In such cases, the chief executive considers the reports will provide vital information to assess the suitability of emergency arrangements, which may be applicable immediately. Although interim reports need not be as detailed as final reports, the scope must be the same as reports prepared after an event has ended. In terms of time frames, the bill provides that these reports are due within 10 business days after the chief executive gives a notice. Providing a more flexible time frame would defeat the purpose of the interim reports which is to enable the chief executive to quickly obtain a situational assessment of an event. The bill provides a defence of noncompliance if a dam owner has a reasonable excuse.

The fourth issue is temporary full supply levels. The Queensland Conservation Council suggested a broader range of issues and their impacts as well as an extensive consultation process should inform any decision to declare a temporary full supply level for the state's flood mitigation dams in South-East Queensland. In this regard the bill does not limit the matters the minister may have regard to in considering whether a temporary full supply level will mitigate the potential impacts of flood or drought.

Can I say also that a temporary full supply level is just that—temporary. A decision to draw down a dam to temporarily increase the flood capacity of the dam to mitigate the potential impacts of flooding or a decision to temporarily increase the full supply level to mitigate the potential impacts of drought is not taken lightly or without due consideration to the range of relevant factors, including the impacts on public safety and environmental, social and economic impacts. The overriding public interest, however, is, firstly, whether such changes impact the safety of the dam and, secondly, water security for the region. The bill's decision-making framework adequately provides for consideration of all relevant factors in arriving at a decision. The committee stated it does not consider the bill limits the minister's discretion to consider a wide range of impacts when invoking temporary full supply levels and is satisfied with the current proposal.

The government acknowledges the devastating impact of the 2010-11 floods on Queensland communities and that some people are still going through the process of rebuilding their lives both physically and mentally. The initiatives in this bill will help the community to be better informed and better prepared for any similar events in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (8.33 pm): At the outset I would like to say that the opposition will be supporting the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. However, we have some reservations regarding the bill which I will address. We will be supporting the implementation of the recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. We will also be supporting the amendments to the Water Act 2000. But I place on record Queensland Labor's concerns regarding the changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme that have been announced by the government and will be further implemented by this bill. I will speak to the Solar Bonus Scheme changes a little later.

This bill implements nine recommendations from the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry regarding dam safety. The amendments include changes to the preparation and management of flood mitigation manuals, emergency action plans, legislative requirements for flood event and emergency event reports and the declaration of temporary full supply levels to mitigate flood or drought. I note the government's intention to implement these changes before the start of the next wet season. The opposition supports the urgency of these changes.

I want to place on record again the opposition's appreciation to Commissioner Holmes and Assistant Commissioners O'Sullivan and Cummins, as well as the counsel and staff assisting the inquiry, for the professional way in which they conducted the inquiry and for their comprehensive and far-reaching recommendations. By implementing those recommendations in full we may not be able to prevent severe flood events but we will be able to mitigate the severe impacts. I also want to acknowledge the staff of the minister's department for their work in implementing the recommendations. As I mentioned earlier, we will be fully supporting the implementation of the recommendations of the Floods Commission of Inquiry and their implementation through this bill.

We will also be supporting the amendments that this bill makes to the Water Act 2000 which will streamline the water industry. There will be new criteria for determining which dams are required to conduct failure impact assessments. Amending the criteria will exempt 65 dams, which have proven to put no more than two people at risk, from having to undertake future failure impact assessment. The committee report noted that the chief executive can still, under existing powers, require any dam owners to have their dam failure impact assessed if there is a reasonable belief the dam would have persons at risk should the dam fail.

The bill also seeks to extend the time frame for the approval of recycled water management plans by one year to 1 July 2014. The Water Supply Act 2000 also regulates small water and sewerage service providers and imposes requirements for registration and the development of a range of management plans. Currently small water service providers can apply to the regulator for an exemption from planning requirements. These exemptions have always been granted but the application and assessment process places an administrative burden on service providers as well as government. The bill introduces a statutory exemption from the requirements under the act to have an approved strategic asset management plan, an approved system leakage management plan and a drought management plan. There are around 60 registered small non-urban water service providers that will benefit from this exemption.

I note that the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee has made six recommendations seeking clarification about the way the proposed changes will operate. I will not address the recommendations in detail, except to say that the opposition supports the recommendations and we look forward to hearing the minister's response to them.

I turn now to the amendments that this bill makes to the Electricity Act 1994 and the continuing operation of the Solar Bonus Scheme. At the March election the LNP promised to retain the Solar Bonus Scheme at the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour rate. There was no equivocation or wriggle room in the promise. It was in the LNP's election costing document, which says on page 6, 'The LNP has already committed to retaining the solar feed-in tariff.' I table that document.

Tabled paper: LNP CanDo Action: Costings and Savings Strategy [1420].

There were also media reports in March, which I table, where the Treasurer promised—in the *Courier-Mail*—that the Solar Bonus Scheme 'would remain untouched' and from the *Brisbane Times* which reported that the solar feed-in tariff was 'safe'.

Tabled paper: *Courier-Mail* article, dated 23 March 2012, titled 'LNP to make criminals help fund \$4b promises' [1421].

Tabled paper: *Brisbane Times* article, dated 22 March 2012, titled 'LNP unveils long-awaited costings' [1422].

When asked directly on ABC Radio, the Premier reaffirmed the LNP's commitment to retain the Solar Bonus Scheme at the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour rate. I table that transcript for the benefit of the House and refer all members to pages 23 and 24.

Tabled paper: 612 ABC transcript, dated 14 October 2011, regarding Queensland election issues [1423].

There is no amount of posturing or spinning that the minister or Treasurer or the Premier can do to get around the fact that the LNP has broken its promise to the people of Queensland not to cut the Solar Bonus Scheme.

The committee report notes on page 3 that no public consultation was undertaken regarding this decision. So, on top of axing a solar farm project at Cloncurry, this decision is hardly evidence of a government that supports development and growth of the state's solar industry. Solar is something that just makes sense to Queenslanders—after all, we are the Sunshine State. The decision to cut the 44c net feed-in tariff was conceived and executed behind closed doors, and once the decision was taken that was the end of the matter as far as the government was concerned.

I note that through the Electricity Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012 the government has already closed the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour rate to new applicants, replacing it with the rate of 8c per kilowatt hour. This bill contains further amendments to the Electricity Act 1994 which will ultimately allow the government to terminate the 44c rate for existing customers. I note that the Minister for Energy and Water Supply has asked the Queensland Competition Authority to review the feed-in tariff rate and make recommendations by March 2013 on a 'fair and reasonable' feed-in tariff rate. Instead of allowing the Queensland Competition Authority to undertake a review and then implement its recommendations,

the government has jumped the gun by cutting the rate to 8c per kilowatt hour for new customers. Those customers receiving the 44c rate, as well as those receiving the 8c rate, will presumably all be shifted to the new feed-in tariff rate determined by the QCA at some stage after March 2013.

However, it is not just people already on the 44c rate who will be impacted. People purchasing homes with existing solar panels receiving the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour rate will now only be able to access the 8c-per-kilowatt-hour rate. The department of energy website clearly states that, upon the sale of a home, a new electricity account holder is not eligible for the 44c tariff and 'may wish to lodge a new network connection application with their distributor to access the 8c tariff'. A person can only receive the previous tariff rate of 44c if they are renting the property and maintain the existing electricity account holder's name. The only exception applies where the transfer of the account is between spouses.

The solar feed-in tariff of 44c supported 11,000 jobs in the solar industry, which is now reported to have been reduced to less than 6,500. The LNP's cut to the solar tariff is hurting small business and puts more pressure on jobs at the worst possible time. There is a cost associated with the Solar Bonus Scheme and the opposition acknowledges this. However, if the approach to scaling down the solar feed-in bonus was intended as a cost-saving measure it has been a bizarre failure, as laid out in the *Climate Spectator* article titled 'Newman's Accidental Solar Boom', which I table.

Tabled paper: Business Spectator article, dated 11 July 2012, titled 'Newman's accidental solar boom' [\[1424\]](#).

The Minister's media statement said that changes to the scheme were essential because rising costs of the scheme would need to be met by Queenslanders' electricity bills. Energex indicates that in just 13 days from the minister's announcement to the 'close-off' on what is now known as 'Manic Monday', there were some 75,000 applications. If all proceed to implementation, this represents approximately 150 megawatts of solar PV capacity. So while the minister said the scheme had 'met its objectives' because it had reached 461 megawatts over a four-year period, he closed the scheme in a ham-fisted manner which triggered the commitment of 150 megawatts under the scheme in just 13 days. That is a 32 per cent increase in a fortnight. The scheme participants have similarly increased from 180,000 to a further 75,000 applications, a 42 per cent increase. This kind of spiky approach to the industry causes real risks for Queenslanders. Anyone familiar with environmental demand management schemes, including housing insulation and rainwater tanks, knows that when it is a rapid scale-up for short-term production levels, that is precisely when shonky operators or poor quality assurance will flourish. The Newman government has manufactured a spike without consulting industry or consumers.

