



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 28 October 2015

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WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2015



The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Peter Wellington, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair.

REPORT

Committee of the Legislative Assembly



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I table report No. 15 of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly entitled *2014-15 annual report*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 15—2014-15 annual report [[1504](#)].

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 26 August 2015 the member for Clayfield wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games deliberately misled parliament at the estimates hearing on 25 August 2015.

I have circulated a ruling on this matter. I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House by the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I seek leave to incorporate the ruling.

Leave granted.

On 26 August 2015, the Member for Clayfield wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and Commonwealth Games deliberately misled Parliament at the Estimates hearing on 25 August 2015 when she stated that:

What I am saying is that we had our (Red Tape Advisory Council) meeting where we discussed what the target should be. What they said to me very clearly, member for Clayfield, is that they were not interested in an arbitrary target set by government that had no relevance to industry.

Has anyone from CCIQ, AIG—everyone you claim to listen to—ever said to me—'keep the previous government's red-tape target which was based on a public servant sitting in a backroom counting words and pages of legislation'? No, not one.

In his letter to me, the Member for Clayfield stated that the Minister “knowingly misrepresented the views of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ), who are members of the Red Tape Advisory Council, and in doing so has misled Parliament”.

I sought further information from the Minister about the allegations made against her, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5).

The Minister explained that she had not said that the CCIQ had advised her not to maintain a red tape target, but rather her statements were qualified with reference to “arbitrary” targets “based on a public servant sitting in a backroom counting words and pages of legislation”.

Standing Order 269(4) requires:

In considering whether the matter should be referred to the committee, the Speaker shall take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter. No matter should be referred to the ethics committee if the matter is technical or trivial and does not warrant the further attention of the House.

On the evidence before me, I am satisfied with the Minister's explanation that her statements were heavily qualified and on that basis were not factually incorrect. It may be that the Minister's statements were in a sense also evasive of the questions, but again still not factually incorrect.

Accordingly, I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter.

I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence, various dates, relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games [[1505](#)].

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, yesterday the member for Callide made serious allegations in the House about another member. I have still not received any supporting information or evidence for those allegations from the member for Callide.

I emphasise to members that there are Speaker's rulings in the House that members should not make any charges or allegations against other members without supporting or substantiating those allegations by some proof at the time that the charges or allegations are made. In this respect I refer to rulings by Speaker Houghton on 22 September 1977 at page 842 and Chairman Taylor on 18 October 1960 at page 789.

I have, however, received a written complaint from the acting chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Commission Committee arguing that the member for Callide breached the privilege of that committee when rising on the matter of privilege and other points of order yesterday. I have decided to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee.

I wish to make a number of points to all members. Standing order 271 restricts debate in the House on matters before the Ethics Committee, and I expect members to observe that rule. Members who are aware that matters are before the Ethics Committee cannot claim that, as the matter has not been reported to the House, they are free to pursue the matter.

Standing order 211A restricts the unauthorised release of material from both the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee and the Ethics Committee. There are sound reasons for that, and I expect members to observe that rule. Members who deliberately or mischievously breach that rule should be dealt with sternly by the House.

I often provide members the opportunity to provide information on allegations of breach of privilege in accordance with standing order 269(5). Usually that process is afforded the courtesy of confidentiality, and I am disappointed to see that the courtesy has been ignored in the last 24 hours. I do note that my providing the opportunity for information under standing order 269(5) is not mandatory.

TABLED PAPER

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety, Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Mr Bailey)—

[1506](#) Transmax Pty Ltd: General Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Business Development Fund

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.05 pm): Mr Speaker, last week I launched the \$40 million Business Development Fund, which will help turn great ideas into reality. The investment panel will be comprised of seven experts in the field of venture capital innovation. Confirmed panellists include: Dr Elaine Stead, investment director at Brisbane based Blue Sky Venture Capital, who has spent her career in life sciences and medical technology and was previously vice-president of Sunshine Heart, a US-based company which develops therapeutic devices for people with heart failure; Mr Troy Haines, entrepreneur and founder of theSPACE in Cairns, an incubator that connects innovators, inventors and start-ups in order to collaborate and commercialise new ideas; Ms Monica Bradley, director of Purposeful Capital, an innovation strategist who has returned to Australia in recent years after a successful career in the US and the Middle East. Monica is an investor, director and founder of start-ups in the media, digital and services sector; Dr Cherrell Hirst, who is a director of many biotechnology companies including ImpediMed, Tissue Therapies, Relevare and Xenome. Dr Hirst has been CEO of life sciences venture capital fund QIC BioVentures. She was Queenslander of the Year in 1995 and received an OAM for her work in breast cancer and education.

The fund is an essential component of the Business Investment Attraction Package, part of the \$180 million Advance Queensland policy initiative. This is a \$40 million fund that will help kickstart Queensland's next wave of start-ups. For good ideas a minimum of \$250,000 is now on the table, half

from the state and half from co-investors. The state will invest up to a maximum of \$2.5 million if the business idea is the right idea. That is money available to give emerging businesses the help they need to get started.

A similar New Zealand Seed Co-Investment Fund started with \$40 million of its own. Since 2006 it has attracted \$140 million in private investment, attracting 14 seed co-investment partners and funding 116 companies. Just like the Rugby World Cup this weekend, I think we can do far better than the Kiwis. But the Business Development Fund is not about the government wanting to get involved in businesses and staying involved: we can step in early and get out of the way early once the business is up and running, and hopefully our involvement will lead to a new phase of angel investing in this state. We want to lead the way when it comes to investing to point those angel investors in the right direction. Applications for the first round of Business Development Fund investments are now open. All ideas must meet eligibility criteria such as having the majority of its asset and employees located in Queensland and of course the potential to be job generators in their own right. This is an exciting new policy that will drive Queensland's start-up revolution, and I encourage all investors and potential applicants to get involved.

LNG Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.07 pm): Mr Speaker, the massive investment in the LNG industry has been a generational game-changer for Queensland. It has not just changed the way energy is produced and delivered in our country and in our region, but it has also driven our economic growth in recent years. We are talking about approximately \$60 billion in investment and tens of thousands of jobs, and now that we are coming to the end of the construction phase we move into production and export.

Two weeks ago I was in Gladstone with the Minister for State Development and the member for Gladstone for the first shipment of gas from the Santos project. It is the second project to come online following the Queensland Curtis LNG project in July this year, and I advise that the third project, Australia Pacific LNG, remains on track for sustained production from the fourth quarter of 2015. Already over \$1 billion of LNG has been exported.

Now that Santos has started, Queensland is on its way to becoming the fourth biggest LNG exporter in the world. Like all major players, Santos has invested heavily. Their project alone is worth around \$18.5 billion and has delivered around 10,000 jobs. These are long-term investments and locked-in contracts.

There will always be ups and downs in the price cycle, but the LNG industry is crucial to our economy. It provided a big economic boost domestically during construction and is now destined to be one of our biggest exports in the operational phase.

I am pleased to say that the LNG industry has bipartisan support, but it gives me great pride to stand here today as a Labor Premier talking about these projects, given they were initiated, planned and now finally delivered under a Labor government.

Queensland Symphony Orchestra

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.10 pm): Queensland's vibrant arts community continues to capture international attention. That is not only confined to our burgeoning film industry. I am proud to inform members that the new artistic leader for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra is internationally acclaimed conductor Ms Alondra de la Parra, who will join the orchestra in the newly created role of music director.

Ms de la Parra is one of the most compelling conductors of her generation and has worked with leading orchestras in the US and Europe. Her appointment is a significant coup for Queensland. Ms de la Parra has already proven her popularity with the orchestra and with Queensland audiences when she performed with the QSO to standing ovations earlier this year. She will return in 2016 to open the QSO concert season, officially commencing her three-year partnership with the QSO in 2017, a year which also marks the orchestra's 70th anniversary.

Ms de la Parra will be certain to push the orchestra's boundaries on a global front to take the company to new and even greater artistic heights while showcasing Queensland on an international level. I am looking forward to the energy and experience Ms de la Parra will bring to our internationally renowned orchestra as it sets a new artistic benchmark and continues to spread the joy of music throughout the state.

Building Queensland

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (2.11 pm): Last night the parliament unanimously passed legislation to establish Building Queensland as the independent adviser to government on major infrastructure projects. Building Queensland, together with the State Infrastructure Plan, provides a new foundation for integrated and rigorous long-term infrastructure planning in Queensland and delivers on two of the Palaszczuk Labor government's key election commitments. By bringing Building Queensland into existence we are ensuring that only projects that demonstrate clear economic, fiscal or social benefits or those that have significant regional significance will be considered for government funding.

Well-directed investment in infrastructure provides significant economic benefit in the form of increased productivity, job creation, training and skills development opportunities. Building Queensland is a key mechanism in the realisation of these benefits. Building Queensland will produce a pipeline of priority projects based on an expert review of infrastructure proposals and comprehensive business cases. Once developed, the pipeline will inform future state infrastructure plans.

The work which Building Queensland will undertake, combined with the direction set in our State Infrastructure Plan, will help provide the certainty for industry so it can invest in Queensland with confidence. This is already starting to pay off, with the Treasurer and Minister for Main Roads today announcing new private sector investment in the Logan Motorway, helping to meet one of the private sector opportunities identified in the draft plan, which is to improve passenger and freight movements between Brisbane and the Gold and Sunshine coasts by increasing capacity and efficiency on roads and the public transport system.

Today I am pleased to announce the members of the Building Queensland board. The new Building Queensland board will set the strategic direction and framework by which Building Queensland will assess both economic and social infrastructure projects. Members were selected following a public advertisement process and an independent search led by Talent2, one of Australia's leading recruitment firms.

I am pleased to announce that the chair of the board will be Alan Millhouse, who has headed Allens' national infrastructure practice, from 1996 to 2008, where he provided extensive advice on structuring, development and financing of major infrastructure projects, particularly in the water and transport industries, including PPPs. He is a previous president of the Infrastructure Association of Queensland and has served on a number of boards including as chair of Queensland Motorways and a director of SunWater.

I will outline the other members of the board. James McKenzie has extensive corporate and board experience including chairing or serving on the board of Mirvac, ShineWing, the Victorian Funds Management Corporation, Gloucester Coal and Pacific Brands and co-vice-chair of Yancoal Australia. Mr McKenzie is also a former CEO of Norwich Union Australia and managing director of funds management and insurance at the ANZ Banking Group.

Catherin Bull has had an exceptional academic career in urban planning and design, built on an earlier architectural career. Ms Bull has extensive involvement with boards and panels providing high-level advice on infrastructure planning and delivery including chairing South Bank's design advisory panel, serving as a member of the design review panel for the Sydney Olympics and as a commissioner for integrated design in South Australia.

Jacqui Walters is a former principal and group strategy lead with global infrastructure advisory Evans & Peck, as well as roles at Deloitte, PWC and IBM. Ms Walters has recently provided consulting and advisory services to SunWater, Infrastructure New South Wales, Origin APLNG and McCullough Robertson.

Finally, Graham Hooper is an engineer who has held extensive roles with AECOM Maunsells in a 26-year association focused on transportation, logistics and ports. Prior to that Mr Hooper had four years with PNG Harbour Board. He has worked in 20 countries and was a member of AECOM's Global Major Projects Risk Review Committee.

These five independent directors will complement directors-general of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning as well as the Under Treasurer in making up the eight members of the board.

I am confident that, under the leadership of Alan Millhouse, Building Queensland will provide the government with the independent expert advice on infrastructure priorities it needs to plan and assess the infrastructure needs for Queensland's future.

Market-Led Proposals

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.16 pm): I am pleased to update the House on the progress of our market-led proposals framework. Since the budget we have had over 28 submissions to the market-led proposals initiative, which is a great start. The framework recognises that, while encouraging competition in selection and procurement is always preferable, there are situations where unique proposals can bring benefits. The framework allows for the government to pursue an exclusive engagement with those unique proposals which meet the government's criteria. We have streamlined the assessment process to make it easier to engage with government.

Today I am very pleased to inform the House of the first cab off the rank for market-led proposals, an almost half-billion dollar investment in our road network. This morning I announced with Minister Bailey and local MPs, the members for Woodridge, Algester, Logan and Stretton, a new proposal for a series of upgrades along the Logan Motorway-Gateway extension corridor led by Transurban. This has been approved to proceed to the detailed assessment stage under our market-led proposals framework.

This proposal includes interchange upgrades at key congestion and accident hot spots, widening parts of the Gateway Motorway extension and the construction of some new ramps to ease congestion and improve safety and efficiency for all motorists including heavy vehicles. The proposed works address major congestion and road safety issues currently experienced on the Mount Lindesay Highway and Wembley Road interchanges. The proposed works are valued at approximately \$450 million. The expected cost to the state is zero dollars.

The Logan Enhancement Project is a great example of government helping industry to bring their ideas to fruition and to show that Queensland is open for business. We recognise and appreciate the efforts Transurban has gone to in bringing forward its initial proposal. The state's assessment team for the detailed proposals phase will be led by Queensland Treasury and supported by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. During this period, Transurban will provide the state with further information to assess the merits of the project. The project is expected to support more than 1,300 jobs during construction and generate more than \$1.2 billion in economic benefits for Queenslanders.

Transurban proposes to fund the upgrades through toll increases for trucks across the Logan and Gateway motorways. There will also be a new toll facility for motorists if they choose to use the proposed new south-facing ramps at Compton Road. Motorists will not be forced to use any new tolling points and will have access to alternative routes via the existing toll-free road network. Motorists who use existing toll routes and continue to use the same routes will not see an increase in tolls as a result of this project.

A range of stakeholders have already outlined their support for the project including the RACQ, the Queensland Trucking Association and the Queensland Transport and Logistics Council. I stress that there will be further broad consultation over this next stage. It is expected that we will receive Transurban's final proposal in late 2016, at which time we will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, modify it or consider other options. I encourage more proposals like it because, unlike those opposite, we are open for business.

This project fits in well within the framework of the Draft State Infrastructure Plan released this week by the Deputy Premier. This is exactly how the State Infrastructure Plan is meant to work. The State Infrastructure Plan identifies our committed one- to four-year investments from government, then identifies opportunities over the longer term that we want to see the private sector partner with us on and look at innovative funding models. I look forward to seeing this project and other market-led proposals like it come to fruition under this government, because we are getting on with the job.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.19 pm): Today the Palaszczuk government throws its support behind Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Queensland women. Around 2,900 new cases are diagnosed in Queensland each year. That is why cancer screening is available for all Queensland women as part of the BreastScreen Australia cervical screening and bowel cancer screening programs. While we know regular check-ups are the most effective method of intervention, we know not all women participate as regularly as recommended. BreastScreen Queensland has gone

from strength to strength, carrying out more than three million mammograms and 200,000 assessments. There are over 200 locations across Queensland, including mobile vans for women in rural and remote areas. That is why Pink Ribbon Day and Breast Cancer Awareness Month are important events.

It is a priority of the Palaszczuk government to support organisations that deliver cancer screening and support. That is why this year we announced that the Advanced Breast Cancer Group would receive \$770,000 in funding to support women with breast and gynaecological cancers. This group offers a unique service that connects women throughout Queensland and helps them to manage their treatment. They provide vital support to women in the advanced stages of cancer. I was proud to restore funding to this group which, regrettably, was cut by the former LNP government. Not only did we restore funding, we will be providing that funding over the next three years, delivering certainty for the Advanced Breast Cancer Group along with many other community based health organisations. The Palaszczuk government is making sure that all Queensland women have the ability to access free services to maintain their breast health.

State Schools, Withdrawal Strategy; Autism Hub

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.21 pm): I rise to update the House on the use of a withdrawal strategy at Kawungan State School. I want to make it clear that this situation is completely unacceptable. As soon as the department became aware, the school was ordered to close the room. The matter is being investigated. A senior departmental officer is on the ground at the school to review and assess the school's practices and procedures. Yesterday the deputy director-general, state schools, reaffirmed to all schools that under no circumstances must a student be placed in time-out without strict supervision and that students in time-out must be given an opportunity to rejoin class after each 10-minute interval. Today regional directors have been ordered to contact schools to ensure they are complying with the department's expectations.

The safety and wellbeing of Queensland students and school staff is a high priority for our government and a responsibility I know that the department, our principals and teachers take very seriously. I know schools are committed to working with parents to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students in our classrooms. Sometimes this requires difficult decisions, particularly with regard to students with complex needs, including those for whom challenging behaviour is part of the array of needs associated with disability.

I am committed to ensuring our schools are appropriately resourced and that principals and teachers receive the support and advice they need when they need it. That is why early this month with the Premier I announced as part of this government's Advancing Education plan that we will open a new autism hub in 2016. This hub will be available for all teachers and principals in all schools across Queensland. This will build on our strong commitment to provide additional support for students with disability in state schools. In this year's budget we had an increase of more than \$72 million, bringing our total allocation to almost \$930 million. The Queensland government remains committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of our staff and students in all of our schools.

Fernvale, Weather Event

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.23 pm): This morning the member for Ipswich West, Jim Madden, and I joined my Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Acting Commissioner, Mark Roche, for a visit to Fernvale following last night's destructive storm. As minister, the safety and wellbeing of all Queenslanders is my top priority. As soon as it was safe for me to do so, I wanted to visit the community personally to speak with affected residents and to thank our dedicated emergency services crews for their outstanding work.

Yesterday's thunderstorm was a super cell that left a five-kilometre path of destruction across the Fernvale township. Homes have been badly damaged, cars have been wrecked and debris strewn across a huge area. Our latest information is that 48 premises received minor damage, nine properties have moderate damage and six properties are severely damaged. Four to six homes are currently uninhabitable. Others have had roofs ripped off or damage from fallen trees. Residents told me of the incredible roar of the winds, the sheer force of the horizontal rain and the thumping impact of golf ball sized hail. This was a massive and a frightening storm, but I am very thankful that no-one was seriously injured or lost their life as a result.

As soon as it was safe, our emergency crews were out helping residents to mop up, with over 80 calls for service. Last night we had over 50 staff and volunteers, including urban search and rescue crews and the state emergency service and rural fire brigade volunteers, on the ground. While most of the major roads have now been cleared, there is still a lot of debris on the ground. This morning our SES crews from Ipswich, Somerset, Scenic Rim, Gold Coast and Logan were in Fernvale alongside 18 staff from the rural fire service, our police and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. The latest update is that 643 sites are still without power. We are asking residents to please remain vigilant, especially with fallen powerlines. Our crews are working closely with local police and the Somerset Regional Council to ensure help is getting to where it is needed most.

Events like this can be extremely traumatic, especially in tight-knit communities like Fernvale. I was with Rhonda McCulkin this morning—an older lady who was in shock and deeply traumatised. Her house had its roof ripped off. Roofing was located in the paddocks. A shed was thrown up against her house. There were bricks broken and windows that were blown in and also blown out. She lives in McCulkins Lane, named after her family's heritage in the area. She said to me that she was concerned about the rain that could ruin her grandmother's and her mother's heirlooms. It was heart wrenching meeting Rhonda today. To be honest, I did not want to leave her. I only came back because parliament was in session. I left her in the hands of a good friend, but I asked them to please keep in contact with me.

We are working with affected residents to ensure they have all the necessary help and support they need. The Palaszczuk government stands with the people of Fernvale and together we will work to get the town back on its feet as soon as possible. Once again, I would like to put on record my deep appreciation to all of our emergency service staff, volunteers, police, paramedics, our energy workers and other public servants who have been working around the clock in Fernvale. I would also like to thank the mayor of Somerset Regional Council, Graeme Lehmann, and all of his council workers for their assistance and cooperation. It will take a while to get Fernvale back on its feet, but together as a parliament we must ensure this little town gets back on its feet as soon as possible.

Renewable Energy

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (2.29 pm): Rebuilding the renewable energy industry in Queensland after the neglect of the Newman years is underway. Last month, I advised the House that the renewable energy auction promised by the Palaszczuk government at the last election will exceed our election commitment of 40 megawatts by 50 per cent. At the last sitting, I advised the House that there had been strong interest in the auction, with 30 potential project consortiums having registered their interest already. Increasing the uptake of renewable energy in the Sunshine State will not only be good for our environment but also create the new jobs of the future and diversify our economy.

The solar auction is not the only renewable energy project occurring in Queensland. In late August 2015, Ergon released an expression of interest to contract electricity via renewable energy certificates from new renewable energy projects in Queensland. If these projects were not built in Queensland, they would be built somewhere else—as happened over the past three years under the LNP. On 23 September 2015, the initial period for responses closed. I am very pleased to inform the House that Ergon has received proposals from 22 renewable energy development companies, some with multiple project options. In total, about 2,000 megawatts of projects have been submitted from proposed new solar PV, wind and bagasse projects. A large spread of pricing from these projects has been seen. However, I can advise that Ergon is encouraged by the strong level of competitive pricing from some of the projects that are well advanced in development. Ergon is on track to work through the responses to create a short list by the end of October, with a view to forming contracts with some of these projects later this year and early next year.

While the Palaszczuk government is blazing a renewable energy future for Queensland, it is time the federal government stopped blocking renewable energy projects and started approving them. The Deputy Premier called in and approved the 2,025 megawatt Mount Emerald wind farm in North Queensland more than six months ago and it has been on the federal minister's desk gathering dust ever since. It is time the federal government approved the Mount Emerald wind farm to kickstart Queensland's clean energy future and much needed clean energy North Queensland jobs. The new Prime Minister and federal energy minister, Josh Frydenberg, may talk the talk, but for Queensland's clean energy future, it is time for them to walk the walk.

Disability Housing

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (2.31 pm): I am delighted to advise members that, under this government, more than 30 people with disability across the state will be able to move out of nursing homes and public health facilities and back into the community. The Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering infrastructure in this key area and has allocated more than \$6.6 million for six organisations to build or modify a range of dwellings in areas with a high disability housing demand. This is great news, as it means that people with high physical support needs can move out of aged care or public health facilities and live in their communities, close to family and friends. We know how important it is for people with a disability to have choice and control over where they live and independence in their daily lives.

These projects include a range of accommodation options that are designed to help people who use wheelchairs and other equipment to live as independently as possible. Fully accessible one-bedroom units and duplex accommodation will also be fitted with assistive technology, such as environmental controls and doors that can be controlled from an iPad. I had the opportunity to see this kind of technology in action at the Bundaberg Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Initiative house during the community cabinet, and I saw what a difference it makes.

We are pleased to be working with non-government organisations, including Regional Housing Ltd, Multicap, Community Housing Ltd, Cootharinga North Queensland, House with No Steps and Churches of Christ Care to deliver these projects. Organisations are contributing the land where the new housing will be constructed, or contributing an existing building to be modified so that it is fully accessible. I thank the organisations involved for their contribution of close to \$3 million in total—a great partnership to achieve the best value for money for Queenslanders.

Our investment will also generate around 20 jobs in the construction industry in key regional areas across Queensland, including Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Townsville, Cairns, Logan and Crows Nest. This is great news for these communities where jobs are so important.

This funding builds on our previous announcements over recent weeks of funding for high and complex needs accommodation in North Queensland and a fourth round of funding under the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Initiative. It could not have come at a better time, as a number of the projects will be completed as the NDIS rolls out across Queensland. I am pleased to be part of the Palaszczuk government, which cares about people with a disability and creating jobs for regional Queenslanders.

Smithsonian and Cooper Hewitt Fellowships

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.34 pm): In June, the Premier signed an agreement giving Queenslanders access to the expertise and networks of the world's largest research and museum complex. The new three-year memorandum of understanding between our state and the Smithsonian Institution was signed during the Premier's visit to Washington earlier this year. The Smithsonian Institution, founded in 1846, is regarded as one of the most prestigious in the world. Therefore, today it gives me great pleasure to invite talented researchers and teachers from across Queensland to apply for the 2015-16 Smithsonian and Cooper Hewitt fellowships. There are five of these fellowships on offer.

Each Queensland Smithsonian fellow will receive up to \$25,000 to spend between eight and 16 weeks at a Smithsonian museum or research centre, while the Queensland Cooper Hewitt fellows will receive up to \$20,000 to spend between eight and 12 weeks at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York.

This is an opportunity of a lifetime. We are continuing the Smithsonian and Cooper Hewitt fellowship programs, because they are an investment in Queensland's future. They align with our Advance Queensland initiative to reinvigorate research, develop and harness new ideas and stimulate innovative thinking in our schools so that our students are better prepared to contribute to a knowledge-based economy.

Our Smithsonian fellows will collaborate with other researchers to advance studies on important issues that affect us, our industries and our natural environment. Our Cooper Hewitt fellows will work closely with teachers and educators in New York on a learning project in design-led education for students. On their return to Queensland, the successful recipients will share the knowledge they gained with other researchers, teachers and students.

The Palaszczuk government made a commitment to expand opportunities, to skill Queenslanders and retain our best and brightest, and we are delivering. Our \$360,000 agreement with the prestigious Smithsonian Institution will continue the fellowship programs until 2018. I look forward to updating the House when these important fellowships are awarded.

Mining Industry

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.37 pm): The Palaszczuk government is very aware of the value of the resources sector and its contribution to the Queensland economy and communities, providing royalties for services, jobs for families and resources that build electronic equipment, cars and homes. We are underpinning that awareness with action—action that will support the industry as it works through a cyclical price downturn. We are modernising mining and exploration tenure systems to cut red tape for miners, improve post-mining rehabilitation, encourage innovation and provide greater certainty for landholders.

Our innovative resources tenure framework is the latest stage in a reform project that started under Labor six years ago under my good friend and colleague Stirling Hinchliffe, the member for Sandgate, and will culminate in legislation coming to parliament in the second half of 2016. My resources ministerial round table is about to meet for the second time, bringing together representatives from companies and peak bodies representing the mineral, coal, petroleum, gas and exploration sectors, along with government departmental heads from Natural Resources and Mines and State Development. Its terms of reference include promoting innovation and technology in the resources sector and streamlining regulatory frameworks.

The government has continued funding to support the collaborative drilling program which, since 2006, has paid more than \$6 million in government grants to bolster exploration in underexplored areas or innovative proposals. We know that in downtimes it provides the best opportunity for resource companies to secure approvals and invest. The Coordinator-General is leading some key processes, supporting the Galilee Basin development, including a land acquisition program and assessing development applications in the basin and Abbot Point state development areas. This includes tracking and facilitating all approvals. This will mean that resource companies are ready to employ Queenslanders when commodity prices improve.

This government has saved TAFE. I repeat: we have saved TAFE. My colleague the Attorney-General ended LNP plans to sell off our public vocational education and training network, a network that plays a vital role in providing a skilled workforce for the resources sector. Instead, in 2015-16 we allocated \$160 million to support TAFE Queensland and its regional network of first-class teachers and trainers.

We have won the national mining equipment, technology and services growth centre for Queensland. We have won that proposal. Earlier today, I joined the Commonwealth minister for industry, Christopher Pyne, in launching the \$20 million national growth centre at the QUT Gardens Point campus. The Palaszczuk government is committing \$6 million over four years to snare this centre, which will help Queensland's mining equipment, technology and services sector commercialise and export its bright ideas to the world. Last year, Queensland received \$21 billion of revenue from this sector. It is all about playing to our strengths to diversify and to supercharge our economy. It is a far-sighted investment in jobs and growth, for now and into the future.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (2.40 pm): I advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting yesterday. The committee has resolved, pursuant to Standing Order 136, that the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee report on the Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Bill 2015 by 5 February 2016 and the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 5 February 2016; the Agriculture and Environment Committee report on the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 5 February 2016; and the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report on the Multicultural Recognition Bill 2015 by 5 February 2016.

MOTION

Referral to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (2.41 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Health and Ambulance Services Committee inquire into licensing arrangements that affect the sale and use of tobacco in Queensland.

That, in undertaking this inquiry, the committee should consider: what arrangements currently apply in Queensland with respect to licensing the wholesale and retail supply of tobacco products; what licensing arrangements apply in other states and territories for the wholesale and retail supply of tobacco products; and the capacity for licensing arrangements for tobacco wholesalers and retailers to support broader public health objectives.

Further, that the committee report to the Legislative Assembly by 29 April 2016.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Referral to the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (2.42 pm) by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee inquire into smoking and tobacco use at universities, technical and further education facilities, and registered training organisations.

That, in undertaking this inquiry, the committee should consider: what arrangements currently apply that limit smoking at these facilities; the impact of smoking on staff, students and campus users; and the capacity for improved laws and regulations at these facilities to reduce smoking.

Further, that the committee report to the Legislative Assembly by 29 April 2016.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

UTILITIES, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Report



Mr KING (Kallangur—ALP) (2.43 pm): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 6 of the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 3 June 2015 and 14 July 2015*. This report covers the portfolio subordinate legislation tabled on 14 July 2015 considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has a disallowance date of 11 November 2015. The committee did not identify any significant issues in relation to policy or regarding the lawfulness of the subordinate legislation. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee: Report No. 6, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 3 June 2015 and 14 July 2015 [[1507](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Electricity Prices, Order for Production of Documents



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (2.44 pm): I give notice that I will move—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Treasurer and the minister responsible for energy to produce to the House by 11 November 2015 all analysis and modelling, including draft modelling, prepared by or for the government or in the possession of the government on the impact on electricity prices of the state government policy to aggregate electricity corporations in Queensland.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Heavy Vehicle Charges



Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.45 pm): This morning the shadow transport minister and member for Indooroopilly made the prediction that Labor's big announcement today would mean one thing: higher tolls for trucks and heavy vehicles using the

Logan and Gateway motorways. How did the member for Indooroopilly know? He knew because it is written in black and white in Labor's secret economic plan. Of course, that leaked plan, which not two weeks ago the Premier claimed was not government policy, proposed new tolls and charging for heavy vehicles. On 15 October, not two weeks ago, at page 2260 of *Hansard*, when asked by the opposition leader about tolls, the Premier said this is 'not government policy'. What do we see today? An announcement that will mean higher tolls for heavy vehicles using parts of the Queensland road network.

This announcement flies in the face of Labor's promises not to slug Queensland road users with higher taxes and it flies in the face of the Premier's assurances that the leaked economic plan from her own department is not government policy. It begs the question: what is next? What other parts of the economic action plan will this government be introducing in an attempt to shore up its weakening budget position? Could congestion charging be on the cards? Can parents expect to be slugged with co-payments just to send their children to public schools? Can we expect to see transport subsidies cut and regional train services stopped?

Toll increases under a Labor government should come as no surprise. They have never seen a tax they did not like to hike. Members might remember that in 2010 Andrew Fraser and Anna Bligh slugged motorists using the Gateway and Logan motorways with a 30 per cent fare increase in an attempt to fatten up the toll roads for privatisation. The current Premier and Treasurer were members of that government.

How quickly members opposite forget that it was their side of politics that sold assets without even taking it to the people of Queensland. How quickly they forget that Queenslanders were constantly treated like cash cows because the former government had no control of the budget. If members opposite need any further proof, I table an article from the *Courier-Mail*, written by Steven Wardill, titled 'Taking a toll—\$27m worth—Treasurer defends fee hikes as value for money'. That article was written five years ago. The names may change, but the actions stay the same.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 19 March 2010, titled 'Taking a toll—\$27m worth—Treasurer defends fee hikes as value for money' [[1508](#)].

Interestingly enough, that article by Steve Wardill included quotes from the then Transport Workers Union's Hughie Williams, who said that the increased costs for commercial operators would send more businesses broke. Today, Peter Biagini from the TWU said that there has been no consultation at all with the TWU, yet the government supposedly prides itself on listening and consultation. We are travelling around the state listening to Queenslanders. What we are hearing is that this government has no plan, it is not being upfront with the people of Queensland and it is holding Queensland back.

Logan and Gateway Motorways, Extension

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (2.48 pm): This morning, I was very pleased to join the Treasurer and the members for Logan, Algester, Woodridge, Springwood and Stretton to support their Logan communities deal with an issue that the previous government neglected for three years. For three years they neglected the congestion. For three years they neglected the road safety issues on the Logan and Gateway extension. For three years they did nothing. They built their tower of power, but they neglected their constituents. Perhaps that is why this government holds all the seats in that area. When it begins, this project will create 1,300-plus jobs, that is, 1,300 jobs that are desperately needed here in South-East Queensland.

We hear the opposition say, 'You should work with the private sector.' We hear them say, 'You should be innovative with your funding solutions.' That is what they say. When we come into this place and do that, what do we get from them? We just get the same old whingeing, the same old carping, the same old negativity, the same old fear campaign—the same tactics that led them into opposition.

Is this idea of working with the private sector a new idea? I do not think so. That brings me to some previous reporting from a former leader of the LNP. The article states—

Campbell Newman's Queensland LNP will be putting all options on the table—including the possibility of introducing tolls—to deliver a decent all-weather highway linking the north and south of the State.

That is the Bruce Highway. The article continues—

... LNP Parliamentary Leader Jeff Seeney ... flagged the involvement of private enterprise in helping fund the huge cost of rebuilding the Bruce Highway.

It gets better. The article continues—

"I certainly would rule in the involvement of private investment and private funding in a whole range of models ...

They were the member for Callide's own words. When we come in here and say that we are working with the private sector to create jobs and save lives on our roads—to make a safer Logan Motorway—what do we get from those opposite? We get the same old negativity, the same old carping, the same old lack of substance from the opposition that took them into opposition. They lost 36 seats at the last election. We would think that they might have learnt something by now.

This project is fantastic for the south side. It will create jobs. It will see a much more efficient road system. It will see results in terms of freight productivity which will create more jobs and flow-on jobs. Why does the freight industry support this? Why does the Transport and Logistics Council and the Trucking Association support it? They know it is good for Queensland.

OneSchool, Information Technology



Mr MANDER (Everton—LNP) (2.51 pm): Yesterday in the House I spoke about the long-awaited and much overdue Deloitte Australia report into the education department's child protection IT failure. I explained how the report asked more questions than it answered. The key question—the minister's oversight of her department—was not addressed.

Why was Deloitte not asked to investigate why it took so long for the minister to detect that these reports were not getting through to the appropriate authorities? The minister has still not yet explained why her department knew as early as 15 February this year that some of these reports were not getting through to police. It took until 31 July for her to make a statement about the bungle. The report details six different occasions from February this year when the IT failure was discovered by officers of her department, yet nothing was done about it.

While this is a very serious failure that potentially puts vulnerable children at ongoing risk of harm, an even more alarming outcome of this report has been highlighted to me. In the document the *Queensland Department of Education and Training OneSchool—Technology review* by Deloitte Australia appendix G is titled 'Detailed code review'. Appendix G states—

This table below explains the detailed review of the software code ... additional comments and an indication of the ability of this code to implement the requirement.

I am reliably told that the information in this table, combined with information through the rest of this report, could enable a person with malicious intent to cause harm. I am informed that the three documents which comprise the Deloitte report contained an unnecessary level of detail relating to the most vulnerable members of our community.

This is a major oversight. At best it comes from naivety or, more concerningly, it comes from a complete lack of understanding. No commercial entity would publish this level of detail. I am told that the department already receives large numbers of malicious IT attacks. Now it seems that the minister has given these computer hackers and anybody else in the world who would like to break into this system the OneSchool specifications and the detailed coding.

Furthermore, I am told that the provision of this level of detail could breach IS 18—information standard 18—the Queensland government's Chief Information Office's own policy for managing the collection and storage of data. The minister needs to take urgent advice about this potential compromise of the department of education's IT security following her release of the Deloitte report. In her zeal to score political points on an issue as sensitive as child protection, has she compromised the integrity of the OneSchool system and potentially put the safety of children at risk?

OneSchool, Information Technology



Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.54 pm): This matter has been on the public record since July. Within 24 hours of my first becoming aware of it, as has been well reported, I went public to explain what had happened. What is very disappointing to me is that there is a gentleman in this House, the shadow minister for education, who since July, and despite my office and departmental staff providing him with a one-on-one briefing to explain the issue—in the best interests of Queensland I wanted the shadow minister to know exactly what had happened—and as of 28 October clearly demonstrates to every single person, through the statement he just made, that he fundamentally does not understand what happened with the coding error. For some reason he cannot understand what went wrong.

Let us get this very clear. There was the Carmody report that made recommendations to the Newman government. The Newman government allocated \$400 million to implement the Carmody recommendations.

Ms Davis: Plus the contingency fund.

Ms JONES: Plus the contingency fund. Member for Aspley, the education department did not get one dollar to implement those recommendations.

As the Deloitte report clearly shows, the beginning of the implementation of this coding error started in August 2014. I think it is a clear matter of public record that I was not in the parliament in August 2014. I think it is pretty well known that I was not here in 2014. The coding error—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: Can you stop the clock, please?

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I would urge you to stop your frivolous interjections. With the clock now stopped, I put the member for Chatsworth on notice and the member for Aspley on notice. Frivolous interjections are not acceptable and are disorderly behaviour. You are on notice. Please desist from further disorderly behaviour.

Ms JONES: For the clarity of all members, the Carmody report made a number of recommendations for the department of education. It is one of the largest reporters of suspected child abuse in this state and yet the department of education did not get one dollar. They decided to go through and earmark the OneSchool system. They started doing this coding change back in August 2014, but it failed.

For the benefit of the member for Everton, the failure was that the coding error meant that, despite the email not going through to the Queensland Police Service, it generated a report in the department of education that it had gone through. That is what the flaw was. I said that we had to go back further. We discovered another 344 reports that did not go through under the watch of those opposite.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: In relation to the warning of the members for Chatsworth and Aspley, that warning is under standing order 253A.

Draft Queensland Economic Action Plan

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.58 pm): Who could forget only two weeks ago when this parliament came together that we had minister after minister, including the Premier, stand up and say that the government's so-called draft economic plan was not their draft economic plan and was actually put together by a rogue in the government's economic policy planning group. This is like the member for Rockhampton acting as a rogue agent only to be slapped down because he was doing it of his own volition.

Indeed, what we have seen here today is that document rise from the grave again, because that document, which contains some 60-odd promises from the Labor Party at the last state election, also contains a range of commitments around heavy vehicle tolling. When I stood in this parliament last time, along with my various shadow ministers, and asked the Premier and minister after minister over there if this document contained any policies of the government, if this was their draft plan, they said no. In actual fact we had the Deputy Premier being most emphatic about this, saying that it was not government policy and she reinforced it on at least three occasions.

Today it is government policy because we have just had the member for Yeerongpilly stand up and proudly proclaim something which was ruled out in this draft economic plan two weeks ago as government policy, and that is using heavy vehicle tolling. What is next? I ask the honourable member for Yeerongpilly: what is coming next? We now have heavy vehicle tolling. Will congestion tolling come in next as a consequence or will the other provision that is contained within here come in next, and that is statewide heavy vehicle tolling?

This government pretends to be a consultative government. We have the TWU out there today saying that the government did not consult on this. They have some 10,000 members including owner-operators in Queensland who have not been consulted. The big difference between the LNP and the ALP is that we have always been open to Queenslanders that we have been open to engaging with the private sector. It was this government that came to power saying that it wanted to close things down and bring it all back in-house, that it was opposed to outsourcing. It was the Premier and the Treasurer at the time at the last state election who said they would not be increasing taxes and charges. Where does the new tolling regime play into that?

(Time expired)

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude at 4.01 pm.

Road Infrastructure, Tolls

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (3.01 pm): My question without notice is to the Premier and I ask: will the Premier tell the parliament where in Labor's election policy and costings did the Premier outline that Labor would increase cost-of-living pressures by announcing new road tolls?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question, but obviously they have not been listening to anything that has been said in this House today. This is a project, a market-led proposal, by a private company. People can choose to use the road or not use the road. That is right. This is a market-led proposal which will relieve traffic congestion. It means 1,300 jobs—1,300 jobs—in the south-east corner of this state and fixing traffic congestion. I want to commend the Treasurer and the minister for working with the industry and the stakeholders about bringing this proposal together.