As I said, the opposition acknowledges that there is a cost associated with the Solar Bonus Scheme. That is why when we were in government we took steps to ensure the sustainability of the scheme such as capping the size of eligible individual solar PV systems to five-kilowatt capacity and limiting the scheme to just one system per premises. These changes were introduced to curb the increase in applications for large systems by people seeking to make a profit from the scheme and to ensure the scheme's sustainability.

The changes that the LNP have made to the Solar Bonus Scheme represent a broken promise. They promised clearly before the election to do one thing: retain the Solar Bonus Scheme and not change it. Now after the election they have decided to do the opposite. Labor will not simply allow the LNP to break their election promises. We will hold the government to account for the promises that they made before the election. I, therefore, place on record our concern and the disappointment of all affected Queenslanders that the LNP has decided to break its election promise to retain the Solar Bonus Scheme at the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour rate.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (8.42 pm): I rise to support the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I would like to address the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008, water supply act amendments that relate to dam safety and, in particular, emergency action plans.

Emergency action plans are currently required to be prepared by owners of referable dams under either development conditions or safety conditions applied under the water supply act. A referable dam is a water supply dam that would put more than two persons at risk if it were to fail as determined by a failure impact assessment. The Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry recommended that the water supply act be amended to provide a legislative requirement for emergency action plans to be prepared for all referable plans and for these plans to be approved and periodically reviewed. In response to the commission's recommendations, the bill introduces a legislative requirement for all referable dam owners to have an approved emergency action plan. In addition, the bill specifies mandatory content for plans and requires that approved plans be reviewed after five years. The approval process provides for the chairperson of the relevant local or district disaster management group to review draft plans. The chief executive responsible for the water supply act can also seek advice from Emergency Management Queensland before approving a plan. This ensures that emergency action plans are integrated with disaster management arrangements at the local level.

Our government has committed to the implementation of all 177 recommendations of the Queensland floods commission. It is important that we respond swiftly and strongly to deliver the changes needed to improve Queensland's preparedness to deal with future floods or other disasters. As

a child, I witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of the 1974 floods on the homes of many of my school friends and family members in Bundall, Surfers Paradise, Rio Vista, Isle of Capri and lower lying parts of Southport, Chirn Park and Labrador. Last January, many of my friends and colleagues worked together to help families in Goodna, Ipswich and the Lockyer Valley. Through my association with the Gold Coast Titans and my community radio station Juice 107.3, we were able to rally many volunteers, nearly 300 vehicle loads of supplies and sufficient funds to purchase new refrigerators for many families in and around Goodna.

Better management and a more transparent framework for governing our dams are important steps forward in our approach to water management and flood mitigation in South-East Queensland. Last year the Gold Coast was spared the devastating effects of major flooding—in part a fluke of nature and, I suspect, in part due to the significant raising of the Hinze Dam. As a former Gold Coast City councillor, I am proud to have been part of a council that made the hard decision to raise the Hinze Dam to stage 3 in spite of many reports and advice to the contrary. The Hinze Dam, now 15 metres higher, has nearly double the water storage capacity, at some 278,680 megalitres—about a three-year continuous water supply—and now provides significant flood mitigation capacity, providing greater protection for homes in the Nerang River delta and the Gold Coast flood plain.

As I said earlier, I believe better management and a more transparent framework for governing our dams are important steps forward in our approach to water management and flood mitigation in South-East Queensland. These changes to the legislation provide for better planning and preparedness in meeting the challenges of Queensland's sometimes extreme weather events, reduce red tape and create a better framework for flood mitigation and water management. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (8.46 pm): It is with pleasure that I rise to speak on the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The objectives of the bill are to amend the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to implement recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry relating to dam safety and flood mitigation matters. It also amends the Water Act 2000 to relocate provisions for declaring temporary full-supply levels for flood mitigation dams to the water supply act. It also amends the water supply act to change the criteria determining which dams must carry out failure impact assessments; extend the due date for when certain low-risk recycled water schemes must have an approved recycled water management plan or exemption from a plan in place; and provide exemptions for small non-urban water service providers from certain planning and reporting requirements. Quite a lot of primary industry participants, or farmers, will be rather pleased about that as, prior to this, a lot of their dams were reportable. Among other things, this bill amends the Electricity Act 1994 to align the operation of the Solar Bonus Scheme with government policy to reduce the feed-in tariff for new small customers after 9 July 2012 and clarify the conditions for the feed-in tariff entitlement.

I turn to the flood mitigation manuals' content and approval. Currently, approved flood mitigation manuals are in place for Wivenhoe and Somerset dams and North Pine Dam which set out different operating strategies for the operation of these dams during flood events. These manuals are approved by the chief executive for a period of five years. Where an approved flood mitigation manual exists, the dam's owner, operator and employees are protected from civil liability for any act or omission done honestly and without negligence in observance of the procedures in the manual. That is a great step forward from where we were at during the time of the last flood.

Because choice of operating strategies under flood mitigation manuals has the capacity to affect millions of people and the need to balance competing interests when determining these strategies, the commission recommended that the minister, as the representative of the people, should approve the manual for use by dam operators rather than the chief executive. That also is a great step forward. The commission considered that departmental officers should maintain the role of assessing flood mitigation manuals and provide information and advice in order for the minister to make the decision but that the assessment should be conducted by an independent person who has had no involvement in a manual's development at any stage and who can be seen to be independent of all individuals who were so involved. That obviously is one of the crucial issues in terms of the recent flood we had: to maintain a clear line of command in terms of the operation of the dams, particularly the flood mitigation dams in Queensland.

In terms of the legislative requirement for flood event and emergency event reports, a flood event report is triggered where flood releases occur in accordance with an approved flood mitigation manual, while emergency event reports can be required if an emergency action plan for a dam is triggered. The bill introduces a legislative requirement for emergency event reports and flood event reports to be prepared by dam owners and submitted to the chief executive within 30 business days after the end of an event. Emergency event reports are currently required under development or safety conditions while flood event reports are required under an approved flood mitigation manual. This bill clearly sets out the directions in terms of a flood event and makes that so much clearer.

The bill also stipulates in the area of the temporary full-supply level. We have had many discussions in this parliament about the temporary full-supply level. The bill relocates provisions for declaring a temporary full-supply level for flood mitigation dams from the Water Act to the water supply

act. These provisions were introduced in response to the commission's interim report. The declaration process will be streamlined to allow for an abbreviated decision-making process if a new full-supply level is to be declared more than once in six months, and to reflect the government's election commitment to restructure the bulk water supply arrangements in South-East Queensland. The relocation will better align responsibilities for dam safety and flood mitigation under one act and reflect current administrative responsibilities.

The other part of this bill relates to the Solar Bonus Scheme. The bill amends the Electricity Act to align the operation of the Solar Bonus Scheme with government policy to close the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff to new entrants from midnight on 9 July 2012 and replace it with an 8c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff. It inserts a head of power in section 44A(2) to prescribe the circumstances in which different categories of small consumers are no longer entitled to be credited with a feed-in tariff and an end date of 1 July 2014 for the 8c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff. It also inserts new transitional provisions that clarify ongoing eligibility to the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour credit amount for qualifying generators covered by section 328 of the act. It also updates sections 44A and 55DB of the act as a result of the Electricity Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2012, gazetted on 6 July 2012. This bill actually covers those two areas very effectively and, quite frankly, is a step forward in terms of the Queensland government delivering on its election promises.

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (8.54 pm): I rise to speak on the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and offer some comments on just a few aspects of the bill as a member of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee, before which this bill went for examination. This bill has several important purposes, including amending the water supply act 2008 to implement recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry relating to dam safety and flood mitigation; amending the Water Act 2000 regarding provisions for declaring temporary full-supply levels for flood mitigation dams; amending the water supply act around issues relating to failure impact assessments, recycled water schemes and non-urban water service providers; and amending the Electricity Act 1994 with regard to the reduction in the feed-in tariff for new small customers of solar energy.

As I was part of the committee's examination of the bill, I would like to express my thanks to the Department of Energy and Water Supply for their briefing, as well as the Queensland Farmers Federation, Queensland Conservation Council and Seqwater for their submissions on this bill. I must declare a particular interest in certain aspects of this bill upfront, in particular the issues surrounding North Pine Dam. North Pine Dam falls entirely within the boundaries of my electorate, and the impact from significant rainfall and flooding that this dam has on my electorate and the neighbouring electorate of Kallangur has been significant in recent years, particularly during the January 2011 floods.

North Pine Dam has a significant difference in its storage capacity to Wivenhoe Dam in that it has no flood mitigation capacity. Once it hits 100 per cent capacity, as it did very rapidly in January 2011 and as it did several times during that wet season, the water simply has to be let out of the dam to prevent it spilling over the dam wall. We have seen all too clearly the adverse impacts of this downstream from North Pine Dam: substantial erosion, regular closures of Youngs Crossing Road and the irreparable damage to the northbound AJ Wyllie Bridge on Gympie Road at Lawnton.