I find it quite hypocritical when opposition members come in here and start talking about cost-of-living pressures. Let us go back to electricity. Let us go back to cost of living. What happened under their watch? There was a 43 per cent increase in electricity prices.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I bring you back to the importance of relevance and not debating the issue. I invite you to continue.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There is also a road called the second range crossing, which I heard many members on that side of the House talk adamantly about time and time again. Is there a toll on that road? Yes, there is. Yes, they have admitted that there is a toll on that road, and people can choose to travel on that road if they want to. Is that project generating jobs? Yes, it is. Do the members for Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South support that project? Yes, they do because it is delivering jobs for their community. My government will always stand up—

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am happy for the Premier to move a bit wide but my question was specifically: will the Premier inform the House of where in Labor's election policy and costings did the Premier outline this particular policy and its resultant implications?

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I travelled the length and breadth of this state during the election campaign talking about creating jobs. That is what people are talking to me about. They are talking to me about the fact that they want jobs for their children. They want jobs for their families. That is what the people of Queensland want. This government is focused on the future. When we look across to those opposite, they are clearly stuck in the past. We only have to look at the Leader of the Opposition, who has been here for 26 years, who has been round and round the traps so many times that we cannot even remember. They have no direction and no plan for this state, and they stand condemned.

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that the Premier has not mentioned 'toll' in her answer at all. That was the question.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think you need to draw to the attention of the Leader of Opposition Business that he should not mislead the House. The Premier clearly answered the question by referring to tolls from the very outset.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. Members, there is no point of order. I do not want members to commence a shouting match in here. I call the Premier if you have anything further to add.

Road Infrastructure, Tolls

Mr SPRINGBORG: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. In the last sitting the Premier said, 'Our economic plan was delivered on 14 July. It's called the budget.' Will the Premier inform the House which budget paper flagged increasing tolling on our roads?

Ms PALASZCZUK: In the budget my understanding was that we clearly talked about market-led proposals. This is exactly what we are talking about—a market-led proposal. This is clearly evidence of my government getting on with the job and delivering for Queenslanders. I said very clearly we would deliver projects. Just have a think about what this government has delivered over the last couple of weeks. We have an agreement with the Prime Minister and the council to develop the second stage of

the light rail. The Deputy Premier turned the sod on Yeerongpilly Green—6,000 jobs over the next 10 years. Today we have a market-led proposal—1,300 jobs. Stockland and the Caloundra South expansion means more jobs again. We make no excuses for generating the jobs that are needed for Queenslanders. In stark contrast, what have we heard from the opposition? I search high and low for any sign of a plan, any sign of a policy, but yet there is absolutely nothing.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier. I do not want to have a debate. Thank you for answering the question.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I do not need your assistance. You have had a good go this afternoon.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, I do not need you shouting from your chair. If you want to ask a question, you are invited—

Mr DICKSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I did not say anything at all then.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, I heard you. The *Hansard* record will reveal what you said a few moments ago. I urge you not to debate the issue with me.

Domestic and Family Violence

Mr FURNER: My question is to the Premier. Premier, could you advise the House of any new initiatives that highlight the community's stand against domestic violence?

Mr SPEAKER: One moment. There is too much chatter. Member for Ferny Grove, will you repeat the question, please?

Mr FURNER: My question is to the Premier. Premier, could you advise the House of any new initiatives—

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is clearly breaching standing order 244(7). He is not referring to the member by their parliamentary title or district.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ferny Grove, will you repeat the question?

Mr FURNER: I will rephrase the question. My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier advise the House of any new initiatives that highlight the community's stand against domestic violence?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Ferny Grove for raising a very important issue. I would like to talk about what we are doing in relation to domestic violence when they are ready.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They want to have a conversation across the chamber—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Who made that interjection of 'come along then'?

Mr Cripps: I did, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Will you apologise?

Mr Cripps: To whom, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: To the House for your interjection.

Mr Cripps: Mr Speaker, I withdraw and apologise to the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This morning I had the privilege of joining many members of the House for a White Ribbon morning tea where we recognised around 17 new White Ribbon male ambassadors. Many members of the House attended, and I thank all those members who made the time. I do understand that committee meetings were being held and that not all members were able to attend. It was very important for us to make a stand and to show very clearly that this parliament is very supportive of the work of the White Ribbon association.

What was overwhelming this morning is that many of the new male ambassadors are from our Police Service, including Deputy Commissioner Brett Pointing, and also from our multicultural community. It was lovely to see members of the African community deciding to go through the process and become White Ribbon male ambassadors. I know there are members on this side of the House who are White Ribbon ambassadors, including the member for Ferny Grove—and I thank him for the

work he is doing in his community—the member for Springwood, Mick de Brenni, and the member for Stafford, Anthony Lynham. I thank them very much for the stance they have taken. I would encourage other male members to also think about that.

What was very clear today is that the Queensland branch of White Ribbon is very determined to increase the number of male ambassadors. They are going to be talking at length to communities up and down the coast to get more regional representatives—and members of parliament can be involved—including representatives from our western communities. It was encouraging to see so many people there today who are absolutely committed to making a change and making a difference. It was also encouraging to see strong support for respectful relationships being taught in schools. I thank the Minister for Education for the work that she is doing in this space.

As a community, we stand united. As a parliament, we stand united. This is not just a male issue. It is not just a female issue. As I said today at that morning tea, it is a community issue that we all must take responsibility for. It struck me afterwards when I was speaking to victims of domestic violence how they are slowly turning their lives around. On behalf of the Queensland parliament, I thank them for their bravery, their courage and their ability to talk about these issues that have had a profound impact on them. Each and every day I am moved when Queenslanders raise their personal issues with me.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I would like to inform members that the member for Cleveland has apologised to me and informed me that he was the person who made that earlier unparliamentary interjection which I referred to. I apologise to the member for Buderim for referring to him.

Mr Dickson: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Draft Queensland Economic Action Plan

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I refer to Labor's Economic Action Plan, which the Premier protested was a draft and not government policy, and I ask: given the government has today announced increased tolling, which was one of the initiatives in that plan, will the Treasurer reveal what else in the Economic Action Plan is Labor government policy?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. Let us get something clear up-front. The document that the opposition continually refers to as a draft economic plan for this government is not government policy. I will say it again—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members, I urge you to allow the minister to answer the question.

Mr PITT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This document is not government policy. Reference has been made that it has election commitments in there. Do we support our election commitments? Yes, we do, because on this side of the House we honour our election commitments, unlike those opposite. That is the first point I would make. The second point is that that document clearly, as we have said, is not government policy. What I do have is the LNP's attempt at what they call their real economic plan. On page 17 under 'Funding future infrastructure' it states—

With this option no longer being considered—

that is, asset sales—

infrastructure has to be funded from free cash flows or in partnership with the private sector.

I ask rhetorically: is it their policy that they would not consider this? That is the first point.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, I would ask you to desist from interjecting. You have had a fair go this morning. I would prefer not to warn you as the Leader of the Opposition, but if you persist I will.

Mr PITT: We have heard other suggestions this morning about today's announcement, the first of the market-led proposals to come from this government, one of 28 that we are considering at present. That is far more than I think the three that we saw under the previous government. That is the approach that the previous government had. They closed their doors to everyone and they closed their minds about how to do things. They had one vision and one vision only, and that was asset sales. The only plan they still have is asset sales, because the opposition leader ruled it out as quickly as he could, abandoning their only choice for Queensland after the previous election. Now what has he done? He has opened the door yet again recently on radio.

I will not be lectured by those opposite about a document which is a fictitious draft economic plan which is not government policy when very clearly in their own policy they are backing the position that this government is taking in terms of dealing with the private sector and having innovative funding models. That is what we are doing. This project will create 1,300 jobs. It is a \$450 million investment from Transurban. This is infrastructure being brought forward. It will be delivered years ahead of time. It would not be happening in this time frame if it were simply a straight government investment. That is being very clear, because if it were those opposite would have been able to easily fund it previously. But, hang on, again their plan was all about asset sales. We are showing through the budget—

Mr DICKSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like the Treasurer to clarify the difference between an asset sale and an asset lease. I do not think he understands economics.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Buderim, that is not a point of order.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Buderim, that is a trivial point of order. Minister for Education, I do not need you to provoke the opposition. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

Mr PITT: I do, Mr Speaker. When it comes to deciding the difference between an asset sale and an asset lease, let us be really clear. If that member who was a member of the former cabinet does not know the difference between an asset sale and an asset lease, it is no wonder they are sitting over there.

China-Australia Free Trade Agreement

Mr de BRENNI: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise the House of any developments in the trade relationship between Queensland and China?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Springwood for the question about our trade relationship with China. As we all know, China is Queensland's largest trading partner. On my recent trade mission there I explored a whole lot of opportunities that can exist for our diversified economy. There are huge opportunities when it comes to agriculture, and I have asked the Minister for Agriculture to do a lot more work on how we can increase our beef exports and our agricultural exports. Fundamentally, Labor supports the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement. There is no clearer signal that I, as Premier of this state, can send to our friends in China that we stand united in this agreement, because it is going to deliver a huge boost to our Queensland economy as we go on a path of diversification. It is also comforting to see that at a federal level the new Prime Minister has been sitting down with the opposition leader and they have been working towards an agreement in relation to this. Our national leaders are working together, and I would hope that there would be bipartisan support in this chamber for this very important agreement as it moves forward.

We know there are going to be a lot of opportunities when it comes to tourism in relation to the growing markets there as well. I will be sending my tourism minister very shortly to China to capitalise on those opportunities. We are looking very closely at attracting more direct flights into Queensland from China, and it would be an outstanding deal if we could secure direct flights from Shanghai. I want the tourism minister to go and talk directly about generating those flights here. Once we have more tourists here, it means they are investing and they are experiencing what Queensland has to offer.

In summary, the Queensland government supports the agreement. We will continue to build on our relationships. We will continue to promote trade and investment opportunities. We welcome bipartisan support when it comes to this very important issue for Queenslanders.

Corrective Services

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Corrective Services. Minister, I have been contacted by a justice of the peace who is also a single father of three. He received a letter recently from the Capricornia Correctional Centre, and I table copies.

Tabled paper: Copy of redacted letter, dated 7 October 2015, from General Manager, Capricornia Correctional Centre, Ms Paula May, regarding persons associated with an OMCG making application to access the facility and copy of envelope [1509].

To his surprise, when he opened the envelope he found a letter claiming that he was a criminal gang member. Upon further inspection, he realised that the envelope was addressed to him but the letter was to a different person. Can the minister guarantee that the minister's department has not put his and his children's safety at risk by disclosing his personal information to a criminal gang member?

Mrs MILLER: Mr Speaker, can I thank the member for the question. I will have that matter immediately investigated.

Moreton Bay Rail Link

Mr WHITING: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier please advise the House how the delivery of important infrastructure like the Moreton Bay Rail Link will improve public transport services in the region?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Murrumba for the question. I love getting up on my feet and talking about the Moreton Bay Rail Link, but I do not think I love getting up on my feet and talking about it as much as the Attorney-General or the member for Murrumba. It is exciting to see that this project is coming to conclusion. What this means in terms of a catalytic, transformative piece of infrastructure is that we can start delivering better services to Queenslanders—and that is what infrastructure is all about.

I can announce that consultation will commence on Monday, 2 November on the draft rail and improved bus timetables that will roll out once the rail line becomes operational in 2016. Moreton Bay Rail Link will deliver more than 650 train services weekly, including trains every six to 12 minutes in the peak, all-day express services and a consistent 55-minute journey between Kippa-Ring and Central. The proposed bus timetables will make it easier for residents to connect with the high-frequency rail services and there will be improved connections to community hubs. The draft timetable includes an addition of 147 bus trips every weekday, as well as increased operating hours and 15-minute frequency on key routes during peak periods. The proposed bus routes will mean that some areas will have access to public transport for the very first time—parts like Griffin and Petrie. We are kicking off consultation with residents on our plans to deliver an easy to use and integrated network. Consultation on the draft timetables will be open for six weeks. We will hold nine community information sessions across the region on weekdays and weekends where people can find out about the new timetables and speak with TransLink planners.

This is what happens when you plan for infrastructure. This is what happens when you actually conceive of ideas, when you identify what the challenges and opportunities are and when you go after trying to make them a reality. Last night in the debate on the Building Queensland Bill what was really interesting was when the member for Callide got to his feet and let the cat out of the bag, when he said that the LNP's lack of a plan was absolutely deliberate—that their lack of an infrastructure plan was absolutely deliberate. He stood up and he said, and I quote, 'In the three years we were in government'—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I find the member for South Brisbane's misleading of the House offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, the member has found the comments relating to him misleading and offensive and he has asked that they be withdrawn.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw, but I will quote directly from what the—

Mr SPEAKER: No, no. It is an unconditional—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, the standard procedure in this House is that, if a member finds a comment personally offensive and they have asked for it to be withdrawn, it happens. I am happy to have a further conversation with the Deputy Premier after the sitting.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I just wanted to clarify, for the benefit of the whole of the House rather than a private conversation, that the member for Callide rose and said that the comments from the Deputy Premier were misleading and offensive. I need to clarify what you are ruling on and what you are asking. There is no clarification about them being misleading. You have ruled other people out of order on point of orders like that, including me.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. My understanding is that the member for Callide found those comments offensive and misleading and has asked those to be withdrawn because he finds them offensive. It is not an opportunity for members to debate whether they would have found those comments offensive. The rule is that if a member finds them offensive the procedure is that it is withdrawn. I am happy to have a discussion later on with whomever wants to have a talk to me about this matter.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I withdraw. The reason Queensland did not have—

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Deputy Premier. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I do not need your interjections. If you want to have a conversation, I invite you to join other members later on.

Ms TRAD: The reason Queensland did not have an infrastructure plan for the last three years can be attributed to what the former deputy premier, the member for Callide, said in the House last night, when he said and I quote, 'In the three years we were in government when I was the minister for infrastructure, the same bureaucrats who came to the current Deputy Premier ... came to me ... and said, "We have to have an infrastructure plan, Minister." And I repeatedly said, "No." "' "We have to have an infrastructure plan," and I said, "No."'

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by the Deputy Premier

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (3.25 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising relating to the Deputy Premier misleading the House. I have in fact the transcript right in front of me and what the member for Callide said was this—

... 'We have to have an infrastructure plan, Minister,' came to me repeatedly and said, 'We have to have an infrastructure plan, Minister.' I said, 'No. We are not going to put out a wish list like every Labor government before us has done.'

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order suddenly arising?

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, a quote that deliberately misleads the House, I would suggest to you, is something that should be taken with the utmost seriousness by you in terms of misleading the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We are not going to have a debate. Member for Clayfield, I invite you to write to me about this matter and I will consider it.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

OneSchool, Information Technology

Resumed.

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister advise whether the technical information contained in the Deloitte Australia *OneSchool: technology review* report breaches information standard 18 of the Queensland government?

Ms JONES: I am happy to have a look into that, but I have made it very clear that there is a big stark contrast in the way I have handled the release of the Deloitte report, the release of the information associated with the failure of the implementation of the OneSchool child protection system in September 2013 and the update which started in August 2014 and was implemented in January 2015. That is, I said from day one that I would provide all information publicly, that I was not going to do this behind closed doors and sweep it under the carpet, that I was going to ensure that all material that was relevant to the system failure implemented by the former government was out there for everyone to see, and I stand by that.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms JONES: I said to the member for Everton that I am happy to have a look at that. I do say once again that if you were genuinely interested about risk—as you tried to say in your comments this morning—then you would have actually come and spoken to me about it. You would not have come into this parliament and played politics, which you are accusing me of simply because I dare to point out—

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is now debating the matter rather than answering the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister, I would urge you not to debate the issue. I urge you to make sure your answer is relevant and not debate the issue and go through the chair, not directly to the member.

Ms JONES: I think the point that is very relevant to everyone here is the contrast with the way our government has handled this compared to those opposite, who have chosen at every single turn to act politically. Never once has the member for Surfers Paradise come forward to say what briefings he received, what information he asked for, what questions he asked before it went live.

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again, I bring the minister's attention to the question that she is supposed to be answering about technical information contained in the Deloitte report.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member. Minister, I would urge you to make your answer relevant. If you have anything further to add that is relevant to the specific question, I am happy to listen.

Ms JONES: Mr Speaker, I do. I have one more comment to make. If the member for Surfers Paradise had asked those questions before it went live in September 2013, none of these questions would have to have been asked today.

Mr SPEAKER: I remind members of the importance of not using the word 'you' when referring to other members. It is important that members refer to the member by their proper title. I call the member for Logan.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Stolen Wages

Mr POWER: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Can the Treasurer please give the House an update regarding the stolen wages reparation scheme and how this will benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders?

Mr PITT: I thank the member for Logan for his question. I know he is a tireless advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in his electorate, and that should be recognised by the House. I can inform the House that work on the reparation scheme has commenced in earnest. Consultation has begun and affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are now able to make submissions for consideration by the task force, and that is important. As people in the House would be aware, the task force is being chaired by social justice commissioner Mick Gooda. They held their first meeting in Cairns on 24 September. That was essentially an opportunity for those members of the task force to understand fully their roles and responsibilities as they relate to this important task. The second meeting was held in Townsville on 22 October. Their job over the coming months is going to be about leading consultation through this process. Individual members of the task force will also have opportunities for consultation in their own regions and to engage with people who have been affected by this terrible part of Queensland history across the state. This consultation process is going to provide valuable input into exactly how we as a government respond and craft the criteria which is going to be used to assess the eligibility of potential applicants to the stolen wages fund, which was one of our election commitments. I commend them for their hard work and for their time.

As a House we have to recognise the past injustices and particularly past practices of former governments in Queensland in terms of withholding wages in our state. Community members are able to provide written submissions until 30 October. That is in just a couple of days time. I suggest that if people are able to get into that process and get into it quickly they will be able to help craft what that eligibility criteria should be. It is a very important part of ensuring as many people as possible are able to share in that \$20 million commitment that our government has made to Indigenous Queenslanders.

While I am on my feet I would also like to take the opportunity to talk a bit about the constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australians, our first Australians. Of course, 50 years on from the 1967 referendum we have an opportunity to honour the legacy of those people who worked so hard for a yes vote at the 1967 referendum and repeat that process and help create history again to make sure that we have that recognition. I am happy to work with the new Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull. We will need strong leadership to make sure that this happens in a bipartisan way the same as I would with Bill Shorten. Similarly, I expect that I will be able to work with Nigel Scullion, with whom I have a strong working relationship, just as I will with Shayne Neumann. I hope that the shadow minister in this House will also support that very important cause. It is important that we recognise our First Australians in the Constitution. I think it would go some way, even if only symbolically, to help redress some of the concerns we have seen, particularly through dark parts of our history like the stolen wages.

Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee, Estimates Hearing

Mrs STUCKEY: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism. Did the minister sight and approve the revised set of answers to questions on notice provided in her name to the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee estimates hearing this year?

Mr SPEAKER: Would the member for Currumbin please repeat the question?

Mrs STUCKEY: The question is to the Minister for Tourism. Did the minister sight and approve the revised set of answers to questions on notice provided in her name to the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee estimates hearing this year?

Ms JONES: Yes.

Regional Queensland, Pathology Services

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on the importance of having access to pathology services in regional Queensland and how it affects my constituents?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Maryborough for that question. I know how passionate he is about pathology services in Maryborough and the delivery of good health services to his community. I know that he campaigned on the issue of the restoration of pathology services to the Maryborough Hospital for quite some time prior to and during the 2015 election. He knows that the delivery of local health care to local communities matters and it matters across the length and breadth of our state. I know he has been an extremely strong advocate for his community. It has been 17 years since there has been a Labor member for Maryborough, and we have a member in this parliament for that electorate who is now delivering for his community. I am very pleased. We have had a series of Independents and an LNP member who could not deliver. In fact, the last LNP member for Maryborough let the member for Southern Downs and opposition leader cut pathology services from that hospital. That is what they do: when they are in power they let their own government reduce services.

I am very pleased to report to the parliament that pathology services have been restored to Maryborough Hospital. I was delighted to be there with the member for Maryborough and other members of the community who championed to restore those services, one of the many cuts presided over by the opposition leader when he was the health minister, cuts that affected regional and rural communities. Now, 95 per cent of urgent pathology work will be conducted at Maryborough Hospital. Patients seeking urgent treatment in particular will now receive their pathology results earlier. Instead of the two to four hours it took to go to Hervey Bay, they can get treatment earlier because they will get their pathology results earlier. There is \$60,000 in new equipment. That equipment can be used 24/7. Two new staff members will not only use that equipment, but will train other members of the staff there at Maryborough, and I want to thank them. I have been to Maryborough Hospital a couple of times now. I want to thank the mighty staff at that hospital for the amazing work they do. There are two additional staff who will train other staff at that hospital. There is \$230,000 in recurrent expenditure to support the reintroduction of pathology services. That will make a big difference to the people of Maryborough and the constituents whom the member for Maryborough represents.

The member for Maryborough knows the difference that Labor governments make when it comes to health care. I thank him for his advocacy because he spoke for the community. That is what every member of this House does: they stand up for their community. They want their community to have the best possible service. Instead of being obsessed by the bottom line, like the member for Southern Downs was when he was the health minister, we are obsessed with the front line, and this government will continue to deliver front-line health services to the people of Queensland.

Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee, Estimates Hearing

Dr McVEIGH: My question is to the Minister for Tourism. I refer to the minister's statement to the estimates committee hearing, 'I, too, like you, would like to know what the delay was.' As the minister has just advised she was responsible for signing off on revised sets of answers, has the minister misled the committee as she knew full well the cause of that delay?

Ms JONES: Mr Speaker, I do not actually understand what they are getting at here. There is a process—I understand it—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: I am happy to keep answering. I understand there is a process where you submit questions, the parliament looks at the questions and if they have a problem with the questions, they get back to you. You change the questions and it is submitted.

Ms Trad: There's a secretary involved.

Ms JONES: There is a secretary involved. That is why. That is hardly news. That has been going on for a long time. That is exactly the way I recall it.

Mrs Stuckey: That is not what you said in parliament.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, you have had a chance to ask the question. I now call the member for Brisbane Central.

Ms JONES: I think they are two different questions.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry?

Ms JONES: Between what is in *Hansard* and what was asked today.

Schools, Autism Hub

Ms GRACE: My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister outline to the House how the Palaszczuk government is working with schools to better support students with autism?

Ms JONES: It is a relevant question and a question that absolutely goes to the heart of what this government is doing to deliver better education for every student no matter where they live in Queensland. As I said, we are absolutely committed as a government to ensuring that all students benefit from the quality education that our schools can provide.

We know that in our state schools there are now 12,000 students with autism spectrum disorder and other challenges and complex behaviours. That is why our Advancing education plan to deliver world-class education in Queensland, which the Premier and I recently released, included a new autism hub. I am sure that, like me, during the last election many members of this House had a lot of parents coming up to them and saying that they wanted more specialist skills to support students with autism in our schools. We have listened to those parents, and that is why we are delivering the new autism hub which will begin in 2016. This autism hub will run information sessions and practical workshops as well as an online portal for information, support and advice for schools and parents. As a priority, the new autism hub will develop clear and comprehensive guidance for regional and school staff on world's best practice for supporting students who display complex and challenging behaviours.

This is another example of our government listening to the community and delivering the resources and the investment that the community asked for. Increasingly in our schools we are catering for, and want to provide more support for, all of our students, particularly students who are displaying more complex needs and requirements, and that is absolutely what we are doing. As part of our record investment of more than \$9 billion in Education we announced an additional \$70 million in our budget to support students with disability in our state schools because we prioritise the education of our young people every single day. That is \$9 billion to ensure that we are growing our education sector and putting back the teachers which were cut by the LNP government. There were 500 fewer teachers under their watch. With our election commitment and our commitment to build education we will deliver an additional 2,500 teachers. We know that the teacher at the front of the classroom makes the difference to a good-quality education. When we talk to parents what they say to me is—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: They went to the election denying that. In the estimates hearing it came out very clearly that there are 500 fewer teacher positions, but we will always deliver more teachers. There will be an extra 2,500 teachers over the next three years—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: I warn the member for Toowoomba North that your interjections are not being taken. They are deemed to be frivolous; please desist. You are warned under standing order 253A.

Regional Queensland, Education

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Tourism, Major Events and Small Business and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. Remote western Queensland towns in the grip of the rural crisis and without high schools were hit hard by the year 7 transition, which imposed financial costs on parents and councils and social costs on towns. Will the minister therefore commit to funding teacher aides to deliver year 7 by correspondence in these towns to offset the impact of this policy change?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for his question. I know that he, just like me, is passionate when it comes to ensuring that all students, no matter where they live in this state, have access to good-quality education. We know that part of doing that is working with parents and local communities. I had the privilege of meeting with the member for Mount Isa earlier in the year, and since meeting with him I have also had meetings with the mayors of Cloncurry and Mckinlay shires about providing additional support for families in communities who would like to keep their year 7 students at home.

I am pleased to advise the House that the department is actively working on this at the moment. I do see merit in what the member is saying. I know that we have bipartisan support for this and, of course, our broader view is that having year 7 in high school was a decision we made because we finally reintroduced 13 years of schooling in Queensland. This brought Queensland into line with all other states, which meant that we had to make a decision about where those year 7s were best situated. As I have travelled across Queensland as the Minister for Education, year 7s are overwhelmingly telling

me how much they love being in a high school setting and how having access to specialist teachers in science, maths and English and participating in extracurricular activities is making a big difference to them. Through the representations made to me by the member for Mount Isa, I understand that in the circumstances we should look at another model based on what the community would like. I can advise that we are working on that and I should have an announcement for him soon.

Gladstone, Economic Development

Mr BUTCHER: My question is to the Minister for State Development. Will the minister please update the House on how the government is fostering employment and economic development in Gladstone?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Gladstone for the question. There is no doubt that wonderful city is an economic driver for Brisbane, and I also share his enthusiasm for welcoming back Leo Zussino as the chairman of the Gladstone Ports Corporation. What a true champion for Gladstone. It is great to get a local back again!

We are forging ahead with a business-boosting master plan for the port of Gladstone. This plan has gathered momentum with the release of an amended proposed boundary. The amendments responded to public input received midyear and were released in a consultation report earlier this month. This is the first stage in a process to create a master plan that will drive economic development in and around Gladstone's port and, most importantly, at the same time protect the Great Barrier Reef. The proposed Gladstone master plan area encompasses a total area of 88,000 hectares and includes land controlled by the port of Gladstone, the majority of the Gladstone State Development Area, part of the Gladstone Regional Council area and marine components within the port limits.

Master planning is important because it prioritises areas for specific development. Most importantly, it preserves infrastructure corridors for power, water, gas and transport so that future development will be unhindered. The next stage is an extensive study into the economic, environmental, cultural heritage and community aspects of the proposed area. Gladstone is the pilot for master planning of all of our four ports. The study will be developed in consultation with industry, government, environmental and community sectors. We are taking the community with us on this master planning venture.

I anticipate that a draft master plan will be available for further consultation by June next year. Master planning at Queensland's major long-established bulk commodity ports of Gladstone, Abbot Point, Hay Point, Mackay and Townsville is part of the Queensland government's commitment to the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan. I am continuing to work closely with the Gladstone Ports Corporation and other key stakeholders to test the concepts and processes of master planning our priority ports. Master planning will set a clear pathway for growth in and around Gladstone port and Gladstone city. The plan will deliver sustainable regional development and protect the reef. Furthermore, the master plan will support the ongoing growth of Gladstone's LNG plants as well as facilitating business with their customers and, as a result, will generate important local jobs.

Country Racing

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Minister for Sport and Racing. In relation to country racing, will the minister guarantee that there will be no reduction in prize money allocation, no reduction in the number of country race meetings and no reduction in the number of races allocated to those race meetings in the electorate of Gregory?

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question. I am concerned there are three components to it and it could be read as three questions, but I will allow the question.

Mr BYRNE: I thank the member for the question. What is the saying? 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' The fact is that, as the member may like to know, the legislation specifically precludes the minister from stipulating the number of race meetings or interfering in prize money directly. What I can say is that we have been looking very carefully at the entire package of issues that we have inherited from those opposite. That is the fact of the matter.

I noted yesterday some of the commentary by the shadow racing minister about where we sit. It was a very interesting discussion which was put forward. I have also noted the commentary from the LGAQ recently, and I am happy to sit down with the LGAQ at any time. They have not approached me or my department about where we would want to go or what they would like to contribute to the retention of country racing. We all know how important country racing is, and I have already made comments in this House about the retention of the once-a-year non-TAB meetings. I think the statement previously

given to one of the crossbenchers should indicate that we have a very strong sentiment to support those things going forward. The entire issue of racing comes back to the facts. The facts are very well represented in the annual report put forward by Racing Queensland.

Mr Nicholls: They made a profit.

Mr BYRNE: I know that those opposite in particular have simply refused to accept the material that is there. I hear the comments from the member for Clayfield about these matters. It has been interesting—

Mr Nicholls: The profit they made?

Mr BYRNE: I hear these things regularly about where we are with racing. The member for Clayfield does not believe KPMG. He does not believe the Queensland Audit Office. He does not believe the facts about where racing is today or the decisions that were made. I revert to the facts and the evidence. We have undertaken considerable consultation. Racing Queensland has been doing what it is required to do. Many questions have arisen over recent times in the reflection of what has happened, particularly correspondence I received from the previous chair of Racing Queensland about conversations he had with the previous minister and the member for Clayfield when he was the treasurer about commitments that he was going to give in terms of underwriting racing into the future. I would like for the member for Clayfield to one day stand in this place and reveal what commitments he gave when he was the treasurer of this state to the members of Racing Queensland.

What I say in terms of the question asked is: the fingerprints of where we are with racing rest across the chamber. We will be considering all matters moving forward in a prudent and sensible fashion.

Advance Queensland

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the Minister for Science and Innovation. Will the minister advise the House how the Advance Queensland initiative will help to diversify the economy and create—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr Byrne interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Clayfield and the Minister for Racing, I would urge you not to pursue your debate across the chamber. You are invited to go outside. Member for Mirani, will you repeat the question, please.

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the Minister for Science and Innovation. Will the minister advise the House how the Advance Queensland initiative will help to diversify the economy and create jobs?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. The member for Mirani recently joined me and the member for Mackay at an Advance Queensland forum in his region, so I know how interested he is in making sure his constituents are well placed for the jobs of the future.

The Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland initiative is focused on building a stronger and more diversified economy and creating the high-value, knowledge-based jobs of the future. Through Advance Queensland we are investing \$180 million over four years to develop, attract and retain skills, boost collaboration between industry and researchers, and support the commercialisation of new products and services.

We are facing an unprecedented era of change. Research shows that disruptive technologies will drive an economic acceleration 10 times faster than the industrial revolution and 300 times its scale. As a result of automation and machine learning, around 40 per cent of current occupations may not exist in the near future. Advance Queensland is about giving Queenslanders and our businesses the best possible chance to thrive in this changing world. It is about equipping our young people with the skills increasingly in demand such as science, technology, engineering and maths, coding and creativity and entrepreneurship. It is also about ensuring that our world-leading research and development is commercialised here, creating jobs for Queenslanders.

Advance Queensland will help to build a more resilient and diverse Queensland economy—one more capable of weathering fluctuations in volatile commodity markets. Our key programs include the \$50 million Best and Brightest Fund to attract, develop and retain research and entrepreneurial talent, including an \$8 million Knowledge Transfer Partnerships program; the \$46 million Future Jobs Strategy, encouraging new collaborations between industry, SMEs and research organisations to seize opportunities in growing global markets; a \$24 million package to increase start-up activity and encourage growth in existing enterprises; the Queensland Commercialisation Program, providing

\$12 million to support proof-of-concept projects; and the Business Development Fund, part of the Treasurer's portfolio, providing \$40 million of co-investment funding to promote greater angel and venture capital investment.

Advance Queensland is also supported by actions designed to better position Queensland for the digital world. This includes the draft State Infrastructure Plan released by the Deputy Premier which, for the first time, has a dedicated focus on digital infrastructure and services—something we can all be proud of. We have consulted extensively with world-leading experts and successful entrepreneurs in designing Advance Queensland because it is central to building a dynamic and diverse economy and supporting our businesses to create the jobs of the future.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the member for Hervey Bay, I would invite the members for Hinchinbrook and Caloundra to have their conversation outside.

Hervey Bay Hospital

Mr SORENSEN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. Given that local paramedics have complained about the return of ambulance ramping under Labor, can the minister advise when the Hervey Bay Hospital emergency department expansion will be approved?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Hervey Bay for his question. I was delighted to be up in Hervey Bay recently to open the new oral healthcare centre—promised by Labor and delivered by Labor. In relation to ramping, I genuinely urge the member for Hervey Bay to speak to the Leader of the Opposition and ask for an explanation from him about why he removed the metropolitan emergency department access initiative directive. That resulted in a doubling of ramping.

I have spoken to the hospital and health service and other staff at Hervey Bay. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hervey Bay know that we have made a commitment of \$180 million for our Enhancing Regional Hospitals program. That money goes to the electorates of Caloundra, Hervey Bay, Warrego and Gladstone, where we are going to build a new emergency department.

I say to the member for Hervey Bay that there is a planning process involved in all health facilities. I assure the member for Hervey Bay that we will take our time to get planning right. Our government knows that when you do not plan things properly and you do not execute that plan properly—when you do not properly commission a hospital and you do not properly open a hospital, namely, the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital—you establish legacy issues that take months and months to resolve, and that creates ongoing problems. I say to the member for Hervey Bay—

Mr McArdle interjected.

Mr DICK: No, there is a planning process that will be put in place by the hospital and health service and by the Department of Health, and the direction they get from me is: do it right and do it properly so that we do not have legacy issues, like at Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, to clean up after the event.

Members opposite laughed the last time when I said that there were clean-up issues to be addressed in Health. We have put \$70 million into the Lady Cilento hospital to address the mess left by the member for Southern Downs and to support our hardworking staff, whom he abandoned as health minister, where he did not properly discharge his responsibility.

I say to the member for Hervey Bay that we are going to get it right. We are very happy to invest in the hospital in his electorate, to expand it, but we will take our time to get it right. We will get our infrastructure group in the department to work with the hospital and health service in Wide Bay to make sure that expansion is right. The budget papers make it clear that there is \$180 million over four years, but we will work closely to make sure that expansion is right and delivers for the Hervey Bay and Fraser Coast community.

Vocational Education and Training

Ms LINARD: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Training and Skills. Will the minister please outline the importance of the vocational education and training sector to Queensland's export industry and update the House on recent developments for Queensland's public training provider?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. Queensland's world-class vocational education and training sector is going global after a new partnership was forged between TAFE Queensland and Peru's national service administration of industrial work, SENATI. A memorandum of understanding between the two organisations came after a recent trade mission to Peru, Chile and the United States with the Minister for State Development and the member for Stafford. SENATI has joined forces with

TAFE Queensland, Queensland's premier provider of vocational education and training, to deliver specialised technical training and advice, the development of training methodologies that suit local demand and competency based training solutions. This mutually beneficial partnership will identify opportunities for the sharing of knowledge and expertise and will herald the development of VET programs designed to meet the needs of the Peruvian economy.

This is a great step for Queensland in demonstrating its leadership in the vocational education and training sector. Our teachers, students and skilled workers are world class and they are in demand in South America. The CEO of TAFE Queensland, Jodi Schmidt, said that TAFE Queensland would assist SENATI with a range of programs designed to meet the needs of current talent shortages and future workforce needs.

We are excited to be working with SENATI and over the next 12 months TAFE will be providing technical training in a range of specialty areas, such as electrical instrumentation, air conditioning and refrigeration and automation. Internationally, work roles and trade areas are ever changing. Automation in the electrical and instrumentation trade areas is one such area that we have identified as being on the increase. TAFE is the only registered training organisation in Queensland and, in fact, one of only three in Australia to deliver this automation training.

In addition, TAFE's refrigeration and air-conditioning training capability is mapped to a globally recognised quality framework, with a focus on national refrigerants. TAFE understands the environmental and economic concerns that synthetic refrigerants garner and the importance of natural refrigerants for our global economy. TAFE is eager to contribute to this partnership, to further develop international certification processes and expand the scope, capability and capacity of SENATI's instructors, training programs, processes, infrastructure and equipment.

When it comes to international education in this country, we want to see Queensland lead the way. I know that the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Education and I will continue working hard to send the message out that we have high-quality training in this state and that we want to be working with our international partners to expand these opportunities into the future.

Mr SPEAKER: That concludes question time.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Further Answer to Question; Corrective Services

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.01 pm): I rise to make a ministerial statement. In relation to a question asked by the member for Kawana, I am advised that an investigation is already underway into this matter. As the member would appreciate, I am not in a position to comment further at this time and I will await the outcome of the investigation. However, I can assure the member that, if action is required, action will be taken.

Further Answer to Question; OneSchool, Information Technology

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (4.02 pm): I would like to inform the House that the Queensland Government Chief Information Office has advised that the email environment has not been placed at a higher risk as a result of the Deloitte report. The risk is currently limited and low.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2)

APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) resumed from 16 September (see p. 1872) and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) resumed from 16 September (see p. 1873)

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.03 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its reports, tabled on 20 October 2015, regarding the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2015 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2015. I am pleased to note that the committee supports both bills and recommends that they be passed.

The purpose of the bills is to provide for supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure that occurred in the 2014-15 financial year. Unforeseen expenditure is expenditure that is from the Consolidated Fund for a department that is above the amount approved for that department as part of its annual appropriation at budget time. The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2015 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by seven departments in the 2014-15 financial year of \$9.110 million. In summary, 60 per cent of this unforeseen expenditure was incurred by the Public Safety Business Agency in relation to expenditure on capital projects transferred from the Queensland Police Service, such as police station and watch house upgrades and refurbishment. A further 28 per cent was incurred by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and this unforeseen expenditure related to the additional expenditure that was incurred for the support services delivered by the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges.

Unforeseen expenditure and lapsed appropriation can occur for a variety of reasons. These include significant one-off factors such as natural disasters, the timing of Commonwealth payments, or the reprofiling of projects. However, agencies are constantly improving their scrutiny and monitoring of expenditure to improve value for money and to efficiently deliver their services on time and on budget.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2015 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service in the 2014-15 financial year of \$2.934 million. This additional expenditure related to one-off expenses for the 2015 state general election, the fire protection system at Parliament House and upgrades to the finance system. Therefore, total supplementary appropriation for 2014-15 is \$12.044 million. To put that figure into context, that unforeseen expenditure represents just 0.03 per cent of the published budget. This is the lowest amount of unforeseen expenditure over the past 18 years. By comparison, 11 of the last 18 years had unforeseen expenditure that exceeded \$1 billion. This outcome for 2014-15 is indicative of the measured and responsible fiscal approach of the Palaszczuk government. The LNP forecast a \$67 million deficit for 2015. We have turned that into a surplus. That was achieved despite significant write-downs in royalty revenues and payroll tax since in former government's midyear fiscal and economic review in December last year.

In the budget that I brought down on 14 July, I forecast a surplus in 2015 and in each of the following years over the forward estimates we will deliver these surpluses without selling assets. We will deliver surpluses across the next four years while investing in the jobs of the future through our \$180 million Advance Queensland package, the innovation centrepiece of this year's budget. We will deliver surpluses across the next four years while restoring front-line services, particularly in health and education, both of which have record budgets this year. We are investing in a \$500 million Schools and Hospitals Fund that will refresh vital infrastructure, using local labour and generating local jobs. We will deliver surpluses across the next four years while paying down debt. Our responsible fiscal management will see total borrowings lower each and every year over the forward estimates, compared with those forecast by the previous government in the 2014-15 budget.

After factoring in revenue write-downs and critically needed funding for health and education, and even on the LNP's preferred measure of non-financial public sector debt, the 2015-16 budget papers show that total borrowings will be \$2.673 billion less by the end of this term of government than they were forecast on 18 December by the member for Clayfield.

I would like to thank the committee for its comprehensive consideration of the bills and the *Consolidated Fund financial report 2014-15*. The introduction of the bills at the same time as the release of the Consolidated Fund financial report allows for the timely consideration of unforeseen expenditure by parliament and the committee. The Consolidated Fund financial report contains explanations of all unforeseen expenditure incurred by departments. This information supports parliament's understanding and debate of the bills.

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2015 also amends section 71 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009. This section allowed departments to borrow, with the Treasurer's approval, from Queensland Treasury Corporation. Following a review of its operations, a decision was made, in agreement with Queensland Treasury, that QTC no longer provide their leasing business. As leasing is a form of borrowing, an amendment is required to section 71 to remove the requirement that borrowings can be sought only from QTC so that a department has the ability to enter into a lease arrangement with the

private sector. It is important to note that the Treasurer's approval is still required before any borrowings can be entered into. All traditional borrowings will continue to occur with QTC except in exceptional circumstances and only with the Treasurer's approval.

Before I wrap up I would say that there is another component to the unforeseen expenditure side and one that seems to be an anomaly to those who are not necessarily aware. If the 2015 election had resulted in a different outcome, we would have seen the biggest degree of unforeseen expenditure in Queensland's history if the \$37 billion worth of assets had been sold, because that would have appeared on the books as an unforeseen expenditure. I certainly commend the bills to the House and again thank the committee for its work in perusing this legislation.

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.10 pm): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2). I thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its reports. The opposition is supporting these bills. As we have already heard from the Treasurer, the primary purpose of these bills is for the approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred in the last financial year. As the Treasurer noted, the total of just over \$12 million is the lowest level of unforeseen expenditure in the last 18 years, both as a percentage and total basis of appropriation. I cannot accept his assertion that it was due to the management of the Palaszczuk government because the LNP was on the treasury benches for the majority of the 2014-15 financial year and in our time in office we were able to put an end to the waste and mismanagement that was the hallmark of the previous Labor government. It is another indication of our commitment to fiscal discipline and accountability.

As the Treasurer mentioned, we have had a prolonged period of government expenses growing at a much higher rate than revenues were growing. The average rate of increase of expenses over a prolonged period of time was 8.9 per cent, but under the LNP expenses growth averaged just 0.1 per cent. In fact, back in the 1998 budget, which was the last Borbidge budget, total revenue in Queensland was \$14 billion and yet a small surplus was able to be achieved by the Borbidge-Sheldon government. I think it also puts in perspective just how much increased revenues have become a factor of the Queensland government. Under Labor much of that was frittered away which led to the situation that we inherited when we came in in 2012. That is the point: \$14 billion in 1998 and here we are now in an over \$50 billion budget and we were able to achieve, as the government, expenses growth that averaged 0.1 of a per cent, which is the lowest level of expenses growth since accrual accounting began. We were able to do this while investing record amounts in health, education, child safety and road infrastructure. I know the Treasurer might choose to forget it, but we should always remember just how dire the situation was in Queensland before the LNP's election to office.

I know the Treasurer is aware, because I have previously tabled Queensland Treasury's *Fiscal Reform Blueprint* from 2012. Let us go back and look at what that document said. It said, 'Queensland's fiscal position and outlook is unsustainable and restoration must be an urgent priority for this term of Government.' It also said, 'Debt in 2014-15'—that is, the budget year for which these bills seek supplementary appropriation—'is expected to be almost 5 times greater than 10 years prior.' Using Labor's own budget forecasts, Queensland's total debt was projected to reach \$85.4 billion in the 2014-15 financial year. The Treasurer's own budget papers show that the LNP was able to reduce this total by almost \$10 billion. Unfortunately, despite the Treasurer's ongoing claims about paying down debt—and we have heard it from him again in this debate—the 2015-16 budget papers show debt continuing to increase each and every year over the forward forecasts up towards \$80 billion.

Mr Pitt: Your forecasts have them going higher.

Mr LANGBROEK: That even takes into account the Treasurer's raid on superannuation, long service leave and the shifty debt shuffle onto the government owned corporations to which the Treasurer is obviously referring with that interjection. The Treasurer can say that their projections are that they will have a lower debt under them, but with the way they have moved things around, anyone who can read a balance sheet will understand the concepts have not lowered Queensland's total indebtedness. You can fool some of the people all of the time but you are not going to fool all of the people all of the time. For the moment this Treasurer is managing to do that, but we are going to stick with our fiscal principles that I know that he has amended severely.

The LNP left office forecasting fiscal surpluses each and every year over the forward estimates. What has happened to these surpluses? They have been turned into fiscal deficits totalling more than \$3 billion. We put an end to the years of unforeseen expenditure totalling billions and billions of dollars. Let us go through it on a year-by-year basis: 2005-06, \$1.874 billion; 2006-07, \$3.99 billion; 2007-08, \$2.152 billion; 2008-09, \$2.957 billion; 2009-10, \$1.053 billion; then, of course, 2010-11, under the stewardship of Andrew Fraser, unforeseen expenditure of \$9.3 billion; and in 2011-12, \$2.826 billion.

Whereas under the LNP, through our strong financial management, in 2012-13 the number was \$63.445 million and in 2013-14 it was \$448 million, largely due to defined benefit superannuation payments.

I am willing to admit that there are a range of factors that contribute to the variations in numbers in any one year. In fact, they are referred to in the report of the Finance and Administration Committee. I note that the committee raised questions in relation to the statement of receipts and payments about higher profits for Queensland Rail, Stanwell Corporation, Energex Limited and Ergon Energy in 2013-14—all under the LNP—and that Ergon and Economic Development Queensland also made tax equivalent payments for the first time in 2014-15—I am quoting from the report—as well as a \$120 million dividend received from Queensland Treasury Corporation in 2014-15.

There is a pattern that I have referred to that emerged under Labor and it is no wonder that under the former Labor government, under Andrew Fraser's stewardship, they decided to combine the supplementary appropriation with the annual appropriation bills introduced on budget day. I well remember the day when this resulted in a lengthy delay between when the expenses occurred and when it was actually approved by parliament. It meant 12 months passed before the bills were introduced and up to 18 months before the bills went through the House. That was some time after the completion of the financial year and why we have committed to having a bill similar to this in our Real Economic Plan that said that we will make sure, if we are returned to government, that we do not have lengthy delays for the supplementary accounts. That practice did nothing to enhance integrity and accountability. It was all about hiding the true state of Labor's financial ineptitude from the people of Queensland.

The LNP government had a proud record of introducing into parliament a supplementary appropriation bill as soon as possible after the end of each financial year. As I said, that is what we did in government. We remain committed to that. We gave that commitment to ensure that the people of Queensland know the true state of Queensland's finances. We will not try to hide Queensland's financial position, as this government is seeking to do, by ignoring the state's total debt. We will always be open and up-front about the challenges this state faces. I heard today the health minister say that we focused on the bottom line whilst Labor focuses on the front line. You need to focus on both and we make no apologies for focusing on the situation we inherited and making sure that we did have those record deliveries in front-line services as well.

The LNP commitment is reflected in the explanatory notes of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2). Timely consideration of unforeseen expenditure enhances transparency and accountability of government expenditure. As such, supplementary appropriation is sought via a separate appropriation bill as soon as possible after the end of the financial year rather than combined with the annual appropriation bills introduced the next year at budget time.

I must at least congratulate the Treasurer on doing better than his Labor predecessor in this regard. This bill has at least been introduced in a timely manner. That does not hide the fact that this government has no policies for taking the state forward or restoring Queensland's fiscal position. I spoke previously about our Real Economic Plan. This was released before the Treasurer delivered the budget. It was a case of the LNP opposition outlining its economic vision even before the government of the day. We are still waiting to see what plans this government has. Only last sitting week and even today we have seen the Premier and the government running a million miles an hour from the Queensland Economic Action Plan that was drafted in the Premier's own department. I can understand why the Premier and Treasurer would want to distance themselves from this document. After all, what did it have to say about some of their key election commitments such as Advance Queensland? That the policy would have a low impact on creating jobs, a low impact on boosting business investment and a low impact on improving productivity. In distancing itself from the document concocted in the Premier's department, the government has raised questions about what it stands for, what it is going to do for this state and how it is going to build a stronger Queensland economy and not hold Queensland back.

Earlier this week CommSec released its quarterly *State of the states* report. That report showed Queensland in the middle of the pack on most economic measures, well behind leading states like New South Wales and Victoria. Instead of standing up and acknowledging the need to do better, the Treasurer yesterday took it as an opportunity to attack me. That is fine, but his attack only serves to highlight the fact that he is fresh out of ideas. It is easy to play the man, harder still to step up and say what he intends to do.

The Treasurer might think that Queensland lagging in sixth position on economic growth is okay, but I do not. The Treasurer might think that Queensland's position as part of a third tier of economies is satisfactory, but I certainly do not. The Treasurer may think that ranking last of all states on construction work is acceptable, but we on this side of the House think we need to be doing better.

As I have already said, I thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its consideration of the bill. As the Treasurer mentioned, unforeseen expenditure for the 2014-15 financial year totalled just over \$1 million. I also note that total appropriation in 2014-15 was less than the amount approved as part of the 2014-15 budget. That is undoubtedly a good result. It is the result of hard work and diligence by a lot of people who maintain these accounts behind the scenes. It is also a sign of the fiscal discipline instilled in the departments. I extend my thanks to all of those departmental officers who have accepted once more that it is entirely important that government agencies live within their means.

As highlighted in the *Consolidated Fund financial report* and the explanatory notes, \$9.1 million relates to unforeseen expenditure incurred by seven departments last financial year. Sixty per cent of the unforeseen expenditure incurred by departments was incurred by the Public Safety Business Agency, relating to capital projects transferred from the Queensland Police Service. A further 28 per cent was incurred by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, relating to additional expenditure required for the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges.

Just a couple of weeks ago, I was at Emerald for a function to acknowledge students from the Emerald Agricultural College. We saved both that college and the agricultural training college at Longreach, but there is still considerable work to be done with the sector to encourage students and to both adopt the model and make sure that we invigorate the agricultural sector, as we were proud to do. It was wonderful to see those students at that function in Emerald just a couple of weeks ago.

It should also be noted that clause 4 of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) amends section 71 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009 so that departments can borrow with the Treasurer's approval and removes specific reference to the Queensland Treasury Corporation. This amendment has been canvassed by both the Treasurer and the parliamentary committee in consideration of the bill and is a necessary change. Departments will still be required to get the Treasurer's approval for borrowings. As such, I will not spend any more time speaking to that aspect of the bill.

Regarding the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2), there was a total of slightly less than \$3 million in unforeseen expenditure for the Legislative Assembly. That expenditure was primarily in relation to one-off expenses for the 2015 state general election, the fire protection system at Parliament House and upgrades to the finance system.

I do not wish to spend too much longer canvassing the various parts of the two bills. We have already heard the Treasurer provide an explanation and Treasury officials have also provided evidence to the Finance and Administration Committee, which has produced the report, which of course I have referred to today. However, I do want to make this point: fiscal discipline is absolutely essential here in Queensland, where we continue to have a huge debt problem, which is a problem of the Labor Party's making. Treasury's own advice to the previous LNP government was that an unprecedented period of fiscal discipline is required to restore the state's financial position. I urge the Treasurer not to lose sight of that.

The former LNP government started the process. We put a lid on expenses growth. We enhanced financial accountability by ensuring that supplementary appropriations were introduced into the parliament as soon as possible at the end of the financial year. We managed to stabilise the state's debt. We put Queensland on the path back to a fiscal surplus—a true surplus—as recommended by Queensland Treasury. That was the result of hard work and focus. My concern is that this Treasurer and this Labor government will not have the same commitment and the same focus. My concern is that under this Treasurer we will return to the bad old days when unforeseen expenditure blew out by billions of dollars. My concern is that under this Treasurer expenses growth will balloon once more, severely impacting Queensland's financial position. My concern is that under this Treasurer debt in Queensland will continue to grow past \$80 billion, despite his promises to pay down debt. All I can say is that the LNP opposition will be holding him to account and watching him every step of the way to ensure that Queenslanders know the true state of the finances. In conclusion, I again thank the committee for its consideration of the bill and I thank the departmental officers for their work.

Question—That the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question—That the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Appropriation Bill (No. 2)

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.25 pm): I move—

That the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) be now read a third time.

Question—That the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.26 pm): I move—

That the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) be now read a third time.

Question put—That the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title (Cognate Debate)

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.26 pm): I move—

That the long title of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.26 pm): I move—

That the long title of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

JOBS QUEENSLAND BILL

Resumed from 16 September (see p. 1875).

Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (4.27 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 16 September 2015, the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015 was introduced into the Queensland parliament. Parliament referred the bill to the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee for consideration. The committee tabled its report on 20 October 2015. I now table a copy of the Queensland government's response to the report.

Tabled paper. Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee: Report No. 5, 55th Parliament—Jobs Queensland Bill 2015, government response [[1510](#)].

Firstly, I thank the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee for its thorough consideration of the bill. I note that before preparing its report the committee received a briefing from the Department of Education and Training, considered written submissions from stakeholders and invited selected stakeholders to a public hearing. I particularly acknowledge the contribution of stakeholders and their valuable input into the committee's consideration of the bill. Indeed, it was pleasing to see the widespread support expressed for the establishment of Jobs Queensland from a broad range of stakeholders in the written submissions received by the committee.

The government is committed to growing the economy, building new and innovative industries, and strengthening the competitiveness of established industries in Queensland. Central to achieving those goals is ensuring the state has a highly skilled and productive workforce and a vocational education and training sector that is responsive to the skills and training needs of industry, now and into the future. This bill delivers on our commitment to establish an independent industry led statutory entity, which provides industry advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning.

Before I move on to the committee's recommendations, I would like to address an issue raised by the opposition members of the committee. It is an issue that they raised during estimates, which I took on notice and provided a comprehensive answer to.

Those opposite have questioned this government's commitment to setting aside \$40 million over four years for the establishment and continuation of Jobs Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is committed to investing in skills and training. To develop new industries and support innovation, Queensland needs an appropriately trained workforce so we have a highly skilled, capable workforce to deliver the jobs of the future.

Those opposite do not seem to understand that investing in skills and training is an investment in Queensland's economy that pays dividends now and into the future. To achieve this, it is important to establish an independent body that can assist in advising the government and achieving these outcomes. We have committed to ensuring that Jobs Queensland is adequately funded to achieve this outcome.

The committee has prepared a comprehensive report on the bill. I am pleased that the committee unanimously recommended that the bill be passed. I turn now to the two additional recommendations that the committee has suggested.

Recommendation 2 suggests that the bill be amended to require that at least one member of Jobs Queensland is a person with direct experience in the education, training or employment sectors. The government supports this recommendation. The government notes that the committee's recommendation is consistent with the overall policy intent to provide a broad mix of membership relevant to the functions of Jobs Queensland.

The bill allows for a member to be appointed with direct experience in the education, training or employment sectors, but does not mandate this. The government will make the committee's suggested amendment and strengthen this requirement to ensure that at least one member will have skills or experience in the education, training or employment sectors.

Recommendation 3 of the committee suggests that clause 10 of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015 be amended to require the minister, in recommending persons for appointment to Jobs Queensland, to have regard to include persons of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and from regional areas who have experience and knowledge relevant to Jobs Queensland's functions. The government supports this recommendation and agrees to amend the bill accordingly.

The government is committed to ensuring Jobs Queensland has a diverse membership to ensure members represent a wide range of backgrounds and have a broad knowledge and skills base to support the work of Jobs Queensland. This amendment is consistent with the government's policy to have broad representation on Jobs Queensland including a balanced gender representation, which is provided for in clause 10(5) of the bill.

The government also notes that, in addition to membership, clause 9 of the bill supports Jobs Queensland to bring a broad perspective to its advice on future skills needs and workforce development and planning. Clause 9 requires Jobs Queensland, in performing its functions, to consult with community representatives, including representatives from rural and regional areas and representatives from a broad range of industries, including representatives from employers, unions, industry associations and peak bodies. I intend to move amendments to give effect to the committee's recommendations during consideration in detail.

This bill ensures that future workforce planning and independent industry advice is central to the government's skills and training priorities and investment decisions. The bill also ensures that Jobs Queensland forms part of our broader plan to make Queensland's vocational education and training sector the strongest and most productive in the nation—supporting industry to employ people with the skills it needs to grow into the future.

The bill establishes Jobs Queensland as a new independent entity to provide strategic industry led advice to government on skills demand and workforce development and planning. The bill provides for its statutory functions and governance arrangements while providing flexibility and longevity to allow Jobs Queensland to be responsive to changing economic and industry needs.

Under the bill, Jobs Queensland will have three key functions. It will provide advice to me as Minister for Training and Skills on skills needs for particular industry sectors or regional areas; future workforce development and planning; and the apprenticeship and traineeship system in Queensland. It will also have a research function and be required to publicly promote its role and functions.

I am committed to industry having an independent voice on skills. It is important for the state that government receives independent industry advice on where the future skills demand is likely to occur within the economy. I want to be clear that when we talk about future jobs we are talking about what skills are needed, where the training gaps are, what new jobs are likely to evolve, what industries will arise into the future and what skills and training will be needed as a result.

Jobs Queensland will be established to ensure it has a structure which allows it to wholly focus on its strategic, advisory role, genuinely engage with industry, identify demand for skilled work across the economy and, in turn, consider the implications of this at a strategic level. Jobs Queensland will identify the skills and training needs across industry sectors to inform priorities for the government's significant investment in vocational education and training.

Jobs Queensland's advice and reports will help inform priorities for the state's investment in skills, training and workforce planning, and inform the development of strategies and programs to respond to these priorities. Importantly, neither I nor the Department of Education and Training can direct the content of the advice that Jobs Queensland provides. Jobs Queensland must also produce a public annual report about how it has performed its functions.

To ensure the new body can hit the ground running following formal establishment, a Jobs Queensland interim reference group will be created. The group will operate until Jobs Queensland is established and the Jobs Queensland chairperson and members are appointed. Upon my selection, representatives for this group will be considered and endorsed by the Premier and Minister for the Arts.

Access to independent industry advice on the future skills needs across the economy is critical to allowing the state to better target our training programs and skill investment towards the needs of the future. The establishment of Jobs Queensland is a critical initiative that will support Queenslanders into employment, foster a skilled and productive workforce for business and industry and contribute to a productive and growing economy. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (4.36 pm): I rise to speak on the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. Labor proposes to establish Jobs Queensland next year as an independent statutory body with \$40 million in funding over four years. Jobs Queensland will be established to provide advice to the minister about workplace skills needs, future workforce development and planning and the apprenticeship and training systems.

We on this side of the House will be supporting the bill and also supporting the recommendations of the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee. We do that with some trepidation. It is quite obvious that the establishment of this statutory body is simply to replace a very successful initiative of the previous LNP government. To facilitate the establishment of Jobs Queensland, Labor disbanded the LNP's Ministerial Industry Commission in May 2015.

This commission was established in 2013 as an independent advisory body to provide advice to the relevant minister on training and skills, with a budget of approximately \$3.5 million. The MIC was a genuine partnership between government and industry, creating an annual cycle of collaboration to establish industry needs and use that as a basis for directing government investment in training.

The MIC was chaired by the former assistant minister for further and technical education in order to provide weight and standing to the commission and held monthly meetings all over Queensland, including in Townsville, Toowoomba, Cairns and Mackay. The MIC had a clear mandate to advise the minister on Queensland's skills and workforce development priorities; give industry and employers genuine opportunities to have input into how training investment is made; conduct regional industry

forums to give small, medium and large industry a voice on local, regional and state requirements; and to provide small, medium and large enterprises advice on the ways they could provide advice to government.

The MIC reported to government in a number of ways including through the annual skills priority report that detailed short-, medium- and long-term workforce developments and skill requirements including evaluating economic and industry trends; asking industry across the state for feedback on the analysis and tailoring of government investment to best suit the needs of the economy; through an annual skills highlight report that outlined key achievements of the MIC and the vocational education and training system response to industry advice; through key research, policies and advice that informed the commission's market oversight role; and on an ad hoc basis depending on what emerging issues there were.

The creation of Jobs Queensland seems to be all about ideology and putting union bosses back in charge of the training and apprenticeship system in Queensland. The Premier has made no secret of the fact that this government owes its election win to union bosses. This is about repaying union bosses and returning union control to the training sector.

As this bill currently stands, it appears to be a remake of the failed Skills Queensland, which had no real links to industry or Queensland's training needs. In their own submission to the Skills and Training Taskforce, Skills Queensland themselves acknowledged that they were unable to maintain a central focus on its roles as an industry led body providing advice on skills needs and funding priority.

Why were they unable to maintain a central focus on their role as an industry led body? It is because they had too many union bosses on their board. They had representatives from the AMWU, representatives from the AWU and representatives from the QTU. The representation on the board led to Skills Queensland having to acknowledge themselves that they failed in the job for which they were tasked by becoming a mouthpiece of the unions.

The minister claims that Jobs Queensland will be independent, but I ask: how can it be independent when, through the statement of expectations, the minister dictates how the body reports to the minister, the nature and scope of activities that Jobs Queensland should carry out, and activities of Jobs Queensland? To be a truly effective body, Jobs Queensland needs future plans in order to provide certainty for industry. Students and industry should be provided as well with five-year forecasts about the skills requirements of the future similar to what the MIC was undertaking at the time it was disbanded by this government.

In the time that it has taken for Labor, who claim to be pro jobs, to establish Jobs Queensland, the LNP had established an industry led Skills and Training Taskforce, accepted the task force's interim and final report and responded with a five-year vocational education and training action plan, 'Great skills. Real opportunities'.

Jobs Queensland is not truly independent. As I said, the statement of expectations is issued by the minister and sets out the nature and scope of all Jobs Queensland activities. There is no requirement by Jobs Queensland to inform the minister if things change throughout the year. Jobs Queensland does not have the capacity to consider the supply of skills in workforce planning. Jobs Queensland is about ideology and putting union bosses in charge of the training and apprenticeship system in Queensland.

The other issue is the \$40 million budget of Jobs Queensland. At this stage we do not know of any key performance indicators. We do not know of any benchmarks. We do not know of any objectives. When the department was asked to give a bit of detail about the spending of \$40 million over a four-year period, the department responded—

The establishment of Jobs Queensland was committed under *Working Queensland*, one of the Palaszczuk Government's election commitments during the 2015 election. The allocation of \$40 million over 4 years to establish Jobs Queensland was confirmed through the 2015-16 State budget allocation. Through the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015, the Department of Education and Training is implementing this commitment.

That is simply not good enough. There is absolutely no information there whatsoever about how this money will be spent, what the salaries of the board members will be, or how many staff there will be. This seems to be again another bureaucracy that has been created by this Labor government—a bureaucracy that continues to talk about jobs but does very little about creating jobs. Of course the only job creation we have seen has been the increase in the Public Service, which already reached its annual increase target by the end of the first quarter of the financial year.

As I said earlier, we will be supporting the bill. We do have numerous questions and concerns about the establishment of another bureaucracy, and we have very grave doubts about what Jobs Queensland will be able to achieve in the future.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (4.44 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill before the House today. Firstly, as the chair of the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee, I would like to thank my fellow members of the committee for their work and dedication to this bill, as well as the committee secretariat. Finally, to the interested groups who submitted their views to the bill, I thank you as well.

The purpose of the bill is to establish, as we have heard, a statutory advisory body called Jobs Queensland, whose role is to provide the minister with advice about workforce skill needs, future workforce development and planning, and the apprenticeship and traineeship system. Jobs Queensland will also conduct research into skills needs and promote public awareness of its advisory functions.

When talking about the role of Jobs Queensland, it is not through pure coincidence that the Palaszczuk government this week also debated the Building Queensland Bill, which is an independent statutory body that will ensure a whole-of-government perspective to major infrastructure planning, prioritising and investment. Alongside this also sits the draft infrastructure plan for Queensland, which outlines short-term and long-term plans to advance Queensland.

It is important for industry to inform the government's significant investment into vocational education and training, or VET, to underpin skills development and sustainable economic growth in Queensland. Industry led workforce planning, facilitated by Jobs Queensland, is crucial to ensure industry can meet their future workforce needs, stimulate innovation and achieve global competitiveness.

When reading through the submissions received in relation to the bill, they each supported the need for this statutory advisory body. The National Retail Association stated in their submission that Jobs Queensland was 'fundamental to the long-term success of the state'. The Queensland Nurses' Union saw the potential that Jobs Queensland could bring as an important evidence based mechanism to deal with unemployment and planning for future needs.

Every member in this chamber has been to their schools in their electorates, and many of those schools are high schools that work very closely with their TAFE colleges to provide students with alternative education opportunities to prepare them for the future. As a former high school principal, I can safely say that perhaps one of the best meetings I would have attended with my TAFE counterparts was when they presented their annual jobs and training forecast. This is where research had been conducted on future developments in the city and what skills were needed to meet those particular developments. We would also hear from employment agencies and various industry sector representatives from around the region. Schools would use this information to inform their curriculum offerings and develop further partnerships with industry and institutions to prepare students with skills needed for the future. Unfortunately, some did not see the writing on the wall.

I recall one school—and I will safely say it was not my school—that had contracted a registered training organisation, or an RTO, to deliver a certificate II level course for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The course was very successful and was opened up to the rest of the school as funding was provided for students to engage in certificate II courses. This too proved to be a boom, with over 100 students successfully achieving their Certificate II in Personal Sports Training. The school was very proud that it produced so many students with a certificate II qualification, but, there were no jobs for those students at the end of their course. The saturation of qualified personal trainers made it impossible for these graduates to enter the workforce. With the best of intentions of gaining students with an employable skill set, it was in the wrong area.

Jobs Queensland will conduct the research and provide the evidence to inform the government where to invest its training requirements based on the future workforce development and planning needs. It will advise the minister about the skills it anticipates will be needed for particular industries and regional areas. This bill is exactly what Queenslanders need as they prepare themselves for the ever-changing and ever-challenging needs of a diverse jobs market based on a diverse economy. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (4.48 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. At the outset, as the deputy chair of the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee, I would like to join with our chair, the member for Townsville, in acknowledging the efforts of fellow committee members, as well as those of our secretariat and, of course, those in particular who made submissions on the bill. Whilst the opposition is supporting the bill, together with the recommendations of the committee in relation to education, training or employment sector experience being represented among the members of this statutory body and that persons of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander descent and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and regional areas be included on the body, there are a number of key issues with this bill that this House and the people of Queensland, I believe, should be fully cognisant of.

In considering the comments just made by the Attorney-General and her reference to concerns expressed by non-government members of the committee in relation to the budget detail for Jobs Queensland, she misses altogether the point that we were pursuing. She misses altogether the point that we have absolutely no detail on the \$40 million budget to debate, let alone the figure itself and I will come back to that point later in my contribution. Nonetheless, I certainly acknowledge the minister's recognition of the committee's recommendations.

First of all, I want to refer to the concept of independence of Jobs Queensland from the minister and the government. The Attorney-General has gone to great lengths to explain that she is very focused on this concept of independence. In fact, the bill does that and various submissions to the committee focused on the same issue. When we look at clauses 23 and 24 of the bill in regard to ministerial directions and statements of expectation, Jobs Queensland must comply with those directions or at least have regard to those statements of expectation. We can look further in terms of the minister's influence on the membership of Jobs Queensland. For example, clause 102(b) states—

The members must include ... at least 1 person the Minister considers represents employees.

I would suggest to the House that, as outlined by the honourable member for Everton, the minister's statements in part appear to be about ideology and putting union bosses back in control of training and apprentice systems in Queensland—as the member for Everton suggested, perhaps paying them back. In considering some of the detail around this bill anyone could be forgiven for thinking the body is designed around union direction and requirements rather than the genuine needs of industry.

Another issue that has been focused on in the bill is the relationship of Jobs Queensland, a statutory body, and the suggestion that it is independent from the department. Departmental secretariat and financial oversight details outlined in the committee's investigations confirm that the body risks being anything but independent of the department and hence the minister. In fact, the body will be very much dependent on them. Strangely enough, what we see, therefore, is a statutory, apparently independent, body that does not even control its own budget or administration. These are some of the issues of concern to the opposition.

The bill, the overview provided by the minister and briefings provided to the committee go to great lengths to compare the Jobs Queensland statutory body as proposed to the Ministerial Industry Commission that it purports to replace, established by the former LNP government and disbanded by the Palaszczuk Labor government in June this year. I think the House should note that the Ministerial Industry Commission focused on a five-year action plan 'Great Skills, Great Opportunities' wherein Queensland's training system would focus on enhanced productivity, participation and consequently economic growth. The Ministerial Industry Commission was chaired by the former assistant minister for technical and further education—interestingly enough, a training professional, and I refer to the honourable Saxon Rice. She chaired the commission in order to ensure a direct line to government. She focused on the requirement for an annual report and a five-year forecast moving to a 10-year forecast in the future. I suggest strongly to the House that that is typical of an LNP 'roll up your sleeves' approach to work with industry across the entire state and to provide a real plan for the VET sector. The Ministerial Industry Commission comprised industry and business leaders, amongst others, to ensure a genuine partnership across the state. They were not paid, interestingly enough, as is proposed for Jobs Queensland—what some might see amongst other things as simply including fees for union mates. Finally, the Ministerial Industry Commission was charged with considering not only demand for skills in industry—and I note that that is also a clear intention of the Jobs Queensland proposal—but also supply which Jobs Queensland risks ignoring given the lack of reference to this important issue in the bill.

In terms of the detail—the budget, the objectives, performance indicators and the lack thereof—I refer to information supplied as evidenced in the committee's report. The information attempted to address key areas of consideration of the committee, and I refer there to detail around the \$40 million budget. The House should note that the committee's report, tabled as required on 20 October this year, has under the heading of 'Budget and Anticipated Expenditure' what is only a very broad response from the department about budget detail. A further response from the department dated 21 October, the day after the committee's required reporting date and just considered by the committee at its first opportunity earlier today, 28 October, and subsequently released by the committee, again fails to provide any detail.

I would suggest that this shows a total disregard for the more than reasonable budget queries from the committee with a brief, flippant and, I suggest, arrogant response from the department. It is worth quoting that response, as the member for Everton has already. The response to queries about the budget detail of \$40 million was—

The establishment of Jobs Queensland was committed to under Working Queensland, one of the Palaszczuk Government's election commitments during the 2015 election. The allocation of \$40 million over 4 years to establish Jobs Queensland was confirmed through the 2015-16 State budget allocations. Through the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015, the Department of Education and Training is implementing this commitment.

The fact is that the whole bill remains silent on the issues that some of us in the committee were wanting to investigate as evidenced by that further response from the department. Surely the minister must recognise that an allocation of \$40 million—I repeat, \$40 million—about which the department has ignored requests for detail from a parliamentary committee is a considerable amount of taxpayers' money. Under this bill there are no objectives, no milestones, no key performance indicators or other bases on which to judge its performance. A 'she'll be right' response is not good enough and I would suggest smacks of a typical Labor government approach of 'spend up big now and worry about the detail later'.

While supporting the bill, the opposition—and I hope the parliamentary committee in the future—will strive to monitor the expenditure and progress of Jobs Queensland given that it appears the Palaszczuk Labor government is silent on such matters and apparently not even interested. We also remain concerned about the risk of lack of independence of Jobs Queensland from the minister and the department, and so we will monitor those issues as well. I urge the minister and government to give these issues the very serious attention that they deserve.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (4.58 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015 because that is what we are here debating this afternoon. I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government, a government that is committed to growing the economy and building new and innovative industries in Queensland. To do that, Queensland needs a highly skilled, productive and well-trained workforce to meet the workforce needs of the future and, importantly, the workforce needs of industry.

This bill, as part of the Working Queensland framework, will establish an independent statutory entity to provide strategic industry led device. Jobs Queensland will provide advice on skills needs for particular regional or industry sectors, future workforce development and planning, and the apprenticeship and traineeship system in Queensland. It will also carry out and promote research and market intelligence and promote public awareness of its statutory functions. Jobs Queensland, importantly, reinstates an independent voice for industry to provide government advice on skills needs of the future. It will be responsive and support productivity and skill development through industry skill demand. With a focus on its strategic advisory role, Jobs Queensland will engage with industry, identify demand for skilled work across the economy and consider the strategic implications for skills development in Queensland.

Jobs Queensland will comprise an independent board with a mix of industry leaders, employer representatives, union representatives and members with expert or specialist skills in such areas as workforce planning, economics and research skills. Jobs Queensland must consult with representatives from the community, including rural and regional areas, and consult with representatives from a broad range of industries.

Jobs Queensland will provide meaningful advice and will support effective workforce planning, and the Department of Education and Training will take the responsibility for the training related workforce development strategies identified through the planning process. This will ensure that our government is aware of industry priorities and, in turn, the investment requirements in the vocational education and training sector. This will underpin skills development programs, ensuring that the investments are effective and appropriate in supporting employment and industry and sustainable growth in Queensland, with a focus on making the Queensland VET sector the strongest and most productive in Australia. Small, medium and large entities and industries from across Queensland can contribute towards advising on skill and workforce planning matters, and there will be broad stakeholder consultation to ensure full representation.

The committee called for and received submissions from various stakeholder groups, and I would like to thank those who made submissions and those who attended the public hearings. These submissions—which the committee received from industry groups, peak policy bodies and unions—supported and acknowledged the importance of the creation of an independent statutory entity to provide strategic industry led advice to government in relation to skill demand and long-term workforce

planning. These expert organisations understand the importance of strategic planning and acknowledge the importance of developing an appropriately skilled workforce, and I again thank them for their submissions and support of the Jobs Queensland Bill.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their collaborative and consultative deliberations on the Jobs Queensland Bill, in particular the committee chair, the member for Townsville. I thank and acknowledge the committee secretariat, who provided detailed and thorough support. Jobs Queensland will ensure that training is accessible to trainees where jobs are, that trainees will get the most out of their training and that industry will have access to an appropriately highly trained, responsive and productive workforce that will drive Queensland's economic growth and jobs. I commend the Jobs Queensland Bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (5.03 pm): I rise here this afternoon to make a contribution on the Jobs Queensland Bill. Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, the committee staff, the committee chair, the member for Townsville, and all those individuals who made a submission on this bill. From the outset, I certainly do have some reservations about this bill, especially when it comes to the lack of detail. The bill appears to be, you could say, a blank cheque which is handed out to whoever the government deems appropriate. Whilst I have these reservations, we do support the bill.

I would like to start by speaking about how building the economy of tomorrow must start today. We have a diverse state with multiple centres of employment in metropolitan and regional areas. This gives us a diverse employment market requiring different skill sets in different areas. Furthermore, we must look at the broad spectrum of reasons as to why there are statewide shortages in some sectors of employment. It is only through genuine consultation between industry, employers and government that these shortages can be addressed and training opportunities can be delivered. Training is an area of the economy that requires an enormous amount of investment, and every dollar must be spent wisely to ensure maximum return.

Globalisation will continue to impact and alter the make-up of our future workforce. This is evidenced by the number of technical and trade occupations falling by 19 per cent from 1991 to 2015. Additionally, other occupations such as labourers and machinery operators have decreased by 37 per cent and 19 per cent respectively in that same period. However, these declines do not negate the need for skilled workers in these areas. This notion is supported by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia, which has reported that there is a continued shortage of skilled technical and trade workers as well as professionals. For the 2014-15 period, we had a statewide shortage of motor mechanics, sheet metal trades, metal machinists and cabinet makers, but when we compare this to the needs in regional Queensland this blows out to a far greater list of trades, including civil engineering draftspeople and technicians, diesel mechanics, motorcycle mechanics, welders and the list goes on and on and on.

This leads me to my first dilemma I found within this bill. Originally, there was no requirement contained within the Jobs Queensland Bill for meetings to be held in regional areas or for there to be regional representation on the board. This has been addressed in the third recommendation, which I certainly do appreciate. It does highlight how important different skills shortages affect different regions in our very diverse state. To best understand the needs of regional areas, the statutory body should travel to these areas and hold meetings with local industries and employers to understand their local needs. The Queensland economy cannot be seen as a single entity; it is multiple entities with individual requirements that have their own supply and demand.

It appears the bill mysteriously lacks a focus on current workforce supply. This makes planning for appropriate workforce numbers a piecemeal and potentially inadequate exercise which will fail to deliver short- and long-term workforce needs. An example is if a qualified tradesperson—let us say, a sheet metal worker—finds it difficult to obtain work in the sheet metal area for a couple of years because of a bit of a downturn in that market and they go into another line of work, just say hospitality, for a few years. In recent times, we could say there was a greater push in the sheet metal market for these individuals who have got these skills in this area, and they will not be added to the supply.

This certainly does skew the results and may lead to a result where a shortage appears to exist when it does not. Nothing is more soul destroying for individuals than leaving their vocational education and training provider to find that there is an oversupply of workers in that particular area. To be an effective body, Jobs Queensland needs to encompass a broad spectrum of information, thus creating certainty for the industry and job creation and, therefore, developing our Queensland economy. We cannot just think about what is needed now; we must also think about what will be needed in five years time. That is very similar to the previous LNP government's Ministerial Industry Commission, which was

disbanded by this government. For the first time in this state the Ministerial Industry Commission, an independent advisory body, provided the industry with a say on skills that are needed now and into the future. This was a genuine partnership between industry and a government focused on collaboration to direct government investment into training. The Ministerial Industry Commission was a collaborative approach with people who founded businesses, industry boards, academics and prominent business boards. These leaders in their field were also partnered with the Queensland community to guide the state to a more prosperous future.

Upon reviewing the Queensland vocational education and training sector, or VET, the LNP government developed a five-year action plan, Great skills. Real opportunities. This concentrated on enhancing participation and productivity to give greater real world employment outcomes for those leaving vocational education and training and powering our economy. Instead of continuing with this commission which had runs on the board, the government decided to dismantle the Ministerial Industry Commission in June this year, thereby starting the whole process all over again.

This brings me back to my previous statements regarding my reservations about the bill. I have grave reservations when it comes to how the \$40 million allocated to Jobs Queensland will be spent. From the outset the committee asked the department for clarification and the response they gave provided no further information. I must say it was a slap in the face and an insult to the committee. The response states—

The establishment of Jobs Queensland was committed to under *Working Queensland*, one of the Palaszczuk Government's election commitments during the 2015 election. The allocation of \$40 million over 4 years to establish Jobs Queensland was confirmed through the 2015-16 State budget allocations. Through the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015, the Department of Education and Training is implementing this commitment.

This response is ambiguous at best. It gives no detail about where the money will be spent and what reimbursement the members on the board will receive or any other details. You could say it is like winning the \$40 million Oz Lotto.