I am eagerly anticipating the outcomes of the North Pine Dam Optimisation Study and its determination of whether or not North Pine Dam should continue to be operated under a flood mitigation manual. Whatever the outcome of that, it is crucial that North Pine Dam is assessed somewhat differently to Wivenhoe and Somerset dams, given the lack of capacity for flood mitigation water storage. Whether that be via a flood mitigation manual or otherwise is a matter for the longer term review, but the serious impact of a major dam without any flood mitigation capacity in a suburban area cannot be treated lightly. North Pine Dam is unique in this regard and needs to be treated accordingly. I know that the minister is fully aware of the situation with North Pine Dam and the concerns of myself, the member for Kallangur and residents of the local area. I thank the minister for taking the time, since he has been in that role, to meet with residents and talk with us about the issues relating to North Pine Dam.

I also take this opportunity to comment on just a couple of the issues discussed by the committee during hearings and briefings. Firstly, with regard to recommendation 5, the committee recommends that the legislation provide flexibility in the time frames for providing an interim flood event report in light of the practical difficulties which may arise in some circumstances. I did have a few points to make about that, but I thank the minister for his clarification in his reply speech of the rationale behind that part of the bill. That certainly clarifies the situation.

The other issue is the declaration of temporary full-supply levels. That was another interesting discussion. Again, I am pleased to support the committee's conclusion about the proposal in the bill—that the control over temporary alteration of the full-supply levels of Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams should be a function of the responsible minister. As I have already mentioned a couple of times, it is vitally important that decisions, particularly regarding North Pine Dam, always recognise that there is

no flood mitigation storage capacity and that it is located in an urban area. I know that those important facts will form part of the responsible minister's decisions regarding temporary full-supply levels in North Pine Dam.

Finally, I want to mention sections of the bill relating to the Queensland Solar Bonus Scheme. The scheme is certainly an admirable one. Of course, it is highly desirable to see consumers moving to various forms of renewable energy. Queensland's Solar Bonus Scheme commenced in June 2008 and by July 2012 had more than 205,000 solar PV systems being installed.

The rate of uptake, which was no doubt higher than anticipated, means that the cost of the scheme through to its end date in 2028 would be substantially more than first thought. The spike in uptake after the government announced the end of the 44c feed-in tariff has highlighted this issue further. The problem that this scheme has created due to its own popularity is that the burden of cost to maintain our state's electricity network has been slowly shifting from all network users to those who either cannot afford or simply have not installed solar PV systems. It is simply not acceptable to our government to see that that burden falls to the consumers who can least afford it. The new 8c feed-in tariff is comparable to the tariff offered by other states, and I commend the minister for tasking the Queensland Competition Authority to review the feed-in tariff rate and to make recommendations on an ongoing fair and reasonable feed-in tariff rate.

In closing, I again thank the department as well as those stakeholders who participated in the process through their submissions. I also thank our committee chair, the member for Mirani, and the committee secretariat for their work in providing briefing papers and coordinating this process. This bill contains some important policy proposals and, after the committee's scrutiny of the bill, I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (9.00 pm): I rise to support the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The bill has several purposes: to amend the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008; to amend the Water Act 2000; and to amend the Electricity Act 1994. Firstly I want to discuss the aspects of the bill in relation to dam safety. This bill has been prepared to implement our legislative response to the final report released by the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry, which focused on a broad range of matters relating to the devastating 2010-11 floods. Our government fully supports all recommendations relevant to state government responsibilities and we are committed to working with all levels of government and the community to improve future disaster preparedness.

As the Wivenhoe Dam and the Somerset Dam are located within the wonderful electorate of Nanango, I have taken a keen interest in the benefits of this legislation. The impacts of the flood event were devastating for all involved, none more so than the constituents of the Nanango electorate who live downstream of the Wivenhoe Dam wall. The results of water releases were horrendous and today many still live with the destruction caused by the mass of water which flooded this area. For their sake, I believe it is important that our government has responded to recommendations that make necessary legislative changes before the impending wet season.

The legislative amendments being mentioned today will support nine of the recommendations made by the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry relating to dam safety and flood mitigation. Importantly, they will ensure that owners of referable dams have an emergency action plan. They will ensure dam owners submit flood event reports and emergency event reports within 30 days of a flood. They will also ensure dams will be operated under a flood mitigation manual and they will streamline the declaration of temporary full-supply levels for flood mitigation dams to mitigate potential emergencies. These amendments will have great benefits for our community, in particular creating greater peace of mind that our dams are being well managed at all times and that we will be much better prepared for when and if the next flood does come.

This bill also provides for a reduction in the regulatory burden. The bill extends the due date for recycled water management plans for providing an exemption from doing a plan by one year for recycled water schemes supplying for lower risk users and provides exemptions for small non-urban service providers from certain regulatory requirements. We are doing our bit to get out of the way of business so that the job can get done.

The other part of this bill which I wish to discuss relates to the changes to the Electricity Act with regard to the Solar Bonus Scheme. In June our government announced changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme to help limit the rapidly escalating cost and its contribution to increasing electricity bills across Queensland. This issue is particularly important throughout our state but particularly in my electorate of Nanango, where at the moment we are facing the imminent closure of two of our power generators at the Tarong Power Station and the loss of many jobs. There are several reasons for this closure, with the main one being the oversupply of electricity in Queensland. One may ask: why has this horrendous issue come to bear? That is because of our falling electricity demand. I am extremely disappointed with this announcement, but I understand the reasons and the economic reasons why the board has been left with little other choice but to make this decision. I hope that a reduction in costs now will shore up the viability in the long term, ensuring that it remains an integral part of the South Burnett community.

Unfortunately the Solar Bonus Scheme, like other Labor schemes, has played a part in this decision to put the two generators into cold storage. The Solar Bonus Scheme has resulted in an oversupply of electricity in the market. Since this scheme was introduced, more than 185,000 households all over Queensland have invested in solar panels. We understand that many people did their sums on a feed-in tariff of 44c and the government has ensured that existing customers and those who signed up before 30 June 2012 will still receive this generous rate. However, all new customers will now receive an 8c feed-in tariff for all surplus electricity supplied to Queensland's electricity network. The Solar Bonus Scheme has done its job. It has made solar power more affordable for Queenslanders, but what about the people who cannot afford solar power? I also believe that our government should not continue a policy agenda that subsidises the power bills of those who can afford solar over those who cannot. For example, pensioners, single-income families and students who cannot afford to participate in the scheme have been directly impacted by rising electricity costs not felt by those with solar. They will be the beneficiaries through the curbing of this costly scheme. These are the battlers that Labor simply forgot.

The impact of the carbon tax has also hit us again. Our coal fired power generators and stations—Tarong—have suffered a \$1.1 billion write-down since the carbon tax was implemented. Unlike Victoria, which receives compensation from the Commonwealth for its dirty brown electricity generators, Queenslanders do not receive one cent in compensation from our coal generators.

A government member: Shame!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is a shame. I want to thank the minister for bringing this bill to the House and I thank the committee that worked on this bill. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr PUCCI (Logan—LNP) (9.07 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This amendment bill sets out to implement the recommendations laid out in the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry report. Just under two years ago, our state saw the most devastating floods in our nation's history. The devastation and impact those floods caused on Queenslanders, their livelihoods and the economy at large are well documented. On 16 March 2012 the QFCI released its 177 recommendations that were focused on the premise, events and aftermath of the 2010-11 floods.

Our government, in response to those findings, has supported all of the recommendations and outlined a framework for the implementation of the recommendations. Nine of those recommendations need stronger legislative support, and that is what this amendment bill sets out to provide. This amendment bill is about protecting Queenslanders. Like so many other legislative amendments passed by this House over past months, this amendment bill makes the right changes to better prepare and, most of all, provide the legislative tools and regulations to better protect Queenslanders for years to come. With the implementation of this bill, our government's legislative response to the inquiry's report will be on track, with an emphasis on the recommendations being implemented before the 2012-13 wet season. Though some of these recommendations with the aid of this legislation will represent a considerable task for our government over the coming months, much has already been achieved.

The state needs to be better placed to deal with any eventuality that may arise. For that preparation to occur, pragmatic and sound legislation must be in place to form a foundation that private, public and other government agencies can use as a mandate to prepare our state through mitigation and prevention. Many of those objectives will take longer to be implemented fully. However, the progress made by our government is a tribute to the proactive steps that we are taking to put into effect the recommendations of the inquiry.

This bill also demonstrates that our government is working in collaboration with other levels of government to improve disaster preparedness. This bill will address key issues facing the regulation of dams and water within our state. One of the many factors identified in the report was the need to reform and sharpen the government's procedures and, furthermore, clarify the state's responsibility for flood mitigation in Queensland.

Within my electorate, in areas such as Logan Village, Chambers Flat and Browns Plains, just to name a few, steps to adjust to flood mitigation are being undertaken. That is what this bill does: it paves the way for forward planning to occur and it puts in place measures that aim to prevent devastating events such as the 2010-11 natural disaster. This bill will also see changes made to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 that will provide the minister with the appropriate authority for flood mitigation manuals and the criteria for approvals. With the presence of referable dams, the commission has also specifically recommended that appropriate legislative measures be in effect to place an obligation on owners to have an effective emergency action plan and, furthermore, have it assessed by a state agency. Flood mitigation and the strategies used demonstrate the broad spectrum that is directly affected by their impact, which is why the recommendation of the commission stipulates that the minister have final approval for the respective manuals for dam operations. The commission also recommends, and it is thus supported through this bill, that the role for assessing flood mitigation manuals be conducted by an independent individual separate from the developmental process behind the manual. It is also prudent that upon completion of this development the advice of the departmental staff be forwarded to the minister.