I find it interesting, though, that the minister claims Jobs Queensland will be an independent body. However, through the statement of expectation the minister dictates how the body will report to the minister, that the minister gives written direction about what activities should be carried out by Jobs Queensland and that the minister gives directions of what must be included in the annual report.

The committee did make some recommendations, and I agree wholeheartedly with recommendations 2 and 3 in particular. In recommendation 2, the committee recommends the bill be amended to require that at least one member of Jobs Queensland is a person with direct experience in the education, training and employment sector. That is a no-brainer. In recommendation 3, the committee recommends that clause 10 of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015 be amended to require the minister, in recommending persons for appointment to Jobs Queensland, to have regard to include persons of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and from regional areas—and I spoke before about regional areas. They will certainly have a focus on what is happening in regional parts.

In closing, whilst we support the bill, I have a lot of reservations about the money situation. When it comes down to it, there are no key performance indicators and there are no targets. I do feel it is like an open cheque and that does concern me greatly.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (5.15 pm): I rise to support the bill and also to thank the chair, the deputy chair and the committee members and also the committee secretariat for the hard work that went into preparing this bill and getting it right. Jobs Now, Jobs for the Future—I know I am not alone when I say that the people of the Maryborough electorate need to know there is a future. Each and every one of us in this House knows that the future of this state, especially my electorate, relies on the worker. I have said it before that the very backbone of our communities is the worker. Whether it is a small business or a welder at Downer putting the trains together or doing maintenance on the trains, they are the people who make up my electorate. It is these people who need to know that there is a future for them and their colleagues and that we as a government are committed to ensuring skills demand is met and long-term workforce planning is committed to.

With the creation of Jobs Queensland, we will see an independent body take the reins on just that, the future of our employment and job stability in Queensland by long-term workforce planning and providing advice to government on skill needs in local communities and regions. This will be done by the best people to give advice and consult with the communities, the people who are most skilled and knowledgeable: industry leaders, unions, employer representatives and working Queenslanders. This will be done through consultation and engagement with the community, rural and regional areas, and associations and peak bodies. It will give an independent voice back to the industry on skills demand

and long-term workforce planning. The advice and reports provided by Jobs Queensland will be a key input to help inform priorities for state investment in skills, training and workforce planning and will inform the government of strategies and programs for Queensland.

Also for transparency, clause 21 of the bill requires Jobs Queensland to complete an annual report outlining how it has discharged its functions during the financial year and the activities it has undertaken. A copy of this report must be tabled in parliament within 14 days of it being received.

Under the previous government, I saw the VET sector in my electorate torn to shreds, narrowing the future hopes of jobseekers and constituents needing to upskill to meet industry needs. Jobs Queensland will support our VET sector and ensure the skills are better aligned to future jobs needs with a focus on making the Queensland VET sector the strongest and most productive in Australia.

Jobs Now, Jobs for the Future—the creation of jobs will help take Queenslanders forward with better planning and an understanding of emerging and innovative industries that will continue to grow and build the workforce of Queensland. After three years of job losses and a stagnant economy in my electorate under the previous government, this is the beginning of a future for Queensland. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (5.18 pm): I rise today to speak on the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. Ensuring employment needs are met in Queensland is without doubt a core contributor to future prosperity and forward progression of this great state. The availability of employment and ongoing job security is at the very heart of every Queenslander and affects their feeling of self-worth and the knowledge that they can positively contribute to their communities. This bill seeks to establish Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory body to provide advice to the minister about workforce skills needs for individual industries, advising on future workforce development and planning for Queensland including regional Queensland. The body will undertake particular research and focus towards education and VET training.

As a member of the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee that undertook the review of this bill, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members for their professional approach to ensure the best possible outcome from our activities. I would also like to thank Sue Cawcutt and the secretariat team for their continued hard work in keeping our committee on schedule and productive.

The committee's review provided three recommendations: that the Jobs Queensland Bill be passed; that the bill be amended to require that at least one of the members of Jobs Queensland be a person with direct experience in the education, training or employment sectors; and that Jobs Queensland have regard to including persons of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, persons from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and persons from regional and remote communities who have experience or knowledge relevant to Jobs Queensland functions. I am pleased to see that the minister has accepted these recommendations.

It is interesting to note that while the bill and associated documentation purports that Jobs Queensland will provide strategic industry led advice to government on skills demand and training needs for varying time frames, there are no short-, medium- or long-term targets, outcomes or expectations that have even remotely been provided for. This issue is further exacerbated when you consider that Jobs Queensland is replacing the highly successful Ministerial Industry Commission, an independent advisory body established by the previous LNP government that for the first time provided industry with real input into skills and training requirements in Queensland and a body that actually had a set direction and established outcomes. In fact, in the time it has taken for Labor to progress Jobs Queensland to this point the previous LNP government had established an industry led Skills and Training Task Force, accepted the task force's interim and final report and responded with a five-year vocational education and training action plan. Job creation to date under this Labor government has not had any direction, any plans and or expected outcomes. Considering the absolute lack of detail provided by the Labor Party government for any time frames, directions or outcomes in this bill other than a proposed yearly report that is vague at best, I have to question what Labor has done and will be doing in the interim to promote job creation for Queenslanders.

Locally in the Gaven electorate we cannot afford to wait for this Labor Party government that has no plan, no direction and no idea. I have been working on practical solutions for addressing the unemployment rate in Gaven. According to the Australian government Department of Employment's quarterly *Small area labour markets* and the Queensland Treasury, unemployment was 6.2 per cent for the June quarter this year. This 6.2 per cent represents just over 2,000 unemployed residents who live in the Gaven electorate. The source for these statistics does not include those who are underemployed or those who require more hours or secondary employment opportunities to make ends meet. As a

catalyst to encourage job growth in Gaven I recently established Nerang2020, which is a group of industry experts and community leaders who are dedicated to revitalising and progressing the Nerang area. The idea came from speaking with local small business owners and developers who, like me, saw potential in the area. Unfortunately, due to a lack of communication amongst stakeholders in the community the area was being held back, and I saw this as an opportunity for us all to work together. What is different about Nerang2020 when compared with many of the Queensland Labor government's initiatives is that we did not want to create a talkfest which, as we know, under this Labor government is called a 'review'. Anyone in politics who says they know everything should not be listened to, and I was smart enough to realise that I needed to work with those 'in the know' to see real change in our community.

My role is to take as much information as I can from the civil engineers, town planners and construction experts who deal with developments in our community every day and to understand what I need to do as a community representative to provide this information to the Gaven electorate as we move forward in an informed and educated manner. We do not just sit down and say, 'Wouldn't it be great!' We are looking at practical applications. Following each meeting there is a list of action items that each of us must address to ensure that we are progressing to the next level so we know where we are going. I am also proud to say that Nerang2020 is an apolitical group which I hope will be built upon with enthusiasm and passion by all community leaders regardless of their political views over the next five years and beyond.

Government members interjected.

Mr CRAMP: I heard some commentary coming from those opposite, and I am more than happy to provide some education and vision if those opposite would like to come and see me after this. Sometimes it takes more than a parliamentary term to create and enact real change.

Government members interjected.

Mr CRAMP: And we get a bite! As community leaders we have a responsibility to ensure that these legacies are continued and the community does not miss out. The Nerang community and the Gaven electorate felt this way for quite some time, and whilst there is excitement about the possibility of Nerang being revitalised through urban renewal, there are many within this community who are cynical and fear that Nerang will be forgotten. They are hesitant to believe that anyone is willing to fight for what this community deserves. There is over \$2.5 billion worth of investment planned in the Nerang area, and I have been advised that figures of upwards of \$5 billion will be approved by the time the Commonwealth Games come to Gaven in 2018. It is initiatives like Nerang2020 which will truly provide more local employment opportunities and not continue the talkfest that this Labor government seems intent on continuing.

I would now like to speak about what I consider to be the kicker in this bill. As has been noted before, the cost of establishing this body is enshrined in vagueness and a lack of any real detail. This is a body with no outcomes, time frames, direction and not even any meeting requirements. According to this Labor government, the cost of this is \$40 million. Naturally all members of the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee—even the government members—were at a loss as to why such a large amount of Queenslanders' money was required to establish this body, so logically we asked a question of the Department of Education and Training. I naturally expected—I thought 'naturally' expected—to be provided with the documentation upon which they were relying to produce this figure: perhaps a budget or even some historical data. But no, the committee received a four-line response advising us of what we already knew: that \$40 million was allocated to establish Jobs Queensland, but nothing further. That is correct; \$40 million is apparently needed for the minister to virtually handpick seven to 12 members of a body which does not really have that much to do, and even if they do the minister does not have to accept it. This is truly an exercise in wasting Queenslanders' hard-earned money, and the lack of detail, transparency and accountability for this expenditure is abhorrent at best and flies in the face of good and responsible governance.

Government members interjected.

Mr CRAMP: You will have to speak up. That being said, the LNP is the only party that has a truly independent and unbiased interest in the welfare of employees and employers alike and will always support any partnership or agreement between industry, employers and government that provides for improved workforce outcomes, especially in the areas of increased access to skilling and training for Queensland workers. However, Jobs Queensland should not be an exercise or an excuse for faceless union power brokers to muscle their way back into controlling training and apprenticeships in Queensland. This body should be free to provide unbiased independent recommendations that are

purely in the interests of ensuring that Queensland has an adequately trained and skilled workforce which provides employers and industries with the ability to be viable and competitive in their respective marketplaces.

I sincerely hope that for the future of this great state of Queensland the Labor government do utilise Jobs Queensland as a vehicle to provide practical and tangible outcomes to produce employment and drive innovation and motivation in our industries and their respective workforces; however, based on Labor's track record since coming into government I will not be holding my breath.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. I frequently have discussions with people in my electorate about training and jobs. I speak with a diverse range of people: those who own small businesses; managers in larger private, public and non-profit organisations; union members; young students; and parents of young people about to enter the workforce, and all are deeply concerned about how we will assist people to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to enter the workforce. All are doing their bit to achieve this: small and large businesses are doing their bit to try and develop their staff; large organisations like the Greenslopes Private Hospital play a major role in training an array of people to work in various roles in the health care sector.

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the Baxter compounding pharmacy in Coorparoo with the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. This organisation provides two months of training for new staff before they are allowed to even enter the sterile work area. Students in my electorate approach their studies in a responsible and serious manner, and they are supported by parents who make significant sacrifices to obtain the best education possible. All of these groups tell me that they are looking to the government for leadership on the issue of skills development.

When I have discussed our Jobs Queensland policy with people in my electorate they have been very supportive. That is why I am supporting this bill. Like me, the people of my electorate believe that the government can and must intervene in the labour market by actively planning our workforce of the future and ensuring we have the capacity to develop it.

Our economy is changing, our society is changing and the jobs we are doing are changing. In my own experience, many of the jobs that now exist in the healthcare sector certainly were not in existence when I started 27 years ago. It is imperative that the government establishes a process to plan for workforce development. While the government has the capacity to have an understanding of these issues, it is imperative that we establish an independent body that engages all stakeholders to advise the government on planning for workforce development.

This bill establishes an independent board made up of industry leaders, employer representatives, union members and experts with specialist skills. Unlike those on the other side of the House, we are prepared to listen to all stakeholders. In fact, this legislation demands that the minister cannot direct the advice given by this group—another example of the willingness of the Palaszczuk government to truly listen to the people of Queensland. This is in stark contrast to the past three years and is warmly welcomed in my electorate.

Whenever I speak to owners and managers of business or those who manage non-profit or government organisations, it does not take long for discussions to turn to workforce issues. All of the people I speak to are deeply invested in the issue of developing a sustainable workforce that will meet the needs of their organisations into the future. Businesses like Borgo Salumi in Holland Park have identified their workforce needs and take responsibility for training their staff. The committed members of the Southside Chamber of Commerce often turn their minds to workforce issues, and many have talked to me about the needs of their business sectors. When I talk to people from the unions, like the Transport Workers Union or the Services Union, they can quickly identify the training issues for their industries. These are the people we can and should listen to. They are best placed to understand their industries and they are keen to make a contribution. With the passage of this bill we are not only listening to these people; we are empowering them to give frank and fearless advice—something we should all welcome in our Westminster tradition.

I am extremely pleased that Jobs Queensland will give advice to the minister on three key areas. First, it will focus on anticipated needs in specific industries and regional areas. This is recognition that we need to develop strategies specific to various industries and regions. The workforce development issues in my electorate, which is surrounded by opportunities in the service, healthcare, education and research sectors, will be very different from those in electorates in areas where there is much more agriculture and mining. Second, it will focus on future workforce development planning. The workforce, as I have noted, is changing rapidly, and we need to look forward, not backwards. Finally, it will provide advice around apprenticeship and traineeship systems in Queensland.

I recently attended the school community industry partnership school leavers expo. I met many young people from my electorate who had decided that they wanted to pursue on-the-job educational opportunities. Whenever I talk to tradespeople they tell me that how we manage apprenticeships is crucial to the ongoing success of their business and their industry. I was pleased on Monday night to meet Jade from Holland Park, a former Cavendish Road High student who was nominated for an apprentice of the year award. I spoke with Jade, her mum and her employer. They told me how positive it had been for her to have the opportunity to pursue a trade in a field she loved, close to her home. We must carefully plan for the future of apprentices and trainees so that we can support not just individuals like Jade but also entire industries.

This bill is full of positive things for the future of our economy in this state. I cannot cover them all, but I would like to commend the minister on her leadership in this area. Part of being a leader is being prepared to listen and to seek advice. This bill demonstrates that the minister and the Palaszczuk government are serious about being leaders in this exciting and important area of our society and economy. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.34 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Jobs Queensland Bill. At the outset I join with my colleague the member for Everton, the shadow minister for education and training, in saying that I very much support a genuine partnership between industry, employers and government. I believe that a genuine partnership is what can give us a genuine opportunity to provide input into how training and investment is made in Queensland. I am sure all members of the House, irrespective of which side of the House we sit on, would agree that in order for Queensland's economy to prosper we need a skilled, motivated and innovative workforce. I am sure all of us want to make sure that any organisation set up to do this is truly empowered.

At the outset I put on the record my appreciation for the work of the former member for Mount Coot-tha and the former assistant minister for technical and further education, Saxon Rice, who I know was incredibly passionate about vocational education and training. Indeed, she was very passionate about the Ministerial Industry Commission. I know that the member for Surfers Paradise himself, as minister for education and training, was also particularly passionate about making sure there were lots of opportunities for school students, as well as people in their twenties and beyond, to further their technical education and vocational opportunities for those who wished to avail themselves of them.

I am sure members on all sides of the House would agree that it is important that we have an advisory body that will continue the work of organisations such as the Ministerial Industry Commission and Skills Queensland. I am sure members on this side of the House are hoping that Jobs Queensland, unlike its Labor predecessor Skills Queensland, is perhaps a little bit more balanced in its approach and its membership.

I am sure we could all agree that, when it comes to making sure the advisory body we set up is best placed to provide advice to the government about industry skills needs for the future, balance is very important. The actions of this government show that they are not necessarily seeking balance. I do have concerns—I know that these have been expressed by both the shadow minister and the LNP members of the committee—about the make-up of this advisory committee. I urge the minister to ensure the membership of this advisory committee is broad. We do not want this to be an organisation that is just listening to the CFMEU, the ETU, the Nurses' Union and other unions in this state. Many organisations and peak bodies should make a contribution to the future of vocational education and training in this state.

As we move beyond 2016 and as we look to diversify our economy, to create opportunities for the students who will complete year 12 in mere weeks and to provide a strong economic future for us, them and the next generation, in order to ensure the opportunities we provide are sound and good we need to make sure that those who are providing the advice not only have the requisite experience and knowledge but also come from broad sectors of the community.

I think it is particularly important to highlight the need to ensure rural and regional Queensland is heard. I am sure that members of this House have put this case before, but it is very important that we think about future opportunities for rural and regional communities. We need to consider the skill sets the industries and those communities will need. As rural and regional communities are perhaps trying to adapt to changing populations and to the drought and other weather events, it is particularly important that a body such as Jobs Queensland can hear their voice. They need an opportunity to put forward their unique perspective so that we are—in addition to listening to not just representatives of the unions—listening to not just people who come from the south-east corner.

As I said, all members of this House would agree that it is important that we work together collaboratively to ensure that there are opportunities for the school students of today so that they can have occupational and educational opportunities tomorrow. I look forward to hearing what the remainder of the debate brings. I note that the minister has acknowledged the recommendations that were made by the committee. I would like to pay tribute to the members of the committee, particularly my good friend the member for Toowoomba South, who I know was a strong advocate when it came to making sure that there was a broad range of membership on this committee. As I say, I look forward to hearing the remainder of the debate.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (5.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015, which is yet another plank in the Palaszczuk Labor government's plan to provide for jobs now and jobs for the future. It fulfils one of our key election commitments. The establishment of Jobs Queensland is going to give back to people who are working at the coalface their voice on skills in Queensland and provide independent advice on what skills we need in the future and those industries that need to be supported through our significant investment in vocational education and training. Jobs Queensland will advise on three main matters: identifying the skills that it anticipates are going to be needed for particular industries in regional areas, future workforce development and planning and the apprenticeship and traineeship system in Queensland.

It is particularly poignant that we are debating this bill at this time of the year, because I think that all of us are spending a lot more time than we usually do with our year 12s and watching them being so excited about finishing school and looking forward to the next stage of their lives and wondering what they are going to do with their future. It makes us really sharply aware of how important it is that those young people have the skills that are going to equip them for the future and, most certainly, that those young people do not embark on some skills and training exercise that leads them to a career that no longer exists or is no longer relevant and that they have to go through such a soul-destroying exercise. We are responsible and have a strong stewardship to provide a future for our children.

However, as elected representatives, we have an even bigger responsibility and that is to look after the interests of Queensland as a whole, to make sure that we are developing new and emerging industries and developing the skills to serve them so that we can keep our economy going now and in the future. By the end of the Newman LNP government, Queensland's unemployment rate was the highest that it had been for 11 years. So it was imperative that the Palaszczuk Labor government had a strong and proactive plan for the future. That is what we took to the election and I believe that is why we are sitting on this side of the House and the LNP is sitting on the other side.

As we see with the Jobs Queensland initiative and the government's other election commitments rolling out, every day we are seeing more and more clearly how all of those initiatives are working to provide employment opportunities both now and into the future. We have initiatives such as Building Queensland and the State Infrastructure Plan, which is not only going to deliver important infrastructure but also create real jobs across the state, and initiatives such as Advance Queensland, which is aimed at building a diversified economy for the future. We have the government's coding initiative—and a couple of weeks ago at Bulimba State School, with the minister and the Premier, I was very proud to show off what the students there are doing. They are learning skills that are going to equip them for the industries of the future. As a result, from the government's initiatives we have seen that, since the state election, 34,500 jobs have been created. That is from the initiatives of this government. I know that the LNP does not like to let the facts get in the way of a good story, but that figure speaks for itself. For those people who have those new jobs, that is what matters. It is the fact that they have those new jobs, not what the LNP says that we are or are not doing.

However, we can never afford to stay still. That is why this bill is just so important. Jobs Queensland is going to support our future employment opportunities by supporting a more responsive VET sector. When the LNP was in government, the TAFE system and the VET system were absolutely savaged. That sector experienced substantial cutbacks and fees skyrocketed, which removed incentives for people to improve their skills and employability. I cannot count the number of young people who came to see me who had finished one semester of TAFE and went back for the next semester and found, without any notice, that the fees had doubled, tripled or, in some cases, increased by tenfold. That changed completely the course of what they were going to do with their lives. Anguished parents did not know what they were going to do with their children and how they were going to make sure that they could engage in some sort of employment. I congratulate the minister on what she has done since we have come to government to address the damage that was done to the TAFE sector and to make TAFE very successful and one of the strongest vocational education and training systems in Queensland.

Earlier this year I felt very privileged to speak to the QTAMA Bill. That bill was aimed at addressing what the LNP had planned, which was a sell-off of TAFE to the private sector. Since the passage of the QTAMA Bill we are ensuring that vocational education and training is accessible to all people regardless of their ability and regardless of where they live in Queensland. That was just the first step. It was exciting to hear what the minister said in her ministerial statement today about the new partnership between TAFE Queensland and Peru and all of the wonderful things that are going to emanate from that. I think that we are all looking forward to seeing not only what happens in that regard but also what happens with the other potential partnerships now that TAFE has its mojo back.

One of the key components of Jobs Queensland is that it is an independent statutory body. It is important for industry to act independently—that is, completely free of any influence by the minister—to inform the priorities for government investment in vocational education and training. We just cannot have something so important be subject to political vagaries. I know that, when the LNP came in, it had promised to improve workforce planning and match skills development with workforce need. However, it then ignored the advice of its own Commission of Audit and its skills and training task force and established a ministerial industry commission instead of an independent body to match training with industry demand. I know that the members opposite keep saying that it was an independent body, but I cannot work out how you can have an independent body when you have an assistant minister in charge of it. It just seems to be an oxymoron.

Speaking of independence, I note some of the endorsements that were provided independently by submitters to the committee about this bill. The National Retail Association said that it was—

... fundamental to the long-term economic success this state.

The Motor Trades Association said that it had the—

... potential to assist with job generation across the State.

The Queensland Nurses' Union said that it could be an—

... important, evidence-based mechanism for dealing with unemployment and planning the future workforce needs of the economy.

United Voice talked about it—

Creating a dynamic and responsive vocational education and training... sector closely aligned with the evolving needs of industry and students can position Queensland to meet the challenges of growing a resilient economy.

Investing in skills and training is an investment in our community. The dignity of work, universal access to education and equality of opportunity are at the core of the values of the Palaszczuk Labor government. I believe that this bill is one of the pieces in the jigsaw puzzle that ensures that that is, in fact, what the Palaszczuk Labor government is successful in achieving for Queenslanders. I congratulate the committee for its very hard work on this bill and the minister for the significant achievements that she has already made. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. We were elected on a commitment to focus on jobs now and jobs for the future. Since the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power, we have recorded eight months of consecutive employment growth. In trend terms, this growth represents 34,500 jobs created in Queensland since January. Under our comprehensive Working Queensland framework, we committed to establish Jobs Queensland to reinstate the independent voice of industry on skills in Queensland.

With Queensland forecast to have nation-leading economic growth in 2015-16, according to respected economic forecasters Deloitte Access Economics, we need to ensure that we have the right skills to take advantage of opportunities created by this growth. The objective of the bill is to establish Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory entity to provide strategic industry led advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce development and planning and the apprenticeship and traineeship system. Jobs Queensland will ensure that skills are better aligned to the job needs of the future. Strategic workforce planning of this nature is imperative to ensure that we have the right skills in the right quantity at the right time.

Our ability to be competitive on a national and international scale depends upon the ability to be able to respond to opportunities in the market, areas of market growth and skills demand. Jobs Queensland will have a focus on making Queensland's VET sector responsive, strong and the most productive in Australia. The vocational education and training sector is vital to building the Queensland economy by delivering the well-trained workers required to address the needs of industry. TAFE Queensland has a vital role to play in providing training where other training organisations will not, including in regional and remote parts of Queensland, and to some of the most disadvantaged Queenslanders. We made an election commitment to the people of Queensland to restore TAFE as the

premier public provider of vocational educational and training in Queensland after an unprecedented ideological attack by those opposite. We want to make Queensland's vocational education and training sector the strongest and most productive in Australia. That is why we committed \$34 million over the next three years to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of VET in this state. That is why we committed to the creation of 100 new full-time-equivalent teaching and support staff positions. Vocational education and training is education and training for work and is a vital part of Queensland and the nation's broader educational network. TAFE Directors Australia estimates that more than one person in every street in Australia is enrolled with TAFE, describing graduates as the heavy lifters in our economy, often as small business owners and major creators of employment.

The bill before the House establishes Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory entity and sets out its core functions, most importantly to provide advice to the Minister for Training and Skills about skills it anticipates will be needed for particular industries in regional areas, future workforce development and planning and the apprenticeship and traineeship system. It is important for industry to inform the government's significant investment in VET to underpin skills development and sustainable economic growth in Queensland. The provision of independent advice about skills needs, informed by a mix of industry leaders, employer representatives, union representatives and members with relevant expert or specialist skills that form the entity will assist in informing government training priorities, the development of training strategies and programs and government investment in vocational education and training. In performing its functions, Jobs Queensland must have regard to the skills and workforce development needs of industries and communities and economic factors affecting the state. Broad employer consultation will help small, medium and large entities from across Queensland that have a direct and tangible stake in such decisions contribute towards advising government on skills and workforce development and planning matters. Importantly, Jobs Queensland will be able to carry out and promote research and market intelligence and promote public awareness of its statutory functions. The bill and the establishment of Jobs Queensland will allow critical industry led workforce planning to ensure industry can meet future workforce needs, stimulate innovation and achieve global competitiveness. Jobs Queensland will reinstate the independent voice of industry on skills in Queensland.

We were elected on a commitment to jobs: to reducing Queensland's unemployment rate by keeping jobs, creating jobs and skilling individuals to meet industry demand now and into the future. The bill will assist in meeting these commitments and accordingly I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (5.52 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. When the Palaszczuk government was elected by the people of Queensland earlier this year, we made it very clear that our focus was on jobs, jobs and jobs. Labor is committed to providing Queenslanders with secure jobs with fair wages and conditions. After the rising unemployment and mass sackings under the Newman government, we undertook to show that Labor's way—job creation without asset sales—is a better way for Queensland. It pleased me to see that unemployment has dropped in Queensland since the election of the Palaszczuk government at the start of this year. We have not flagged from our commitment to jobs for Queenslanders and this bill forms a key part of that commitment. We have a plan for jobs now and jobs for the future. The \$1.6 billion Working Queensland framework sets job creation as a Palaszczuk government core policy objective to lead Queensland to a prosperous and inclusive future. Working Queensland includes a commitment to establish Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory entity and that is what this bill is about today. Jobs Queensland will provide strategic industry advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning with a focus on making Queensland's vocational education and training sector the strongest and most productive in Australia. This independent advice will help inform priorities for the Queensland government's significant investment in vocational education and training. It will lead to a more responsive vocational education and training sector which will, in turn, help support future employment opportunities by ensuring Queenslanders' skills better align to future job needs. I am proud to be part of a government that has jobs for Queenslanders as its No.1 priority. We know that the availability of jobs is of crucial importance to the wellbeing of Queenslanders because having a job delivers so many benefits. The most obvious benefit of having a job is financial security, but through work we can also acquire a sense of purpose, identity and connection with our community.

The record of the LNP under Newman shows that the LNP do not take seriously the challenge of ensuring that Queenslanders have access to the benefits of a job. When the Newman government came to power in 2012 it trumpeted a four per cent target for unemployment in Queensland. At the time unemployment in Queensland was 5.5 per cent. Three years later, in January 2015, the Newman government presided over a 6.6 per cent Queensland unemployment rate, hitting an 11-year high. I think it is fair to say that the LNP did not have a serious plan for jobs in Queensland. Sounding off about

four per cent unemployment targets and then slashing 24,000 public sector jobs does not constitute a serious plan for jobs in Queensland. Slashing labour programs with a proven track record of delivering real employment opportunities to Queenslanders like Skilling Queenslanders for Work does not constitute a serious plan for jobs in Queensland. The LNP's atrocious track record on jobs was particularly hard felt in my electorate of Ipswich which bore the brunt of the Newman government's slash-and-burn job cuts, cutbacks to training programs like Skilling Queenslanders for Work and the axing of funds to community organisations and front-line services.

At the time of the election in January this year, the *Queensland Times* reported that unemployment in the Ipswich region had risen from 5.3 per cent in 2012 when the Newman government came to power to a staggering nine per cent. Yearly average youth unemployment in the Ipswich region went up from just over 12 per cent in the first year of the Newman government to 18.5 per cent in its final full year in 2014. I vowed at the time to fight hard to get those Ipswich residents back to work and I am proud to be standing here today as part of a government that is putting forward a key part of its Working Queensland framework. Well-targeted vocational education training is so important to reducing the high levels of unemployment, especially youth unemployment, that came about under the Newman government. The Jobs Queensland Bill aims to make the Queensland vocational education and training sector the strongest and most productive in Australia. As the minister for training noted in her speech, it is of great importance that industry is free to form an independent view on where future skills demand is likely to occur within the economy.

The government intends Jobs Queensland to comprise an independent board with a mix of industry leaders, employer representatives, union representatives and members with relevant expert or specialist skills. Jobs Queensland will give independent advice to the training and skills minister about the skills it anticipates will be needed for particular industries and regional areas, about future workforce development and planning and about the apprenticeship and traineeship system in Queensland. Jobs Queensland will also carry out and promote research in relation to these three matters and it will be required to promote public awareness of its statutory functions. This will be one of Jobs Queensland's core functions and it will also lead and work with other bodies to ensure adequate workforce planning is undertaken across the country. It is expected that once Jobs Queensland is established it will identify sectors or regions where workforce planning is required and partner with key agencies and bodies with the expertise and skills needed to undertake effective and comprehensive workforce plans.

The Jobs Queensland Bill specifies that it must perform its functions while having regard to community and industry skills and workforce development needs as well as economic factors affecting the state. As I have said, this Jobs Queensland Bill forms a key part of the Palaszczuk government's election commitments outlined in the Working Queensland framework. Jobs Queensland will help support future employment opportunities, ensure skills better align to the job needs of the future and help develop a workforce capable of supporting sustainable economic growth across Queensland. Jobs Queensland will be an independent body that will reinstate the voice of industry on skills in Queensland. Through the establishment of the independent entity Jobs Queensland, this bill forms a key part of the Palaszczuk government's plans for jobs in Queensland. For all these reasons, I am very proud to support the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015.

Debate, on motion of Ms Howard, adjourned.

MOTION

Electricity Prices, Order for Production of Documents



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Treasurer and the minister responsible for energy to produce to the House by 11 November 2015 all analysis and modelling, including draft modelling, prepared by or for the government or in the possession of the government on the impact on electricity prices of the state government policy to aggregate electricity corporations in Queensland.

It is important at the start of this debate to recap where we are. To do that, we must remind ourselves of what Labor's election promise actually is. We will all recall that, at the start of the year, there was an election and Labor had a handful of election promises. This was one of them and it is that they would merge the two electricity generators in the state of Queensland, CS Energy and Stanwell, and they would merge the three electricity network companies in the state of Queensland: Ergon, Energex and Powerlink. Since then, we have heard a chorus of complaints and concern raised by very

eminent individuals and organisations around what that policy will actually do to electricity prices in this state. They started with the ACCC and no less an individual than Rod Sims, who said of the previous Labor government—

They turned Queensland from one of the most competitive generation sectors to the least. Queensland has the most concentrated electricity generation market of the four main electricity generation states. Any increase in that form of concentration will obviously give greater market power and push up electricity prices.

He also said—

To further consolidate would mean that this entity you create would have 66 per cent of the electricity market which would clearly raise grave concerns in relation to competition in the Queensland market.

We've got a spot market for energy and having one body own 66 per cent of the energy is extremely troubling.

If you decrease competition in the generation market that can increase the cost generation and that can flow through to the consumer.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr POWELL: I hear the minister; he is arguing already with the ACCC. If he does not want to take the ACCC's advice, perhaps—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. One moment, member for Glass House. Member for Nanango, you will all have an opportunity to speak.

Mr POWELL: If the minister is not happy to take the ACCC's comments, perhaps the ACIL Allen report to the QCA is more to his liking. It states—

The new government has suggested in its energy policy a plan to merge CS Energy and Stanwell Corporation in order to reduce operating costs. If the two portfolios are merged, and their respective trading teams are also merged, then there would be an increase in market concentration.

In the past, ACIL Allen's modelling of the aggregation of the previous three portfolios into two (which occurred in July 2011) indicated a wholesale price increase due to an increase in market concentration.

An article in the *Courier-Mail*, referencing the commentary of the Queensland Productivity Commission, states—

The QPC found Queensland already had higher wholesale prices than in other states operating in the national energy market despite surging household solar use cutting consumption.

Merging state-owned generators CS Energy and Stanwell, which Labor promised at the last election, risked making it worse by reducing competition...

If that is not enough for the minister and the Treasurer, perhaps they will listen to one of their own. Of course, I refer to former energy minister John Mickel, who warned the state government that it must enhance competition through its power company merger and ensure consumers get value for money. The former energy minister said that it was important that the government kept competition in mind. He said—

My advice would be, make sure you that when you're putting things together that you enhance competition, that you don't promote monopoly—that the proper outcome for this is value for money for the consumers.

We all know how that was handled. Out they trotted Schwarto. Boy oh boy, on this side of the House we miss Schwarto! He said of John Mickel—

His advice would be about as unwelcome as an echidna in a balloon factory.

Don't we know it! Why? Because John Mickel's advice to this government is exactly what the state of Queensland needs. However, oblivious to all the expert advice, even if considered by Schwarto to be as helpful as an echidna in a balloon factory, the Palaszczuk government is proceeding with this dud policy. If they are persistent in proceeding with this policy, they must show Queenslanders the modelling. That is why this notice of motion is before the House tonight. I say to the government: put the modelling into the public market so that people can see that what Labor promises to do and intends to do will not drive electricity prices up.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (6.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'energy' be deleted and the following words inserted:

'to produce to the House in December 2015 at the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review an analysis of any anticipated impacts of the state government's policy to aggregate electricity corporations in Queensland.'

Tonight's motion is particularly galling, given the LNP's track record when it comes to both electricity prices and the future of our energy business. Let us be really clear on two counts: the LNP promised to reduce electricity prices for consumers in Queensland by \$120 per year prior to the 2012 election and in government they presided over a 43 per cent increase in electricity prices. That is one of the key reasons they are no longer in government. The LNP then made asset sales the centrepiece of their 2015 election campaign. They proposed to sell the very electricity corporations we are now talking about. Suddenly they are greatly concerned about our government businesses, what happens with them and how they are operating. However, they wanted to sell them to the highest bidder and we know that would have been to profit at the expense of electricity users.

More than eight months ago, I requested that the member for Southern Downs table the modelling associated with the asset sales; modelling that cost Queensland taxpayers over \$43.6 million to produce. Despite the member for Southern Downs telling the *Courier-Mail* that the member for Clayfield would provide that modelling to the House in due course, eight months later we are still waiting. Of course, we have not sought to take the cheap political route and compel the opposition to do that via a motion of the House. They made the statement that they would do it, they have not done it and I think that speaks for itself.

On this side of the House we have respect for the Westminster system and the cabinet process. As those opposite know, the government has provided several updates to the House in relation to the energy mergers and the process. At budget time, I advised that work was ongoing in relation to the most appropriate merger model. I advised that with these income-generating assets remaining in public hands, we have an obligation to ensure that they are operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

In framing our Debt Action Plan we gave consideration to the revised outlook for the capital requirements of the energy businesses, the benefits of the forthcoming merger and the independent advice we received regarding the capacity to move our energy businesses towards more commercial gearing levels. At estimates, I advised the House that Treasury had confirmed from their preliminary desktop work that \$150 million a year in savings was absolutely achievable. This remains the case and it concerns me that the member for Glass House was attacking the energy minister for apparently not agreeing with the ACCC, when what those opposite did was to question Treasury's advice that that \$150 million was achievable. That is exactly what they have done. Again, they are putting a blight on Queensland Treasury.

These savings will be achieved through back-of-house efficiencies including maximising administration, and technical and corporate efficiencies in areas such as boards, legal services, human resources and ICT. I advised the estimates hearing that Treasury is still undertaking the detailed examination of the merger process and that this modelling would be concluded prior to the MYEFR. This remains the case. At estimates, I stated—

... it is very difficult to provide any specific figures or additional modelling until we have settled on which entities will be merged with others.

...

... the combination of those businesses is very important.

We do not intend to release pre-emptively any of that modelling until we have some certainty about which entities may be merged with others. That also goes to the heart of not releasing too much of that work ahead of time which could cause some undue concern to people within the workforces of those businesses, not because of any forced redundancies, because we have been very clear about our position on that, but to ensure that there is no suggestion that entity A will be merging with entity B when in fact that may not be what eventuates. It is very important that we do this process in a measured and sound way. That is the work that Treasury is undertaking. As we indicated on budget day and also in answer to your question on notice, we will be providing an update at the midyear review. At that time we will be able to outline very clearly what the anticipated savings will be on an annual basis through the merger process.

Clearly, the ACCC has expressed concerns about competition in relation to the generation businesses and this emphasises the importance of undertaking due diligence as part of the merger process. I am amazed that those opposite seem surprised that the ACCC had concerns about a potential merger of gencos given that they were on the record saying so. If those opposite had bothered to read our election commitment they would also know that it said very clearly 'subject to consultation with the ACCC'. If they want to split hairs they should read the documents before attacking them.

Unlike the LNP, we are engaging with both employer and employee stakeholders to ensure they have been fully consulted on the merger activities. We fought hard to retain these in public hands. We want them to run more effectively and efficiently and to work harder for Queenslanders. That is exactly what we will achieve.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the member for Burnett, member for Coomera I would urge you to be more considered in your interjections and make sure they are not frivolous. Member for Glass House, you have been continually interjecting. I would urge you to be more considered in your interjections and not make frivolous interjections.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (6.11 pm): I rise to support the motion to seek the answers that Queenslanders deserve to know on the impacts of aggregation of our power generation companies. Electricity prices are a primary source of cost-of-living pressure in Queensland, as we all know. Rapidly rising electricity prices are not only causing direct cost-of-living pressure but also indirect cost-of-living pressure through increased costs of local council rates, water and sewerage. These have all increased due to the ever-increasing price of electricity.

High electricity prices in Queensland are impacting the economy. While small business and industry are forced to pay high electricity prices, they are not reinvesting in their businesses or creating new employment opportunities. In the Wide Bay region, electricity prices are impacting the economy and the cost of living. Electricity prices are destroying the Wide Bay economy as businesses are being forced to close and people are desperately looking for work. Business growth is minus 4.5 per cent. More businesses are closing down than starting up. This is higher than the regional Queensland average of minus 2.5 per cent.

There are 9½ thousand unemployed people in the Wide Bay region. This equates to an unemployment rate of nearly nine per cent. The Wide Bay region is home to the largest population of age pensioners. Some 14 per cent of the population receive the age pension. That is nearly double the state average. A large number of families in the Wide Bay region, some 30,000 families, are receiving a family tax benefit.

Low average household electricity consumption shows that people simply cannot afford to continue down this path, let alone cope with any future increases. Average electricity consumption in the Wide Bay region is 23 per cent. There are many instances where consumers are looking to voluntarily restrict their electricity use. These include bypassing the network through solar PVs, onsite diesel generation or large scale batteries. In the case of businesses and irrigators in the region, they are simply scaling back or shutting down operations. If network prices are not substantially reduced, the electricity sector will be sent into a death spiral, where electricity consumption will continue its downward trend, resulting in higher prices and further destroying electricity consumption across Queensland.

I spoke about this issue many times in the last term of government. I acknowledged that it took time for us to pull back the basket case that was the electricity industry. Yes, power prices did go up 40-odd per cent under our government, but the important decisions that saw prices plateau this year need to be acknowledged. We also need to acknowledge that prices went up by 300 per cent under the previous Labor government. The Australian Energy Regulator's draft determination shows that we can flatten network prices, something that Queensland is experiencing at the moment.

Families will pay more for their power bills if the state owned electricity companies Ergon and Energex succeed in overturning a decision from the Australian Energy Regulator. Queenslanders are bitterly disappointed that the government has not intervened on behalf of Queenslanders to keep their power prices down.