By streamlining these recommendations and implementing this legislation, we will see a consistent formalisation of the current process for assessing flood event reports and emergency event reports. Another factor that is a key element that came out of this flood inquiry is the need to move some of the current requirements to legislation in lieu of having them imposed on the individual dams by the regulator. This would create increased transparency and provide the opportunity for community scrutiny.

This bill also sets out to reduce the regulatory burden on the recycled water service providers. As it stands, the framework for low-risk users is being reviewed in direct response to stakeholder concerns about the current process for submitting a recycled water management plan. By reviewing this process, it will eliminate the current onerous provisions that impede any likely savings that could be made with a more standardised approach. This bill speaks to our government's ongoing commitment to reducing bureaucratic red tape. By cutting red tape, we are allowing the providers the ability to deliver their services without having the burden of regulatory measures that are in place. By removing the red tape, we are effectively cutting the service costs for small non-urban service providers and, therefore, easing the cost of living on Queenslanders.

This bill provides the structure for cost-saving measures to be implemented as part of our government's agenda to reduce costs for everyday Queenslanders, with a regulatory limit to be imposed on the prescribed credit amount when it addresses the Solar Bonus Scheme. This is in response to the escalating future costs of the scheme in comparison to the price of rising electricity costs owing to flawed taxes that hurt everyday Queenslanders.

I am proud of the steps that this bill takes to prepare and regulate our state's dams and water resources. I commend the honourable Minister for Energy and Water Supply and his department for their tireless efforts in implementing the recommendations of the QFCI. We cannot predict nature but we can prepare ourselves the best way possible and this bill does that. I therefore commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (9.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, introduced into the parliament on 12 September 2012 by the honourable Minister for Energy and Water Supply, the member for Caloundra. We do not have to cast our minds back very far to remember the horrific days of late 2010 and early 2011. The unprecedented rainfall and subsequent flooding across Queensland left a wake of destruction and loss that will be forever etched in the memory of all Queenslanders. Three-quarters of the state was declared a disaster zone, 2.5 million people were affected, 29,000 homes and businesses were inundated and, sadly, 35 people lost their lives. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority estimated that restoration and reconstruction costs would exceed \$5 billion.

But these floods did not break Queensland or the spirit of Queenslanders. Instead, it made this state and its people stronger and, following in the spirit of making this state stronger, the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 will go a long way towards addressing the recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. As we know, the commission released its interim report on 1 August 2011 and its final report only days before this year's state election on 16 March 2012. On 7 June 2012, the Premier released the *Queensland government response to Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry final report*, which supported all recommendations relevant to the state government and outlined the government's framework for implementation of the recommendations.

The Newman government has committed to implementing all 177 recommendations of the commission's final report, with many of the recommendations already implemented and other recommendations that will be implemented over the coming months and years as some will take longer to implement. Indeed, the Newman government is committed to and is already working collaboratively with other levels of government and the community to improve disaster preparedness. But one thing can be assured: although implementing these recommendations is a considerable task and will take discipline, like many other tasks that have faced the Newman government since taking office, this task is not something that the LNP will walk away from. The Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 has been prepared to implement the government's legislative response to the final report in relation to dams, with an emphasis on responding to recommendations that need to be implemented before the 2012-13 wet season.

I would also like to thank the chair, the member for Mirani, and the other members of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee and the committee staff for their work on this legislation and the organisations that participated in the public meeting that was held on this legislation, those being the Queensland Farmers Federation, the Queensland Conservation Council and Seqwater. The committee made a number of recommendations and I am glad to see that the minister is looking at those recommendations. Importantly, these legislative changes will reduce red tape as well as provide Queensland with a framework that will allow more transparency and better tools to manage one of the state's most valuable resources. In brief, the purpose of the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 is to amend the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to implement the recommendations of the Queensland Floods

Commission of Inquiry relating to dam safety and flood mitigation matters; amend the Water Act 2000 to relocate provisions for declaring temporary full supply levels for flood mitigation dams to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act; amend the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act to change the criteria determining which dams must carry out failure impact assessments; extend the due date for when certain recycled water schemes supplying for lower risk uses must have an approved recycled water management plan or an exemption from a plan in place; provide exemptions for small non-urban water service providers from certain planning and reporting requirements; and amend the Electricity Act 1994 to align the operation of the Solar Bonus Scheme with government policy to reduce the feed-in tariff for new small customers after 9 July 2012 and clarify the conditions for the feed-in tariff entitlement.

This bill also streamlines provision for declaring temporary full supply levels for relevant dams to mitigate potential emergencies, reduces regulatory burden on some water service providers and implements changes to the operation of the Queensland Solar Bonus Scheme to limit the escalating future costs of the scheme and its contribution to increasing residential bills in Queensland, something I notice that those opposite do not seem to grasp. The legislative amendments are required to implement and support implementation of nine of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry final report recommendations relating to dam safety and flood mitigation. Although the Bureau of Meteorology does not foresee a repeat of the rains received during late 2010 and early 2011 for the 2012-13 period, Queensland and Queenslanders alike are again moving to prepare for the wettest season of the calendar year. It is interesting to note that unlike 2010-11, it is the Indian Ocean and not the Pacific Ocean that is warmer and the temperatures of the Indian Ocean are likely to remain drivers of weather patterns which could otherwise deliver above average rains for south-west Queensland as well as usual summer storms for the east coast.

I apologise for sounding like a weatherman, but this is a real example of showing the timeliness of these legislative amendments and another way the Newman government is getting on with the job. The Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry has identified that the current regulatory framework regulating dam operations is in need of reform to sharpen governance arrangements and to clarify state responsibility for flood mitigation in Queensland. Government action is needed to regulate dam safety because there is a significant risk to life and property if we do nothing.

This legislation will provide the people of Queensland the transparency and safety they deserve. This legislation will go a long way to reduce anxiety in those who now fear the sound of heavy rain on their roof. This legislation will provide clearer instruction by moving some of the current requirements to primary legislation instead of conditions imposed on individual dams at the regulator's discretion. It will also increase transparency and provide an opportunity for community scrutiny. In summary, the amendments of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act and the Water Act will establish the minister as the approving authority for flood mitigation manuals and provide criteria for that approval; introduce a legislative requirement for owners of referable dams to have an emergency action plan approved by the chief executive; introduce a legislative requirement for dam owners to submit flood event reports and emergency event reports within 30 business days after the end of the event; set out legislative criteria that outlines which dams should be operated under a flood mitigation manual; and relocate and streamline the provisions for declaring temporary full supply levels for flood mitigation dams to mitigate potential emergencies.

With regard to the dam safety related amendments, the current criteria require many dams to be failure impact assessed despite there being no obvious risk to the public. About half of the assessed dams have less than two persons at risk. Around 80 per cent of the dams captured by the current criteria for failure impact assessments were assessed not to have a population at risk and so were not classified as referable dams. However, these dam owners must still review the failure impact assessments at a period set by the chief executive which is, on average, every 12 years.

The amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act with regard to dam safety will change the criteria determining which dams must carry out failure impact assessments thereby reducing regulatory burden on small referable dam owners and make minor consequential amendments to section 561 and 562 for referral of operational works applications for referable dams and appeal provisions respectively. With regard to recycled water providers, the Newman government is helping to reduce the regulatory burden. Recycled water providers are currently required to submit a recycled water management plan by 1 July 2013. However, the framework for low-risk uses is being reviewed in response to stakeholder concerns and it is likely the review will recommend changes to regulating low-risk schemes. Requiring providers to submit more onerous plans before the review would substantially reduce the likely savings from introducing a more standardised approach. A non-urban service provider typically provides bulk water, non-potable water for irrigation or stock and domestic purposes or drainage services. Currently there are 60 service providers that fit within this group of small non-urban service providers that are required to apply for exemptions from preparing management plans. The process for exempting small non-urban service providers from management plans places an administrative burden on providers and government. The specific amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act will reduce the regulatory burden by extending the due date for recycled

water management plans while providing an exemption from doing a plan by one year for recycled water schemes supplying for lower risk uses to 1 July 2014 to allow time to simplify regulatory arrangements and provide exemptions for small non-urban service providers from certain regulatory requirements.

Finally, the changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme through the amendments to the Electricity Act will align the operation of the Solar Bonus Scheme with government policy which saw the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff close to new entrants at midnight on 9 July 2012 and be replaced with an 8c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff. It will also insert a head of power in section 44A(2) of the act to prescribe the circumstances in which different categories of small customers are no longer entitled to be credited with a feed-in tariff and an end date of 1 July 2014 for the 8c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff.