The Palaszczuk government is relying on the profits of these businesses to pay for their election promises, with significant evidence of price gouging of those most vulnerable in our community. This is occurring with no remorse or even acknowledgment that things can be done and were starting to put downward pressure on electricity charges.

This government's budget strategy sees 100 per cent of profits stripped out of these businesses and going back into government coffers. It might be in the Labor government's best interests to see the revenue of these businesses go up, but it is not in the best interests of Queenslanders. Unfortunately, those opposite do not seem to acknowledge the serious issue confronting Queensland.

Network charges make up roughly half of the typical household bill, and these charges will continue to rise. These need to be reduced. If these government run businesses are successful in their challenge it will mean Queenslanders will end up paying significantly more.

I am also concerned about other Labor policies that could drive up power prices. Its plan to merge electricity generators has been criticised by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, while Queenslanders are already missing out on savings because of their decision to delay retail deregulation.

Minister Bailey has already presided over an unfair hike in car registration and now he wants families to pay more for their electricity. This proposal poses many questions for regional Queensland. Removing competition from the marketplace was hoped to drive efficiency. We will move to allowing the flawed practice of exaggerated forecasts on future price paths. We need to stop Labor's flawed solar schemes being tied to electricity accounts. We need to stop the expanded capex program and the recommencement of the gold plating that Labor is guilty of. We know that Energex alone want an additional half a billion dollars in additional expenditure, all while demand for services is in decline. The government will put in jeopardy our regional providers' capacity to respond to those important callouts, particularly during disasters.

When is the minister going to accept that he cannot keep treating consumers as cash cows and come up with a plan to tackle the cost of living? I highlight the treatment of primary producers, like irrigators. The fact is that they are responsible for cutting the agriculture energy committee that had real and tangible results for the primary producers of Queensland. Those men and women were relying on true engagement and true prosperity solutions to be provided through sensible energy reform. That is why I support the shadow minister's motion. Let us hope we can get the all-important information from the government.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (6.16 pm): As I have worked in the Queensland electricity supply industry for most of my adult life, I think I am pretty well placed to be able to contribute to this debate. It is sickening to me to read the wording of the opposition's motion after what they wanted to do to my industry. They are calling for advanced details of the electricity merger proposal. They are wanting to insert themselves into cabinet processes to get an early drop on something the government has already said will be released in December this year.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock! Member for Nanango, those comments are unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr KING: This is despite those opposite, when in government, spending more than \$70 million preparing the same government owned corporations for sale without having a mandate to do so. This money could have been spent on schools, hospitals, roads and unemployment programs. The money those opposite wasted could have paid for a number of railway stations, like the one I need at Dakabin. It is money wasted. I therefore support the amendment moved by the Treasurer.

We all saw the Strong Choices ads and propaganda before the election, which the LNP is now trying to wipe from the collective memory of Queenslanders. I do not forget. Those opposite were so keen on outsourcing assets that they even outsourced the assessment and market soundings they undertook.

Let us be clear, if privatisation had occurred it would have resulted in no dividends being retained by the government for investment in essential services like schools, hospitals and roads. Instead, all dividends would have been given up to private sector owners to profit from. These private owners would have increased prices and cut jobs in order to satisfy their need for a return on investment.

It is hypocritical for the LNP to be raising anything to do with the energy GOCs—hypocritical at best. It is particularly so given we have requested the opposition release documents relating to the preparatory work done on asset sales when they were last in government, which the Leader of the Opposition so far has not done. What double standards. We gave a commitment to Queenslanders that we would responsibly reduce debt without selling our income-generating assets.

As one of the most decentralised states in Australia, it is crucial our energy generators, transmitters and distributors remain in state ownership to ensure appropriate levels of service, reliability and industry experience to maintain.

Mr Crandon: So you can gouge them.

Mr KING: You have no idea. With these businesses remaining in public ownership, we have an obligation to ensure that they are run as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Mr Crandon: What do you know about electricity anyway?

Mr KING: I might have a clue about electricity—a little bit. Simply selling the businesses off to the highest bidder was the easy option the former government were pursuing—an easy option that would have left Queenslanders worse off. Power prices are forecast to stabilise over the coming years and the decisions taken in the budget to reduce debt through equity withdrawals from Ergon and Energex have no impact on the price of electricity. Oh, no love? Changes in technology mean the electricity network businesses—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr KING: You might learn something if you listen. Changes in technology mean that the electricity network businesses are going through a period of change, where the network no longer needs to be expanded or enhanced at the same rate as before, when the businesses were making up for previous years of underinvestment and improving reliability.

As the government has indicated, the Treasurer will be updating the House at the time of the Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Review in December on the status of the electricity mergers. There is no hidden agenda. There is no Strong Choices propaganda campaign in the works. This is how structural reform is done by a responsible and measured government. We went to the election open and up-front with a clear plan. Now we are implementing that plan in consultation with the GOCs, the unions and the broader public. Government will provide, as I have said, an update on the electricity mergers process in the Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Review in December, and I would urge those in opposition to pay attention when it comes out—unlike you are at the moment. You just might learn a thing or too.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr KING: Are you finished? You might learn a thing or two. Did you hear me? I support the amendments moved by the Treasurer.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.21 pm): What a fearsome contribution that was from the member for Kallangur, trying to tell us that his knowledge of the ETU somehow tells that he knows about electricity, telling us that we might learn something when he continued with the same baseless claims that we heard from the Treasurer—in fact, parroting the Treasurer's claims that we need to wait for MYFER.

This was a very clear election commitment. It has been outlined by the member for Glass House and by the member for Burnett what Labor said before the election and what they have actually delivered since—that is, delay after delay after delay. We have heard from the Treasurer tonight that now we have to wait till December for this \$150 million worth of savings that might come from people in human resources or that might come from people in IT—'It could be entity A or entity B, but we do not want to frighten anyone because we are really not sure whether it will happen at all.' That is very different to what people in Queensland were led to believe before 31 January. There was a cast iron promise to make sure these five entities were merged into two, yet supposedly the member for Kallangur is able to tell us that he knows more than the ACCC, that he knows more than the Productivity Commission, that somehow he knows more about any advice given to the competition authority—a newbie in this place with a vested interest.

I rise tonight to support the motion moved by the member for Glass House and oppose the amendments moved by the Treasurer. We have had price rises over the last three years, but those increases started much earlier than three years ago. Network prices were locked in in 2010. In fact, it was the gold-plating of the networks experienced under the then premier Peter Beattie that helped lead to the energy wipe-outs that I and the member for Caloundra, the member for Currumbin and others who came in the 2004 election saw. Those energy wipe-outs caused John Mickel to be made the energy minister. It was John Mickel this week or last week who called on Labor to not decrease competition and in fact had to be slapped down, as we heard from the member for Glass House, by the former member for Rockhampton in that typical belligerent Labor way that we see from those opposite tonight. That was John Mickel standing up for the consumers of Queensland. But over on the other side we see Labor politicians standing up for their own jobs and those of their mates.

If the Treasurer is absolutely fair dinkum about saving \$150 million a year from these supposed mergers, the bottom line is \$150 million a year equates to 1,500 jobs. That is what they are worth—about \$100,000 each. Yet we have the Treasurer who is not prepared to come in here and tell us where exactly those people are supposed to come from, just as he could not do at estimates. Yet in their pre-election manifesto, it was all supposedly to be done by the budget that we had brought down just a couple of months ago.

The bottom line is that Labor are addicted to the revenues that these businesses provide. They gouge them for profits to prop up their budget. They rip special dividends out of them and they are still doing it. Back in 2009, when I was in this place, the then treasurer Andrew Fraser wrote to the Labor federal energy minister arguing the case for higher power prices. We have seen from the energy minister, who is to speak after me, that he has not opposed the process of making the appeal that we are about to see brought down by the regulator tomorrow.

At estimates, when the director-general of the Department of Energy and Water Supply was asked about what would happen if there were revisions to the AER determinations, Professor Simshauser said, 'But if there is a revision and it deviates from the current draft then there will be a

change in the structure of electricity prices.' The member for Glass House then asked, 'And that change will mean an increase? Professor Simshauser said, 'Depending on where the revenues go. It will follow the determination.' The member for Glass House said, 'So if the revenues go down, prices go down. If the revenues go up, prices go up.' Professor Simshauser said, 'An increase in revenue would mean an increase ...' Who benefits from the increase? The Palaszczuk government—a government whose sole budget strategy is to strip as much money out of these businesses as possible.

They went to the election on a platform of paying down debt using the revenues of these businesses. Now we are seeing a sleight of hand that we saw in the budget where the total budget in Queensland is not decreasing, but they are trying to say that by stripping money out of the energy companies they can afford to have more debt and yet Queenslanders are not going to pay. We know what is going to happen under this Labor government. We are talking about another policy failure—this failure to plan to aggregate the state owned electricity companies.

The Treasurer went to the election ignoring all expert advice in this space. There were competition issues that it would lead to higher power prices and their modelling completely ignored the up-front costs of merging businesses. That is why we do not need to wait till December. That is why this motion calls on the government to provide that modelling by early November. That is appropriate for us to be able to judge what is going to happen so Queenslanders can hopefully not suffer under this Labor government as they have before.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (6.26 pm): I am very happy to follow the member for Surfers Paradise, a member who has form when it comes to asset sales. You sold off Nyanda State High School, and that is why I am here. They remember you.

What we saw in this debate was the usual sleight of hand from the opposition. What is happening in this financial year with electricity prices? We are seeing an on average decrease of half a per cent. Yet we have LNP member after LNP member coming in here telling untruths about prices rising in the retail market. Do not just believe me, Mr Speaker; believe St Vincent de Paul. St Vincent de Paul confirmed that on average prices are decreasing this financial year—decreasing under Labor.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Compare that to a 43 per cent increase under the LNP. The 43 per cent increase over three years is like an albatross around your neck. I did a little exercise. I added up the swings against the three speakers from the LNP at the election. The swings in Burnett, the swings in—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Glass House and member for Nanango, you are now warned under standing order 253A in relation to your frivolous and continuous interjections. Please desist. I call the minister.

Mr BAILEY: When you add up the swings against the three LNP members who just spoke, it is pretty close to 43 per cent.

It is eight months and they still have not learned anything on the other side. The state election delivered a verdict from Queenslanders on the future of our electricity industry. The No. 1 message was no asset sales. The LNP went to the election urging Queenslanders to sell every part of our electricity industry to the private sector. They say we treat it like a cash cow, yet their policy was to take the energy companies to the abattoir. Every generator, every transmission line, every pole, every wire, every regional depot and every meter in every home was to be sold off to the highest bidder. Under the LNP plan, part of the money from the sale was going to pay down debt but future dividends would benefit private shareholders, not the people of Queensland.

In stark contrast to the LNP, Labor went to the election promising to keep our electricity generators and networks in public ownership to use the dividends to pay down government debt. But we also had a plan to get the best out of our assets for the Queensland taxpayer. We promised to look at examining to make cost savings through restructuring our power industry bodies into a single generating body and a single distribution body to get \$400 million in savings. That is what we said we would do. Government debt would come down at a similar rate than under asset sales, but it would still come down over time. It was a clear dividing line through the campaign.

Good government reflects the will of the people. People had their say at the election—they were very clear about it. In fact, to ensure our energy businesses can operate as efficiently and effectively as possible for us—the people of Queensland—we regeared them to operate more in line with industry

peers. This, alongside increasing the dividend payment ratio to 100 per cent, enabled the state to pay down general government sector debt by \$4.1 billion. This includes \$600 million in interest savings that helped free up capacity in the budget for schools and hospitals, not private shareholders.

The fact is that keeping our electricity assets in public hands does not mean that businesses are run inefficiently. We do it for the public. Let us look at the comments from the opposition in public. This is from the member for Clayfield only last week. They say they do not support Strong Choices anymore, but here is his comment on ABC Radio—

My view, very firmly, is that government should be the regulator of energy companies. We should have the power without the conflict to regulate them.

In other words, your policy—your member for Clayfield—is still advocating the selling off of energy companies. When we look at what Lawrence Springborg said only a month ago—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, please refer to members by their correct title.

Mr BAILEY: The member for Southern Downs said on ABC Radio—

I think it will become more and more stark as we go on from here over the next 12 to 18 months that two to three years and possibly beyond about the benefit of this for New South Wales—

that is, public asset sales—

in contrast to what this government has proposed and they may force people to come to a different conclusion.

He is still advocating for public asset sales. The LNP can spend \$100 million on modelling for GOCs being privatised, but they want us to share the modelling now. I sense a contradiction in their position—

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 43:

ALP, 42—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 41:

LNP, 41—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Pegg, Costigan.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 43:

ALP, 42—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 41:

LNP, 41—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Pegg, Costigan.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Treasurer and the minister responsible for energy to produce to the House in December 2015 at the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review an analysis of any anticipated impacts of the state government's policy to aggregate electricity corporations in Queensland.

Sitting suspended from 6.39 pm to 7.39 pm.

**ELECTORAL (REDISTRIBUTION COMMISSION) AND ANOTHER ACT
AMENDMENT BILL**

Resumed from 15 July (see p. 1345).

Second Reading

Mr WALKER (Mansfield—LNP) (7.40 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

This may well be one of the most important pieces of legislation that comes before the House in this sittings. The reason I say that is that it goes to the very fundamental issue of how people are represented in this place, how they get elected to this place and how indeed the people of Queensland properly take part in the democratic processes of this state. It has been 30 years since that issue was looked at, and 30 years ago a decision was made after the Fitzgerald years and through the mechanism of EARC. EARC at that time made a number of recommendations about Queensland's electoral system.

The first recommendation that I wish to refer to tonight was the recommendation that the Queensland Legislative Assembly continue for the time being, as the recommendation said, to be comprised of 89 members. The commission also recommended that a periodic review of the number of members of the Legislative Assembly be undertaken by an independent electoral authority every seven years. That has not happened within the last 30 years.

The second recommendation that is of importance was that the commission recommended that, for the purposes of redistributions of Queensland Legislative Assembly electoral districts, the quota of electors per electoral district should be determined by dividing the number of electors enrolled for the state, as nearly as can be ascertained, by the prescribed number of members of the Legislative Assembly—that is 89. The commission also recommended that electoral districts in Queensland should contain equal numbers of electors with a permissible tolerance of 10 per cent above or below the quota, except that where a large electorate of 100,000 square kilometres or more in area existed the quota could be departed from to an extent greater than 10 per cent, if the numbers were then affected by what we now know as the two per cent margin figure that is to be applied to those large seats.

So EARC recommended 89 seats with a review every seven years by an independent body. It recommended that the one vote, one value principle be departed from to the extent of the two per cent weightage. I will table that recommendation from EARC.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, regarding Electoral and Administrative Review Commission recommendations relating to electoral redistributions in Queensland [[1511](#)].

The situation in Queensland of course has changed considerably over that 30-year period. The population of Queensland has doubled and that does have implications for how we as members of this House have an ability to represent those who vote for us. It is probably not such a big deal for those of us, like me, who represent an electorate that you can drive around in an afternoon, but it has considerable more impact upon those in this place who represent the larger seats and the people who live in those seats.

The other important factor that needs to be considered by the House is that over that period of time, over the 30 years, the flight of people to the city has increased. When EARC made its recommendation back in 1986, 41 per cent of Queenslanders lived outside the built-up areas. That percentage has now decreased to 29 per cent, so only 29 per cent now live outside the heavily settled areas. The impact of that, in my opinion, is that this House needs to recreate the EARC process to look at whether the 1986 model is still suitable 30 years later in 2016, when this next redistribution will be carried out. So that is what this bill proposes to do—to effectively set up a mini EARC to look again at whether the rules of 30 years ago, with that tremendous change in population and the difference in where people now live, mean that the number needs to be changed or whether the weightage is still appropriate.

The proposal then is as follows: that the Redistribution Commission be expanded from three people to five people; that the people who are to be added, other than those who are there ex officio, are endorsed by every party within this parliament so that it is an absolutely independent body; and that when that body comes to do the redistribution it will also have the ability to not only distribute the seats as it sees fit—an authority we already pass to that body—but also look at whether additional seats, up to a maximum of five seats, is an appropriate thing for this parliament to adopt, given that the population has doubled since we had 89 seats, and also whether the weightage for the large seats at two per cent is sufficient or whether it should increase to another figure, and again a cap is placed on that of four per cent.

Some of the commentary has appeared to assume that this legislation will in fact mandate an increase in the number of seats or mandate an increase in the margin, but I want to make it clear that that is not correct. We are simply empowering an independent body, in the way envisaged by EARC back in its 1986 recommendation, to look at this again 30 years on and to make a decision as to how Queenslanders are best represented in this parliament.

It is clear from the evidence given to the committee as it went around the state listening to people about this and listening to our own members that it is difficult for some of our members to properly represent their electorates in the current situation. That will occur far less after the next redistribution. It is clear from the figures that are before us as to what will happen at the next redistribution. Because the growth has been in the south-east corner particularly and other coastal areas and because there is a fixed number of seats at 89, there is only one way you can add more seats to those growth areas and that is by taking them from somewhere else, by taking them from those large seats which are already large.

The evidence before the committee is I believe overwhelming—such as the evidence from the member for Mount Isa, Robbie Katter, who indicated that it was difficult to service an electorate the size of France that runs from Mount Isa to Birdsville. He said that he has had to sleep a number of nights in his car during this parliament because he has been stranded between centres within his electorate.

Mr Cripps: Next to Hughenden and Etheridge.

Mr WALKER: And all of those places that the honourable member mentions. The member for Gregory, Lachlan Millar, gave persuasive evidence that he services an area that, for example, has 57 schools in it and he has to try to adequately represent 57 schools in this place. The Clerk of the Parliament, in his evidence to the committee, said that he had produced a paper back in 2009 suggesting that the parliament needed another 10 seats and he said what would happen in his view if there was not an expansion in the number of seats, and I will quote specifically from him. He said—

It needs to be made clear, however, that the status quo (ie. no extra seats) will mean that each redistribution will result in less country and regional seats. This will result in less representation in the Queensland Parliament of country and regional people.

People might say that is okay, bad luck for those people. However, the problem is that if we do not do something those five large, original rural seats that we presently have will become four at the next redistribution, then three and then two. Mr Laurie makes the point in his evidence—somewhat tongue in cheek—that Mr Katter's electorate will end up starting at Mount Isa and finishing in the western suburbs of Toowoomba. That is what will happen. My submission to the parliament is that that is an unacceptable position and we do have to do something to stop that occurring. It is simply not satisfactory to say to the rural and regional residents of this state that that is the way things are going to end up. We do need this review and we need an independent body to have a look at whether the system needs tweaking so that that outcome, which is so unfair to many residents of Queensland, is avoided.

A government member: Gerrymander.

Mr WALKER: I think the response from the government has been disappointing and hackneyed. No more politicians; it is an easy thing to say and an easy, populist point to make. However, it is important that we do not look at it in that hackneyed way but that we look at it properly in terms of how this parliament properly represents those whom it is required to represent.

One vote, one value is an important proposition, but an equally important proposition is that people have adequate representation in this place and those propositions have to be balanced. For many Queenslanders one vote, one value means one vote, no value because their vote will not count in this House because it will be so watered down by the population trend of which I spoke earlier.

Claims of gerrymander have been put around, calling back—

(Time expired)

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (7.50 pm): I rise to speak in relation to this private member's bill and indicate that the Palaszczuk Labor government will be opposing this bill. We do this because we stand up for Labor principles. I stand up for the people of Queensland and with the people of Queensland to oppose the return of a gerrymander from the bad days of Joh. I stand with the people of Queensland to say now is not the time to create more jobs for politicians instead of jobs for ordinary Queenslanders. I stand with the people of Queensland who value one vote, one value.

I have listened to the contribution of the member for Mansfield and heard him say this is a serious debate, and it is. However, from what we have just heard one would think this is a very insignificant matter. The submissions from the member for Mansfield were that this is just updating the act, but it is

so much more than that. Let's be clear what this bill proposes to do. It proposes to allow an external body that is made up of people not elected by the people of Queensland to decide whether there should be extra politicians, allow this extra body to be increased in numbers and require the LNP to approve who those members should be. So it is to expand the body, give the LNP the right to decide who goes on to it and then give them authority to decide how many extra politicians up to five.

The member for Mansfield claims that this is about transparency and accountability, yet even the LNP did not bring this bill before the House when they were in government. They are bringing it now because they are in opposition in a minority government and they will do anything they possibly can to try to win at the next election.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Will members cease interjecting and allow the minister to be heard.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I ask for that comment to be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry; was this by the member for Lockyer?

Mrs D'ATH: It was extremely offensive.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, I ask you to withdraw.

Mr RICKUSS: I withdraw.

Mrs D'ATH: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Palaszczuk Labor government is about supporting jobs. We are dedicated to jobs and strengthening the economy in this state. This is why this week we have put through the Building Queensland Bill. That is why we are debating the Jobs Queensland Bill. That is why we are pursuing Advance Queensland to create new innovation, new job opportunities and new businesses in this state. It is Labor that is investing in jobs, infrastructure, health and education in this state, and that is what the people of Queensland want us to do. That is what the people of Queensland want us to be debating in this House each day, not coming in here slinging mud and looking for any opportunity to try to get a leg up to win the next election not based on policies, not based on the economy, jobs or policies of any sort, but to come in with these sorts of initiatives—initiatives that have not been widely consulted on. The member for Mansfield said to the committee when it comes to consultation—

Miss Barton interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask the member for Broadwater to cease interjecting, please. The minister has the call.

Mrs D'ATH: When asked by the committee what consultation had occurred in drafting this bill, the member for Mansfield said that he had consulted the LNP team and he and his wife had travelled around to some electorates including Vaughan Johnson's electorate. That is fine, but that is not consultation with the people of Queensland. They did not go to the election saying this is what they would do. Were they going to do it if they had formed government? Nothing was ever mentioned of this initiative until they ended up in opposition.

I want to take up this point about the size of the electorate. I get the arguments that those in regional seats find it difficult to represent their electorate because of the large size of their electorate and its geography, and that was recognised with the Goss reforms. There was bipartisan support to give a two per cent weighting. That was recognised. It is also recognised by the fact that regional members in large electorates get extra resources. They also get two electorate officers to help them represent their electorate.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: Those issues are recognised but we cannot just look at a regional seat and say, 'It is hard to represent such a large geographic area so there must be an increase in a weighting to move away further from one vote, one value,' without looking at the rest of the state.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: it is hard to represent a high-density electorate of over 30,000 voters—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Mermaid Beach please cease interjecting as with a number of other members whom I will not name at this particular point in time.

Mrs D'ATH: It is just as hard for members—

Ms Simpson interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the member for Maroochydore is going to interject, you need to do so from your own seat. I call the minister.

Mrs D'ATH: It is just as hard for someone in Brisbane Central, Surfers Paradise or even the seat of Mansfield where there is high-density living, when there are so many more people to try to reach out to and engage with in the nature of a member's work. We know in regional seats—

Miss Barton interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Broadwater, I have asked you once before to cease interjecting. The minister has the call.

Mrs D'ATH: Every member in this chamber gets an equal vote. So to say that all of the constituents of a regional member do not count and that they do not have a say in this chamber is just misleading. For every single one of us once we get in here, it is one vote, one value; we are all equal, no matter what size the electorate and no matter how many voters.

I take the point about the size of the electorates. There is no justification for increasing the weighting from two to four per cent based just on the geography. I will say this, because I am the only one in this chamber who can say this. I have been a federal member and I represented over 90,000 voters with two extra staff—one office, two extra staff. It can be done. An honourable member can represent more voters. They can do their job properly.

Mr Rickuss: You got voted out. You got voted out.

Mrs D'ATH: I remind the member for Lockyer that I got a 17½ per cent swing—remember that.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer!

Mrs D'ATH: We have to take this argument of the LNP to a final conclusion. There are 89 seats in this parliament. There are 30 members of the federal parliament from Queensland and we are being told that 89 seats is not enough in Queensland; we need more politicians; we need an extra weighting for regional seats. They have not actually justified their argument. They have put no facts up. They have not consulted with the people of Queensland. It is all about trying to create extra seats and bringing back the gerrymander so that they can get back into government and stay there for a long time.

The Leader of the Opposition should know better. He more than anyone should know better. He came in in 1989, and the Leader of the Opposition knows the work that went on with the Goss reforms to actually come up with the system we have today. Those reforms had bipartisan support; they were important reforms.

The reason why they have not changed since is because no-one wants to go back to the bad old days of Joh Bjelke-Petersen and the gerrymander. Go out and consult the people of Queensland to find out what they really think. I am not saying that sometime in the future there will not be a need to increase the number of politicians in this House, but what I am saying is (1) you do not outsource it; and (2) the fact is that right now what this state needs and what the people of Queensland are crying out for is jobs, investment in infrastructure, investment in education and investment in health. That is what they want, not extra politicians.

When I go to my electorate and I am asked, 'What are you spending our taxpayers' dollars on?' I will tell them that I stand up for the people of Queensland and their jobs. I stand up for one vote, one value, and I stand up for the fact that we do not want a gerrymander back in this state. To paraphrase Paul Keating, this bill shows us what the LNP and the Leader of the Opposition are really all about. You can just see the Leader of the Opposition with a group of school kids on a tour around Parliament House talking about the Joh and Russ Hinze days, showing them pictures and telling them proud stories about the 'white shoe brigade', the public servants whose lives were destroyed, the honest cops who were punished and 'the joke'. Then the Leader of the Opposition smiles and proudly says, 'This isn't history, kids; this is the future.' This is serious. This is not a joke to me. This is about the people of Queensland and standing up for them.

Ms Simpson interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I have asked the member for Maroochydore to cease interjecting if you are not sitting in your own chair. Member for Maroochydore, you must not be interjecting. I call the minister.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am passionate about this. This is not a minor change; it is not a technical change; it is not just modernising the act—it is a slippery slope, and one that I do not support.

Mrs SMITH (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (8.01 pm): I rise this evening to support this bill. This bill is an honest piece of legislation to achieve real electoral reform for all Queenslanders. The argument we have just heard from the Attorney-General was flawed and filled with emotion and politics, and I will explain why when I address the issue of the large electorates and the five seats that are struggling.

My electorate of Mount Ommaney is 30 square kilometres. It is fairly easy to get around; I can probably do it in about 20 minutes. I can get to local school events and community events, and my constituents do not have far to come and see me when they have issues involving child safety or the police. The committee went around to the large rural and remote electorates and listened to what the people were saying. They said that they do not get enough representation and they do not get to see their members. A classic case in point is Billy Gordon, the member for Cook: in nine months he still has not got around to his second electorate office.

Government members interjected.

Mrs SMITH: I am loving it now! You want to make this personal and it is not; it is about the rural and regional people that we met. We will look at the facts, which I found very interesting. Since 1986 the population of Queensland has increased by over two million, or 79 per cent; the number of seats in this House has increased from 82 to 89; and we have seen a 505 per cent increase in the Public Service.

We went to Napranum and Bamaga in the Torres Strait, and those councils did not feel that they were being supported. They said that they supported all three points of the bill that the member put up. The member for Gregory wants to get out and see his constituents and represent them, but his electorate covers over 330,000 square kilometres which, as we pointed out, is larger than Victoria and Tasmania. The reality is that 330,000 square kilometres is a big area to cover.

Mayor McGrady was very interesting because, as a former Labor member, he had a lot to say. He told us how good he was in his electorate and he told us about all the things that he could do, but it was interesting to look back at how big the Mount Isa electorate was when Tony McGrady was a member of this House. Can you guess how big his electorate was? It was only 40,000 square kilometres and it is now 570,000 square kilometres! When the size of the Mount Isa electorate was increased, Mr McGrady said, 'With the changes in boundaries, I am now inheriting problems from the new areas in my electorate because of our isolation.'

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! This is going to be a long night. Everyone is going to have a lot to say about this topic, so if we could just keep the excitement down to a minimum that would be excellent. I call the member for Mount Ommaney.

Mrs SMITH: This is very interesting, because Mr McGrady was talking about the period after his electorate had been increased from 40,000 square kilometres to 195,000 square kilometres. He said, 'With the changes in boundaries, I am now inheriting problems from the new areas in my electorate because of our isolation.' So he was having issues back then, and the issues for the poor member for Mount Isa now are—

Mr Power interjected.

Mrs SMITH: Yes, and he is sleeping in his car! The member for Logan does not want to hear about rural and remote people having the same representation and having the same access to their member. The reality is that if you do not support this bill you are saying that the people in regional and rural areas do not have the same—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Logan and the member for Mount Ommaney need to bear in mind that this is not about a conversation across the chamber. I call the member for Mount Ommaney.

Mrs SMITH: I very much support this bill. At the end of the day people want to have proper access and representation, and that came through loud and clear when we went to Napranum, Weipa, Mount Isa and Bamaga. It took the Torres Strait Islanders, who had to come over to Bamaga for the day to see us, half a day to get there so they could express their opinions. We face challenges in this state that are unique to Australia. We have large regional and remote areas, and as I understand it this unicameral parliament with only 89 members has one of the lowest percentages of representation throughout all the states. This is about taking out the politics. It is about representation for all people of Queensland. I support this bill.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (8.07 pm): I rise to make a contribution in opposition to the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill. It is an innocent enough sounding name for a bill that is nothing but a disgraceful attempt by the LNP to diminish democracy in our great state. I want to focus my comments particularly on the proposal in this bill to increase the malapportionment: the proposition to amend the so-called large district weighting from two per cent to four per cent.

In short, this is a proposal to increase the bias in favour of rural seats in the Queensland electoral system. It is a return to the unfair electoral system that was in place before the Goss government changed the laws in the aftermath of the Fitzgerald inquiry. Yet we are here actually debating a bill from the LNP to bring back a form of gerrymander. In my inaugural speech I observed how lucky we are in Queensland to enjoy a strong, robust democracy and how much I value that. We have universal suffrage, rule of law, free and fair elections, independent media and a vibrant civil society. Of course, during their stint in government those opposite did their very best to diminish our democracy. They gagged civil society organisations, they disenfranchised vulnerable groups with unnecessary voter ID laws and they opened up the flood gates for large, anonymous political donations. Queenslanders rejected these anti-democratic measures. But the member for Mansfield—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Lockyer, if you continue to interject, I will warn you under standing order 253A.

Dr MILES: But the member for Mansfield is not satisfied. He is having another crack, and this time the target is equal suffrage—the concept of one vote, one value. There is no more important principle of democracy than the notion that each of our votes should have equal weight in determining which party forms government. I expect that most Queenslanders would be surprised to know that in Queensland not every vote does have equal value. There are five seats in which a vote is actually worth more than one. It is a reflection of our geography—a measure designed to ensure that residents in the most remote parts of Queensland have access to their elected representatives.

I accept that there are difficulties in servicing large geographic constituencies. I know that the members in those seats work really hard and travel enormous distances in their electorates. I was in Mount Isa recently and heard from the honourable member just how far he had travelled in that week alone. I support them having additional resources and support to make that task easier, but there is absolutely no good reason to increase the bias in favour of regional seats and diminish our democracy—not at a time when technology is decreasing the tyranny of distance in ways not even contemplated when this rule was first introduced.

Right now, a rural vote could be worth as much as 1.8 times a city vote—nearly twice as much. Under the proposal of the member for Mansfield, we could see a situation where a country vote was worth more than 4½ times as much as a vote in the electorate of Brisbane Central.

What it comes down to is this: I cannot and will not say to the voters of Mount Coot-tha who put me here, ‘Your vote is worth a quarter of the vote of another Queensland.’ I will not say to them, ‘In our democracy you are worth less than a Queensland from Warrego or Gregory.’ It is not a reflection at all on the members or the people they represent; it is me defending the rights of my constituents. I could not in good conscience claim to be representing my constituents and support this bill. I could not go back to my electorate and tell them that I supported a bill to further reduce the value of their vote relative to others. I cannot believe that the member for Mansfield has sold out his constituents by bringing this bill, which only serves to diminish the democratic power of the people who elected him.

The motives are obvious. So desperate are they to claw back power, so desperate are they to finally make the member for Southern Downs Premier, that they will sell out their constituents in urban and coastal seats to curry favour with the crossbench and give themselves a chance of picking up an additional malapportioned seat.

The result of these changes is obvious if we consider what would have happened if these rules had been in place at the last election. The LNP would have gained an extra seat. It would have changed the outcome of the election. That is the motive here: if you cannot win, change the rules.

Mr Watts interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, I understand that you have already been warned today by the Speaker. I would ask you to cease interjecting.

Dr MILES: I challenge the member for Mansfield to stand with me at the Toowong Village shops on Saturday morning and explain to my constituents why he wants their vote to be worth less. In fact, I challenge the member for Mansfield to stand at the Bunnings on Wecker Road on Saturday morning and explain to his constituents why he is proposing a bill that diminishes the value of their votes. I will even come, too. I do love those sausages!

What I find truly extraordinary is that the LNP opposition persists in bringing bills to parliament just like they did during their days in government. They bring bills to parliament that propose significant changes without undertaking a hint of public consultation. There was no attempt to gauge the support of their constituencies. They had no interest in a public discussion about the problems they claim to be fixing. They certainly have no mandate from the people of Queensland at an election. It is as though they have learned nothing. Their attitude is arrogant and anti-democratic, just like this bill.

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (8.15 pm): The first thing the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha could do is go to his electorate and tell the truth, because none of what the members of the government have said today in any way tells the truth. Indeed, none of the things they claim are in this bill are actually in this bill.

I would just like to give members opposite a little history lesson. We have heard false and dishonest claims tonight by members opposite that it was the Goss government that introduced the legislation that established EARC. It was not. It was bill No. 106 of 1989, the Electoral and Administrative Review Act, that established EARC and PEARC in Queensland. It was established in a—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: And how he squeals when he is caught out.

Dr MILES: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Previous speakers have clearly made reference to the Electoral Act 1991, not the initiation of EARC.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr SPRINGBORG: There have been numerous references tonight to the process that was established by the Goss government that saw the process for the existing Electoral Act in this state. It is not true that the foundation stone of that was laid by the Goss government. The foundation stone of that was laid by the National Party government of the day, with Russell Cooper, with the bipartisan commitment of Wayne Goss as opposition leader. It is a great pity that the bipartisanship that existed then to address issues that needed to be addressed does not exist today.

There is another interesting lesson from history. The zonal system that was recommended against by Tony Fitzgerald had its initial manifestation in establishment by the Hanlon Labor government. It was carried forward under the Nicklin, Pizzey and Bjelke-Petersen government and beyond. The other thing—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will thank the member for Sandgate to cease interjecting.

Mr SPRINGBORG: The other thing the Leader of the House conveniently overlooks is that on not one single occasion between 1957 and 1989 did the Labor Party receive more than 50 per cent of the vote in this state—on not one occasion. On the first occasion they did; in 1989, they won the election. The interesting thing—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I know that we are seeing some apoplexy on the part of the Leader of the House. The Leader of the House does not want to hear this. Indeed, when that which had its genesis in this act—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: If we could all just try to keep things to a minimum, we will get through what will be a long night.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Indeed, in that election the Labor Party won 54 seats, the Liberal Party won nine—one was overturned by the Court of Disputed Returns, so 10 seats became nine—and the National Party won 26. With the abolition of the zonal system, a new electoral system came into being. There was also a recognition in the new Electoral Act that there could be a consideration of a special dispensation in seats of over 100,000 square kilometres, or of two per cent of geographic area, which

could be converted into 2,000 voters. That was because the Fitzgerald process gave recognition to the fact that there should be a consideration and, at the time, there was bipartisan support for that consideration.

The interesting thing is that, at the following election, each of those political parties—the Liberal Party, the National Party and the Labor Party—received within one per cent of the vote they received in the 1989 election. The National Party won 26 seats, the Liberal Party won nine seats and the Labor Party won 54 seats. So with the new, fair electoral boundaries there was no change in the number of seats within the Queensland parliament and the votes were almost identical. So that gives a different perspective of what happened that the members opposite do not want to know.

The other thing that also needs to have some consideration—

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: When people cannot debate, they do a lot of screeching. When they do not want to talk about the things that are of historical fact, they will act in the way that the Leader of the House is acting. The process that grew out of this legislation in 1989 and also from the first report of EARC was that there should be a seven-yearly review. That did not happen, probably because of the sensitivity of the minority coalition government between 1996 and 1998. It would not have happened under the Beattie-Bligh governments, because they had no interest in it and it certainly could not have happened under a Newman government, which had a huge and seemingly insurmountable majority.

The opportunity to do these things come very rarely. Certainly, when you are going into a redistribution cycle that comes around basically every eight years, or three terms, that is the appropriate time to review electoral boundaries. When it comes to politicians' pay, I hear ridiculous arguments over and over again. I have never engaged in that, because we always eviscerate ourselves to the nth degree. We eviscerate ourselves into a vortex that gets us nowhere. They are cheap political arguments and they serve no-one's interests.

In 1989, we had a population of just over two million people and in this place we had 89 seats. In 2015, we have a population of around 4.6 million and we still have 89 members of parliament. Since the parliament was established in 1859, the numbers of members in this parliament have increased periodically. It is somewhat passing strange that, despite that, with the population increasing by around 100 per cent since 1989, the number of public sector employees in this state has increased fivefold—from 40,000 to 200,000. People do not talk about that in the same way as they talk about the issue of representative democracy.

Regardless of where those seats are located and whether there may be a special consideration, ultimately, what happens is that we end up cannibalising one part of the state in order to deal with population increases in other parts of the state. The population has still increased in those other areas of the state but not at the same rate as has occurred in other parts of Queensland. Because of our refusal one way or the other, we have walked away from one of the recommendations of EARC, which grew out of the Fitzgerald process, and have not gone through the periodic review every seven years.

Another matter that deserves some consideration is that nowhere in this bill does it say that that special consideration should go from two per cent to four per cent. The bill says that independent commissioners can consider that. Nowhere does it say that the number of seats should go from 89 to 94. It says that the commissioners can consider that. It was interesting to listen to the Attorney-General, who stood up in here and accused the LNP of wanting to appoint the independent electoral commissioners. At the moment, the only person who can appoint the three independent electoral commissioners is the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General has no compunction about appointing the electoral commissioners but has us believing that she is going to do that in the best interests of Queensland. This bill proposes a tripartite approach where the three political parties would agree on the independent electoral commissioners. That is reasonable.

I think that it is completely and absolutely unreasonable for a government not to properly consider the issues of the effluxion of time and the problems of population increase and not having enough seats. Even the Commonwealth parliament grows in numbers from time to time. Despite the fact that the New South Wales parliament has an upper house, it has grown in size.

The Attorney-General did not tell us that we also have a Senate that comprises around 72 members. So on this issue of special consideration, Western Australia has a special electoral consideration for remote areas, as does Canada and the UK. Indeed, over the years in the UK the Labor Party has been advantaged the most from that special consideration.

This bill deserves a greater degree of consideration in an historical context than what it has received tonight. It certainly deserves consideration, because if we do not do this tonight, we will suffer the consequences somewhere down the line in unrealistic, disproportionate representation in certain regions of this state.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Before I call the member for Ferny Grove, I would like to acknowledge members of the Greater Mount Gravatt-Mansfield Lions Club who are in the gallery tonight.

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (8.26 pm): I rise to oppose the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. I want to touch briefly on the three objectives of this bill. Firstly, we have heard from the architect of the bill that the membership of the Redistribution Commission is to be increased from three members to five members. The second objective is to determine the number of electorates, subject to a maximum increase of up to five additional electorates—so increasing the number of electorates from 89 to 94. The third objective is for the Redistribution Commission to have the capacity, at its discretion, to increase the weighting in electorates from two per cent to four per cent.

I indicate that only 16 submissions were made to the inquiry into this bill by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which I chair. I think that demonstrates the interest that was shown in this legislation that is before the chamber tonight. On 25 August in Parliament House the committee held a public hearing on the bill. The committee also travelled to Mount Isa; Weipa; Napranum, which is an Indigenous community close to Weipa; Bamaga, which is up in the cape; and Cairns.

I thank the committee members for travelling to those areas. That showed the commitment that the committee had in getting out into rural areas so that people in those areas could get an understanding of the bill that was before the committee. It was an enjoyable opportunity for me to go to some of these Indigenous communities again. I had travelled to some of them in my past career in the Senate. Some of those areas had undergone some changes. It is always a joy to visit those Indigenous communities. I thank Brett Nutley, who is employed by the Queensland parliament, for his assistance in organising the appropriate access into those communities.

Some of the previous speakers to this bill have said that the objects of this bill originate from the Fitzgerald inquiry. The Fitzgerald inquiry noted that there were concerns about the electoral boundaries, which were seen to be favouring the government of that time, allowing it to retain power with minority support. It was a system under which the electoral boundaries were determined that was of particular concern.

I turn now to those amendments in the bill that increase the size of the Redistribution Commission. The member for Mansfield—and neither did any evidence that was presented to the committee—made no case whatsoever to increase the composition of the commission. In fact, the Electoral Commissioner, when giving his evidence indicated that, if that were to happen, there would be a need to cut staff. During the hearing into this bill by the committee, Mr van der Merwe indicated that there would be a need to cut staff. He stated—

The Electoral Commission runs a very tight budget. If I have to put two extra staff on I am going to have to make some cuts somewhere along the line.

Once again we will see the opposition go down the path of more jobs cuts in the community. Where do those opposite stand on this? They are pushing this agenda all the way through which will mean more job cuts for Queenslanders.

I now turn to the proposal in regard to the number of seats in the Queensland parliament and the weightage of the original seats from two per cent to four per cent. I ask members to look around this chamber and count how many vacant seats there are. I can count. I went well in maths. I count three. If it was put to the Electoral Commission that the number of seats be expanded to five, there would need to be substantive changes to this chamber. There would be disruption and, no doubt, cost to the taxpayers to make that occur.

Secondly, since being elected this Labor government has had its eye, as indicated by the Attorney, on jobs for Queenslanders. Conversely, those opposite are focusing on jobs for more parliamentarians and to reintroduce the gerrymander in this House. There has been a lot said about representation. There are 30 Queensland federal members and 12 senators. Do the sums. There are 42 representatives in Queensland who quite adequately go about the state. Admittedly, for about 20 weeks a year they are in Canberra so they are outside their electorates, not like some of the members here who are closely associated with the electorates that they represent. I make that point.

One witness concisely summed up what this means in terms of jobs and what people are thinking about this particular bill. I refer to the Hon. Tony McGrady, the Mayor of Mount Isa. He provided evidence to the committee and said—

I do not think people know or particularly care.

...

I think the average punters out there are more interested in jobs and the economy than politicians fiddling round with electoral boundaries or increasing the number of politicians because there are more important things to do than to be ... putting this on the agenda at a time when we have major issues in the resources sector and the unemployment figures are rising.

That is a learned colleague who has been in this chamber, was a Speaker and is now Mayor of Mount Isa. Interest in this bill was extremely scarce. At no stage did the committee observe any groundswell of public support for any increase in the number of electoral districts in the state of Queensland. Thirdly, should this bill be accepted, we will return to the bad old days of the Joh era where the principle of one vote, one value is further eroded by placing more weight on the value of voters in rural seats to those in the majority of the 84 other seats in this state.

It might be rare for us on this side to use examples of Liberal members' contributions but on this rare occasion I do. I reflect back to 1991 when the member for Toowong, Mr Beanland, then leader of the Liberal Party, stated this in his contribution for the electoral system we currently have in this place—

It is quite apparent to everyone that today Parliament is being asked to rubber-stamp a new gerrymander for this State. An examination of the proposal and an analysis of its defects reveals that even EARC admits, on page 169 of its report, that a 1 per cent arbitrary rule would make little difference but a 3 per cent allowance would overcompensate and produce unfairness. Therefore, the commission plucked out of the air the possibility that enrolments could vary by as much as two to one, which would allow phantom voters to be counted as real voters in a number of western and northern seats.

This is the real issue in respect of this weighting being increased from two to four per cent. He went on to indicate, and I concur and agree with his comments—

... no allowance for the high number of non-English speaking people who may be voters in a number of city electorates, the high transient populations in a number of city electorates, and the problems caused to State members in those electorates in communicating with their constituents.

These views were also canvassed and expressed before the committee. Fourthly, this bill is deficient. It is a fundamental disaster. The drafter has missed any opportunity to fix a remedy. Nowhere in the bill does it provide for any guarantees to increase the number of electoral districts in the parliament—nowhere whatsoever. I think the architect of this bill agreed with that position. It merely provides a mechanism for the Redistribution Commission in considering whether the number of districts should alter.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr FURNER: But there is no guarantee—no guarantee, you knucklehead!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! We will wait for the House to come to order. Member, I think I detected some unparliamentary language there. I ask you to withdraw and I also remind you to direct your comments through the chair.

Mr FURNER: I withdraw it. Therefore, we could end up sustaining the number of seats we presently have or adding somewhere between one to five seats. Once again, there are no guarantees in this bill whatsoever. Professor Orr argued against further diluting the one vote, one value principle which is presently only diluted by the existence of the five additional large districts. He applied the example of while Mount Isa has a population density about 1/6,000th of the inner seat of Brisbane, an electorate like Mount Isa is very difficult to service. He expressed concerns with the practical impact of this objective of the bill and said—

If the proposal were adopted, an electorate like Mount Isa would shrink physically—rather than expand to the southern border, as it risks doing. It may need barely 10,000 electors. If all five of the vast electorates shrink, a sixth north-western electorate will certainly have to be born. Votes in those electorates may then be worth two to three times more than those of other Queenslanders. I fear that stretches contemporary ideas of citizen equality to breaking point.

Effectively, this bill is as useful as an ashtray in a motorbike. I reject the bill.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! The House will come to order! I am on my feet! Before I call the member for Beaudesert, I remind some members that previous Deputy Speakers and the Speaker have already issued some warnings in respect of the standing orders. If interjections continue, those warnings will be acted upon. I call the member for Beaudesert.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (8.37 pm): In rising to speak in favour of this bill tonight as a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee that examined the bill and conducted a very wide-ranging inquiry that took us all across Queensland and involved public hearings here in Brisbane as well, it is clear that this bill is about ensuring that all Queenslanders, wherever they live, are properly represented in our parliament. The committee heard from many people supporting the proposals put forward in this bill to give the commission the option, as the member for Ferny Grove has pointed out, to add up to five seats to this House, the option to expand the weightage for large electorates from two to four per cent and to make some other changes to the Redistribution Commission.

We heard especially from Indigenous people in Cape York, from the Napranum Shire Council and other areas of the Torres Strait who were very supportive of the proposal put forward in this bill, particularly people from the electorate of Cook, because they experience firsthand the issues that come from a lack of access to their representative. It is a big issue in the electorate of Cook, it is a big issue in the member for Mount Isa's electorate and it is a big issue in the electorates of Gregory, Warrego and Dalrymple because the distance involved for people to properly access their representative is a big impediment to them being truly represented in this House.

It is not only distance—and we will hear a bit about distance from the member for Gregory—but also there are weather issues. For example, for a lot of the year it is impossible for members to get around the electorate of Cook. We heard also that people want to see their representative face to face. They want to sit down across the table from them and tell them about the issues that they face. If this bill is not adopted and we keep the present electoral system, the ability for those people to be properly represented in this House will continue to diminish. They deserve to be heard. All regional Queenslanders deserve to be heard just as much as those Queenslanders who live in South-East Queensland or other provisional cities.

Contrary to what some people will say, this bill does not introduce or reintroduce any type of gerrymander and I put that on the record. Since 1992 we have had a system that allows for a large electorate allowance. This bill does not change that situation whatsoever. In 1992, EARC made a recommendation that there be an allowance for large electorates because of the distances involved and because of their remote locations away from Brisbane and other major centres. It was recognised that remote Queensland electorates need an allowance because of the challenges people face in accessing their representatives. The changes proposed in this bill are an evolution of the EARC recommendations. In fact, the bill implements one of the EARC recommendations, which the Labor Party never implemented—that is, to review the number of seats in this place.

In 1986, when we last expanded, there were about 2.65 million people in Queensland, which is an average of 17,500 electors per electorate. Now we still have 89 members, but the population is 4.75 million people, which is 33,500 electors per electorate. There has been no change in the almost 30 years since those changes were made. This bill simply implements the last recommendation of EARC, which is something that the Labor Party committed to doing before assuming government in 1989 but failed to do through the various iterations of the Electoral Act. I compare that to New South Wales, where a slightly higher number of electors is represented by each lower house seat, but we always forget—certainly some members opposite have forgotten—that they also have an upper house, which affords extra representation to people in rural and regional New South Wales.

One vote, one value is a vital concept for Queensland and this bill does not take that away. However, we live in a system of representative democracy and one vote, one value is just one aspect of our representative democracy. One of the other aspects—and this came out in the report and it came out in all of the submissions—is that people need to be able to access their representative. If we do not adopt this bill tonight, the ability for people in rural and remote Queensland to have fair and equal access to their representative is going to continue to diminish over the ensuing years, which is simply unfair for rural and regional Queenslanders. If two or three members of parliament cover most of mainland Queensland, how will those people be well represented? How will they drive to the electorate office? I have one of the biggest electorates in South-East Queensland, but still it is less than an hour from anywhere in my electorate to my office. In some cases, we are talking about it taking almost a day to drive from a home to the electorate office or conversely for a member to travel from his or her home to another place in the electorate.

We have a conflict of two principles and we need to resolve that conflict. We need to remember that Queensland is different in that we do not have an upper house. We have single-member electorates and people need to have access to their representatives. Robbie Katter, the member for Mount Isa, has given some excellent examples of the challenges he faces in serving his electorate, such as having to sleep in his car on the side of the road when travelling between places. The member for Gregory, my

friend Lachlan Millar, has commented on the number of people in his electorate. There are 57 schools in his electorate. How can the children at those schools fairly expect to see him in a three-year cycle when the electorate is so big?

The Indigenous communities want this bill to pass. The committee report contains great supporting evidence from the Clerk of the Parliament and other academics, who support an expansion of the parliament. We must give the option to the commission to expand the size of the parliament and also the size of the Redistribution Commission, and to introduce bipartisan appointments to that process as well. I support the bill and I urge the House to do so as well.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (8.44 pm): I rise to make a contribution in the debate on the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. As the Attorney-General has already advised, the government is deeply opposed to this bill. I go back to when my government introduced our first budget. Our first budget centred on jobs: creating jobs now and creating jobs for the future. On the day after the budget, the opposition came into this House. Was it a policy proposal that was put forward? No! Was it a commentary on the budget? No! It was a bill about having more politicians in this House. It was not about jobs for Queenslanders. I think that tonight Queenslanders and families would be absolutely appalled if they tuned in to watch a debate about the opposition wanting to create more politicians in this state. Why is this House not debating issues around health, education, service delivery or cost-of-living issues? This LNP opposition is focused on one thing, which is themselves.

Mr Walker interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My greatest fear, member for Mansfield, was if Campbell Newman had been re-elected to this place there would be a change to the electoral boundaries in this state. That was my greatest fear. Even Campbell Newman did not put in front of this House what the member for Mansfield has introduced on behalf of the opposition. We have clearly seen an attempt to bring back Joh's gerrymander in this state. Each and every one of them should be totally and utterly ashamed. I ask the member for Mansfield: where have the principles of the Liberals gone? They have gone forever from this House.

I remember growing up in the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era and I want to forget it. Those were the bad old days. I remember attending rallies. People used to be silenced. What the opposition is proposing is wrong and it is disgraceful. My government will stand up for the principles of integrity, accountability and a fair electoral system. That is what the people of Queensland elected us to do.

I put this to the House and the people of Queensland: when, during the election campaign, did any one of those opposite stand up and pledge that they were going to introduce a bill to change the electoral system in this state? Not once did they do that. Not once did we hear any election commitment in relation to changing the electoral system in this state.

Tony Fitzgerald would be shocked at what is before the House tonight. Let us go back in history and look at the Fitzgerald reforms. The Fitzgerald report outlined the problem when the electoral system does not have the confidence of the community. This bill does not have the confidence of the community. It was never put to an election. It was never debated in the election campaign. They are trying to sneak it through because they are desperate to get power in this state. They cannot do it through the fair and democratic system, so they want to create more jobs for more politicians and change the zonal system, bringing back the gerrymander.

In his report, Mr Fitzgerald pointed out—

A fundamental tenet of the established system of parliamentary democracy is that public opinion is given effect by regular, free, fair elections following open debate.

A Government in our political system which achieves office by means other than free and fair elections lacks legitimate political authority over that system.

He went on to say—

The fairness of the electoral process in Queensland is widely questioned. The concerns which are most often stated focus broadly upon the electoral boundaries, which are seen as distorted in favour of the present Government, so as to allow it to retain power with minority support.

That is what was happening and, following the changes recommended by EARC, a fair electoral system was put in place.

I have heard arguments in here about the larger electorates. When I travel around the state I know how hard the members of each and every electorate in this state work. Not once has one of those members complained to me about not being able to do their job and represent the people of Queensland in this House—not once. The answer is that we can always look at additional resources where they are

needed. We heard from the Attorney-General that when she was a federal member of parliament she represented 90,000 people and had four staff. I have not heard any member from those larger electorates say they cannot do their job. What we are seeing tonight is a cunning plan by those opposite.

Ms Simpson: Have you ever slept in your car to get across your electorate?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Maroochydore, your interjections are not being accepted—

Ms PALASZCZUK: As the former Speaker, I would have thought you would have known better.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Premier! Member for Maroochydore, I will warn you on the next occasion if you persist with your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Even Denver Beanland, a former Leader of the Liberal Party, said in 1991 that ‘the legislation does not adhere to the principle of one vote, one value. The Liberals back then even believed in one vote, one value. Those Liberals are gone.

The member for Mansfield should go and put to his electorate that he no longer supports one vote, one value in this state.

Mr Walker: We haven’t had one vote, one value for 30 years.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Go and put that to your electorate. I am happy to go and put it to your electorate and see what reaction I get.

The legislation we are considering tonight is clearly an attempt by those opposite to bring about changes to the electoral system and bring back the gerrymander.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We all know who the Leader of the Opposition’s political hero is? We have heard that time and time again. The Leader of the Opposition’s political hero is Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Whichever mastermind of those opposite came up with this proposal is an absolute disgrace.

We have said very clearly that we are opposing this bill. It is unfortunate that it got to the stage where it was brought into this House. We do not support the creation of more politicians in this state. My government is focused on creating jobs. Today, we very clearly saw a market-led proposal that will create 1,300 jobs in South-East Queensland and relieve traffic congestion. That is what Queenslanders want to hear. They want to see that this government is delivering for families out there. They want to see jobs for their children. They want to see jobs in their communities. They want to see this government focused on them and not on ourselves. That is what each and every one of my members will do right across the state.

In conclusion, I want to say one thing to the member for Mansfield and the LNP: Sir Joh would be very, very proud of you. The rest of Queensland will be totally and utterly appalled.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (8.52 pm): The Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 is about ensuring this parliament is representative and provides reasonable representation. Our sparsely populated geography means that weighting is essential to achieve equality of representation. This government says it is about consultation. The Premier said the government would consult the public more. What was really meant was consultation for urban Queenslanders because the government does not support giving remote constituents the same ability to consult with their representatives.

Vast electorates mean that constituents have fewer opportunities for direct interaction with their MP. The member for Gregory, during the public hearing, said—

... the access of constituents to members is in no way comparable to that of city electorates which can be driven across in minutes ...

The member for Mount Isa has had to sleep in his car twice this year when trying to get home. More resources can never be a substitute for representation. Rural weighting ensures reasonably sized and manageable electorates.

The LGAQ is aware that people in rural and remote areas of Queensland are potentially disenfranchised due to the large size of their electorates. In the last 30 years Queensland’s population has almost doubled from 2.5 million to 4.5 million, and the size of electorates has almost doubled from 17,000 to 33,000 constituents. The federal electorate of Leichhardt is smaller in area than the state seat of Cook. The state seat of Gregory is larger than Victoria and Tasmania combined. The Clerk of the Parliament said—

No extra seats will mean that each redistribution will result in less country and regional seats. This will result in less representation in the Parliament of country and regional people.

He said that there is a real possibility that the seat of Mount Isa could begin at the outskirts of Toowoomba. Technology cannot compensate for face-to-face contact with a human being and cannot replace members. Mr Ouma of the Napranum council in Cape York said—

Technology is a facilitator. At the end of the day an on-the-ground, person-to-person meeting is how you get to the real issues that each electorate wants to address. You can have an office in a big city somewhere and just dial in to your electorate, but you still have the distance, you still have the disconnect.

Two hours north in my electorate there are many areas where phones drop out, where internet access is inefficient. My own electorate office has been inaccessible by both phone and internet for two days earlier this year and again for three days last month.

The Clerk said the size of the electorate affects all members. He said—

In ... what they can realistically hope to achieve with the increasing workload—and technology has not made it easier; it has made it much more difficult.

He advised—

It is inevitable that there will be pressure for more resources to assist members who will increasingly struggle to service their electorates and perform their other duties.

Extra resources for existing members are likely to cost much more than extra members.

The former member for Mount Isa and the local mayor, Tony McGrady must have had his ALP hat on the day he spoke to the committee. He definitely was not speaking as someone who fights for people living in remote Queensland. He told the committee, and this was mentioned earlier—

There are more important things to do than to be putting this on the agenda.

He has changed his tune. When he was a member of this House he told the parliament in October 1991—

The humble electorate office is the real hub of activity for any elected member. Different parts of the state place different emphasis on the role of the member's office. I tend to believe that the further away from Brisbane one goes, more importance is attached by the people to the activities of the member's office. In Brisbane and in other regional centres, people have direct access to government departments. However, in the more remote areas the electorate office performs the work and offers the assistance and advice to constituents that in the main—or in the large centres of population—are performed by Government departments.

With the changes in boundaries, I am now inheriting problems from the new areas in my electorate. Because of our isolation, I am finding it more and more difficult with my present staff to perform in the way which I believe is required.

His electorate was much smaller than it is now. The government's one vote, one value mantra is hypocritical. It is not used to elect Labor Party officials. It is not used to select delegates to conventions. It is not used in preselections. It is not used to select the state parliamentary leader. If we do not support this bill, there may come a time when these disparities grow so large that the parliament is no longer viewed as a representative body. This bill provides the right combination of measures to ensure that all Queenslanders are adequately represented.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (8.58 pm): I may be new to this parliament, but I know that the Queensland people have a very long memory and a deep suspicion of any attempts to undermine our electoral system. For too long Queensland lived in the shadow of a gerrymander, but we cleaned up this state and we must remain vigilant against slipping back to this dark past.

There has been no justification put to support the introduction of this bill, other than it is—and I acknowledge it is—very difficult to cover a very large electorate. I have no doubt that it is very difficult. I have no doubt that consulting with constituents is difficult when the drive between houses is hours and not minutes. It would appear that the 150 members of the federal parliament whose electorates are even larger and the 76 senators, who represent an entire state, are able to manage.

I believe that this bill is a distraction and a distortion of the priorities for this parliament. I recently attended the Youth Parliament and what struck me as I sat in your chair, Mr Deputy Speaker, was the diversity on display in this chamber. As I told the group of talented young leaders, I long for the day that our own parliament reflects the diversity of our great state. I believe it is a much higher priority for all of us to ensure that we reform our political structures to deliver the election of more women, more Indigenous people, more culturally and faith diverse people to this House.

I am constantly asked at events how can we get more women, young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or culturally diverse people into this parliament. Not one person has ever raised with me the need for smaller electorates. And certainly no-one has ever said to me, 'You know what we need? More members of parliament—more of the same.' Coming from an incredibly diverse electorate based in Logan, I know the efforts required to service people from non-English-speaking backgrounds, people with low literacy and vulnerable families.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: Mr Deputy Speaker?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Logan and member for Lockyer—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Lockyer, I understand that you have been previously warned. If you persist you will be warned. The minister has the call.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am not disrespecting distance as a real issue, but I think these additional needs that I have just listed are just as important, and they cannot be fixed by more politicians or by changing weightings for determining electoral boundaries. Given Queensland's very recent history and the long memories of Queenslanders, I urge all members of this House to think very seriously before a move back in time in the direction of malapportionment. Do we really want to tell the voters of Everton or Clayfield or Aspley or Mansfield that their vote is worth less than those who live in Warrego or the Southern Downs? I would need to see a better justification for interfering in our electoral system than geography and population density. With 225 cultural groups creating Queensland's multicultural society and contributing to the success of our state, a much higher priority for me is making our parliament reflective of our community and relevant to our community.

Ms LEAHY (Warrego—LNP) (9.02 pm): I rise to support the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. I will outline what the current outdated electoral distribution formula will do to the electorate of Warrego and why there is therefore the need for this legislation for rural and regional representation right across Queensland.

A fundamental principle of our system of government is representative democracy and that all citizens have reasonable access to their elected representative or the opportunity to question their local member. As a representative of the third largest electoral district in Queensland, the Warrego electorate—an electorate larger than the state of Victoria; the only district in Queensland that has both a New South Wales postcode and a South Australian postcode—I am speaking from firsthand knowledge of the people and the communities.

In 1991 Warrego amalgamated with the former electorate of Balonne that was abolished at the same time the electorate of Roma was abolished and merged with the electorate of Western Downs. In 1999 Warrego assumed almost two-thirds of the Western Downs electorate and in 2008 the Murweh shire was returned to the electorate, and it expanded eastward toward the Condamine River and Jimbour Creek to gain an area, including the town of Jandowae, from the Condamine electorate. This cumulative expansion of electorates occurred well after PEARC and EARC reforms and well beyond expectations. So let us look at the number of members who represented the area of Warrego prior to 1991. There was Howard Hobbs, Don Neal, Russell Cooper and Brian Littleproud. Now one member is doing the representation work of four previous outstanding members of this House.

We have heard earlier speakers talk about what has not happened in the last 30 years in relation to the periodic reviews of the number of members of parliament and the increase in the average number of electors in each district. There has also been growth in the Public Service. In fact, under this state Labor government the predicted number of public servants is increasing at a rate of about 20 per day. The whole-of-government expense for each of these public servants is approximately \$93,000. Therefore, it is costing the taxpayer approximately \$1.8 million per day. If Queenslanders are worried about the cost of a few more members of parliament, then they should be shocked and they should be shaking in their shoes about what it is costing them per day for the increase in the number of public servants under this Labor government.

The Warrego electorate expands from Jimbour Creek in the east to Cameron Corner in the west, where the South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland borders meet. A King Air aeroplane can fly from two hours from one side of Warrego to the other and you will be closer to Adelaide than Brisbane when you reach the western boundary. If this legislation is defeated, who knows how long it could take. It could take four hours to fly a King Air from one side of Warrego to the other after the next redistribution.

I ask the question: would the residents of Brisbane tolerate it if they had to drive seven hours to see their local member face to face? That is how long it takes the residents of Thargomindah to drive now to see their local member or for their local member to drive to see them. People only work for eight hours a day. If this legislation is voted down tonight, those constituents and many others across rural and regional Queensland will have the current unacceptable drive time doubled or trebled or worse.

Telecommunication improvements and staffing should not be taken as an excuse to take away a constituent's fundamental right to speak with or question their local member in person. Telecommunications have improved. However, there is much more work to do across the Warrego electorate to reach the metropolitan telecommunication standards.

I often compare with my great advocate for central Western Queensland the member for Gregory, my neighbour to the north, and I know that other members of the five large seats also face similar electoral challenges. Warrego comprises 5½ local government areas; two different hospital boards; 17 hospitals and clinics—one major regional hospital being that of Roma Hospital, which is desperately in need of replacement; 57 schools, including the School of Distance Education; 26 police stations; 16 ambulance stations; 17 fire stations; numerous state government employee houses and major departmental regional offices; thousands of kilometres of highways, state controlled roads and local government roads; and two key railway lines.

In recent times in the Surat Basin there has also been the experience of the development across the resources industry. At the peak of construction there was an extra 30,000 people in my electorate, placing pressure on infrastructure that was not designed for those population increases. Even after many of the resource workers have returned home, there is the added complexity of dealing with the downsizing issues. This could happen in any regional electorate. Without the support of this legislation, the larger electorates will have to contend with more square kilometres, more distance—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Warrego, we will wait a couple of moments because your own members, the member for Gaven and the member for Albert, are interjecting on your speech.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango and member for Lockyer, I have already issued a warning to the entire House that the next person who interjects will be warned under the standing orders. I call the member for Warrego.

Ms LEAHY: They will have to contend with more distance between constituents and the member and more infrastructure to maintain, and they will also have to deal with the peaks and troughs of the resource industry development as they come and go.

I also want to raise the issue of forced council amalgamations that decimated elected council representatives in rural and regional Queensland under the Beattie Labor government. Prior to 2008, across Warrego there were 104 elected councillors who did that job not for the pay but for the fact that they wanted to improve their community. There are now 41 councillors elected across the electorate of Warrego. There is a clear trend here and, unless this legislation is supported, history will continue to repeat itself, and rural and regional Queenslanders will receive the Labor style second-class democracy.

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (9.09 pm): I rise to oppose the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 mainly on the basis that I fundamentally support one vote, one value. There are a number of inclusions in this bill which must be opposed for no other reason than the fact that it was developed without any information being given to the people of Queensland. It came in after, as the Premier said, we put our first budget down. There was not any widespread community consultation or any independent expert review. Probably one of the most anticipated reports following the Fitzgerald inquiry would have to have been the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission's report on Queensland's electoral boundaries. I clearly remember many organisations, including the Citizens for Democracy, strongly advocating along with the ALP for the fundamental principle of one vote, one value.

Since the implementation of the EARC report on electoral boundaries, which was critical of Queensland's zonal system, finding that it was contrary to a fair system for voters and unacceptable in a modern democracy, Queenslanders have had no appetite to turn back the clock. They have no appetite for terms coming back like 'gerrymander'. They have no appetite for terms like the 'phantom voter formula'. They have no appetite for voting based on size, not people. People vote, not trees or acres of land, but those opposite want to return to bad old days where square kilometres of land count in lieu of voters and people.

Although not totally convinced, the ALP went along with the recommendations of EARC and a two zonal system was agreed to at the time due to the small weightage recommended and, in reality, only six electorates would be affected. The Liberal Party was totally opposed to this, claiming that it was a multizonal system. Where are they now? Where is the member for Mansfield now standing up for what the Liberal Party's values were back then?

The Labor Goss government and the Hon. Matt Foley struggled with the EARC report on this issue as Labor opposed weightage and the zonal system but had a strong desire to deliver Queensland a system based on integrity, honesty and fairness. Although they disagreed with the departure of one vote, one value due to the small amount of weightage—two per cent—and the independent and open

redistribution process, the weightage proposed was acceptable mainly due to the fact that the outcome did not favour any particular political party, but this bill turns it all on its head. We hear those opposite saying, 'We are only giving them options'—options of doubling the weightage. If they really want an independent view, why give them any options? Why not leave it open to them to decide what it is they can do? Why stipulate anything at all? Because we know exactly where those opposite want to go.

A small group, not the parliament, is given the option of increasing the number of electoral districts in the Legislative Assembly from 89 to 94. Why 89 to 94? What if they decide there are to be fewer or more? Why not just keep it open? Because we know what is behind this. There are other provisions that can only be described as a means to frustrate the appointments to the Queensland Redistribution Commission.

While I understand the EARC possible reasoning for a weightage in its report in 1990, I believe many of the issues it raised about representation—and even those that are raised here today; yes, there are some rural areas that are very big but you are not going to get 10 members representing that rural area and, other than that, there is no way that you are going to diminish the size of those rural areas—relating to increases and advances in technology are no longer relevant today. Back in 1990 mobile phones were the size of bricks and the internet was only just being established.

Ms LEAHY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. There has not been advances in those rural and regional areas in relation to telecommunications. The member is misleading the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Warrego, there is no point of order. Before I call the member for Brisbane Central, I remind the House that there is a general warning that members are to desist interjecting. The next person to interject will be warned under the standing orders.

Ms GRACE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I was saying, and for the benefit of my rural colleagues, back then mobile phones were the size of bricks, the internet was only just being established, social media was not even heard of, emails practically did not exist and texting was not even in the English language. Things have definitely changed since the 1990s. Communication technology has significantly improved, and to suggest a doubling of the weightage even as an option in this day and age is totally unnecessary and smacks of wanting the good old days of gerrymander back and don't we want them back!

I know the voters of Brisbane Central support one vote, one value and do not accept for one second that their vote is worth any less than those in rural seats and vice versa. I strongly support one vote, one value. This bill is totally unnecessary, and I urge all members in this House to oppose what is clearly a bill that wants to go back to the good old days of gerrymander in Queensland.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (9.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of this bill. I know everyone in this House works extremely hard in their electorate. This is not about people not working hard or not working hard enough. Everybody in this House works hard for their constituents. This is about geography and distance. Like all members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, my responsibilities to my constituents are twofold: to know their needs and to represent their needs in parliament; and to assist them in dealing with the state government legislation, services and departments in their daily lives.

For some members, there are very few departments or services that impact on their constituents. They may have three or four schools in their electorate, but they may have a hospital as well. They may never have dealings with departments such as mines, land or water. They can drive across their electorates in 10 or 15 minutes or even an hour. The seat of Gregory covers 327,000 square kilometres—larger than Victoria and Tasmania combined.

As the member, I deal with eight local governments, four separate health and hospital boards administering 20 hospitals and outpatient clinics. Gregory covers two different districts within the Department of Transport and Main Roads, and two key rail routes, the southern east-west line and the central east-west line incorporating the key Blackwater Bluff coal freight hub, as well as thousands of kilometres of state roads vital to Queensland's freight task and to bringing a large proportion of Queensland products to market and port.

I represent 57 schools, 26 police stations and 25 ambulance stations. A seat like Gregory involves representing front-line public servants on issues such as state government employee public housing as well as the many constituents who engage with these state government agencies as customers. Every one of the state government departments has daily relevance to Gregory's people, even Fisheries.

From the time available to me to meet with my constituents and to represent their issues, I must deduct the time spent travelling between the 39 different communities, only two of which are connected by a commercial air flight. To give the House an example, it is not unusual for a constituent to travel

from Jundah to meet with me in my office in Longreach or Bauhinia to my office in Emerald, both of which are roughly a 500-kilometre round trip or five hours in a vehicle. Could you imagine asking a constituent in Brisbane to travel to Dalby or to Kingaroy to see their local member?

I had the pleasure of opening the Quilpie show, and it is no show without their favourite son and former member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson. I took off from my home town of Emerald at 3.30 in the morning, picked up Vaughan in Longreach at about 9 am after having a cup of coffee and a yarn. I hit the road to Jundah to catch up with the mayor and the locals at Barcoo shire for lunch and made it to Quilpie by about six o'clock that night to open the show the next morning. That is a typical trip for a member in a big seat. The members behind me—the members for Mount Isa, Dalrymple, Cook and Warrego—experience that on a weekly basis.

When EARC recommended the implementation of a system based on a single population quota of electors to members, it allowed for a particular concession to be applied in seats over 100,000 square kilometres. Further to this, the five large electorates were granted a second electorate office and one extra officer to staff it. Gregory is one of those seats. While the population concession and the second office are of assistance in ensuring better access for constituents, the access for constituents to its members is still in no way comparable to that of city electorates which can be driven across in 15 or 20 minutes or even regional electorates which can be crossed in a single return trip.

Some have tried to argue in the public discourse about these matters that advances in communication and digital technology have corrected that disadvantage. This is simply untrue. It is exactly these very large electorates where constituents struggle physically with poor internet and telephone coverage, few transport options apart from private vehicles and a lot of dirt roads and distances.

All of the obstacles to fair representation that existed in 1990 essentially remain. What has changed are the boundaries, which have been rearranged and expanded as more and more seats have been pushed to the coastal areas of Queensland, especially in the south-east corner. The reason for this is that the number of seats has not increased since 1986 while the population has virtually doubled. The population quota system then dictates that the larger electorates would expand their boundaries to provide for smaller electorates in the more densely settled parts of the state. I do not think this was ever EARC's intention. In November 1990, EARC recommended that an independent electoral authority review the number of members of parliament every seven years. The intention was to keep pace with population growth. By not implementing this recommendation, I believe we have condemned rural and remote Queensland to lesser representation than other Queenslanders. At the same time, we are happy for regional and rural Queenslanders to pay their taxes and charges like every other Queenslanders while they enjoy lesser benefits.

The issue is exacerbated because the continual expansion of the large seats under the quota system largely ignores the natural geographical boundaries of Queensland's districts and the very real human cultural boundaries created by these differences. I believe this is dangerous because it undermines people's sense of being part of a community of common interests, which is so vital to the functioning of our democracy. The loss of representation has been further exacerbated by the forced amalgamations of council in 2007 which repeated all the insults. The only way to overcome this situation is to increase the total number of seats so that the five large electorates are not further reduced in number and expanded in size. The bill would achieve that outcome in a way which is not politically partisan. Rather, it vests the decision in an independent body which can review the number of members—up to a maximum of 94—in the best interests of Queenslanders and of Queensland democracy.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (9.21 pm): I rise to speak against the member for Mansfield's Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill. Last year this chamber paid tribute to the Hon. Wayne Goss, former premier, on his passing—one of the truly great politicians to have ever served our great state of Queensland. Of Wayne's many achievements, perhaps the most significant was the ending of the infamous Joh Bjelke-Petersen gerrymander, whereby the Liberal-National coalition was able to draw the Queensland electoral map to suit themselves. It was Wayne Goss and the Labor Party that removed this electoral farce, casting aside an absurd system that was as obvious as it was deceitful.

It is therefore nothing short of remarkable that the member for Mansfield would try and drag such an archaic, corrupt and unfair system back from the dead with the introduction of the Redistribution Commission Bill. This bill will grant the electoral Redistribution Commission the power to allow an electorate with a size of over 100,000 square kilometres to exceed the 10 per cent limit of the electoral voter quota by four per cent. At the same time, it will give the commission the power to introduce as

many as five additional seats into parliament. Currently, these large electorates can receive as many as two per cent of their electoral votes as notional votes to help them meet the quota. This proposal before the parliament today would double this.

Our system of government in Queensland, as it is in almost every other democracy in the world, is based on the concept of one person, one vote. Each Queenslanders—no matter where they come from, rich or poor, rural or urban—has an equal say in who represents them in parliament and ultimately who forms the government of the day. To reintroduce the Joh Bjelke-Petersen gerrymander would disenfranchise the vast majority of Queensland voters in a way that would, in the words of Professor Graeme Orr in his submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, ‘stretch ideas about citizen equality to the breaking point’.

If this bill were to be passed, when the people of my electorate of Ipswich West go to vote, they would do so knowing their vote was not worth as much as others. The opposition must take Queenslanders for fools if they genuinely believe the Bjelke-Petersen stain on our state’s history would be so quickly forgotten. Yet, as we saw with the introduction of compulsory voter identification laws, the LNP is more than happy to disenfranchise Queenslanders’ right to vote if it means improving their electoral standing.

It is equally shameful that the member for Mansfield would argue for such draconian legislation under the guise of pretending to care for the interests of rural Queenslanders. No-one knows more than me about how important it is to fight for rural Queensland. Every day I go into battle for rural Queenslanders to ensure they have access to the opportunities, services and infrastructure that urban Queenslanders enjoy. I am proud to be a member of a government that stands up for rural Queenslanders. In the short time we have held office, we have delivered policy after policy specifically targeted to benefit rural Queenslanders. Whether it be the inquiry into the Grantham floods, the doubling of the amount available to local councils for TIDS funding, the extra funding for the schools of distance, increased state school funding, legislation supporting ethanol biofuel, the reintroduction of objection rights for mining or the increased funding for wild dog management programs, the Palaszczuk government has shown its willingness to tackle the issues important to rural Queensland.

Just today I visited Fernvale, which was blasted by a storm cell yesterday. I was able to see the good work of our government’s emergency services swing into action, and I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the efforts of those dedicated men and women of our emergency services who are working so hard to get Fernvale back on its feet. If those people opposite were interested in improving the infrastructure and services for rural communities like Fernvale, then they should take it upon themselves to bring forward sound rural policies instead of wasting this parliament’s time with the bill we have before us today.

It was the hard work and sensible policies that saw the late Wayne Goss create the representative system that we are fortunate enough to enjoy today which affords every Queenslanders an equal say in deciding our state’s future. If we are to continue his good work, it is the responsibility of the current Labor government to condemn the member for Mansfield’s bill. For these reasons, I urge the members here tonight to reject the bill. In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for their hard work in reviewing the bill.

Debate, on motion of Mr Madden, adjourned.

MOTION

Order of Business

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.28 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That government business orders of the day Nos 2 to 13 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ELECTORAL (REDISTRIBUTION COMMISSION) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed, on motion of Mr Walker—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (9.29 pm): I rise to support the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill. I acknowledge that over the last two elections about 90 MPs have passed through the parliament. Most of the MPs who have spoken tonight, particularly on this side of the House, would have never been through a redistribution. I know that the member for Mirani has been through a redistribution. His seat was abolished in 2008, but he is a good member of parliament and as a number of elections have been held he has regained a seat.

I fully support this bill that has been put before the House by the opposition. One of the reasons why is that in the last redistribution we saw three seats in rural and regional Queensland abolished and placed in Brisbane. We are fighting tooth and nail to try to keep open our railway tracks, hospitals and schools. One of the frustrating things is that, as we are seeing a lot of closures and cutbacks in rural and regional Queensland, there is also that real decline. Because of the closures and cuts we see many constituents move from the rural areas into the city areas. Then because so many people have moved from the rural areas, a number of seats are abolished because the number of constituents no longer reaches 34,000. So they are abolished and merged with other rural seats and another seat is created in Brisbane. In rural and regional areas we have had that proper representation from the beginning, but we have to travel further and further and it becomes harder and harder.

In the last redistribution the seat of Fitzroy was abolished, which was then held by the current member for Mirani, Jim Pearce. There was also the seat of Charters Towers, which was mine. It merged with the seat of Tablelands and is now called Dalrymple. The seat of Cunningham and, likewise, the seat of Darling Downs were also merged to become the seat of Condamine. As we saw those seats abolished, they were not put back into rural and regional Queensland. They did not equalise the balance so that we would have that fair representation. Instead, they abolished those seats in rural and regional Queensland and they put them into Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast.