It will also insert a new transitional provision that clarifies ongoing eligibility to the 44c credit amount for qualifying generators covered by section 328 of the act. It will also update section 44A and 55DB of the act as a result of the Electricity Amendment Regulation No. 3 prescribing two credit amounts for section 44A(1)(b) of the act. This includes updating distribution and retail authority reporting requirements for each prescribed credit amount and moving redundant scheme review provisions. Furthermore, the changes to the Solar Bonus Scheme are another example of how the Newman government is making inroads to deliver cost savings for all Queenslanders. For example, Energex alone will need to recover \$78.5 million in excess solar feed-in tariff payments at the current 44c a kilowatt hour. Energex is currently applying to the Australian Energy Regulator for a determination to pass through these costs. Energex has predicted that this will impact network prices for residential customers by approximately 10 per cent and the retail tariff by approximately four to five per cent. None of us here want to see that, do we? In essence, the pass-through costs of the over 147,400 homes on the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour rate is approximately \$70 per annum on the average electricity bill for every Queensland home. I am getting a lot of people in my office, and I am sure other members in this chamber are as well, who are complaining bitterly about their electricity prices. This is a good thing. This change to the Solar Bonus Scheme in the legislation will be another way the Newman government is reducing the cost of living for all Queenslanders.

The amendment of Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 has been created to provide Queensland and Queensland residents with a more transparent and accountable framework for managing water and other assets, particularly when decisions regarding loss of property and life need to be made in the time of flood, as well as providing a more equitable solution to the determination of the Solar Bonus Scheme that will help Queenslanders keep their cost of living in check. I commend the honourable Minister for Energy and Water Supply for his timely work in bringing this amendment before the House and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (9.29 pm): I rise in support of this bill and to make a short contribution to the debate, specifically in relation to its impact on the management of North Pine Dam. On 11 January 2011 I returned home early from work because my wife had informed me that water had reached our back fence as it had come over the wall at North Pine Dam. Thankfully, that is where it stopped, but many along the river were not so lucky. I also make note that, at this point in time, whenever the dam needs to have water released we see Youngs Crossing Road go underwater, which causes absolute havoc for thousands and thousands of people who have to cross that river every day.

The North Pine Dam was completed in 1976. It has a 570 metre wall and is a concrete gravity dam with earthfill embankments on abutment construction. The dam is located entirely in the Pine Rivers electorate, although the northern side of the dam and the banks of the river are in my electorate. Thousands of people live downstream of the dam. It is unique in Australia due to the population housed downstream of the dam, many of whom were there prior to the dam being built and many of whom have moved to the area since the dam has been built. If the dam fails, the estimate is that thousands would be affected depending on the time of day that it happened.

The recent flood inquiry recommended that the manual of operation for the North Pine Dam be rewritten with specific mention of: investigating the feasibility of the prerelease of water in response to weather forecasts; to also consider operating the North Pine Dam as a flood mitigation dam; and spell out the dam safety implications of the nominal full-supply level, including the maximum flood the dam is able to pass safely, and predict the likely loss of life from the dam. It was also recommended that the hydrology of the dam be restudied, that is, the inflow of water into the dam depending on the rainfall, the rainfall rate and the degree of soakage in the catchment area. I am proud that this government and specifically this minister have the fortitude not only to take the recommendations under advisement but also to act on them by ensuring our legislative response reflects those recommendations.

I note that currently approved flood mitigation manuals are in place for Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams. Those manuals set out how the dams should be operated during flood events. I note that a steering committee, led by the Department of Energy and Water Supply, has been set up to deliver on recommendation 17.3. The North Pine Dam Optimisation Study steering committee will work with representatives from state agencies, Seqwater, the Brisbane City Council and the Moreton Bay Regional Council. The flood inquiry recommendation 17.3 requires the Queensland government to

determine the operational strategies to be adopted for the dam by considering the impacts of a wide range of options that prioritise differing objectives over a range of flood events. Considerations are to include inundation of urban and rural areas, water supply and security, dam safety, submerging bridges, bank slumping and erosion, and riparian flora and fauna. It is my understanding that a work program has been developed for the study and a wide range of operational strategy options prioritising different objectives for the North Pine Dam will be available for consideration by the government in December 2013.

On behalf of the residents of Whiteside, Kurwongbah, Petrie and Murrumba, I support this bill and congratulate the minister for bringing it to the House. I also thank the minister for coming out and visiting the dam wall, where he saw the erosion and the effects of how the dam is operated and talked with the residents of my electorate and the electorate of Pine Rivers about its effect on their lives. That represented quite a hallmark for the residents, because prior to that no minister had bothered to come out and talk with them. It is a significant dam in the water supply of this area of our great state. I think that the attitude of the minister represents the very can-do attitude that is fast becoming the hallmark of this government, which is willing to make the tough decisions to get Queensland back on track. I am very happy to recommend this bill to the House.

 **Mr YOUNG** (Keppel—LNP) (9.34 pm): I rise to support the Water Legislation (Dam Safety and Water Supply Enhancement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. The main purpose of this bill is to implement recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry relating to dam safety and flood mitigation matters. Another important aspect of the bill is to acknowledge the devastating floods of 2011 and the impact on people's lives and property. This bill will develop a website so that the general public can be better informed and better prepared for flood events in the future. The website will provide 24-hour up-to-date accurate information about flood risks, with the aim to minimise risks where possible.

The bill addresses nine dam safety recommendations to reform the regulatory framework regulating dam operations to enhance governance arrangements and clarify state responsibility for flood mitigation in Queensland. Flood mitigation manuals will assist the minister, as the approving authority, to determine which water supply dams with sufficient flood storage capacity should be operated in accordance with the manuals. The three dams, Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams, represent the dams that historically had a regulatory framework of dam safety conditions imposed by individual dam owners. Those will now be the responsibility of the minister. The dam owners will now have a legislative requirement to prepare emergency action plans and submit flood event reports and emergency event reports to the Department of Energy and Water Supply and those emergency action plans will be reviewed each year.

The bill will also address the regulatory burden on recycled water service providers that currently have to provide a recycled water management plan. Those onerous and time-consuming management plans, often for low-risk water providers that deliver non-potable water for industry, irrigation and stock use, place unnecessary and costly administrative burdens on providers and government. The bill will extend the due date for recycled water management plans or provide an extension from doing a plan by one year for recycled water schemes supplying for lower risk uses to 1 July 2014. It will provide exemptions for small non-urban service providers.

The final aspect of this bill amends the Electricity Act in relation to solar bonus schemes. The scheme provided benefits to stimulate the solar bonus grid interactive power industry, which commenced in June 2008. The scheme worked so well that installations reached 205,000 by 1 July 2012. The feed-in tariff that expires in 2028 proved to be a windfall for those who could afford the system and a burden in costs to electricity providers who, in turn, passed those costs onto those who do not have the solar grid interactive panels fitted.

From 10 July 2012, the feed-in tariffs will go from 44c per kilowatt hour to 8c per kilowatt hour. Consumers who have contracts until 2028 will remain, however. The bill provides a framework to end existing practices that transfer the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour entitlement between property owners and tenants on change of property ownership or tenancy, requires the installation of approved systems for consumers of the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour scheme by 30 June 2013 and ends the 8c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff on 1 July 2014. We have seen power providers—and, in our region, the distributor and retailer, Ergon Energy—hit by the perfect storm of events: decreased consumer power consumption; increased maintenance on poles, wire and transformers; the 44c-per-kilowatt-hour feed-in tariff impact; cyclones Larry and Yasi; and now the biggest hit imposed by the federal government, the carbon tax, which is set to destroy manufacturing in Australia. I commend the minister for the hard work he has done in preparing this bill for the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.39 pm), in reply: Can I start by thanking all those who spoke in the debate tonight. The opposition is supporting the bill before the House. Before I talk about the Solar Bonus Scheme, it is important to recall the drama and misery that many people went through in the floods of 2010-11. I think we can all recall where we were when it started to pour rain in Rockhampton and then areas of Queensland flooded day by day. The

floods and rain then hit the south-east corner. Then we had Cyclone Yasi up north. They were devastating times. There are members in this House who live in areas that were inundated. One member in particular lost a number of people in his electorate—that was in the Lockyer Valley.

The bill before the House goes some way to providing solace for people who went through those very devastating times. As the member for Mulgrave made quite clear—and with which I agree—you can never guarantee anything 100 per cent. At some time in the future there will be another flood in this part of the state. Hopefully the recommendations of the Floods Commission of Inquiry will go some way to alleviating those concerns and the provisions in the bill tonight will help people understand that we are trying to do all we can to eliminate the risk of further flooding across the state.

I acknowledge the great work the committee did in preparing the report in a very short time. It took submissions, undertook a public hearing, prepared a report and tabled that report in the parliament. I say thank you to my department for the great work that they have done. I also thank the Dams Implementation Group for its oversight of the implementation of the recommendations proposed by the Floods Commission of Inquiry.

I want to touch in some detail on the Solar Bonus Scheme. As we know, the Solar Bonus Scheme has now been in place for some four years. It was introduced as a measure to assist people meet their own power commitments and to assist the solar power industry get off the ground. One would have thought that after four years that that industry would have been well and truly established, and indeed it is. It is no longer a small industry in this state; it is well established and progressing very well.

In his contribution the member for Mulgrave made a point that the opposition acknowledges that there is a cost associated with the Solar Bonus Scheme. That is true. But what he did not say is what that cost is, what that cost will be and who pays that cost. He made the comment that when his government was in power it capped the scheme to one five kilowatt capacity unit per premises. What he did not say was what his government was going to do to cap the number of households who could apply for the 44c feed-in tariff. If he accepts that there is a cost associated with solar power, what action did his government take to ensure that that cost did not get out of hand and that the uptake of the 44c feed-in tariff did not spread and spread and spread owing to the significant increases in power bills.

The member would be aware that at this time each year every Queenslanders pays \$54 on their power bill as compensation for the feed-in tariff. Energex have now sought through the AER, the Australian Energy Regulator, to increase that cost to \$70 per household. If we had not stepped in, by 2028 the total cost to the people of this state would have been \$1.8 billion. What we have done is put in place a Solar Bonus Scheme that will reduce that debt for the people of Queensland by at least \$300 million.

The scheme was fine when it started. But the scheme as it stood before we took action was going to impact upon the power bills of Queenslanders year in and year out in an escalating manner. In my opinion, this \$70 per annum is not the end of the matter. It will go up again and again for at least two more years before it starts to taper off. My concern is that every family will be paying \$100 due to the compensatory nature of the feed-in solar tariff.

We have been advised by Energex that the additional poles and wires required to cater for solar is escalating and the cost of those poles and wires is passed on every year to the people in this state. We know that the cost of those poles and wires has jumped from \$6 billion to \$12 billion in the past five to six years. That is simply unsustainable. A large portion of that is directly related to the solar feed-in tariff. That is another cost.

But more than that, what is unbelievable is that the Prime Minister of this nation is saying that the cost of the poles and wires is a matter for the state government. She is not acknowledging that it is the Australian Energy Regulator that sets the poles and wire capex for five-year periods. It is that body that has allowed the debt to bloom, blossom and grow beyond what is sensible.

More importantly, the Prime Minister will not accept the principle that the AER, as a subsidiary of the ACCC, is subservient to the ACCC. It governs its budget. It governs its resources. It governs its manpower. Therefore, it governs its outcome. It is, as Martin Ferguson has said on a number of occasions, time for the AER to step out of the shadow of the ACCC and stand up for the people of this state. It is about time the Prime Minister understood that it is the AER that is driving the cost of poles and wires through the roof.

The Prime Minister turns her back on the fact that it is her government that has imposed the carbon tax upon this state. That is a 10 per cent increase every year in electricity charges for every person in this state and indeed every person right across the nation. We have been advised by the Queensland Competition Authority that the Renewable Energy Target scheme will add an additional \$102 a year to state power bills. Every time we are pay our power bill we are paying for the carbon tax. We are paying for the poles and wires. We are paying for the RET. We pay before we turn the power switch on. We are seeing significant increases in power bills in this state because the government that was in power did not understand that it had to take steps to protect the people of this state.

I return to the issue of the Solar Bonus Scheme. The concern I have with the solar scheme in the way it operated was this: it was not the people who were able to afford to put solar on their roof who were being hit the worst; it was those men and women, those families, who could not afford to do that who were subsidising the people who could. If you can afford to put solar on your roof, congratulations to you but please do not ask the other people of this state to subsidise that over and over again.

We have also been advised that between 100 and 150 applications per day are still being received by Energex at the 8c feed-in tariff rate and that is as at the present time. So please do not stand here and say this industry is on its knees; it is not. It is progressing very well. The applications are coming through on a regular basis. The industry has been established and it is about time that people who cannot afford to pay to put solar panels on their roof stop subsidising those who can afford to do that. It is about time the solar feed-in tariff came down to a responsible level so that people who are able to afford solar panels on their roof do so and those who are not able to do not subsidise those who do.

Can you imagine what would have happened if this government had said overnight, 'It is over and done with—no solar feed-in tariff'? This mob would have gone berserk. This mob would have gone ape because they would have claimed that we had not done the right thing by Queenslanders to give them a fair go to get into the scheme before the reduction in the tariff. We did that. We gave everybody the option to get into it, and if we had not done that I can guarantee that the ALP would have gone through the ceiling. They would have called everybody on this side of the House for everything they could. I do not recall hearing a comment by the shadow spokesperson in regard to the reduction to 8c or the delay in making the 8c applicable anywhere in the media when this reduction was announced—not one comment. But tonight he can stand in the House and make the call that we should have done it immediately. There was no call made in the media by the opposition spokesperson on any issue associated with the solar feed-in tariff at the time we made the announcement. You cannot not do it then and then suddenly claim the high moral ground now. Those positions are incompatible.

In conclusion, again I thank all members for making a contribution to the bill before the House tonight, including my colleague the member for Mulgrave. This is a first step in the implementation of the Floods Commission of Inquiry recommendations and also the solar feed-in tariff. This is a position that this government is very clear on. We want people to use solar but we want people to pay for the right to use solar themselves and not call upon those who cannot afford it to subsidise them in doing so. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 43, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.53 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.53 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (9.54 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Police Service, Firearms

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (9.54 pm): I recently participated in the estimates process as part of the portfolio committees. It was indeed unfortunate that I was undercut in my capacity to genuinely test some of the ministers. The good news is that I now have many questions put together for relevant ministers based on the information prepared for estimates. It was quite incredible for me and for many in the gallery to watch the performance of Minister Dempsey. I am not sure whether the minister set a world record for a 21-minute read reply to a question that required a yes-or-no answer, but it was a tactic chosen in order to protect the minister from any serious scrutiny.

Let's start that process now. Here are some of the questions that I would have asked if we had been permitted. Today I would particularly like to address the clearly problematic issue of police firearms training and competence. I submit that nobody in this parliament knows more about small arms training and standards than I do. So it is from that basis of some knowledge that I am able to comment on the matter.

I specifically wanted to ask the minister how many times in the last two years have the Queensland Police Service experienced unauthorised weapon discharges or incidents of the use of weapons outside the guidelines dictated. I would suggest that shooting at moving vehicles is one such breach. I wanted to ask how much night-firing training do police undertake. I would have asked the minister what standards are applied to a trained officer in order to ensure that they are mission ready to step out on to the street. I would have asked what was the failure rate on the first attempt at qualification. I would have asked what is the retesting schedule for failures. I wanted to ask how often are police weapons inspected by armourers so as to ensure technical safety. I wanted to ask what systems are in place in police stations to account for ammunition on a daily basis. I wanted to ask what are the consequences for an officer who loses ammunition. I wanted to ask if it is true that officers can go 23 months without having to requalify on their weapons.

The parliament will be thrilled to hear that my concerns were perfectly represented by a *Sunday Mail* article, where Sergeant Matt Russell was quoted as saying the police were hesitant, incorrect and even scared during training because of lack of practice. Are there any surprises there? It would seem patently obvious to anyone who understands the use of firearms as a tool of trade in a life-threatening environment that the sergeant's comments are an indisputable function of logic, and this rests on the minister's head.

Mundingburra Electorate, Bruce Highway

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (9.57 pm): I might do something novel and actually speak about something that matters to my electorate this evening. I want to speak tonight about the Bruce Highway crisis action plan and what that means to the people of Mundingburra. For others this might just be a debate about a bit of bitumen or a bit of road, but it is so much more than that for the people of regional Queensland—the people I represent. For them this is about their economy. It is about their lifestyle. It is about their safety. Quite frankly, it is a matter of life and death for the people of regional Queensland.

What the state government has announced—and it is supported by the mayor of Rockhampton, Bill, so it should be of great interest to you—is that for the first time a state government is putting up its hand and saying, 'We are willing to put \$1 billion on the table over the next 10 years over and above what our contribution is.' This is not a state road; this is a federal road. Yet this parliament, this government, is saying it is willing to contribute \$1 billion over the next 10 years. Why? Because it means something to regional Queensland. Our additional \$1 billion can reap an extra \$4 billion from the Commonwealth if they follow the traditional funding model—\$4 billion. That is not the base case; that is over and above that, and that can make a real difference.

What this means for communities is that finally we will have a Bruce Highway that does not constantly fail. To the great credit of the mayors, the councillors and the communities along that highway, they are finally putting aside the differences we have seen over the years where everyone has fought for their small project near their city. We now understand that it does not matter if you are a tomato farmer in Bowen, a tourist operator in Cairns or a cattle farmer in Rockhampton; when that highway is cut or when there are deaths on that road, we all suffer as a community.

Our cause has not been helped by those opposite. When I hear the member for Mulgrave talking about this money as being a waste, when I hear the member for Mackay defending the record of the federal government and saying how wonderful they are, I understand how much more difficult our job is. This is something that we must speak as one about. As a regional Queenslander, I say to the member for Rockhampton: you should be standing beside us, as your mayor is—side by side. This is something which is life or death for regional Queensland. This is a major issue for regional Queensland. I say to those opposite: stand side by side with us, take on the federal government regardless of political persuasion and let us deliver for regional Queensland.

(Time expired)

Surf Life Saving Queensland

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (10.00 pm): Like the honourable minister who spoke before me, I also would like to speak about my local community and in particular the inspirational work conducted by hundreds of surf-lifesaving volunteers in the Burleigh electorate as well as thousands more throughout Queensland. Burleigh is renowned the world over for its beaches and its surf culture, and Surf Life Saving is instrumental to this movement. The Burleigh electorate alone is home to numerous surf clubs including Palm Beach, Pacific—my own surf club—Tallebudgera, Burleigh Heads Mowbray Park, North Burleigh and Miami surf clubs. These clubs and the active volunteers that make them tick are pivotal to keeping our iconic beaches safe.

Surf Life Saving Queensland's six branches and 59 surf-lifesaving clubs throughout Queensland now comprise close to 36,000 dedicated individuals. If honourable members thought the footy season was a long patrol season, just be aware that Surf Life Saving patrols run from the early spring weeks in September through to the following May of each year—a very long season. I can tell honourable members that by the end of the season the water is getting very cold. To highlight the value and importance of the work that surf-lifesaving volunteers conduct, I can inform honourable members that during the 2011-12 period for the Gold Coast there were 799 rescues, 22,547 preventive actions and 1,759 first-aid treatments performed. The figures across Queensland for the same period saw 2,866 rescues, 346,000-odd preventive actions and over 10,000 first-aid treatments performed. This service means that people can have confidence in going to the beach and knowing they can enjoy the surf safely.

Of course, the work of Surf Life Saving Queensland extends much further than the beach; it extends right into the bush heart of Queensland through the Surf Life Saving Queensland Bush to Beach program. Almost 10,000 students across 74 schools participate in that program each year. This education will give our children a head start in water and beach safety. It will also mean that visitors to Burleigh from neighbouring inland electorates will know about the potential risks involved.

If there is one thing I would like members in this place to take away from my speech tonight it is that you need to swim between the flags. Please remember that if the lifesavers cannot see you they cannot save you.

Bundamba Electorate, Events

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (10.03 pm): It is always my great pleasure as the member for Bundamba to attend and support great community events and school awards nights. They both showcase the diversity and talent of our community, and the last few weeks have been very busy—even busier than usual. Springfield is a growing part of my electorate serviced by great state facilities delivered under the previous Labor government such as the great state schools, the Springfield Lakes Community Centre and of course the much anticipated Springfield railway.

Mr Stevens: A big function in Springfield tonight. You weren't invited. I was invited.

Mrs MILLER: I am here doing my job as the member for Bundamba. Last Sunday it was my great pleasure to join Maha Sinnathamby, Bob Sharpless and the community in celebrating 20 years at the Robelle Domain Parklands. Thousands of local residents flocked to the entertainment and the community spirit flowed through the parklands. It is another local project which received the support of the previous Labor government and, may I say, no support from the LNP government. It sent a minister out there, Minister Crisafulli, who came with empty pockets. There was no money whatsoever for the next stage of the Robelle Domain. Not to be forgotten is the Jacaranda Festival in Goodna. This annual festival is always something that local residents start getting ready for when the flowers start to bloom. The events involve local schools and community groups and has talent quests, performances from artists, rides, stalls and great fireworks displays.

Another way that I see the creativity, dedication and talents of our young people is through our school awards nights. Bundamba State Secondary College has been going great guns through a succession of great school leadership and staff and the utilisation of the fantastic school facilities delivered under our previous Labor government. I was recently pleased to accept their invitation to assist in handing out awards to the fantastic students there. The results speak for themselves with the mature, dedicated and successful students of whom Andrew Peach, the principal, is very proud—and rightly so.

Also, last night the Westside Christian College held its awards night. Steve attended on my behalf. It was great to hear how wonderful and heart warming it was. I usually hand out the community awards at the school. I am always stunned by the dedication and Christian compassion shown by the students. The principal, Chris Meadows, and his team of dedicated staff do an outstanding job.

Whilst we are talking about Springfield, let me just say that the Springfield Lakes Community Centre, which was built and delivered by our Labor government, is going to be hypocritically opened by the minister for community services. She is going to turn up there with one of the parliamentary secretaries, making out that it was an LNP initiative. Let me tell you: anything that has happened in Springfield was funded and built by a Labor government.

Domestic Violence, Edon Place

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (10.06 pm): It is with mixed emotions that I highlight the great work being done by the Bundaberg women's shelter, now known as Edon Place. It is a pleasure to know that this terrific staff and volunteers are in my community, providing service to women and their children experiencing domestic and family violence. Edon Place plays a pivotal role not only in service provision but also in the availability of valuable data and information through continuous consultation on policy matters at a state and regional level.

It is sad to see the number of women in our community, state and country who experience and continue to experience domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence and sexual assault continue to be the most prevalent forms of violence against women. The costs to the community are expected to continue to escalate to \$15.2 billion by 2021 without appropriate action. We need to be reminded that domestic violence is about power and control. It can occur in many forms and can affect people of any age. Women continue to suffer high levels of both physical and psychological violence in intimate and wider family relationships in our community. Unfortunately, this horror can exist within our homes, or even with the people already in our lives. In fact, of the women killed each year through domestic violence, 60 per cent are at the hands of partners or ex-partners and 12 per cent by family members. The courage shown by women in deciding to leave the relationship is enormous. The huge risk of this decision means that their safety and the safety of their children are often in jeopardy. Research clearly shows that the most dangerous time for women is in the six months after they leave the abusive relationship.

The number of women accommodated in the crisis accommodation in Bundaberg remains constant, with an increase in children's numbers. For instance, 85 women and 155 children were accommodated last year. Non-resident clients continue to be a large part of the workload, with nearly 1,000 client contacts for a variety of crisis and/or domestic and family violence related issues and emergency relief. We must not forget about the children who have witnessed or have been exposed to domestic violence, which increasingly is being recognised as a form of child abuse. Edon Place is one organisation that is equipped to meet the demands of abusive relationships. Edon Place continues to support Child Protection Week by providing activities in the Bundaberg and district region. The centre has been involved in delivering the Love Bites program, a nationally recognised and highly regarded relationship violence prevention program for young people in Bundaberg and district high schools.

It is important to acknowledge the staff of Edon Place. Their level of passion, commitment and diligence must not be undervalued, as their supportive teamwork is instrumental in dealing with the confronting issues facing women and their children experiencing domestic violence.

I recognise not only the good work in my community but also the organisations and individuals who generously contribute and donate to Edon Place. These donations have assisted numerous women and children when they have needed help the most. I have met the staff and the board on several occasions and have been moved by the work done. I thank them on behalf of my community. I hope the work continues.

Algester Electorate, Parents and Citizens Associations

 **Mr SHORTEN** (Algester—LNP) (10.09 pm): Tonight I would like to talk about the good works that my local P&Cs do in the Algester electorate. Being a regular attendee at my P&Cs, I am always encouraged by the dedication and hard work that the volunteer parents put into their children's school. I have a number of public school P&Cs and two P&Fs in Algester—the Boronia Heights, Algester, Pallara, Grand Avenue and Forest Lake state schools P&Cs and the St John's and St Stephen's P&Fs. I put on record my thanks to the presidents of the committees and the committee members, some of whom volunteer year in and year out.

All honourable members would know the ever-changing environment in which modern educational facilities operate and the contribution that parents make to the running of their children's schools. Funds are always tight, and the P&Cs that I attended earlier in the month warmly welcomed our government's commitment of up to \$160,000 per school to address their maintenance backlog. More importantly, they welcomed the opportunity to be able to go to the market and get the best price for the works that they choose to have done, thus allowing the moneys to be used more effectively and getting more bang for their buck.

As is the case for all members, the coming month is a hectic month in the Algester electorate. Already we have seen a movie in the park that I sponsored for the Boronia Heights P&C—and what a great night that was. It was only promoted within the school community on this occasion but, still, 200 people attended and the P&C was able to generate about \$400 in profit for the school. This week the Algester State School is holding their Multifest, which is their major fundraiser for the year. Previous years have seen anything up to \$30,000 being raised and crowds of up to 5,000 passing through the school. Last year I volunteered on a stall, and I am doing that again this year. Last year's Multifest was a great night. You can imagine it now: flashing lights and loud music from the rides, crowds of kids around

the fairy floss and slushie stalls, kids running from one stall to another enjoying every minute. I expect that Multifest will be great again this year. Grand Avenue State School is running their spell-a-thon, which is a great fundraiser run by the hardworking P&C.

I am working with a number of P&Cs in relation to securing safe crossing points for their students. We as a government have committed to installing flashing lights at school zones, and I have lobbied and will continue to lobby for the installation of these critical safety devices outside my schools. In closing, I commend the volunteers of all of the P&Cs and all of the P&Fs at my schools for their dedication and hard work in the support of their kids' schools.

Tropical and Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (10.12 pm): I have presented to the parliament a petition of 3,100 signatures and an e-petition of 655 signatures, with the support of principal petitioner Mrs Bronwyn Walker, calling for the reversal of the state government's decision to close the Townsville Tropical and Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory. The laboratory services the aquaculture, fishing, beef and other livestock industries of North Queensland. The facility provides vital front-line protection against diseases that have the potential to decimate these industries with devastating health, economic and social impacts throughout Queensland and with implications for the rest of Australia.

The decision to close this important facility has demonstrably not been fully evaluated. The minister has explained the economic reasons this decision has been made; however, there have been very few answers on how the government believes that the Coopers Plains facility will deal with the outbreak of diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease in Far North Queensland. Modelling has indicated that the response time could mean the difference between a contained outbreak in Queensland and devastation that would take the whole Australian market 10 years to recover from, costing billions of dollars.

In 2002 the DPI demonstrated that a worst case scenario would involve key beef and lamb export markets being closed for 15 months. The cost of foot-and-mouth disease incursion would be between \$8 billion and \$13 billion of gross domestic product and the consequences would be felt 10 years after the event. Even an isolated outbreak that was brought rapidly under control was estimated to potentially cost \$2 billion to \$3 billion of gross domestic product.

The minister still has not responded to my question about how the biosecurity lab transfer to Brisbane will save our prominent industries financially if there is an incursion of foot-and-mouth disease in the Gulf of Carpentaria. This is the risk of only one disease. It is an utter shame that the four members representing the Townsville region could not even stand up to the minister and this government over the closure of such an important facility.

Mr Cox interjected.

Mr KNUTH: We are all fighting for rural and regional Queensland, and you backed the push to close that important facility and move it to Brisbane.

The centralisation of this laboratory and the Toowoomba facility to Coopers Plains does not make strategic sense. It does not make economic sense either, as I have been advised that there are now difficulties with the Coopers Plains facility being too small for the equipment to work. The minister has spruiked the savings that will be made from relocating the state-of-the-art facilities to Coopers Plains; however, there has been very little mention of the need for the extension required to house the equipment and work done by the Townsville and Toowoomba labs. The minister is in the unfortunate position of having to justify his decision purely on economic concerns, because this government has demonstrated that it is not prepared to defend the interests of primary industries and is willing to expose—

(Time expired)

Schoolies Week

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (10.15 pm): It is a great pleasure to rise to talk about an issue that every electorate in this state has to deal with—that is, schoolies week. All of us have high schools—

Mr Hart: They are all coming to the Gold Coast.

Mr DAVIES: They go to the Gold Coast. The rite of passage that is schoolies is a bit of a challenge for many people. I have had the great pleasure of being involved with a group called the Red Frogs, a chaplaincy group that works with school leavers—

Mr Powell: Andy Gourley.

Mr DAVIES: Andy Gourley. This year will be their 15th year. I was actually involved back in the early days, when there were only 10 of us down there on the Gold Coast handing out the red frogs. I was one of the original froggers. This year they are actually operating in five locations in Queensland as well as through Victoria and in other states of Australia. This year Red Frogs will be on the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Magnetic Island, Airlie Beach—

Mr Cox: Maggie is a good place.

Mr DAVIES: They are all over the place. They are doing a great job working with our young people and providing a safety net. They are not a bunch of wowsers; they work with young people to provide a safety net to them.

This year, leading up to schoolies, they have actually done over 200 presentations in schools, working with year 12s in schoolies survival seminars—basically teaching them not to have just beer in your fridge but also food, that food is a good thing during schoolies. And they advise people to take a picture of their room when they arrive so that they do not get stung for broken things that were already broken. They work with students to provide them with some good tips on surviving schoolies.

This year over four tonnes of Allens Red Frogs will be handed out in Queensland. JP is not here tonight, but I am sure he would agree that that is actually contributing to the dentistry industry in Queensland. Last year 3,947 pancake breakfasts were provided by Red Frogs. This year there will be 950 volunteers, who are meeting their own costs and often taking holidays to work at schoolies. Last year there were over 10,000 calls to the call centre. Of this, 468 were alcohol related, 43 were drug related and 73 were mental health issues.

The work of Red Frogs is fantastic. I commend the government for continuing to support this great initiative. I commend Minister Davis for her ongoing support of Red Frogs. It is a great initiative.

Thuringowa Electorate, Events

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (10.18 pm): It was another big year of events in Thuringowa—from entertainment at our beautiful Riverway to international and national sporting matches at our state-of-the-art sports stadiums that have put us on the map. The sporting highlights kicked off with the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup at Tony Ireland Stadium in Thuringowa in August. It was a one-day cricket competition for 16 international under-19 cricket teams. Unfortunately, in the finals India beat Australia by six wickets to win the tournament. Can members imagine how many people all over the world got to see Townsville and Thuringowa on their TV screens with such an event?

Then in October we hosted the National AFL Masters Carnival at Tony Ireland Stadium. Teams travelled from all over Australia, with over 700 players and their support staff and, in some case, families travelling to spend the week in Townsville as part of their school holidays. The event had a race day at the Townsville Turf Club which I hear was possibly second only to the Townsville Cup. It was estimated that it injected millions into the local economy which means more tourism dollars. It put extra strain on the hospital, though, due to all those over 50s who found out the hard way that their old bodies just ain't what they used to be! The only downside to the whole event was that Queensland's only home side to reach the grand finals—the over-55 team—lost the decider by 77 points to Victorian Metro. Victorian Metro and the Northern Territory scored two victories each during the weekend's grand finals.

Then in mid-October we had the annual Greek Festival at Riverway over a weekend. There was Greek music, food and entertainment showcasing the culture and traditions of the Greek community. It has now been operating for 13 years and gone from strength to strength. This year about 35,000 people attended the event to get a little taste of Greece in their own backyards.

Mr Gibson interjected.

Mr COX: I take that interjection. This event is one that is unique to Townsville, with the setting of the beautiful Riverway as a backdrop and the enthusiasm of the committee second to none. Just to top off a great weekend, we also had the rugby league test at Dairy Farmers Stadium.

Mr Gibson: You're kidding!

Mr COX: No, I am not kidding at all. We saw Australia take on New Zealand in Thuringowa. What a great night I had on the hill with my family. Townsville again showed why we are one of rugby league's biggest assets, with a capacity crowd turning up on the evening. At least this time around I can proudly say that the Aussies came out on top, beating the Kiwis 18-10. Just when you think we cannot possibly fit any more sport into Thuringowa, we received the good news last week that there is more on the way for AFL fans. Tony Ireland Stadium will host the preseason clash between the Gold Coast Suns and the North Melbourne Kangaroos on 2 March next year.

Mr Gibson: No way!

Mr COX: Unbelievable! Thuringowa is setting the standard in entertainment and sporting events along with Townsville's reputation as the event capital of Queensland. This not only puts us on the map but helps promote tourism in the region. The people of Townsville and North Queensland have a proud record and tradition of just getting on with the job and doing it well. I urge all members and the member for Gympie in particular to consider visiting our region and experiencing one of these great events next year.

Madam SPEAKER: I call the member for Chatsworth, and the member for Gympie will cease his interjections.

Mr Cox: It wouldn't be the same if he didn't, Madam Speaker!

Cowan, Mr R

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (10.21 pm): I rise in the chamber to honour a very special person from the Chatsworth electorate—the late Mr Rowly Cowan, who passed away on 1 September 2012 at 84 years of age. A life well lived is gauged not by what you materially accumulate but rather what it is you achieved and the lives you have touched. On this measure, Rowly was indeed a very rich man. Mr Cowan up until his passing was a dedicated member of the Camp Hill Carina Welfare Association, an association that he was integral in establishing in 1957 together with a small group of concerned residents who wanted to provide sporting facilities to encourage local youth to partake in sport and recreation. The inaugural meeting of this association was held where the Carina Bowls Club stands today and was the start of a 55-year-long volunteering role for Mr Cowan. During this time Mr Cowan held many positions such as founding Treasurer, President from 1979 to 1993 and lastly Secretary, from which he retired only this year. Mr Cowan was also a life member and trustee of the association. At this meeting it was also decided that another prominent member of the community, Mr Clem Jones, together with Mr Cowan would approach council to seek a lease of five acres of land to create sporting facilities for children.

Mr Cowan will be remembered for not only his ties with the Camp Hill Carina Welfare Association but also playing an integral role in the creation of the Crackerjack Carnival, which has now been held consecutively for 39 years since 1973. A sheet metal worker by trade, Mr Cowan was most certainly not afraid of hard work, and this was proven by his efforts towards physically being on the tools to create what is now known as the Clem Jones Centre that is home to 20 different sports and literally thousands of registered sports players. Without people like Mr Cowan, the Clem Jones Centre would never have been developed into the wonderful sporting precinct it is today. Mr Cowan's contribution to the centre was acknowledged with the centre's basketball stadium being named after him, the Rowland Cowan Stadium.

The Crackerjack Carnival is still one of the cheapest entertainment events in Queensland. This was something close to Mr Cowan's heart as he wanted a carnival that could be accessible for local children who may not have been able to afford other events such as the Brisbane Ekka. Mr Cowan's contributions to the community for his many endeavours were also recognised in 2011 at the Australia Day Achievement Awards where he was awarded a certificate of achievement from then Lord Mayor Campbell Newman. His widow, Mrs Jane Cowan, as well as his daughters, Judith and Deborah, should be very proud of Mr Cowan's many outstanding contributions to the Chatsworth electorate. It gives me much pride not only as the member for Chatsworth but as a local resident of the area to honour such a special gentleman who dedicated a lifetime to making a real difference for the Chatsworth community.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.24 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C. Davis, T. Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gully, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young