I say this because I continually hear about the gerrymander. However, politics is normally about what suits someone and is in their best interests at that particular time. I remember when Peter Beattie went to the 2001 election and he campaigned 'just vote 1'. He did that supposedly because it was in people's best interests and he wanted to allow the candidates to choose the party they wanted to vote for and not have preferences go to anyone else. I remember when the Liberal National Party merged. With regard to the campaign of 'just vote 1', some people would vote for the National Party, some people would vote for the Liberal Party and some people would vote for the Labor Party. So the Liberal National Party would find their vote split and a Labor MP would get over the line. That was when we saw Beattie win 66 seats back in 2001. When the Liberal National Party merged, it was just 'vote 1 for the Liberal National Party'. The Labor Party then had a bit of a problem because they campaigned on 'just vote 1' and they saw the Greens vote and other particular votes; people were looking to where they would put their vote and they realised that the Greens were also saying 'just vote 1'. So they came up with this great theory of bringing in compulsory preferential voting—this was under the Blich-Beattie government—because they thought it would advantage them. Here they were promoting 'just vote 1' because it benefited them, but then they started to promote the compulsory preferential voting because the Liberal Party had merged. With regard to redistributions, the one vote, one value argument does not stack up because we have massive electorates out there.

I support this bill because of seats like Gregory. In the last redistribution we saw five seats abolished, and when it all stacked up three seats were merged into Brisbane and we in rural and regional Queensland were left with three fewer seats. Then we saw seats like the Burdekin stretch from Townsville right down to Bowen into Collinsville, Hinchinbrook stretch from Townsville to Innisfail and, likewise, Mirani stretch from Mackay to Rockhampton. We have another redistribution coming up and I believe electorates are going to contain an average of 34,000 constituents. I could pick up another 2,000 or 3,000, the member for Mount Isa will probably pick up another 3,000 and, likewise, the member for Cook and the member for Gregory. Quite a number of rural seats will have to pick up those numbers.

Honourable members must remember that over the years we have seen cutbacks and closures so we are fighting. That is why we keep coming here and fighting for rural and regional Queensland's interests to keep jobs and to keep the regions sustainable. We are fighting against rural decline. We get less and less and then we get fewer seats and when it comes to our representation in parliament there are fewer and fewer of us but there are more in the city. I have no problem with regard to the city having their fair share because they have their fair share of votes. However, we do not want to keep going backwards. That is why I wholeheartedly support this bill before us.

Back in 1985 or 1986 there were 82 seats here in Queensland. The Electoral Commission acknowledged that each member of parliament had the issue of representation because it was a very difficult job. I say this and I mean it; it is a difficult job to represent our constituents with a large majority.

They acknowledged that and at that time there were about 17,000 constituents per seat and there were 82 members of parliament. So they increased it to 89. That was 30 years ago. We are now in 2015 and are going through another redistribution. We are still at 89 seats 30 years later and nothing has changed. If this bill is not supported tonight, we are probably going to see five seats abolished again in rural and regional Queensland. We will probably see Gregory come into the area of Mirani, which the member opposite now represents. We will see seats like Mount Isa go into the seats of Gregory. Likewise, the seat of Warrego will start taking in parts of seats on the coast. Members of parliament on this side of the House will be affected and affected severely.

This bill is about a common-sense approach. The Electoral Commissioner uses his discretion with regard to the number of seats and whether it will be increased by one, two or three or up to five and, likewise, the weighting system. If the boundaries stay as they exist currently, the member for Mount Isa, who has 550,000 square kilometres, which is bigger than France, will have 750,000 square kilometres, which is almost the size of Europe. Likewise, the seat of Cook at 219,000 square kilometres is going to increase to 260,000. The seat of Gregory, which is about 330,000 square kilometres will increase to about 450,000. It is not going to end. The parliament needs to look at this with a bit of common sense and bring a little bit of balance and a bit of sensibility to ensure that we have fair representation. Honourable members may know what it is like. Rural and regional members may travel for 1,000 kilometres from one function to another and there will be no mobile phone coverage in between. Yet people say that we have technology now and this is representation. That is an illusion. In the two seconds remaining I say that I commend this bill to House and I fully support it.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (9.39 pm): I rise to speak against the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. On 31 January this year we saw the power of the Queensland electorate; an electorate who after three years emphatically showed their disdain for a government who had an historic majority in this House, a government who it was envisaged would be in power for multiple terms; an electorate who for three years was being dragged back to the 1950s by an LNP government hell-bent on putting their own jobs before the best interests of their constituency. It was an LNP government that wound back civil unions, stripped working conditions, picked fights with the legal fraternity and medical professions and sacked thousands of hardworking public servants. But the electorate spoke at the ballot box, rejecting these outdated policies and bullyboy tactics, instead voting for a consultative, modern Labor government. This Labor government remembers what happened during the dark days before the Fitzgerald inquiry, and we also remember the public's response to the manipulation of electoral representation. It seems, however, that those opposite have forgotten, despite—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Coomera, I will warn you with the next interjection.

Mrs O'ROURKE: It seems, however, that those opposite have forgotten, despite the bipartisan agreement of the Fitzgerald recommendations. Unfortunately, what this bill shows is that this opposition has learned nothing and instead is on a mission to undermine the power of the Queensland electorate. This bill is nothing more than a desperate attempt by a desperate opposition to put themselves back into government at any cost.

The member for Mansfield states that this bill is intended to promote fairness and transparency, but the reality is you can dress it up and call it what you want; it is still a gerrymander. Queenslanders are smart enough to see this bill for what it really is: a blatant attempt by an opposition to manipulate the electoral system for its own political purposes. While the Palaszczuk Labor government is tirelessly working to create jobs for everyday Queenslanders, this bill shows that the opposition's only job plan is to create more jobs for themselves.

As Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, I understand the geographical challenges of many regional MPs. I was in Mount Isa last week and I would like to thank the member for Mount Isa, who showed me a small portion of his electorate. It is electorates like Mount Isa where the vast distances are most apparent. I am absolutely of the view that those in big electorates deserve extra support, and that is what they currently receive. But I strongly believe that the approach taken in this bill is not the right way to address the challenges that come with having a large electorate. At the end of the day, the last thing that Queenslanders want is more politicians. They just want politicians to get on with the job, and that is what we are here to do. It is for the reasons that I have detailed that I cannot support this bill.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (9.42 pm): It is with an enormous sense of frustration and anger that I rise to speak in support of this bill tonight. I have a lot personally invested in this bill. I may only be here for the longevity of this parliament, but there will be a legacy after this that will resound for longer and play a significant role in the future of Queensland.

I do not think it comes as any surprise that in most cases money from government gravitates towards where the voting areas are. It happens all the time, and I think that is a proposition everyone can accept. I think everyone would accept the proposition that there is a dwindling population in rural and remote Queensland and therefore there are fewer seats. There are more seats in Townsville and Mackay and there is more propensity for the money to go there. I love going through the examples. I have to pick on Townsville because it is my nearest neighbour. A couple of years ago they got \$24 million for Blakeys Crossing. Out in my electorate we have the biggest fertiliser plant in the Southern Hemisphere. It has 38 kilometres of road to seal off so it has all-weather access. There are about 900 workers there and none of them work in Mount Isa. It is not a Mount Isa issue; they are Brisbane and Townsville workers. But it does not get money primarily because we do not have the seats out there.

A deficit of infrastructure and policies go through this House beyond the term of this government, whether it is Liberal or Labor. That happens because we do not have the seats, and I think that is a proposition everyone can agree upon. The population is dwindling because there is less opportunity because we are not investing. There is a deficit of policies and investment. I will go through a catalogue of them if you like. The transmission line is going to hurt our competitiveness in energy in the North West Minerals Province. Little things like the year 7 transition; people leave town. Railway cutbacks; people leave town. There is a deficit of investment and we keep losing people. So they gravitate to the city, which means there is more reason to have more votes in the city. It is a self-manifesting problem. If we do not do anything about it, like with this bill tonight, it is going to get worse. It is not my electorate we are talking about, it is the state. If you want industry to grow, you need investment west of the Great Divide. We are not talking about creating more seats, we want to preserve what is there. They are rural and regional seats with rural and regional issues. We are losing the battle anyway; we are just trying to keep what is there.

I have a personal investment in this because I live my life like this. I will give you an example of a working week for me. People in Mount Isa say, 'Rob, we never see you.' I think, 'Bloody hell!' I think I am in Mount Isa all the time and I think that I am not in Brisbane all that often, so what am I doing? My house is like a motel. I cannot connect with friends in Mount Isa. Here is a typical drive for me. I will do eight and a half hours from Mount Isa to Georgetown in one of the far reaches of my electorate. Over 90 per cent of that time I am out of mobile range, so telecommunication does not mean a thing. If I am going through a town, I will make a couple of insignificant calls because I am racing through there. I do not get a rest because I need to get to the place where I am going to meet people. I do not have time to check my messages when I am there because I need to engage with the people who are the whole purpose of my being there. Then I will hop back in my car. Late at night I might get a chance to check some messages, in which case I do not get a chance to call my family or other people. I get up early and drive back eight and a half hours. Now, that is eight and a half hours that a lot of you people do not have to use. Then I am expected to come down here and compete with you all in debates on issues when you have had extra time. Because you are not sitting in the car you can read your bills and you can connect with the media. You have access to TV cameras and newspapers.

The other week I had to pay money out of my own account to get the media out to try and throw light on an issue that anyone on the coast would have perfect access to. The parliament did not fund it so I paid it myself. In the last six months I was \$4,000 or \$5,000 out of pocket on my travel. I have never gone over it before, but with this new role we have to travel everywhere. I am \$4,000 to \$5,000 out of pocket, my own personal expense, trying to get around my electorate and that means I am driving by myself. That means twice this year I have slept in my car overnight. This is not to make a statement; I just could not make it back in time. I had run out of charter money.

I might only be here for this term, but we are talking about the people after me. There is a great disparity for anyone who lives out in these electorates, and all we are asking for is something that will preserve that. If four per cent is too much, then give us something that just protects where we are. That is not much to ask. What I am also trying to ask here today is that we save ourselves, because this state has a big problem in that we are not investing west of the Great Divide. Not all of the answers are there, but many of them are. If we do not have the voting power it does not get there. No-one has been enlightened enough or had the traction to do that.

I heard people throwing off at Sir Joh before, but he was one of the last people to throw serious money out there to make things happen. You can sit here and make it all about one party or the other, but this is a division between west and remote areas and city areas. We are losing the battle anyway,

as my colleague from Dalrymple knows very well. We are used to taking hits on everything. One of the facts I have in front of me is that nine per cent of Brisbane residents live in poverty while in rural and regional Queensland it is up to 15 per cent. That is no coincidence.

This is not about the Mount Isa electorate. It is not about either party having an advantage. We need to leave a legacy that sets a platform for development and the proper government of Queensland. We are losing the battle in western areas. I have 14 councils, 23 police stations and 40 schools to look after. There are a lot of kids I never get to hand something out to on presentation day. I really feel for those kids. It means so much to them when I can go and shake their hand and be there. I cannot do it over the phone. I have 40 schools to get around, over 570,000 kilometres. If we do not do anything here tonight, if we do not support this bill, we are telling a lot of them that it is going to get worse for them. That is really unfair.

I think I have made my point. I hope I have. I know which way this will go tonight, but I hope members can live with their conscience. This is a bitter pill for us to swallow. It is unfair on the people of Western Queensland. It will do the state damage. We have the opportunity to do something right. If members think four per cent is too much, they should change it to 2½ per cent.

If we do not want any more politicians and I am being told to suck it up in the western areas, then members in the cities need to suck it up as well. We should keep everything the same and not have electorates gravitate to the cities. City constituents do not need any more representation, just as I do not need any more area in my electorate. If I have to take a hit and suck it up, so should people in the city if there are too many people in their electorates. I do not wear that argument.

The last point I make relates to telecommunications. I think that is a very invalid, poor argument. There is no replacement for giving people the opportunity to shake hands with their member or look their member in the eye. There is no great advantage in me or other members in large rural electorates at least preserving the size. Without this, we cannot guarantee preservation of the current size.

I speak with a lot of anger and frustration, but I think this is a build-up of a lot of issues. It goes beyond just this parliament; it goes through all the other parliaments. There is an extreme disparity in representation already. I think the state is paying for it right now. I think it will pay for it more if it is not fixed. This will just take it further. This gives more power to larger voting areas, which is why we talk about more traffic tunnels and more major superhighways when the rail line to the North West Minerals Province, with a gross regional product of \$4 billion, is in decline. I mention the rail line and the Flinders Highway. We do not have a transmission line so we are stuck with the price of gas. All of these things will see industry and opportunities in other parts of the state decline. As I said, over 50 per cent of people out there are flying in and out from Townsville and Brisbane. If members want to save themselves, they should be rethinking their position on these issues. There is a lot of opportunity out there that drives a lot of the business and opportunities here in Brisbane, but it will not be there forever. It is dying at the moment and it will keep dying if we do not look after it.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (9.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this debate. I will be opposing the bill. This bill does not represent important steps that will improve accountability in Queensland's political arena, as the member for Mansfield would have us believe or would like us to believe. This bill seems to be a response to what Dr Paul Williams of Griffith University has stated in the *Courier-Mail* on aspects of electoral reform.

There have been suggestions made in this bill that the current commission has not fulfilled its role. The bill suggests that its role could be improved by increasing the membership of the commission from three to five members. However, the member for Mansfield has not provided, or has failed to point out, what is wrong with the current commission or its workings. Is the member for Mansfield suggesting that the previous commission has been biased?

I would suggest that since this year's state election there has been a marked improvement in representation and governance in this parliament. It is not about more members but about the quality of representation. If members opposite feel they are unable to properly represent their electorates, perhaps they should try another profession. What the people of Queensland do not need is more politicians. They need better government, which this current Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered, is delivering and will continue to deliver.

This bill also incorrectly suggests that Queenslanders will have more equitable access to representation in parliament by legislating for the Redistribution Commission to have the capacity, at its discretion, to amend additional large district numbers, currently set at two per cent, up to four per cent. Attempts to change this legislation will not make the lives of voters any better.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Members, there has already been a general warning about interjections that are not being taken and about disorderly conduct. It is getting late in the night. I must admit, my patience is wearing a bit. I have given quite a bit of latitude. I am not prepared to do that anymore. I issue a general warning.

Mr RUSSO: This is like going down memory lane. It is difficult to understand why those opposite us have introduced this legislation. It is just a grab at power.

Mr ELMES (Noosa—LNP) (9.56 pm): The one thing that has come out very clearly through this debate is that, once the speeches from those opposite me are read and heard in different parts of Queensland, it is guaranteed that the Labor Party will never win another seat west of the divide and chances are they will never win one north of the Tropic of Capricorn.

The way the debate has gone in this parliament tonight has seen people from the other side of the House, from the Labor Party, who are just blinded by ancient bigotry. They are basing their entire decisions, the entire passion they have—whatever that is—and the speeches they have made in this parliament tonight on things that are decades old. What is important tonight is that we have the opportunity—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the House.

Mr ELMES: We have a rare opportunity in this state, because of a redistribution that starts in February, to, just by a little bit, make things a little easier for people who live in rural and Western Queensland.

A lot of the things I have heard tonight are about Labor members who were talking about what happened back in the Goss days and who did what to whom. I have heard a lot of people ask, 'Where are the Liberals? Whatever happened to the Liberals?' When I was elected in 2006 I was a very proud member of the Liberal Party, and I have been a member of that party and its subsequent party for 42 years. I joined the Liberal Party in Mount Isa—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I can hardly hear the member for Noosa. There is audible conversation all around the chamber. I ask that members having conversations take them outside.

Mr ELMES: I joined in Mount Isa, so I have a deep love for rural and Western Queensland. Just a couple of months ago—in July—I had the opportunity to spend some time in the electorate of Gregory. Just to give members a bit of an idea of what we are talking about, the Gregory electorate, like the other five western electorates, has two electorate offices. In the case of the member for Gregory, he has one office in Emerald and one office in Longreach. It takes about four hours to drive between Emerald and Longreach. If I sat in my car and left my electorate office in Noosa and drove south along the Sunshine Coast, down to Brisbane, through Brisbane, down to the Gold Coast, hit the northern part of the Gold Coast and then hit the New South Wales border, two things would happen: I would have a lot of time left out of those four hours and I would have driven through about 30 South-East Queensland electorates

Tonight, we are allowing members who represent these areas to not go back further because of the redistribution, but to stay about the same. As the member for Mount Isa said, if we did that, we would be doing pretty well. As was said here a little while ago, people keep on referring to the Mount Isa electorate as being the size of France. As everyone these days likes to do, I googled the French parliament. If Robbie Katter was in the Assemblée Nationale in France, you would need 577 Robbie Katters to look after the country of France and you would need another 348 Robbie Katters, because that is how many senators there are in France. That is about 925 politicians in the same area. So you would need about 925 Robbie Katters.

As I said, what we are doing here with this bill is trying to do something that is not unusual; we are trying to do something that will just help people who at the moment are really doing it pretty tough out there. We are trying to do the right thing by people who need to be able to see that their representatives in Brisbane, the people who come down here and who are supposed to make laws and discuss and debate legislation on their behalf, have some sort of an understanding about the sorts of things that they go through.

But let me say that after listening to some of the speeches from the members opposite tonight, I doubt whether most of them have been to Toowoomba, let alone to Charleville, and if they have been to Toowoomba they probably flew there. I listened to the speech given by the honourable member for Mount Isa. I looked at the members opposite. It was probably one of the most impassioned speeches that I have heard since I came into this place in 2006. I saw the notice that the members opposite were taking of the speech that Robbie Katter made. I hope that when the vote is taken that the members opposite think of that speech and just for a change vote with their conscience and do the right thing by their state and do the right thing by the people who live in rural and Western Queensland.

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (10.02 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill that was introduced into this House by the member for Mansfield. Can I take one moment to thank the member for Mansfield for his very reflective consideration of this complicated and difficult topic. He has presented to us a moderate and incremental approach to taking into consideration some of the contemporary issues that face democracy in Queensland. We owe it to him and we owe it particularly to those members in this House who represent the big five electorates, which are in excess of 100,000 square kilometres, to think deeply about what type of democracy Queensland wants to have in the future.

The tone of the contributions that came from the members opposite started poorly with the Attorney-General's contribution and, since then, have become worse. I draw the attention of those five members who represent the big five electorates in this state that the Attorney-General came into this House and, during the course of her contribution, said that it was just as hard to represent a metropolitan electorate as it was to represent one of the big five rural and remote electorates in Queensland. That is what the Attorney-General said during the course of her speech—that it was just as hard. That is one of the most outrageous things that I have ever heard come out of the mouth of someone who is considered to have all of their faculties.

One of the things that has also come forward from the contributions of members opposite was that there was no justification for the increase to an area based tolerance for large rural electorates from the current two per cent to four per cent because one vote, one value is the cardinal rule. After listening to the contributions of those opposite, one of the things that became very clear is that they consider the existing two per cent tolerance to be an offence. They consider it to be a burr under their saddle. They have a grudging tolerance for the two per cent that EARC recommended, and EARC being recommended by the Fitzgerald inquiry. It is a matter of convenience for those members who sit opposite. It is a grudging tolerance of that two per cent. The members opposite like to bathe in the warm glow of Fitzgerald and EARC when it suits them, but when it comes to sticking to the points that were made in that committee's report, which have been outlined in detail by the member for Mansfield, of being two per cent but there being a review every seven years since then, they are untruthful and unfaithful to their supposed commitment to the principles of Fitzgerald and EARC. The members opposite are pretenders to that tradition. They are pretenders to that commitment and it stinks. It stinks that they should use it as a convenient cloak to protect themselves when it suits them, but they deny it when it suits them as well. It is disgraceful.

I just want to clarify some of the things that have been put forward consistently by those opposite that are untrue. Clauses 3, 6 and 10 relate to the proposal to allow the Redistribution Commission to determine the number of seats within certain parameters. During the course of this debate, the point has been made by the member for Mansfield and others that we have had no additional seats in this chamber since 1986—none. We need to take the politics out of this process. That point was made by the member for Southern Downs. The Redistribution Commission will be given the opportunity to make decisions and we need to prioritise the independence about the effectiveness of the representation that we have in this chamber. A range of informed commentators have endorsed this proposal, including a submission from the Clerk.

Clause 15 of the bill relates to the second proposal to increase the large district allowance for electorates over 100,000 square kilometres if the Redistribution Commission considers it to be appropriate. This proposal is consistent with the concept that was recommended by EARC, which was, of course, an entity born out of the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry. EARC recognised the challenge of Queensland's geography: the tyranny of distance was central to the characteristics of this state. The tyranny of distance is a characteristic central to the Australian concept. Professor Geoffrey Blainey coined the term the 'tyranny of distance' as a central concept in the character of our country. It has been recognised in what EARC said that, notwithstanding the importance of one vote, one value, we need to take account of the challenge of geography and the tyranny of distance.

Some of the really pointy ends of that tyranny were outlined in some of the contributions that we heard from people such as the member for Warrego, the member for Gregory and the members for Dalrymple and Mount Isa. The member for Mount Isa effectively tackled some of the empty points that were made in the contributions of those opposite. I understand that he demolished the proposition put forward by the member for Brisbane Central during her contribution to the debate that modern technology has compensated for the massive increases in the size of electorates that have happened over the past 30 years since we had an increase in the number of electorates and in the last 25 years since we have had electorates with a two per cent tolerance. The member for Mount Isa absolutely demolished the arguments put forward by the member for Brisbane Central, because his phone never

works, his emails hardly ever work and he hardly ever has time to get out of the car and respond to the people who constantly want his attention in the same way that everyone opposite knows that their constituents constantly want their attention. People in rural and regional Queensland deserve the opportunity to have that same level of access to their local member of parliament.

Indeed, during a contribution from one of the members on this side of the House the member for Brisbane Central was heard to interject that she is almost never home and out most nights. But in contrast to the representation of the member for Brisbane Central in her electorate to the representation that the member for Mount Isa is able to afford his electorate, we know that almost every night the member for Brisbane Central can sleep in her own bed.

Here we are assembled in the parliament of Queensland in Brisbane in a very comfortable room, but if I woke up in the CBD of Cairns, our most northern city, I would be further away from this place than if I woke up in the CBD of Melbourne. Sometimes for North and Western Queenslanders it feels like we might as well be in Melbourne for all the people of Brisbane and South-East Queensland give a flying fruitcake about our circumstances in rural and regional Queensland.

There should be some members on that side of the House who know what we are talking about. The member for Dalrymple mentioned the member for Mirani. It is not just once that the member for Mirani has had a seat that he represented in this place abolished during a redistribution, it is twice. The member for Mirani knows that. Not only did he have his seat of Fitzroy abolished, previous to that he represented the seat of Broadsound. Twice he has had his seat abolished in this House because of the rules of the current electoral redistribution process which have not been updated for 30 years.

The last point that I want to make is in relation to the contribution of the Premier. It is a point that I want to make for the information of those members who represent the big five seats of over 100,000 square kilometres. The Premier said in her contribution that none of the MPs from rural and remote seats have complained to her that they cannot do their job. The Premier has come into this House and blamed the member for Cook, the member for Dalrymple, the member for Mount Isa, the member for Gregory and the member for Warrego for not complaining to her that they cannot do their job. She has heard no justification from those members that they cannot do their job and for that reason she put forward that there should be no change to this legislation. It is the fault of the members for those big five seats that the Labor Party will not be making any changes to our electoral distribution process.

The last thing I will say is that all those people on that side of the House who think that they are going to offend their constituents, I think they underestimate the level of empathy that the people of Queensland have for people who live in regional, rural and remote Queensland. They should reflect on their consciences, especially those who represent rural and regional seats, and do the right thing tonight.

 **Mr GORDON** (Cook—Ind) (10.12 pm): I rise tonight to speak to the bill. As a First Nations person, as an Indigenous Australian, I know firsthand what it is like to be marginalised and disenfranchised and have my voice drowned out by the majority. This is the hardest thing I have had to vote on since my time in the parliament, but I rise to oppose the bill before the House. In opposing the bill I acknowledge that the proponents of the bill have been well motivated in their endeavours to improve representation to rural and remote regions of the state. As the member for Cook I think it is fair to say that my electorate is the most remote electorate in the state. I am well aware of the disadvantages my constituents suffer as a result of the tyranny of distance. I am also aware, as their elected member, that my ability to provide representation to my constituents is made more difficult by our remoteness. So I oppose this bill not because I am not attracted to changes that help constituents access their local representatives, or the local member's capacity to better serve and represent them, I oppose the bill because I believe the methods the bill seeks to use to address the problem are fundamentally flawed.

The way to address the problem of representation for remote regions is not to have more members of parliament, and it is certainly not to have a greater weightage as proposed in the bill; the way to improve the capacity of a member to service a remote region is to improve electoral resources and to increase electoral staff. These are the matters I would like to see addressed to improve a member's capacity to service remote electorates—not more politicians and certainly not a move back to a gerrymander.

I am a great believer in democracy. While democracy comes in a variety of forms, I firmly subscribe to the basic principle of one vote, one value. This underpins the concept of equality of all citizens in our society. It delivers true democracy in an uncorrupted form. As such, I oppose weightage. Weightage is undemocratic. Queensland has had heavily weighted electorates in the past. Under the National Party governments of former premier Bjelke-Petersen we had the infamously politically corrupt

gerrymander that led to shameless corruption at the highest level in our state. Commissioner Tony Fitzgerald determined that there was a nexus between electoral corruption and official corruption. Nobody wants to see a return to that. For that reason, I reject extra weightage as proposed in this bill. While stating that, I acknowledge that the weightage proposed in this bill is not of the same order as existed in the former gerrymandered Queensland electoral system, but it is the thin edge of the wedge. The interesting thing was that when we had these heavily weighted electorates in Queensland they did not deliver better representation to constituents. They corrupted the electoral system and did not deliver good service.

The current Queensland electoral system arose out of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission established out of the Fitzgerald inquiry of 1987-89. Its recommendations were accepted by Premier Goss lock, stock and barrel. The resultant Queensland electoral system is widely viewed as a system of high integrity that has served the state well for a quarter of a century. While no system is perfect and periodic review is good practice, the process leading to this bill coming before us tonight did not, in my view, provide for thorough enough consideration. Much wider public discussion should have been undertaken on such an important matter as amending the Electoral Act. This is bad practice, especially when applied to such an important matter as the Electoral Act that underpins our entire democratic system. For the reasons stated, I call on this House to join with me and reject this bill.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (10.17 pm): For me democracy is not academic. The disenfranchisement of the Irish people was one of the direct causes of the Irish famine which led to my family leaving West Clare and coming to Australia. My family never cast a vote in the Northern Hemisphere. Australia was the place that offered a fair say in a fair democracy. Fair Australian democracy was the cause for which my ancestor and many other Australians took a stand at Eureka to ensure that all Australians had their voices equally heard. It is the cause for which striking shearers stood under the tree at Barcaldine. It is the reason that I joined the Labor Party to fight against the National's gerrymander and malapportionment.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Members on my left have had a fairly good hearing in silence. I ask that the same courtesy be afforded to those on my right. I ask members to cease interjecting.

Mr POWER: The democratic cause is threatened by this really disappointing bill put forward by the member for Mansfield. The history of the British-style House of Commons, which shares the tradition of this place, is one of extending franchise to more and more citizens, ending gerrymanders—or Johmanders, as we know them in this state—and, just as importantly, ending malapportionment of electoral seats. As many in this House would know, the British parliament suffered terribly from seats that were grossly different from the number of voters, which meant that the British parliament could not be truly called democratic. One hundred and fifty-two seats in the British parliament out of 406 were determined by fewer than 100 votes and 88 seats were determined by fewer than 50 votes. A seat based on the medieval town of Dunwich had only 32 voters. The once-prosperous town had slowly been eroded by the North Sea and had fallen into the ocean, yet it still maintained its boundaries and its member, despite all of the townspeople leaving. No doubt the member for Mansfield would approve of that travesty.

However, in the 1820s and 1830s, far more enlightened members of the British parliament took the party name of 'the Liberals'—a name since disgraced by the hyphenated charade of the Liberal Party here in Queensland. Those Liberals fought against the unfair apportionment of electoral seats. In 1832, they passed the great electoral Reform Act, moving along the journey of fair electoral rules that reflect the value we hold of one vote, one value.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Just a moment, member for Logan. Member for Burnett, I warn you that at your next interjection I will give you a formal warning under standing order 253A and I then I will take further action after that. The member for Logan has the call. I have given you great latitude.

Mr POWER: As I said, in 1832 they passed the great electoral Reform Act, moving along the journey to fair electoral rules that reflect the value of one person, one vote and one value. In all of this long and proud history of reform, we have seen a shameful backsliding. Members will be happy to hear this: I include what happened in 1946 as a shameful piece of backsliding, only topped by the rorts of 1985 which saw the redistribution under which the member for Southern Downs was elected. In this new millennia, we have seen no backsliding in British democracies, that is, until today as the stated aim of this bill is to distort the democracy of this state, which would bring shame to the Liberals of 1832.

Why should the opinions of voters in Longreach carry more weight than those in Logan Village? The member for Gregory knows of my passion for the fantastic town of Barcaldine. The member needs to go to the streets of Browns Plains and explain to electors why their vote is worth less.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr POWER: I take the interjection. I have spent time in Barcaldine and I intend to be there for the next May Day. I love the town and I continue to support it, especially its fantastic Workers' Heritage Centre.

Mr Hart interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Burleigh, I have also given you quite a bit of latitude. The next warning will be under standing order 253A.

Mr POWER: The member for Mansfield needs to explain why the electors of Warrego are somehow more worthwhile than the electors of Wishart.

Mr Hart interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, order! I warn you under standing order 253A.

Mr POWER: There are great Queenslanders in Quilpie, but democracy means that they should not have a say that is greater than that of Queenslanders living in other areas of Queensland. In fact, this weekend LNP members should be out with a sandwich board strapped to their chest stating, 'I just made your voice weaker. I didn't stand up for you, at all. In fact, I sold you out.'

Those coming from the five seats that are affected need to know that their constituents do not want an unfair advantage from the rules. This legislation is changing the rules to unfairly weight one Queensland voter's voice to be worth more than others. It is like the rules of Rugby League giving New South Wales a four-point start in any State of Origin game. No-one wants to gain an unfair advantage from the rules and I am sure western Queenslanders do not, either. I was moved by the member for Mount Isa's passion for his electorate—very moved.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr POWER: I can see that others were moved, too. I am passionate, too. People keep moving into my electorate. They move into Logan Reserve, into Yarrabilba just outside and into Greenbank and Flagstone. In total, there will be a city the size of Cairns and a city the size of Toowoomba growing within the electorate. Every day I struggle to fight for the services that those future residents of Logan will need. I know they will need those services. They are not rich people; they are not rich city dwellers. They are people who struggle to put food on the table and to educate their kids. I know they need great schools, I know they need fire stations, I know they need ambulances. I know they need the schools that will educate their kids for the jobs of the future. I have to fight for that and I will continue to fight for it.

In 1991 in this place we debated this principle. At that time the chamber and, unfortunately, Labor looked at placing some sort of weightage, which was limited to two per cent. I have heard from some of those opposite that it is more difficult for people in regional areas to contact their local member. For some Queenslanders living in remote areas, it certainly is. However, since 1946 and even since 1991, we have seen incredible changes in telecommunications. Many more people now have telephones with which to contact their local member. Although not all have the internet, many in rural areas use satellite internet to communicate. Also, we try to make up for some of those difficulties by providing a second office for members of parliament. For instance, the member for Warrego has an office in St George and another office in the great town of Roma.

Ms Barton interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Broadwater, at your next interjection you will be warned under standing order 253A. Let us settle down, members. It is late at night. I understand you are passionate, but let us get through this. The member for Logan has the call. All I ask is for respect in the House.

Mr POWER: Presumably, the 7,000 residents of Roma have reasonably easy access to their member of parliament's office. However, I see no claim that the residents of St George or Roma should gain less of a say than those residents living further from their member of parliament's office.

In my electorate of Logan, there are those who have real difficulty explaining their needs to their member of parliament. Two weeks ago, I sat with a mother of six, a refugee from Africa. She was in tears as she failed to express herself. No-one is suggesting that she should have an extra weight. I have a strong deaf-signing society in my electorate. At times they might have difficulty communicating with me as their member of parliament, but they would not seek extra votes to make up for this.

We know only one thing: every Queenslander should have an equal voice through one vote. Whenever we mess with this principle, we undermine our precious democracy. In the debate in 1991, Liberal leader Denver Beanland made this absolutely clear when he stated that EARC said on page 169 of its report—

... that a 1 per cent arbitrary rule would make little difference but a 3 per cent allowance would overcompensate and produce unfairness.

That was the ruling of EARC and today I urge the House to do as Denver Beanland proposed on that day in 1991. I make the same call. If there are any Liberals left on that side of the House, I urge them to do as the former member for Toowong, Denver Beanland, said and cross the floor to bring electoral justice to Queensland.

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (10.27 pm): I rise to voice my opposition to the Electoral Redistribution Commission and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. This bill is a desperate attempt by members opposite to resurrect the unfair and undemocratic gerrymander of the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era. Retired judge Tony Fitzgerald QC was scathing about the gerrymander and it was his recommendation that set up the Electoral and Administrative Review Committee of this parliament. The Leader of the Opposition would remember, as he was here, that it was the Goss government that introduced legislation to put an end to that disgraceful era of electoral rorting. Goss put beyond doubt that he would ever return to the days of unfair vote weightage and rigged boundaries. I cannot believe that in my lifetime I am going to have to stand in this parliament and defend the basic principle of one vote, one value.

Now the LNP opposition wants to bring back to life the gerrymander and put the notion of one vote, one value to the sword. It was the Goss Labor government which legislated the system we have now and put a stop to the rorting of electoral boundaries. This previous system allowed electoral boundaries to be manipulated. For example, in 1985 the tiny Labor voting Aboriginal community of Wujal Wujal on the Bloomfield River was taken out of the National Party electorate of Barron River—in which its town's boundary fitted—and put into the Labor voting electorate of Cook. As honourable members would recall, it was referred to as the hole in the donut because that is exactly what the electoral map looked like.

The National Party rorted the zonal system to the point where voters in South-East Queensland had one quarter of the voting rights of those in the country zone. Labor put an end to this with a two per cent weighting for less populated areas.

We need to remember that this was a time of no mobile phone coverage in the bush and no internet. The tyranny of distance was a real and present issue. There is validity for a weighting for smaller populated areas of Queensland. This concession was seen by many—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Ms JONES: I take that interjection. I will repeat again that the IT system went live in September 2013. Keep up!

This concession was seen by many at the time as very generous. Now, this bill seeks to lift this concession from two per cent to four per cent. This bill also seeks to increase the number of electorates by five. Labor's core principle is fairness. We believe that people should have the same worth no matter where they live and no matter what they do for a living. The very foundation of this notion is one vote, one value.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Warrego, you are the next one to be warned.

Ms JONES: I oppose this bill because I believe that the votes of the people who vote for me and those who vote against me are just as valuable. The votes of every Queenslander should be valued the same. Every single day of the election campaign I was knocking on doors—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burnett, I formally warn you under standing order 253A. The next interjection I will evict you from the House.

Ms JONES: Every single day I was knocking on doors or talking to people in the Ashgrove electorate. Time and time again this door was answered by someone who was deeply concerned about the direction the state was heading. They told me that this was becoming a Queensland where they did not want to raise their family. They were concerned about the winding back of the Fitzgerald

recommendations. The things that they valued most—equality, fairness and justice—were being eroded by an arrogant and out-of-touch government. Tonight we have seen them return to that. This bill tonight is why they turn their backs—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, I have given you enough latitude all night. I formally warn you under standing order 253A.

Ms JONES: For a while the opposition licked their wounds but now we are seeing their old ways creep back. This bill represents a return to those dark days and, for those reasons, I oppose it.

Unlike those opposite, we will always fight for fairness. We believe that people should have the same worth, wherever they live, whatever they do for a living or whatever worship they believe in. The very foundation of this is the notion of one vote, one value. I oppose this bill. I will always support the notion that the people who vote for me or against me are just as worthy, just as smart, just as entitled to have their vote valued at same value as every other Queensland.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (10.33 pm): I had no intention of speaking to this bill tonight, but this bill is all about representation. If after hearing the member for Mount Isa speak so passionately tonight and outline the duress under which he works representing the people he does and not be moved by it one is in the wrong place.

Let me give members some very simple maths. We go back to 1986 and there were two million people in Queensland. Today we have roughly 4.5 million people in Queensland. Let me throw this question to those opposite who love representing unions. They are all belting their hands up in the air all the time saying, 'We protect the unions. We think the unions are a good thing.' I want to see how they feel about this.

If a schoolteacher had 26 children in their class that would be okay. That would be one schoolteacher for 26 children. What if that teacher had 52 children in their class? Would it still be acceptable to have one schoolteacher or would those opposite go to the union and say, 'We need two schoolteachers.' The exact situation is happening in Queensland today. We are asking for five extra representatives for an extra 2.5 million people in Queensland. Members need to think about it.

What if the population in Queensland continues to grow? We would need a new hospital so we could cater for that population. Guess what? Those opposite are going to want more doctors and more nurses. That is the practical and sensible thing to do. Their argument tonight is that the people of Queensland do not deserve adequate representation. I feel very disappointed that those opposite would not want to look after the people of Queensland. They continue to pretend that they wish to represent all of the people throughout Queensland. Those opposite are not representing the people of Mount Isa. They are not representing the people of Western Queensland. Give them a go. Give them an opportunity to have adequate representation.

I remember the redistribution that was done last time around. I represented the seat of Kawana. Today that seat would have 69,000 people in it. Now we have two seats—Buderim and Kawana. That is because of the growth in this state. Why do we not expand the size of this House to represent people adequately? We might as well fold the Queensland parliament and let the federal government look after the country. Do those opposite want to resign from their jobs? Is that what they want to do? What we should be doing is looking after this state and looking after it adequately.

After the member for Mount Isa's passionate speech tonight, if those opposite do not understand what he was talking about, I do not think they would get his support again. What they are asking for is the opportunity to represent people right throughout this state.

There is another equation I am going to ask members to consider tonight. I totally understand why the state of Queensland is in a financially devastating situation. Those opposite do not understand mathematics. If they understood mathematics it would be a lay down misere—let us add a few more politicians to look after this growing state. We talk about building roads and talk about building the economy. We cannot stagnate. We in this House know that. The Deputy Premier put forward a plan for the future yesterday. We are going to spend money. We want to build roads. We want to do all these wonderful things.

Why do we need more roads? We need more roads because we have a bigger population. Why do we need more hospitals? We need more hospitals because we have a bigger population. The argument of those opposite tonight is to leave the political representation as it is. There is no logic to their argument. I have heard that said by all members on the other side. Their arguments are nonsensical.

We cannot keep going the way we are going. There are so many members here who represent very large populations in different demographics right across the state. Every area is so different. I am very fortunate that I can walk around the seat of Buderim in a day. We could not walk around the seat of Mount Isa or the other big four seats ever. We would die of thirst. We would have no connection to the telephone network, as we heard from the member for Mount Isa.

This is a logical, sensible proposition being put forward by the shadow Attorney-General to give good representation to the people of Queensland. I would be so disappointed if those opposite did not represent Queensland as they say they go out and promote every day. They are not representing anybody in this state if they do not wish to give adequate political representation.

They believe in the unions. They would love to have one teacher looking after 26 children. That is the average class size. They do not believe in that at all. They may as well have 50 kids in a class and not hire any more teachers. Let the class size go to 50 or 60 or 100 or 1,000 children and have one teacher. Let us see how popular that is with the unions? That is what they are expecting the people of Queensland to put up with and suck up. It is wrong.

They know it is wrong. They know their argument is wrong. It is baseless. This is about playing politics. It is about shoring up their base for the future. I think they really need to take that on board. Let us do something smart for a change. Let us be united. I think the crossbenchers have it right on the money. Let us give Queensland more representation otherwise those opposite do not believe in democracy.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.39 pm): I rise in the Legislative Assembly chamber this evening to oppose the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill introduced by the member for Mansfield and supported by the Liberal National Party opposition. Let me be very clear on what this bill will do. This bill will take Queensland back to the bad old days. Make no mistake: if this bill is passed, it will return Queensland back to the days when electoral malapportionment allowed one party to rule Queensland with an outright majority—the then National Party, which secured 49 seats out of 89 at the 1986 election—while receiving under 40 per cent of the vote. Old habits die hard. That was when Queensland was the laughing stock of the rest of Australia. This bill seeks to return Queensland to that time.

The people who will be most disenfranchised if this bill is passed will be people in electorates such as my own electorate of Woodridge. In 1989, when the late Wayne Goss was elected as Labor premier of Queensland—one of our state's finest premiers—he represented the state electorate of Logan, a seat which covered much of what is now the electorate of Woodridge. At the 1989 election, Logan had 29,192 electors, while the previous premier who lost his position at that election, the then National Party member for Roma, Russell Cooper, represented an electorate with 8,221 voters. In many ways this was a symbol of what changed in Queensland at that election. A premier who had been elected by 8,000 voters was replaced by a premier who had been elected by 30,000 voters. In that election, the votes of electors in one state electorate were worth more than three times the value of Queenslanders living in another part of our state.

The Goss government set about establishing fairer electoral boundaries which have worked well for Queensland since that time, and members opposite can hardly complain about them. In 2012, on those boundaries, they secured the largest parliamentary majority in Queensland political history. Of course, they destroyed all of that at the last election, which is, of course, what this bill is all about—obtaining and then entrenching power for those members opposite by any means necessary. This bill is not about fairness for Queenslanders. It is not about better electoral representation. It is all about getting back into power.

What I find greatly disappointing about this bill is that it is being moved and sponsored by the member for Mansfield. I respect the role the member for Mansfield played in the Liberal Party back in the 1980s, when he urged the Liberal Party to stand up to the Nationals. In fact, the member for Mansfield was the one who moved the motion at the Liberal Party state executive to disband the coalition. At that stage there were some Liberals who had principles—people like Terry Gygar, Ian Prentice, Angus Innes, Rob Akers and Rosemary Kyburz. I ask the member for Mansfield: does he remember them? He should—he was among their peers at that time. In fact, this is what the honourable member for Mansfield had to say about those times in his first speech in this very chamber—

In 1983 I was a member of the state executive of the Liberal Party when tension between the coalition members reached breaking point. Although always supporting the view that a cooperative coalition was the best form of government for Queensland, when the tough times came I was a strong supporter of the Liberal cause.

The member for Mansfield was someone who stood up to the worst excesses of the National Party when it was in office back in the 1980s. But how things have changed. The other urban based LNP members who once were Liberals should also hang their heads in shame over this attempt to turn back the clock to the days when Queensland was run by a rotten government elected under a rotten electoral system. I look forward to hearing the contribution of Liberals like the members for Indooroopilly, Clayfield, Surfers Paradise and Caloundra. I look forward to them defending the Liberal tradition of one vote, one value.

What this bill effectively does is take away representation of people in electorates such as my own. We have heard from those opposite about the time and effort involved in servicing large electorates in Queensland. I respect the work ethic of those honourable members who service those electorates and have to travel very long distances. In early July I travelled for a number of hours on the Atherton Tablelands with the honourable member for Dalrymple, who then faced many hours drive from Ravenshoe back to Charters Towers. I congratulate the honourable member for Mount Isa in seeking to obtain a pilot's licence to better service his electorate.

But, as members of this parliament, if we do our job properly—a job we all do voluntarily, because none of us are forced to be here—we all work hard. Some of us represent incredibly diverse electorates, electorates that face incredibly diverse challenges. Some of us have up to 17 people waiting in our office at any one time, waiting for a simple JP signature, many of them refugees and migrants—people who have next to nothing, people who are sometimes not even citizens of our nation—and for some of us that happens day in day out, month in month out. In Woodridge the doors of the electorate office are open to all. Those people seek our assistance to improve their lives and we give it to them.

But we do not make our democracy better if those MPs faced with the challenge of geography are advantaged over the rest of us. The simple and undeniable truth is that Queensland's population is growing most quickly on coastal areas and in particular in areas such as Logan to Brisbane south and in the Moreton Bay Regional Council area to the north of our capital. This bill seeks to disenfranchise those people. In a decade and a half, an additional 300,000 people will live in the areas to Brisbane's north and south. This bill will seek to permanently disenfranchise those people. The member for Mansfield, in introducing this bill, said—

Given the degree to which Western Queensland's population is growing compared with other parts of the state, it is clear that the west would pay the price to give the south-east corner in particular those new seats.

I would like to turn that proposition around—and that is that, under the LNP's bill, it will be the people of South-East Queensland who will be paying the price to provide greater representation to those Queenslanders living in regional and rural parts of this state.

I want to be quite clear. I have enormous respect for my fellow Queenslanders, citizens who live in the western and northern parts of this state, many of whom face the daily burden of a cruel, relentless and unremitting drought. As health minister, I have visited Roma, Longreach, Barcaldine, Isisford, Mount Isa, Bamaga, Weipa and Saibai. Earlier this year I visited the central west with my own sons so they could better understand the size of our state and the challenges communities in the west now face. But this bill seeks to disenfranchise people in seats such as the one that I represent in this place. If the system it seeks to reintroduce became entrenched, it would inevitably lead to perverse electoral, political and public administration outcomes of the type that were common in the 1980s. Like so much of what the LNP proposes, it takes us forward to the past. This bill must be opposed.

 **Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (10.47 pm): I rise in this debate to lend my support to the bill that has been introduced by the member for Mansfield and I congratulate him on the bill that he has brought before the House. I also congratulate a range of speakers on this side of the House who have made impressive contributions to a debate tonight, particularly the Leader of the Opposition; the member for Hinchinbrook; the member for Mount Isa, who of course made a very impassioned speech; the member for Warrego and a whole range of other members. I do not mean to upset anybody by exclusion. But a whole range of members on this side of the House have made very creditable speeches from different perspectives, the different perspectives that are offered from each of their electorates.

In stark contrast, the speeches that have been offered by government members have all had a single theme. They have all been motivated by the bitterness of the past. They have all repeated ad infinitum the Labor creed or the Labor myth that has become their creed, that somehow or other the bill that has been introduced by the member for Mansfield is going to recreate a situation that they found repugnant back in the late 1980s. Leaving aside whatever existed in 1980, there is no way that anybody with an ounce of intellectual nous could suggest that the bill that has been introduced by the member for Mansfield can recreate that situation.

What really riles the Labor members in this debate tonight—the single issue that has been the central part of every one of the contributions that has been made—is their philosophical objection to the concept of weightage. The concept of weightage, as the member for Hinchinbrook quite correctly pointed out, was a product of the EARC process. It was agreed to in a bipartisan way by Wayne Goss and Russell Cooper and it was put in place in 1991. That concept of weightage remains the same in the bill that the member for Mansfield has introduced. He is proposing a slight variation to the quantum of the weightage but no variation at all to the principle or the philosophy of the weightage. Yet the members over there tonight have repeated over and over again, one after the other, some sort of a nonsense that varying the quantum of the weightage is somehow going to recreate a situation that existed before there was any weightage at all in the electoral system. As the member for Hinchinbrook quite correctly said, these people over there wear the cloak of Fitzgerald to their advantage. They parade around in the cloak of Fitzgerald and all of the things that he recommended all the time as though it were Holy Writ—except when it does not suit them.

The EARC recommendations were part of the Fitzgerald outcomes. The seven-year review that the member for Hinchinbrook spoke about was part of the EARC outcomes. Yet the government members seek to ignore all of that tonight. They seek to ignore all of that for a cheap political slogan, for some cheap political points about not having more politicians. Can I say to you, Madam Deputy Speaker Grace, that from my perspective this bill should not be about the number of politicians; it should be about the number of constituents. This bill should be about the constituents who we all represent. In considering how we are going to vote on this bill, we should all ask ourselves these questions. How many constituents can we realistically represent? What is the maximum number that any one of us can represent, irrespective of where we live? Is it 30,000? Is it 35,000? Is it 40,000? Is it 45,000? Is it 50,000? Is it 60,000? Is it 70,000? Of course sooner or later there has to be a limit.

Unless we have the courage to address the real issues that are involved in electoral redistributions, then the number of constituents that we all represent is going to continue to grow. The task of representing that number will be different, depending on where the particular electorates are. EARC recognised that and they introduced the principle of weightage in recognition of the fact that the task would be different. Even with the current quantum of weightage that is included in the electoral system in Queensland and that has been there since 1991, the task of representing our constituents varies enormously depending on our electorate. It does not fully compensate for the difference in the work that is required or the processes that are required to properly represent those constituents.

But the fact remains—and this issue has not been addressed by a single speaker on the other side of the House—that sooner or later the number of politicians in this House has to increase, not because we want more politicians but because the people who we represent deserve to be represented by more politicians. The people who we represent deserve to be able to have access to their local member and to be properly represented in this place. The arguments that have been put forward about technology and resources are complete and utter nonsense. I challenge any member in this place to go out into their electorate or any electorate in Queensland and ask someone, 'Would you be happy to get an email from your local MP? Do you want an email or do you want to see them?' Of course there is only one answer to that question. The people we represent want to see us, they want to get to know us, they want to talk to us—and they deserve that.

With the government tonight retreating to some sort of Labor historical nonsense, it is almost like a chant for some of the members opposite. It is almost like a mindless religious chant that they do not understand; they are not trying to look at the issues that are involved in the bill that has been introduced by the member for Mansfield. In doing so, they are denying the people they represent the proper representation that they deserve in this House.

In the short time I have left, I want to make some comments about my electorate, as different members have done, because I think it is important that the House understands the different challenges. Mine is not one of the big five; it is not one of the geographically large electorates, but it is a very diverse electorate. I have 25 towns in my electorate, 64 schools and 18 local shows that I attend every year. It is a challenge that is different to the challenge that is faced by the member for Warrego, the member for Gregory and the member for Mount Isa. It is different to the challenge that is faced by the member for Surfers Paradise or the member for Mermaid Beach, but it is a challenge nonetheless. That challenge will continue to get greater and greater and greater as the size of the electorate increases and as the number of constituents increases for whoever represents that great belt of Queensland between the outback and the coast.

This bill deserves a better consideration than what the Labor Party government have given it in this place tonight. This bill should not be an opportunity for Labor Party members to regurgitate Labor Party bile. This bill should be an opportunity for some level heads to think about the future of

Queensland, some level heads to think about the future of this parliament and some level heads to think about the welfare of the people we all represent wherever they live. Those people deserve proper representation in this place. Until all of us have the political courage to address the issues that are contained in the bill, the prospect those people face is less and less access to their local member and less and less representation in the Queensland parliament.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (10.56 pm): I rise to speak in opposition to the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. In doing so, I conclude the government's contribution in opposition to the bill before the House.

As has been already discussed, this bill seeks to do three things: one, to increase the membership of the redistribution committee from three to five; two, to give that Redistribution Commission the ability to determine an increase in the number of seats to this parliament, to be capped at 94 members; and, three, to give the Redistribution Commission the capacity to amend the additional large district number currently set at two per cent up to a maximum of four per cent, or in other words to increase the current weightage from two per cent up to four per cent for large regional seats.

I have heard many contributions from those members here tonight, and let me say that we all face challenges representing our communities—every single one. Every single person who has made a contribution in this place has spoken about the challenges of representing their electors—whether it is the 35,000 electors in your seat, Madam Deputy Speaker Grace, or whether it is the 19,000 electors in the seat of Mount Isa that the member for Mount Isa represents. We all have challenges representing the people that we have put our hand up, voluntarily, to stand as their elected representatives, to come into this place to articulate their concerns and to speak on behalf of.

We all have challenges in relation to our jobs regardless of the seats that we represent. In relation to that I thought there was a very good contribution in terms of the issue of weightage that I do want to touch on in relation to distance and a whole range of other classes that I think it is important to read into the Hansard. At page 135 of the EARC report of 1990, a submission by B Peacock said—

Arguments that votes of electors should be weighted in relation to the ownership of assets, the means of production, special interests and distance are fundamentally undemocratic in a classless society where all persons are and should be equal before the law and God.

I think that is a very important quote to commence my contribution with because, in essence, the other two elements of this bill are a distraction. This bill is all about the increase of weightage in those large regional seats. In relation to the element of increasing the size of this parliament, I also was very taken with the Liberal Party's contribution to the EARC report. In relation to the argument to decrease the number of politicians in this place—and let's remember that at the time that EARC was deliberating on all of the issues referred to it by the Fitzgerald inquiry there was a very strong argument to decrease the number of politicians in this place from 89 to 82 because the reason the seats were increased to 89 was never justified in the first place. Let me quote from the Liberal Party's contribution to the EARC report. They said—

In 1985 the Liberal Party strongly argued that there was no justification for increasing the size of the Queensland Parliament from 82 to 89 seats.

It is not adequate simply to assert that increasing enrolments justifies an increase in the size of the Parliament. If this was adequate Queensland could now be considering a Parliament of over 150 members—sufficient to provide electors with the equivalent representation they enjoyed in 1960.

... The increase in Parliament in 1985 was never supported by coherent arguments nor are such arguments now available. Changes in technology and improved and more extensive resources make such increases even more difficult to sustain.

The Liberal Party recommends that the size of the Queensland Parliament be set at 82 seats—the figure that applied between 1972 and 1986.

That was the Liberal Party in 1990. Let us move to the real issue in this bill and that is the increase of the weightage.

The reason why back in 1989 and 1990 the Labor Party accepted the two per cent weightage, even though we had a fundamental principle of adhering to the universal human right of universal equal suffrage of one vote, one value—it is a core principle of the Labor Party, it is a core value, it is our core belief. Regardless of what the member for Callide says in terms of bile—he calls it bile; I call it Labor Party principles—they are our principles just like the Liberal Party of old used to have principles. They do not have principles anymore because the Liberal Party has been swallowed up by the old Nats. The Labor Party believes in universal equal suffrage: one vote, one value. Back in July 1989 we accepted the recommendation from EARC. After 33 years of corrupt National Party rule and gerrymandering in

this state we decided in a tripartisan approach between the National Party, the Liberal Party and the Labor Party that we would accept the two per cent weightage so that we could get the rest of the reforms through. We accepted that at the time.

EARC did not make a recommendation that this weightage should be reviewed every seven years. That is not what they recommended. They did not recommend that this weightage should be extended to three per cent. They actually talked about the significant distortion that three per cent would deliver.

Mr Seeney: What review did they recommend? What review did they recommend?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Callide, you have had your chance

Ms TRAD: You had your go, mate. You have had your go. Settle down, you old Nat. In its submission to EARC the Liberal Party said this in relation to the weighting—

... it has been the Liberal Party which has suffered as a result of the zonal system, because historically it has been the Liberal Party which has not run candidates in the smaller rural seats and therefore we have had to achieve a large number of votes in essentially urban and city seats which the National Party has not been required to get. It is for that reason that the Liberal Party has been the principal victim of the present system.

So the Liberal Party of old, of which the member for Mansfield and the chief proponent of this bill is a member, knew that they suffered under the zonal system; they suffered under the weightage system. They knew that this malapportionment would effectively dispossess their voters, disfranchise their voters. But still the member for Mansfield comes into this place with this bill to reintroduce pre-Fitzgerald voting in Queensland.

Mr Bailey: Sold out.

Ms TRAD: He has sold out. I take that interjection from the member for Yeerongpilly. Let us not forget where this ended up under the Bjelke-Petersen government: with corruption flourishing in this state, with malapportionment. If people do not think that we will not go there fast under a distorted system, let me remind people what happened in the last three years. In the last three years the Crime and Corruption Commission was taken over by the Liberal National Party in this state; they appointed a Liberal National Party mate to sit in the Premier's office to devise media statements to distort public opinion in relation to public policy. That is what happens with those opposite. Then when they did not like what the all-party parliamentary committee determined and found out in relation to the misleading of a parliamentary committee, what did they do? They came in here in the middle of the night and they sacked the committee. If one does not think this will end up where it ended up in the 1980s and the 1970s under the zonal system, one need only look at the last three years. This is an argument today for an increase from two per cent to four per cent. Where does that end? In 10 years time do we come back and argue for six per cent? In 20 years time do we come back and argue for a 10 per cent increase in the weightage system? When does this end? If it is good enough today it will be good enough in five years time and in 10 years time.

It is absolutely imperative that we ensure that all Queenslanders' voices are equal in this place and that we deliver fairness and equality to all Queenslanders not because of where they live, but because we are all Queenslanders.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (11.07 pm), in reply: In bringing the debate to a close I thank all of those who have contributed tonight in what has been an interesting debate. I will not speak for long in concluding. I brought to this House what I thought was a considered and reasonable position to look at a situation that has not been reviewed for 30 years and yet by dint of the very recommendation of EARC, the body that produced what we are now looking at, was required to be reviewed every seven years.

I do not need to fill in the detail of what I have put before the House any further. As I said before, I thought my contribution was reasoned and considered. But it pales into insignificance compared to the passion and the truth of what was spoken by the member for Mount Isa. Nothing I say in summing up tonight will move people any more than that speech possibly could. All I ask is that we do not, because of cheap political opportunity, pass up this opportunity to review this important process, because what happens here tonight locks in a situation for our fellow Queenslanders for almost the next decade. It is an opportunity we should not pass by and it is an opportunity put fairly and squarely before all of us by the member for Mount Isa tonight.

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

AYES, 43:

LNP, 41—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

NOES, 43:

ALP, 42—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

Pairs: Pegg, Costigan.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.

Resolved in the negative.

ADJOURNMENT



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.14 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Currumbin Electorate, Survey



Mrs STUCKEY (Currumbin—LNP) (11.14 pm): Tonight I update the House on the results of an electorate-wide survey I recently conducted across Currumbin in which constituents were encouraged to have their say about what they feel is most needed in our special part of the world. Direct mailing the whole electorate is an expensive exercise, and I am ever mindful of spending my allowance wisely; therefore, I undertake this exercise just once each term.

In the past my surveys have received a healthy response, and this time was no different with almost 3,000 households sending in comments and completed surveys, giving me an up-to-the-minute snapshot of their priorities and key issues. From this information—which, I might add, takes a couple of hundred hours to enter into our database—I am able to service their concerns directly and advocate on their behalf in the parliament.

Over 60 per cent of southern Gold Coast residents scored law and order as their highest priority, saying that this Labor government needs to do more to tackle crime. They have been even more concerned since the Attorney-General directed a task force to repeal and review the Criminal Organisation Act 2009, specifically targeting the tough anti-criminal bikie gang laws brought in by the LNP. It was made very clear to me that residents do not want these laws watered down, with 91 per cent of respondents against it.

Like many Gold Coast electorates, Currumbin has experienced considerable growth causing traffic congestion, highlighting the urgent need for better transport infrastructure and services. Labor neglected road and rail infrastructure during their successive terms in government, so it is not surprising that more than half of the respondents would like to see the heavy rail built as a matter of priority from Varsity Lakes to the Coolangatta airport. Following closely behind was the call for the M1 between Worongary and Tugun to be widened. Half a billion dollars was promised for southern Gold Coast M1 improvements in 2007, but Kevin Rudd stole the money and spent it on federal Labor seats for the north.

Congestion is crippling us, and poor connectivity to and from our airport portrays a negative first impression to visitors. As a premier tourism destination and host to the 2018 Commonwealth Games, it beggars belief that this government does not care how we are perceived. Some six million passengers already pass through our airport, and thousands upon thousands will come for the games internationally and domestically via Sydney, yet the only focus has been extending light rail in northern suburbs. I am not wasting any opportunity to raise these concerns on behalf of my constituents, having canvassed them at the recent SKAL and Creek to Creek chamber breakfasts at the Currumbin RSL, along with letters to the federal member for McPherson and our Prime Minister. As the proud state member for Currumbin for over a decade, I have worked hard to ensure that my electorate gets its fair share so it may continue to flourish as the tight-knit and well-connected community that I know and love.

Fort Lytton Historical Association

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (11.17 pm): Whilst the glamorous Hollywood star Angelina Jolie may have helped financially to restore the bayside's own Fort Lytton, we should not forget the tireless work of the many volunteers who since 1988 have been dedicated to preserving this important piece of Queensland, and in particular Brisbane, history. I recently had the opportunity to visit Fort Lytton again for the official opening of the restored black powder rooms and magazine No. 10 with the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks, the Hon. Steven Miles MP.

The Fort Lytton Historical Association began in 1988 as a group of ex-servicemen, a subcommittee of the Royal Australian Artillery Association (Queensland). These volunteers dedicated their efforts and made a long-term commitment to the preservation of the Fort Lytton site. They also had a vision for Fort Lytton to be a tourist destination. In their own words, on a wet Saturday afternoon there was a gathering of near doddering old ex-service World War II gunners and much younger National Parks and Wildlife personnel with the idea to form a tourist attraction, volunteer guiding groups and the future refurbishment of the gun emplacements.

In 1999 the Fort Lytton Historical Association replaced this subcommittee. Sadly, many of the original subcommittee members are no longer with us; however, the passion to keep the history of Fort Lytton alive lives on in our new members. The fort, which is a national park, is open to the public on Sundays and public holidays, and the wonderful volunteers of the Fort Lytton Historical Association have preserved and brought the fort to life by running guided tours, maintaining a museum, cannon firing, parades and re-enactments. The fort is on the southern side of the Brisbane River and includes the historic fort, a museum, the black powder room, a moat and the Lytton quarantine station—and it is only 15 kilometres from the city. Fort Lytton was built in 1880 to protect Brisbane from an enemy maritime attack, and the fort is the principal remaining landmark of the reserve that for 40 years was the focus of Queensland defence activity. The fort was used for defence purposes in Brisbane until the end of the Second World War.

Whilst Angelina may have contributed financially, the dedication and perseverance of a group of passionate historians have prevailed. That group of doddering ex-service World War II gunners and those in their place have ensured that this rare and surviving piece of 19th century Queensland history has been preserved for future generations. I thank the Fort Lytton Historical Association for their dedication, and I encourage each and every one of the members of the House to visit this important piece of Brisbane's history.

Central Queensland, Jobs

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (11.20 pm): I rise in this House to talk about another blow to Central Queensland. We have learned today of more job losses in the Bowen Basin, with companies looking to restructure and having to let staff go because of the mining downturn. This of course is on top of the many job losses that have already occurred in the mining sector in Emerald, Blackwater and other Bowen Basin communities.

This is having a major impact not only on the families but also on the small businesses in these towns. For a family this is devastating—when a husband or a partner has to come home and say, 'I've lost my job because of the downturn in the industry.' Many of them have locked into mortgages because they have made their homes in those communities. They are also a part of the community. They might be the local junior Rugby League coach or hold an executive position in the club. Their children go to the local schools. Their wife or partner may be involved in the local P&F or P&C association, play a key role in the local dance production or be involved in the kindy fundraising community. The loss of a job not only impacts the person who has lost their job but also hugely impacts the family and the community they live in.

I call on the state government to act now. We need to invest in infrastructure into regional Queensland. We need to strengthen our regions so that we can avoid the boom-bust periods that occur. Mining will always go up and down. Agriculture will always be affected by a downturn in commodities or by weather, such as with the drought we are experiencing now.

Yesterday I spoke about the opportunity of a new meatworks and inland port in the Central Highlands. This will strengthen the economy. We also have a great opportunity for the central west, where we have a sophisticated and well-run outback tourism industry, something on which I commend the former minister for tourism, Jann Stuckey. She understood that outback tourism is one of our major commodities. We have wool, we have beef and we have tourism.

The tourism industry is a very important part of our community right now as we experience drought. To see this you only have to look at the Stockman's Hall of Fame, which is currently upgrading its precinct. Also, the Qantas Founders Museum is looking to add to its fleet, with acquisition of what they call the Constellation. I am sure some members in here would know of the Constellation—it is a very favoured aircraft—or, as we like to nickname it, the 'Connie'. It is coming from the Philippines. I call on the state government to help us try to get that Constellation to outback Queensland, to Longreach, so we can advance an opportunity for our tourism industry.

We also have the opportunity to rebirth the wool industry. We need to invest in fencing to protect our pastures from wild dogs and kangaroos. Wild dogs are having a devastating impact, but kangaroos pose just as big a threat by eating out any pastures we have while we endure the dry times. It is time for us to get behind a shire-wide barrier fence and cluster fencing off the barrier fence. We need the federal government and the state government, along with local government, to come together collectively to get this job done.

(Time expired)

Algester Electorate

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (11.23 pm): I rise this evening to share some of the incredible work that is happening in my electorate of Algester. For over a year now I have held a mobile office at every single market day at Grand Avenue State School in Forest Lake and have been accompanied by some amazing volunteers—people like David Tattersall, Naida Hernandez and Don Fraser, who, whatever the weather, are always willing to help me engage with the people of Algester. It is at these markets that I get to meet with small business operators who are engaging in great innovation—businesses like Elanya van Heerdan's Mad Cow Bakes, which has been expanding their range to meet changing family demands, and Cameron Kath, who sells drought-resistant plants. They join dozens of stallholders including the Grand Avenue State School P&C, which is always hard at work on the barbecue every second Sunday of the month at the very friendly and popular Markets on Grand. I encourage everyone to drop in for all the fun.

Another business in my electorate that has been responding to local needs is Nottingham Road News at the Calamvale Marketplace. The newsagent owners have been lobbying for a go card facility at their shop for many years. Both the member for Stretton and I had petitioned locals to generate support for the service and were recently able to announce the awarding of a go card terminal for the newsagent. This new facility will make public transport easier to use by offering more options for commuters to manage their go card. I was thrilled to be one of the first to top up my own go card at Nottingham Road News and celebrate the success of this campaign.

This morning I was thrilled to join the Treasurer and other Logan MPs to announce a \$450 million market-led proposal from Transurban Queensland to upgrade the Logan Motorway and the Gateway extension corridor. As residents and businesses in my electorate of Algester know, rapid growth has resulted in increased congestion, longer travel times and, sadly, more traffic accidents. During the election campaign and since being elected I have spoken to hundreds of constituents who have shared their concerns about the southbound right-hand turn from Beaudesert Road onto the Logan Motorway. I promised the people of Algester that I would work hard to deliver a solution to this issue after the former member sought to simply close the access point, which would only serve to push more traffic onto local streets.

Transurban's market-led proposal, announced today, would achieve a solution to this. It would widen parts of the Gateway extension motorway, upgrade interchanges and construct new ramps to ease congestion and improve safety. Transurban has committed to a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process during the detailed proposal phase to ensure a thorough understanding of the project and stakeholder support. I am committed to ensuring locals get a say on the proposed development and share their experiences. With the support of the local community I have lobbied and negotiated for this great announcement, and I want to make sure local knowledge is incorporated into this development. I will continue to work hard for the people of Algester and seek solutions that help our community and our businesses thrive.

Heart of Gold International Short Film Festival

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (11.26 pm): Gympie has a heart of gold. On the outskirts of Gympie, travellers pass by a heart ploughed into the side of the fields that promotes a major cultural festival for the region, the Heart of Gold short film festival. Earlier this month Gympie was buzzing with

activities and events held as part of the eighth Heart of Gold short film festival, which celebrates and showcases well-crafted, emotionally nourishing and uplifting films. Attendance outstripped the more than 5,000 who attended last year.

Running since 2006, the iconic film festival has a unique mission to showcase some of the finest short films from around the world. The only criteria is that the films have to have a heart. It is about showcasing and promoting films that can make you laugh, cry or just think. This year there were more than 125 films showcased from 47 countries including Argentina, Guatemala, Iran, USA, Tunisia, India, Mexico, Japan and throughout Europe. It is a wonderful antidote to all the doom and gloom on our screens at home from personal tragedies, financial uncertainty and upheaval to natural disasters, conflicts overseas and insecurity here in Australia.

It is only with the support of sponsors, volunteers, the local community and the committee that Gympie was able to have such a successful festival this year. There were more than 60 sponsors drawn from a wide range of industry and business. Special recognition needs to go to the presenting sponsors, Nolan Meats, which is Gympie's largest private employer and has operated since 1958. A wholly Australian family-owned company, it serves not only the Australian market but also international markets. It exports to Brunei, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Middle East, Taiwan and the USA. In 2011 it was awarded the prestigious Premier of Queensland exporter of the year. Without the support of Nolan and other businesses, it would be an uphill battle to host such an extraordinary event.

The committee of Claudia Granshaw, Elaine Thompson, Greg Jones, Jennine Heymer, Rose Angus, Scott Sturgess and Gay Lohse are to be congratulated for their skills in pulling together all the aspects that ensured a successful event. Artistic directors Margie Brown and Mandy Lake, together with the organiser of the festival, Michaela Banks, have produced a professional and commendable event.

The Heart of Gold international film festival is a central plank in Gympie's calendar of events. From the Music Muster to the Heart of Gold, the cultural calendar of the region caters for all tastes and interests. They help to attract a wide range of visitors to the region, bringing a much needed economic and cultural boost and, once again, put Gympie on the map.

CQUniversity, Cairns Campus

 **Mr PYNE** (Cairns—ALP) (11.29 pm): On Wednesday, 21 October I had the honour of attending the official opening of CQUniversity's new \$15 million campus in the Cairns CBD. The Treasurer and member for Mulgrave, Curtis Pitt, cut the ribbon at the new campus, saying that it primed the Far North to expand on its reputation as a global hub for academic excellence in tropical design, medicine and research. As the member for Mulgrave correctly observed—

Cairns is internationally renowned as a vibrant, multicultural tropical city and having a university campus in the heart of our CBD will further enhance this and build our reputation as a destination of choice for international students.

The new CQU campus will certainly grow the Far North's economy, attracting 2,500 students over the next five years. Some other interesting numbers in relation to the campus that members may find of interest are: 500, the number of international students within five years; \$43,843, the average expenditure value of each international student to the economy; \$15 million, the anticipated non-salary campus investment by CQUniversity over five years; 60, the expected number of campus staff to be employed within five years; \$7.6 million, the estimated annual local staff salary expenditure within five years; \$1 million, the investment by the Queensland government in campus engineering labs; 714, the number of graduates locally produced each year by 2020; and \$224 million, the estimated total economic spin-off impact on the Cairns economy by 2020.

The Palaszczuk government went to the election with a policy of a renewed focus on education, in particular science, technology, engineering and maths. CQU's campus boasts large teaching spaces for classes and residential schools; computer and videoconferencing labs; paramedic science, nursing and engineering labs; a library; staff offices; study spaces; and a welcoming reception area.

CQUniversity Vice Chancellor and President, Professor Scott Bowman, thanked community and business supporters, saying that the new campus provides exciting opportunities for local students. He stated further—

Our expansion into Cairns demonstrates our national reputation for supporting our students to achieve, no matter how they choose to study.

Clearly, this initiative by CQUniversity is a sign of confidence in our local economy. With other businesses also deciding to invest and a local member who is prepared to advocate for our city, I am delighted to announce that Cairns is, once again, a city on the move.

Electricity Prices

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (11.32 pm): It has now been nine months since this Labor government was elected. Since then, we have seen a steady stream of members, starting with the Premier, down to the ministers and on to every other government member, stand up and say what an accountable and transparent government they intend to be. Yet every time they introduce a bill into the House, or they speak to a motion, transparency and accountability go completely out the window. We saw that again tonight, when the private member's motion about the aggregation of electricity corporations in this state and what that would do to electricity prices was debated. This side of the House sought to have a look at the modelling that might have been available to see whether, in fact, that would lead to cheaper electricity prices. The fact is that it is going to lead to higher electricity prices.

Tomorrow, the Australian Energy Regulator will hand down its final decision about power prices in this state for the next five years. I thought it might be appropriate to review it quickly for the benefit of those members opposite because, clearly from the debate tonight, they do not understand how electricity prices in this state are set. I have here in my hand—and I will table it for the benefit of members—the preliminary decision for Energex, and there is another one for Ergon that was handed down earlier this year by the Australian Energy Regulator. That report shows that over the next few years there will be a decrease in electricity prices of 1.8 per cent. That decrease is pretty well averaged over the next five years.

Tabled paper: Australian Energy Regulator, April 2015, report titled 'Preliminary Decision, Energex determination 2015-16 to 2019-20 - Overview' [[1512](#)].

For those members opposite who are listening, electricity prices were set in 2010 to 2015. Owing to the actions of the Labor Party, over the past three years, while the LNP was in government, we saw electricity prices going up. But the actions that the LNP took are leading to a reduction in electricity prices over the next five years. That is what this preliminary report says.

However, the Labor government has increased the debt on our electricity companies by \$3.15 billion. That is going to have an effect on electricity prices. I fear that we are going to see that in tomorrow's final deliberation of what electricity prices are going to be for the next five years. Members on the other side of the House should be under no illusion that if electricity prices go up over the next three to five years it will be their fault. That is what is going to happen.

Gladstone Electorate, Domestic and Family Violence; Sexual Assault Awareness Month

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (11.35 pm): I rise to speak about the great commitment that the people of my electorate of Gladstone have made to say, 'Not now, not ever, not in our town,' to domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence is a violation of the basic rights that we all have to feel happy, healthy, supported and safe in our lives.

It is clear that immediate action is required to eliminate this form of violence from our society and I am proud to say that my community has taken a stand. The Not in Our Town initiative was launched earlier this month at the 2015 Safer Families, Better Communities rally, which was jointly hosted by the Gladstone Regional Council and the Gladstone Women's Health Centre. The Not in Our Town campaign is built on an understanding that Gladstone is our town, our community, that these are our families and our friends and that each of us have a job to do in bringing conversations about domestic and family violence out into the open.

Bringing the conversation out into the open was also the focus of a domestic and family violence community leaders round table that I hosted in Gladstone last week. That event was a great success, with 45 leaders from both government and non-government sectors coming together to share their stories from the front line of support services in Gladstone and surrounding areas. Some of the key recommendations that came from this round table included the need for better collaboration and coordination of the support services that already exist in Gladstone; education on healthy relationships and healthy conflicts starting in primary schools; and the better utilisation of ouster orders, requiring a perpetrator to leave the home rather than, in most cases, the women and children relocating to the women's refuges in Gladstone.

I will be working hard over the coming months to put these recommendations that we came up with into action in my electorate. Domestic and family violence is one of the most devastating issues facing Queensland, but if we do not talk about it nothing will change. The community of Gladstone has rallied together and said loud and clear, 'Not in our town.'

While I am on my feet, I would also like to mention an upcoming event in my electorate, She Runs the Night in Gladstone, to raise awareness of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This year, the Gladstone Women's Health Centre is holding this event, starting at the East Shores precinct and finishing at the marina parklands, with a candlelight vigil at the end, which I will be attending.

Gladstone Women's Health Centre is doing fantastic work in Gladstone, particularly in the field of domestic and family violence in our community. I stand by them in their cause to wipe out domestic violence in my community of Gladstone.

Firearms, Licensing

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.38 pm): I rise tonight to defend the interests of firearm owners in Queensland. This year there was a national review of firearms. It was a great opportunity for Queensland to engage in a process where the licensing regime was readdressed and where the effort and cost that is put on licensed firearm owners like myself and the member for Dalrymple—the responsible people—is redirected towards unlicensed firearm owners—the illegal ones—who we want to attack. There is common ground for us here. We can save costs and start focusing on the criminal activity of the people on the fringes. There was an opportunity for that, but the process was hijacked based on a YouTube clip on the Adler shotgun. There was no data, no gun death, no incident, no rigorous scientific process. It was just an opportunistic political drive to take something out of one category and put it into category D. There are other firearms in that same category that everyone knows have every right to be there as well. This is just an opportunistic political step to put it in there.

The bad news is that there has been no consultation in Queensland with the firearm industry. The government needs to consult with these people. They do not have to agree with them but they must consult with them. The national firearm review has now been handed down with recommendations. Industry must be consulted. There must be discussions with them before that review spits its recommendations out the other side. It must be informed by both sides. That is only fair. I think all voters in Queensland expect that and it has not been done. It is easy to ostracise and demonise this part of the community. We take great offence to that. There is so much misleading information around this. In Canada they have wound back the rigour around the licence part of the industry because they recognise it is a waste of effort and costs. It does not reduce gun deaths. Only when the unlicensed people on the fringes are attacked will gun deaths reduce.

This is an opportunistic political stunt to attack one gun. There are no big commercial opportunities for anyone. This is a political attack on a particular group of people. It is akin to the live-export ban, where something is demonised and thrown out into the political sphere and everyone is too scared to touch it. There is no rationale, science or data backing this up. It is time for Queensland to make a stand and say that this should be done in the interest of fairness, under scientific rigour, under data, under proper process and not without consultation.

Windsor State School, Sesquicentenary

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (11.41 pm): Originally named the Bowen Bridge Road School, Windsor State School was opened in 1865, making it one of the oldest schools in Brisbane. The school community has been celebrating its 150th birthday in style. Together, the Windsor State School and the P&C have celebrated a truly great school with a proud history, highlighting their sense of community which has been evident since the early settlers pressured the government for a school 150 years ago. This school's sense of pride has been demonstrated in its very successful celebratory events held this year starting with ANZAC Day, Foundation Day, an Evening of Elegance and the very well-attended Heritage Day.

Congratulations to the school students, teachers and staff and the parents who did a fantastic job in making sure each well-planned event, all of which I was lucky enough to attend, was enjoyable, exceptionally supported, fun and showcased all that is great about Windsor. From students dressed up in old gear for Foundation Day, to parents dressed up in roaring twenties gear for a sparkling Evening of Elegance, to His Excellency, the Honourable Paul de Jersey, Governor of Queensland, ringing the old school bell to kick off Heritage Day activities, Windsor State School knows how to party during its special year of celebrations.

In particular, Heritage Day was a day of festivities for all ages, with the school at its very best, featuring a full replica classroom, an old school uniform parade, traditional stalls, a history exhibition and, of course, plenty of food and drink including a spectacular old-style high tea. Thanks to John Taylor who gave all the VIPs a great historic tour of the school—and a beautiful school it is indeed.

The planning for Windsor 150 began in June 2011 to make Windsor State School's sesquicentenary a remarkably memorable year. In particular, a big thank you and congratulations to Windsor P&C 150th Committee Convener Katrina Smith, her husband Cam, and her committee team's amazing effort, including Lisa Brewster, Michelle Hildebrand, Amy Ward, Julie Morrison, Sven Lotzvie, James Angliss, Clarissa Brandt, Wendy Schipper, Fiona Jamieson, Tina Paterson, Angela Willis and Helen Thompson; also, P&C president Konrad Litfin, Principal Stephen O'Kane, Deputy Principal Matt Keong, Windsor School student leaders who did a great job entertaining the Governor at morning tea and all involved—teachers, staff and school cleaners, too numerous to name—for their efforts in making these celebrations truly brilliant.

But Windsor State School's community is no ordinary community, for as well as celebrating the past they are also looking to the future and I am very happy to place on record that in July 2017 the current Officeworks site, originally part of the school, will revert back to the school for the benefit of students, teachers and staff. I thank the Minister for Education, Kate Jones, and her office for delivering this site back to the school community and for supporting a master planning process currently taking place to ensure that this school continues to provide the very best education and facilities for Windsor State School students now and in the future. Congratulations to all involved on a truly remarkable school with fantastic celebrations. I enjoyed each and every one of them.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.45 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seene, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams