



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## TUESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2015

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 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS

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

The Honourable P.W. Wellington MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 20 November 2015

“A Bill for An Act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009 and the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for An Act to amend the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006 and the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for An Act to amend the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Public Safety Preservation Act 1986, the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2005 and the Weapons Act 1990 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for An Act to establish the Queensland Productivity Commission and to amend this Act, the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012, the Industrial Relations Regulation 2011, the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Queensland Competition Authority Act 1997 and the Queensland Competition Authority Regulation 2007 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for An Act to provide for the protection of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area through managing port-related development in and adjacent to the area, and to amend this Act, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 2 for particular purposes”

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

18 November 2015

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 18 November 2015, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills [[1705](#)].

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### Paris, Terrorist Attacks

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that, as a mark of respect following the shocking and barbarous terrorist attacks in Paris, the French flag was flown at half-mast at Parliament House alongside our national and state flags during the period of official mourning. The Premier will be making a statement about this matter later this morning.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (9.32 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. On 11 November 2015 in the House, referring to my registration as a registered nurse through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and my recent visits as a member of parliament to the Gold Coast University Hospital and the Robina Hospital, the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services made a number of false statements. These included baseless accusations that I had misled the parliament or breached the conditions of my registration, as well as that I may have put patients at higher clinical risk. For the benefit of the House, I table confirmation I have received from AHPRA that I have not breached the conditions of my registration.

*Tabled paper:* Emails, dated November 2015, between the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP, and the Triage and Assessment Officer, Office of the Health Ombudsman, regarding a complaint received by the Office of the Health Ombudsman [1706].

I believe the minister has misled the House with these false and unsubstantiated statements. This constitutes contempt under standing order 266(2). Mr Speaker, in accordance with standing orders 268 and 269, I will write to you to request that this matter be referred to the Ethics Committee for investigation.

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (9.32 am): I rise on a second matter of privilege. On 11 November 2015 in the House, referring to my visits to the Gold Coast University and Robina hospitals as a member of parliament, the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services stated—

I have written to the Queensland Health Ombudsman in relation to those matters raised by the conduct of the member for Mudgeeraba to seek a full independent investigation of these matters.

I have since received correspondence from the Office of the Health Ombudsman that states—

The Health Minister, however, has not directed the OHO to conduct an investigation in relation to this matter.

I table a copy of this correspondence from the OHO.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 27 November 2015, from the Senior Health Performance and Compliance Officer—Qld, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, to the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP, regarding the outcome of the AHPRA committee meeting on 26 November 2015 [1707].

The OHO has confirmed that the minister has not sought a full independent investigation of the matters to which he referred. In claiming to have done so, I believe that the minister has deliberately misled the House. This constitutes contempt under standing order 266(2). Mr Speaker, in accordance with standing orders 268 and 269, I will write to you to request that this matter be referred to the Ethics Committee for further investigation.

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (9.33 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. On 12 November during the adjournment debate, in a speech given by the member for Logan the member quoted my speech given over two days on 11 and 12 November on the Sustainable Ports Development Bill and made false representation of my words and intentions. Given that the member read from a prepared speech which purports to quote my speech, I believe the member has deliberately misled the House. Mr Speaker, I will be writing to you seeking his referral to the Ethics Committee on this matter.

## REPORTS

### Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General two reports, report No. 4 of 2015-16 titled *Royalties for the regions* and report No. 5 of 2015-16 titled *Hospital and health services: 2014-15 financial statements*. I table the reports for the information of members.

*Tabled paper:* Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 4: 2015-16—Royalties for the regions [1708].

*Tabled paper:* Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 5: 2015-16—Hospital and Health Services: 2014-15 financial statements [1709].

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### Answers to Questions on Notice and Petition Responses

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, standing order 114 requires answers to questions on notice to be supplied to the Table Office within 30 calendar days. Similarly, standing order 125 requires ministerial responses to petitions to be forwarded to the Clerk within 30 days. Where the 30th day is not a working day, the longstanding practice that has been adopted is that the answers or responses should be provided by the next working day.

I wish to advise honourable members that, due to the intervening Christmas and New Year closure period, answers to questions on notice asked this sitting week and ministerial responses to any petitions tabled this sitting week are required to be supplied to the Table Office by 5 pm on Monday, 4 January 2016.

### Drought Relief Dinner

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on Friday, 13 November a dinner was held on the Speaker's Green to raise funds for charities that are providing emergency drought relief to rural communities across Queensland. A total of \$40,000 was raised and will be dispersed through three rural charities: the Western Queensland Drought Appeal, the Queensland Country Women's Association and Buy a Bale. I thank all members who attended and supported this fundraiser. I again thank the Rural Press Club, the member for Lockyer and the member for Ipswich West for their role in the success of the evening.

### Townsville Hospital Foundation, Jacket Challenge

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that I have approved for the member for Thuringowa to wear his fetching floral jacket in the chamber this week. Mr Harper is wearing the coat as a part of Jacket Challenge to raise money for the Townsville Hospital Foundation for the purchase of a children's hoist for the paediatric unit.

### World AIDS Day

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that today is World AIDS Day. Members are wearing a red ribbon on their lapels to raise awareness about the issues surrounding HIV and AIDS, to show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. Parliament House has also been lit in red to raise awareness of this day.

## PETITIONS

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

### Lockyer Valley, Groundwater

**Mr Rickuss**, from 10 petitioners, requesting the House to use the principles of integrated catchment management and ecologically sustainable development as the basis for future management of the water supply to the Lockyer alluvial groundwater [[1710](#)].

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk—

### Gas Rebate

518 petitioners, requesting the House to increase the Queensland Government rebate for gas to match the current rebate for electricity [[1711](#)].

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

### Forest Glen, Sand Extraction

**Mr Dickson**, from 5,681 petitioners, requesting the House to use its powers to prevent the sand extraction operations proceeding at Forest Glen [[1712](#), [1713](#)].

### Medicinal Cannabis

**Mr Dickson**, from 12,380 petitioners, requesting the House to allow all persons with medical conditions or symptoms, who may benefit, access to Australian made whole plant cannabis therapies [[1714](#), [1715](#)].

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

### Bullying

173 petitioners, requesting the House to take such action as is necessary to ensure that all ongoing neighbourhood bullying by adults is criminalised [[1716](#), [1717](#)].

### Medicinal Cannabis

4,090 petitioners, requesting the House to adopt the Medical Cannabis Advisory Group's proposal to amend Health Regulation 270A [[1718](#), [1719](#)].

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

#### Kilcoy Community Kindergarten

**Mrs Frecklington**, from 316 petitioners, requesting the House to not close the Kilcoy C&K Kindergarten on 11 December 2015 and to provide clarification about whether continuation of the Kilcoy Community Kindergarten could be facilitated through the department with any service provider [[1720](#)].

#### Logan City, Bus Services

**Mr Power**, from 165 petitioners, requesting the House to restore Logan City bus services that were lost during the last government and to review the current bus services to ensure the needs of residents of Logan City are met [[1721](#)].

#### Sanctuary Cove, Development

**Mr Crandon**, from 528 petitioners, requesting the House to not alter the act or the regulations governing Sanctuary Cove without first obtaining approval of 75 per cent of residential property owners (excluding Aveo and the developer) and be cognisant in dealing with Sanctuary Cove matters that neither the Principal Body Corporate nor the Principal Thoroughfare Body Corporate is representative of all residents of Sanctuary Cove [[1722](#)].

#### Benowa State High School, Parking

**Mr Langbroek**, from 209 petitioners, requesting the House to support the development of a car park at Benowa State High School to alleviate traffic and parking issues in surrounding residential areas [[1723](#)].

#### Victoria Point, Police Resources

**Mr McEachan**, from 478 petitioners, requesting the House to allocate resources for the installation of a police station or police beat at Victoria Point [[1724](#)].

#### Domestic and Family Violence

**Mr Powell**, from 204 petitioners, requesting the House to make amendments to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 that will cause a domestic violence protection order to remain in force for the whole of the natural life of the respondent or until the order is ended by the court on application [[1725](#)].

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

#### Dohles Rocks Road, Traffic Arrangements

44 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately review the timing and operation of the automated on-ramp lights via the Dohles Rocks Road on-ramp with the view to their removal [[1726](#)].

#### Criminal Organisations Legislation

1,108 petitioners, requesting the House to ask the VLAD review taskforce not to recommend the repeal or replacement of the 2013 legislation and to retain the VLAD laws as they currently stand with further strengthening recommendations as required [[1727](#)].

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

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

13 November 2015—

- [1662](#) Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee: Report No. 7, 55th Parliament—Annual report 2014-2015
- [1663](#) Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee: Report No. 8, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 September and 13 October 2015
- [1664](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Mr C R Dick) to a paper petition (2467-15) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) from 126 petitioners, requesting the House to continue to give every child the opportunity for childcare, kindergarten, school or other education or care regardless of vaccination status
- [1665](#) Land Court of Queensland Annual Report 2014-15
- [1666](#) Report on Operations of the Land Tribunal established under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 for the year ended 30 June 2015
- [1667](#) Legal Services Commission—Annual Report 2014-15

- [1668](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 13, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 15 July 2015 and 15 September 2015
- [1669](#) North Burdekin Water Board—Final Report 1 July 2014 to 18 February 2015
- [1670](#) South Burdekin Water Board—Final Report 1 July 2014 to 18 February 2015
- [1671](#) Response from the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Dr Lynham) to an ePetition (2441-15) sponsored by Mr Pyne, from 1,620 petitioners, requesting the House not to amend the Sustainable Ports Development Bill 2015 to include the port of Cairns or Mourilyan as priority ports
- [1672](#) Queensland Police Service—Review of the G20 (Safety and Security) Act 2013, October 2015
- [1673](#) Response from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Ms Miller) to an ePetition (2410-15) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4) from 24 petitioners, requesting the House to provide more resources to the Queensland Police Service to enforce road safety laws in the Pine Rivers region
- 16 November 2015—
- [1674](#) Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade (Ms Trad) to a paper petition (2489-15) presented by Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) from 1,273 petitioners, requesting the House to reconsider the views of local ratepayers and residents of the Hinchinbrook Shire before any more decisions are made to progress the Ingham CBD Revitalisation Project
- [1675](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Mr Bailey) to an ePetition (2372-15) sponsored by Mr Brown, from 203 petitioners, requesting the House to remove all dumped and abandoned vessels from Tingalpa Creek
- 17 November 2015—
- [1676](#) Response from the Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade (Ms Trad) to an ePetition (2408-15) sponsored by Ms Donaldson, from 26 petitioners, requesting the House to clarify in legislation that persons have freedom of choice between the use of shuttle services, taxis or other public transport at airports; persons who book a shuttle service in advance have priority over walk-ins; and airport management provide an opportunity for persons to book spaces on shuttle buses at a counter or other designated space as designated by management
- [1677](#) Response from the Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade (Ms Trad) to a paper petition (2482-15) sponsored by Ms Linard, from 70 petitioners, requesting the House to extend the sound barrier on Melton Road, Nundah due to excessive train noise and increased freight train movement
- [1678](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 14, 55th Parliament—Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015
- [1679](#) Administrator National Health Funding Pool—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1680](#) Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee: Report No. 8, 55th Parliament—Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015
- [1681](#) Annual Report of Electorate Allowance Expenditure by Members of the Legislative Assembly—1 July 2014-30 June 2015: Erratum
- 18 November 2015—
- [1682](#) Queensland Ombudsman—Report, dated September 2015, titled 'The workplace death investigations report: An investigation into the quality of workplace death investigations conducted by the Office of Fair and Safe Work Queensland'
- 19 November 2015—
- [1683](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 3: 2015-16—Agricultural science research, development and extension programs and projects
- [1684](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission—Annual Report 2014-15
- [1685](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Science and Innovation (Hon Enoch) to a paper petition (2479-15) sponsored by Mr Williams, from 551 petitioners, requesting the House to establish an emergency/crisis accommodation in the East Pumicestone region of Bribie Island, Ningi and Sandstone Point
- 23 November 2015—
- [1686](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Ms D'Ath) to an ePetition (2374-15) sponsored by Mr Ryan, from 545 petitioners, requesting the House to enact laws to increase penalties for people who breach domestic violence orders; increase police powers to enforce domestic violence orders and respond to every and any breach; and increase support for victims of domestic violence through the "victims of crime support scheme"
- 24 November 2015—
- [1687](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Mr C R Dick) to a paper petition (2478-15) sponsored by Mr Knuth, from 5,588 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently approve the upgrade of the Atherton Hospital
- [1688](#) Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Amendment (Midwife Insurance Exemption) Regulation, No. 45/2015, made by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council under section 245 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law and published by the Victorian Government Printer on 3 June 2015

[1689](#) Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 11, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 15 July 2015 and 15 September 2015

[1690](#) Health and Ambulance Services Committee: Report No. 9, 55th Parliament—Mental Health Bill 2015 and Mental Health (Recovery Model) Bill 2015

25 November 2015—

[1691](#) Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Bill 2015: Erratum to Explanatory Notes

26 November 2015—

[1692](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Mr C R Dick) to a paper petition (2488-15) presented by Mr Knuth, from 787 petitioners, requesting the House to approve as a matter of priority the upgrade of the Primary Health Care Centre in Dimbulah

[1693](#) Response from the Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade (Ms Trad) to an ePetition (2462-15) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4) from 197 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the Translink Fare Review Taskforce cut fares to encourage more people onto public transport and reduce traffic congestion

[1694](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 10, 55th Parliament—Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015

[1695](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 15, 55th Parliament—Portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 15 July 2015 and 27 October 2015

27 November 2015—

[1696](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Mr Bailey) to a paper petition (2487-15) presented by Mr Pitt, from 599 petitioners, requesting the House to install School Crossing Supervisors at the traffic lights on the corner of the Bruce Highway and Foster Road, and at the traffic lights directly opposite, so that children can safely cross to the White Rock State School

[1697](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Mr Bailey) to a paper petition (2490-15) presented by Mr Powell, and an ePetition (2435-15) sponsored by Mr Powell, from 183 and 22 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to provide safer road conditions in Woodford between Neurum Road and Mary Street, by relocating the west bound 100km/h sign and installing double white lines

[1698](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply (Mr Bailey) to a paper petition (2491-15) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), and an ePetition (2396-15) sponsored the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 1,810 and 234 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to immediately plan or activate existing plans and recommence public consultation with stakeholders for a sustainable vehicular, public transport and cyclist solution that addresses both traffic congestion and noise abatement on Centenary Motorway and Sumner Road flyover

[1699](#) Childrens Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2014-2015

[1700](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 16, 55th Parliament—Electoral (Improving Representation) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015

30 November 2015—

[1701](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 2, 55th Parliament—Inquiry into the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors, interim government response

[1702](#) Health and Ambulance Services Committee: Report No. 9, 55th Parliament—Mental Health Bill 2015 and Mental Health (Recovery Model) Bill 2015: Erratum

[1703](#) The Queensland Plan Annual Progress Report 2014-15

[1704](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 17, 55th Parliament—'Lemon' Laws—Inquiry into consumer protections and remedies for buyers of new motor vehicles

#### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

[1728](#) Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2015, No. 155

[1729](#) Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2015, No. 155, explanatory notes

Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[1730](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2015, No. 156

[1731](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2015 No. 156, explanatory notes

Legal Profession Act 2007—

[1732](#) Legal Profession Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 157

[1733](#) Legal Profession Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 157, explanatory notes

Public Records Act 2002—

[1734](#) Public Records Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2015, No. 158

[1735](#) Public Records Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2015, No. 158, explanatory notes

Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981—

[1736](#) Exotic Diseases in Animals (Asian Honey Bee) Repeal Notice 2015, No. 159

[1737](#) Exotic Diseases in Animals (Asian Honey Bee) Repeal Notice 2015, No. 159, explanatory notes

Tow Truck Act 1973, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[1738](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 160

[1739](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 160, explanatory notes

Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2015—

[1740](#) Proclamation, No. 161

[1741](#) Proclamation, No. 161, explanatory notes

Adult Proof of Age Card Act 2008, Tow Truck Act 1973, Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994—

[1742](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2015, No. 162

[1743](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2015, No. 162, explanatory notes

Building Queensland Act 2015—

[1744](#) Proclamation, No. 163

[1745](#) Proclamation, No. 163, explanatory notes

Environmental Protection Act 1994, Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[1746](#) Environmental Protection and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 164

[1747](#) Environmental Protection and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015, No. 164, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1748](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2015, No. 165

[1749](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2015, No. 165, explanatory notes

Forestry Act 1959—

[1750](#) Forestry (State Forests) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2015, No. 166

[1751](#) Forestry (State Forests) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2015, No. 166, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1752](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2015, No. 167

[1753](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2015, No. 167, explanatory notes

Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991—

[1754](#) Supreme Court (Admission Guidelines) Notice 2015, No. 168

[1755](#) Supreme Court (Admission Guidelines) Notice 2015, No. 168, explanatory notes

#### MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef (Mr Miles)—

[1756](#) South East Queensland Koala Conservation State Planning Regulatory Provisions

#### MEMBERS' PAPERS

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Cairns (Mr Pyne)—

[1757](#) Letter, unsigned, dated 10 June 2015, and attachment, from the Director of the Yurruwarra (C) Dingaal Aboriginal Corporation, Mr Peter D Olney, to Members of Parliament, regarding claim for compensation for Cape Flattery Dingaal Charlie tribe

Member for Dalrymple (Mr Knuth)—

[1758](#) Correspondence, various dates, addressed or copied to the Member for Dalrymple, Mr Shane Knuth MP, regarding the Dimbulah Primary Health Care Centre

## MINISTERIAL PAPERS

### Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill, Regulatory Impact Statement

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (9.41 am): In its report on the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill 2015 the Agriculture and Environment Committee recommended that a regulatory impact assessment of the bill be undertaken and tabled by me prior to the commencement of the second reading debate. On 30 September the Hon. Curtis Pitt, the Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, requested the Queensland Productivity Commission undertake an independent regulatory impact assessment on the bill. Therefore, for the information of members, I table the 'Decision regulatory impact statement' on the bill as conducted by the Queensland Productivity Commission.

*Tabled paper:* Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill 2015: Decision Regulatory Impact Statement [[1759](#)].

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Paris, Terrorist Attacks

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.41 am): In one night of unspeakable atrocity, our world, yet again, has been forever changed. As terrorists opened fire on Paris on 13 November we watched on appalled, horrified and frightened—appalled that human beings could act with such evil; horrified that such brutality could be unleashed against innocent people going about their everyday lives; and frightened that very suddenly bloodshed was once again on our doorstep.

The sickening events of black Friday in the City of Light have shaken the world, not the least because when these terrorists unleashed they targeted people in environments in which each of us expect and deserve to feel safe. They targeted Parisians enjoying dinner at sidewalk cafes, people watching a football match and, most horrendously, young people attending a concert venue.

The images of people fleeing the massacre at the Bataclan theatre will remain etched on our memories forever. We cannot begin to imagine the experience of being there. We cannot imagine the sheer, unthinkable magnitude of the horror. The stories of survival have touched us. The stories of those who perished have appalled us.

I am positive all Queenslanders and every member of this parliament will join me in offering our sincere and heartfelt condolences to those who grieve for lost sons and daughters, husbands, wives and partners, for friends and family members who continue to fight to recover from this atrocity. I am also sure that all Queenslanders will stand with me to condemn the Paris attacks.

We are fortunate to live in a diverse multicultural community where we enjoy a harmony that must be preserved and must be protected. My government is taking steps to help ensure that we live in a safe society. Personally, the images of the massacre in Paris—of people shot dead as they ate, of teenagers fleeing in terror from that nightclub, of shocked families searching for missing relatives—will stay with me for a long, long time. As the city and the country and the world heals, my government sends its deepest sympathies. I move—

That the House take note of the statement.

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.40 am): I join with the Premier and you, Mr Speaker, and acknowledge that you have very symbolically expressed the support of the Queensland people for our friends in France and Paris following this extraordinary atrocity. Premier, we certainly very much share and endorse the concerns and the empathy which you have expressed in the parliament today.

We have much in common with the people of France because many thousands of Australians spilt blood in the defence of our shared values on battlefields in France and places very closely aligned. A couple of weeks ago when we awoke to the horror of what was happening in Paris it became even more significant for many people because of the fact that so many of our loved ones a few generations removed fought in defence of our shared values—liberty, freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and democracy. What happened in Paris recently strikes at the core of what so many people have fought and died for.

We were shocked and horrified. We tried to understand the feelings of the many people who were involved, whether they be directly or indirectly affected. We saw the paradigm for ourselves and wondered whether something like that could possibly happen in our own peaceful country. We were left with many questions.

There was no doubt that there was much worry and concern and there should continue to be. In the last few years there has been an appalling set of circumstances where we have had to confront things that we have not had to confront in our living memory. We have to be diligent. We have to remain on guard. We have to make sure that we do not overreact in an environment where people want us to do things which we may live to regret.

We have to also make sure that we guard against complacency because complacency can place us at greater risk. We must make sure that we protect ourselves. We must make sure that the people whom we invite to share our peaceful home in Australia will share the same values that we have and are indeed prepared to defend them. I think that is a particularly important point.

Today, following on from what the Premier has said, this is about expressing our condolences, our thoughts and our prayers and indicating to our friends of not only many generations but also many centuries—friends because of their values which we also hold very dear—that we are with them in this very difficult time, we mourn with them, we feel what they are feeling. We will also be there with them as we need to defend those shared values.

### Jobs

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.47 am): We said we would be a government about jobs and we are delivering. In the two weeks since the last sitting of this House, there has been a series of major job-creating projects announced right here in Queensland. The biggest of these was unveiled here at Parliament House last Friday. Rio Tinto announced that they will invest \$2.6 billion in developing one of the world's largest bauxite deposits, 40 kilometres south of Weipa. At the peak of construction, the project is expected to provide work for 1,100 people and ongoing employment for 1,400 workers in Weipa and 2,000 workers at refineries in Gladstone. This announcement is an enormous boost to Queensland's economy and will provide jobs for up to 40 years.

It was just one of several major announcements over the last fortnight, involving expenditure totalling \$8 billion and jobs numbering in their thousands. My government's clear focus and priority is captured in the words 'jobs now and jobs for the future'. That is precisely what we see in these major resource development projects and other projects.

Let's look at some of the other projects from the past fortnight. First there was news of QGC's \$1.7 billion Surat Basin LNG project expansion. The project will provide a welcome employment boost and means that valuable royalties can continue to be generated from Queensland's natural gas environment. QGC's development decision shows that Queensland has the right policy settings for attracting business investment. At peak, this project is expected to generate 1,600 construction jobs.

On that same day Minister Anthony Lynham and I signed off on the contractual close with Destination Brisbane Consortium for the \$3 billion Queen's Wharf development. This project will deliver more than \$1 billion to the state, more than 2,000 construction jobs and 8,000 operational jobs. Following that was the announcement that Queensland has secured an \$800 million gas pipeline project from the Northern Territory, bringing jobs and critical energy supplies to the state's north-west.

My government has been focused on winning the pipeline project for Queensland. Today I want to personally commend the role and the hard work of my Minister for State Development, Anthony Lynham, in getting this project across the line for Queensland. This is an exciting achievement for Queensland in relation to the jobs and opportunities it will create for local suppliers, as well as the potentially cheaper energy it will supply to the north-west resources projects. The new interconnector will generate an anticipated 560 construction jobs across the 600-kilometre pipeline. The Queensland government has already been working with locals in the north-west to ensure local suppliers are ready to capitalise on any opportunities from the pipeline's construction.

Moving from the north-west back to the south-east, Treasurer Curtis Pitt last week announced a new \$140 million development will get underway at North Lakes at the start of next year. This redevelopment positions the Moreton Bay region to further build on the positive economic growth and jobs creation recorded this year.

These projects come on top of \$35 billion in the state budget for infrastructure investment over four years to support jobs for Queenslanders. A total of 43,800 jobs has been created since the election, and the good news just keeps coming. We are delivering for Queensland.

### Nurse-to-Patient Ratio Legislation

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.51 am): Through my government's Nursing Guarantee, we have committed to legislate for safe nurse-to-patient ratios and workload provisions to ensure patient safety and quality health care. We are getting on with the job of rebuilding the nursing workforce through both the Refresh Nursing and Nursing Guarantee policy initiatives. Extensive research across more than 32 countries over the past 20 years has shown the positive effect of nursing numbers on patient, clinical and economic outcomes. My government approved a proposal for phased implementation of nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios in acute wards of public health sector facilities, with ratios of one to four, one to four and one to seven for morning, afternoon and night shifts respectively.

I am pleased to confirm the Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015 will be introduced into the parliament today by the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. It will deliver on my government's commitment to legislate for mandated ratios and workload provisions to ensure patient safety and quality health care in this state. It will ensure both patient safety and improved safety and work conditions for the tireless staff who work in our hospitals.

The primary objective of the bill is to ensure appropriate staffing levels in order to improve patient outcomes and reduce hospital costs from fewer re-admissions. The ratios scheme will be implemented in hospital and health services through a phased implementation model from 1 July 2016. My government is delivering on its election commitments to ensure our health system is the best and safest in the country. My government is committed to ensuring the best outcomes for both patients and hospital staff.

### Overseas Visit

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (9.53 am): This government's economic strategy is all about generating jobs and economic growth for Queensland. In an effort to harness greater investment into our state and form more strategic trade partnerships, I visited key South and South-East Asian markets over the last fortnight.

In Indonesia, I participated in the inaugural Indonesia Australia Business Week in Jakarta that was hosted by the federal Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Robb, and his federal agency Austrade. I am happy to announce that, while there, an MOU was signed between Queensland vocational education and training provider Careers Australia and Indonesia's President University to deliver Careers Australia's internationally recognised and accredited short courses, apprenticeships, traineeships, certificates and diplomas across a range of industries.

In India, I met the minister for urban development and sought opportunities for Queensland companies to deliver on key aspects of the Modi government's agenda for India's economic growth, including its ambitious 100 Smart Cities program. In a country of significant population growth and urbanisation, tremendous opportunities exist for Queensland development, infrastructure and professional services companies to form multiskilled consortia to bid for contracts covering all aspects of the creation of these new smart cities.

In India, I also witnessed the signing of a significant MOU between the University of Queensland and the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore. During the Indian visit we also received news that homegrown Queensland company Charlton Brown, which participated in the trade mission, had received the International Trainer of the Year Award at the 2015 Australian Training Awards. This is a fantastic testament to Charlton Brown's commitment to being innovative and to continuously improving its business.

This mission also highlights the importance of international education and training to Queensland's future. In 2014, it was worth \$2.5 billion to our economy, and its contribution to the economy has doubled over the past 10 years. It is currently our fourth largest export sector and our second largest export services sector. It contributes significantly to our Advance Queensland vision and helps create the jobs of the future.

But it is a sector that was poorly neglected by the former Newman government. Despite its significant contribution to the Queensland economy, it was not one of their four pillars—and it shows. In the past 12 months to June 2015, international higher education enrolments grew 8.8 per cent

nationwide, but unfortunately here in Queensland growth was less than half that at 3.9 per cent. Similarly, international enrolments at public VET courses grew 4.8 per cent nationally but actually fell here in Queensland by 7.7 per cent. We need to turn these figures around, and we should do more to nurture this major growth industry.

That is why I have asked our global business agency Trade and Investment Queensland to coordinate the development of a new Queensland strategy for international education, in partnership with the Department of Education and Training. As a first step, I am delighted to announce that TIQ has commissioned Deloitte Access Economics senior partner Professor Ian Harper to facilitate a half-day workshop with an expert reference group on 11 December this year. The expert reference group comprises: Professor Peter Høj, Vice-Chancellor and President, University of Queensland; Professor Sarah Todd, Pro Vice Chancellor (International), Griffith University; Ms Carol Doyle, President, Study Cairns; Mr Richard Brown, Managing Director, Browns English Language School; Ms Monica Bradley, Director, Purposeful Capital; the Hon. Phil Honeywood, National Executive Director, International Education Association of Australia; and a small group of senior government representatives. This reference group will provide key inputs to the development of the strategy, which will be released early next year for consultation. Trade means jobs, and this government is determined to continue to grow opportunity for Queenslanders both here and abroad.

### Queensland Economy

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.57 am): When it comes to the economy, confidence is king. Queenslanders are confident about the economic plan laid out by the Palaszczuk government at the budget.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** Mr Speaker, they do not like it. Business confidence was through the floor under them.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** They might learn something if they listen, Mr Speaker. The Queensland Index, released last week, had its highest reading in over three years—a net positive of plus 27 per cent, the third highest on record. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents believe Queensland is heading in the right direction. We are heading in the right direction because we have an economic plan which is about delivering jobs now and jobs for the future—an economic plan built on our \$1.6 billion Working Queensland jobs package, a \$34 billion infrastructure program over the next four years and the restoration of front-line services through record health and education budgets.

Most importantly, this plan is working. The data speaks for itself. More than 43,800 jobs have been created in Queensland since the election, including 9,000 full-time jobs. Our economic plan has helped through major budget initiatives like the \$500 million statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund that has seen local tradies employed across the state on critical maintenance and refurbishment projects—475 tradespersons and firms have registered for government work on education maintenance projects since August.

We have led the nation on business confidence for four straight months now according to the NAB. Our economic plan has helped with 1,748 Queensland businesses so far claiming \$2.4 million in payroll tax rebates for hiring apprentices or trainees—businesses like Norman Wright & Sons, a 100-year-old shipbuilding company in Bulimba where I was recently with the member for Bulimba. As I am informed, Norman Wright & Sons is home to the first shipbuilding apprenticeship in Queensland—a very fitting place to talk about our payroll tax rebate.

There is much to be confident about. Merchandise exports are up 21 per cent over the year to September including \$1.75 billion in LNG exports from the port of Gladstone. There has been a 27.5 per cent rise in beef exports. As we heard from the Premier earlier—and I am going to say it again because those opposite need to hear it—since parliament last met we have seen contractual close on Queen's Wharf, a \$3 billion project which will transform Brisbane and deliver an extra \$1 billion to the budget; the announcement by QGC of a \$1.7 billion investment in the LNG industry which will support 1,600 jobs; the announcement of Rio Tinto's \$2.6 billion Amrun project, south of Weipa, which will include the construction of a bauxite mine and port providing 1,100 jobs; and the announcement of an \$800 million gas pipeline from the Northern Territory to Mount Isa, which will help open up Northern Australia to

more jobs and export opportunities. Those opposite continue to talk about the private sector. Business conditions in Queensland are allowing investment to happen—investment that did not happen under those opposite.

Our economic plan is also about delivering jobs for the future through our \$180 million Advance Queensland package. Advance Queensland is the centrepiece of our economic plan and has already seen success with the launch of our Business Development Fund, the launch of the Advance Queensland Johnson & Johnson Innovation Quick Fire Challenge and the announcement of the Queensland Emory Drug Discovery Initiative.

Despite the LNP's legacy, we have all the right ingredients for growth going forward. Treasury forecasts Queensland will have nation-leading growth both this year and next year. This is backed by independent analysis by Deloitte Access Economics, which has also forecast Queensland will lead the nation in economic growth next year. The people of Queensland have a right to be confident. Businesses have a right to be confident because we are creating jobs and we are getting on with it.

### Mining Industry

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (10.01 am): It has been a big few weeks in the Queensland resources sector, about \$4 billion worth. That is right, Mr Speaker: \$4 billion worth. It is a great note to close the year on, especially if you are looking for work in regional Queensland. There are more than 3,000 resources jobs in the pipeline over the next few years. Let us start with the QGC's \$1.7 billion Charlie project near Wandoan—the first major new resource project announced in Queensland since Dugald River in north-west Queensland earlier this year. This is a two-year project, with 1,600 construction jobs plus flow-on business opportunities for local suppliers. Four hundred coal seam gas wells along with the construction of a large field compression station, associated pipelines and infrastructure will feed into existing facilities. It underlines the importance of the CSG-LNG industry in generating jobs for Queenslanders and royalties for the budget.

Last week Rio Tinto gave the Far North an early Christmas bonus, with its \$2.6 billion investment at Amrun mine and the 1,100 jobs it will create. The Amrun mine will also support the jobs of more than 1,400 employees at Weipa and 2,000 employees based at the Yarwun and Queensland Aluminium Ltd refineries in Gladstone that are fed with bauxite from this project.

The acquisition of the Isaac Plains open-cut coalmine near Moranbah by Stanmore Coal Ltd will also boost confidence. It is a little Aussie company getting in and rolling up its sleeves. Production at Isaac Plains had ceased in January 2015, and the mine was placed in care and maintenance. It is good to see these little Aussie companies getting into the coal sector. The proposed reopening of the mine is welcome news for the community of Moranbah, which has been hard hit by the mining downturn and depends heavily on a healthy resources sector.

Let us not forget the North East Gas Interconnector that is going to inject new energy in a real and a figurative sense into north-west Queensland. I personally lobbied very hard with the Northern Territory government to win that pipeline for the north, and it was great to celebrate the announcement in Mount Isa with Tony McGrady. I have worked hard across this state and travelled interstate and overseas promoting and securing investment in the Queensland resources industry, because I know a healthy resources sector in Queensland means jobs for Queenslanders, and there is more to come. The Palaszczuk government is creating jobs now and jobs for the future, and we have the proof.

### Public Hospitals, Nurse-to-Patient Ratios

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.05 am): Today is a significant day in the history of health care in Queensland. This afternoon I will introduce a bill into the House that will deliver major benefits for patients at public hospitals across the state. The Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015 will implement the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to legislate for safe nurse-to-patient ratios and workload provisions to ensure patient safety and quality health care.

Today's legislation follows a proud tradition of health reform in the health sector by Labor governments. In 1923, under the government of Labor Premier EG Theodore, the Hospitals Act established hospital districts and boards with state and local governments guaranteeing board funding. In 1945, under the government of Labor premier Frank Cooper, the Hospital Benefits Act, which established free hospitals in Queensland—that is right; a Labor government established free hospitals in Queensland—was passed. This legislation came into effect on 1 July 1946 when Ned Hanlon,

another reforming Labor figure, was premier. In 2015, under the leadership of Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, another Labor government will introduce legislation that will significantly improve our state's health system.

A nurse-to-patient or midwife-to-patient ratio is the minimum number of nurses or midwives working on a particular ward, unit or department in relation to the number of patients for whom they care. The Palaszczuk government will implement minimum ratios of one nurse to four patients for morning and afternoon shifts, and one nurse to seven patients for night shifts in a range of medical, surgical and acute mental health wards in public sector health service facilities across Queensland. These ratios will be implemented in a phased manner at prescribed locations across Queensland from 1 July 2016.

Research overwhelmingly shows that a higher number of registered nurses relative to the number of patients has a positive impact on patient outcomes, including decreased lengths of stays in hospitals and reduced inpatient mortality. This research has been published in a range of prestigious international medical journals over many years. By mandating ratios across specified Queensland public sector health facilities, our government recognises the important role that nurse-to-patient ratios play in supporting patient safety and quality of care. On behalf of the Palaszczuk Labor government, I look forward to introducing this legislation into parliament this afternoon and am confident that I have the overwhelming support of the nursing profession in so doing.

### Overseas Visit

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (10.07 am): I rise to update the House on the recent tourism delegation I led to Hong Kong and China. The delegation included the Director-General of the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, Megan Houghton; Tourism and Events Queensland's CEO, Leanne Coddington; Brisbane Airport Corporation's CEO, Julieanne Alroe, and general manager, Andrew Brodie; and Brisbane Marketing's Steven Silvester. This delegation focused on strengthening ties with tourism partners and international airlines to boost direct flights to Queensland as well as attracting new tourism investment in Queensland.

We met with a wide variety of Hong Kong and Chinese stakeholders to discuss the opportunities that exist in Queensland. It is an exciting time for tourism in Queensland. There is great interest from China with investors, tourism leaders and airlines looking to our state. I held meetings with the Mulpha group, Cathay Pacific, China Capital Investment Group, the White Horse Group, Hubei Provincial Tourism Bureau, Hubei Wanda New Airline International Travel Services, China Southern Airlines and the Wanda Group, which all expressed confidence in Queensland and strong interest in our state's future.

Everyone agreed that Queensland's natural beauty and its close proximity to Asia make it an attractive state for investors and airline operators. At my meeting investors were very keen to hear about the new opportunities that exist in Queensland and to discuss key Queensland projects that are currently seeking investment. Following the Premier's successful trip in September, I met with China Eastern Airlines and was very pleased to sign a new memorandum of understanding to secure a new year-round Shanghai-Brisbane direct service, which will commence in November 2016 with three flights every week. This is a game-changer for Queensland. It builds on the direct flights that we have already secured from Wuhan to the Gold Coast that I announced earlier this year. We know that direct flights boost tourism, and this commitment from China Eastern is a sign of their confidence in Queensland tourism. The new flights will bring 36,500 additional travellers and will generate more than \$22 million for the Queensland economy.

The future of Queensland tourism is closely linked with China, and the Palaszczuk government is committed to building strong ties with the Chinese because we know that growing tourism means growing jobs.

### Training Ombudsman

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.10 am): Today I rise to inform the House of the important job being undertaken by the Palaszczuk government's interim Training Ombudsman, the significant volume of complaints

received since the interim Training Ombudsman site went live and the outcomes achieved in just 2½ months. The Palaszczuk government was elected on a commitment to create jobs now and into the future. But with jobs growth comes the necessity of an appropriately trained workforce, and this government is committed to ensuring that this workforce has access to the highest quality skills and training. We are committed to delivering the high-skilled workforce Queensland needs for innovation and future growth.

In 2012 the LNP government cut the office of the former training ombudsman, leaving Queensland's trainees, apprentices, trainers, employers and training providers in limbo with no support in navigating the often complicated VET sector and nowhere to raise their concerns and seek assistance in resolving complaints regarding the delivery of skills and training in Queensland. In the recent election Queenslanders supported Labor's commitment of \$5 million over the next three years to reintroduce this position with increased capacity to investigate and, where possible, resolve complaints and the funding necessary to provide assistance and advice to Queenslanders.

On 14 September this year I appointed the interim Training Ombudsman under a ministerial charter to initiate the necessary systems and put in place appropriate processes until the relevant legislation is enacted. Since 14 September the interim Training Ombudsman has received 25 complaints and five formal inquiries. Formal inquiries are those that require the Office of the Training Ombudsman to investigate a matter in order to provide the correct referral advice and information to the client. Of the 25 complaints, 13 have been completed and 12 are ongoing and are at various stages of investigation. Complaints have been received from apprentices, trainees, students, employers, RTOs, other stakeholders, parents and guardians. So far a number of complaints have not just affected the complainant; one complaint currently with the department impacts 127 apprentices while another regarding the wording on a certificate impacted seven students.

As well as receiving and investigating complaints and inquiries, the interim Training Ombudsman and his staff are in the process of setting up memorandums of understanding with a range of significant stakeholders in the VET sector. I wish to thank Geoff Favell for his hard work as the interim Training Ombudsman. Geoff and his staff have worked tirelessly recreating this position, ironing out issues encountered by the former training ombudsman, setting up the parameters within which the Training Ombudsman will operate, finding office space to lease and setting up MOUs with key stakeholders, all while receiving and investigating inquiries and complaints.

Finally, I wish to thank those opposite for endorsing the government's plans and supporting the important work of the interim Training Ombudsman. Some MPs opposite have already referred matters to the interim Training Ombudsman, recognising the necessity for this position. I look forward to bipartisan support for the legislation when it is introduced.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### Media Article

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.13 am): I rise in response to an article published in this morning's media, which I table for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 1 December 2015, titled 'Bid to lock Bates out of wards' [[1760](#)].

From what I have read in the media from the leaked correspondence, Mr Langdon appears to be labouring under a misinformed premise. My visits to the hospital were approved by the minister and the CEO and whether I spent 30 minutes or 10 hours at the hospital is neither here nor there. Comments I made in the media or in the parliament were based on information I obtained during my visits as a member of parliament observing front-line policy implementation and speaking with the hospital and health staff I represent under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010.

During my visits I did not meet a patient, did not speak to a patient and did not view any medical records. Let me repeat that: I did not meet a patient, talk to a patient, touch a patient or view any identifiable records. At all times I have protected the anonymity of those who have raised concerns with me. I have not identified any staff, patients or members of the public; instead, I have merely reflected broadly on the issues at hand. As such, I have not breached patient confidentiality. Mr Langdon's comments that I had subsequently made public comment about a patient to the media are based solely on Minister Dick's baseless comments. I am personally happy to meet with Mr Langdon and explain to him how this work assists me to be an effective member of this parliament.

## PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

### Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, Report

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (10.14 am): I table the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner's report titled *Report of the work and activities of the Crime and Corruption Commission under chapter 11 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*. I commend the parliamentary commissioner's report to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner: Report of the work and activities of the Crime and Corruption Commission under chapter 11 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 [[1761](#)].

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Department of Education and Training, Security Breach

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (10.15 am): I move—

That this House:

1. notes with concern that the personal details of more than 600 Queensland school students were illegally accessed as part of a security breach on the TAFE and education department website; and
2. refers this security breach to the state parliament's Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee for immediate investigation, to report back to the House by 18 February 2016.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### HIV/AIDS

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (10.15 am): Yesterday was the close of Movember. Mr Speaker, as you know, I said to you last Friday that I would come in here clean shaven, much to the delight of this side of the House—and that side of the House, I suspect—but no more so than my wife, I can guarantee. Today is also a serious day; 1 December is World AIDS Day. There are now 27,000 Australians with HIV/AIDS. Since this disease broke upon the shores of this nation, some 10,000 to 11,000 Australians have died from this scourge. On Sunday I put out a media release calling upon the health minister to fund PrEP treatments, and I table a copy of that release.

*Tabled paper:* Media release, dated 29 November 2015, by the shadow minister for Health, Mr Mark McArdle MP, titled 'Queensland must take the next step to combat AIDS' [[1762](#)].

PrEP treatments are drugs used by HIV-negative people to prevent HIV infection. It is a massive step forward in the containment and perhaps eradication of HIV as an issue in this nation. Today the health minister had a prime opportunity to stand on his feet and stand up for people with HIV or at risk of contracting HIV, and he squibbed it. Not so in New South Wales or Victoria. Today the *Sydney Morning Herald* indicates that both New South Wales and Victoria will expand the trials—in New South Wales, from 300 people to 3,700 people who will use PrEP treatment and Victoria will also allow GPs to issue the drug until the Therapeutic Goods Association, the TGA, completes its review next year.

The LNP has a very proud history in this arena under former health minister Lawrence Springborg. This is the second anniversary of the HIV Foundation Queensland, a body put in place by the LNP to look at and undertake research into HIV. It is also the second anniversary of the launch by the LNP and HIV Foundation Queensland of the Queensland HIV Strategy 2013-2015. That is a body that was put in place specifically to deal with and look at HIV, coupled with an education program and an awareness program. We also put in place a sexually transmitted infections professorial chair, again for research purposes. Again the LNP was leading the charge in relation to HIV. This Labor government has not taken up the mantle put down by the LNP. It is a government which claims to have a proud tradition in regard to Health. This one day is one day it squibbed its obligations and its members should be ashamed of what they have failed to do.

### Climate Change

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.19 am): I rise today to discuss an issue that is important to all Queenslanders but which I do not feel has been discussed enough in this chamber in recent years: climate change. The previous government thought they could ignore climate change—some of them even thought they could deny it was happening—but they were negligent. They

negligently told councils they could not work with their local communities to develop plans to adapt to rising sea levels, and they negligently oversaw a spike in Queensland's land use emissions that will more than wipe out any benefit from the Commonwealth's Emissions Reduction Fund. They were negligent because Queensland is already experiencing the effects of climate change. This week international studies demonstrated that the 2011 Queensland floods were worse than they would have been because of climate change. Warmer oceans delivered more water to the atmosphere, which led to greater precipitation and bigger floods.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Dr MILES:** Read the research! Those opposite may not get it and they may want to deny the science, but the people of Queensland get it. Thousands of them marched at the weekend with the Deputy Premier and me and many of our colleagues from this side of the House—

**A government member:** And the member for Logan.

**Dr MILES:** And the member for Logan—to call for world leaders to act on climate change, and world leaders are acting. This week at the UN Climate Change Conference more world leaders are gathered under one roof than ever before, and on Friday I will join them. I will be there to make sure that the future of the Great Barrier Reef is front and centre in their deliberations. As they consider all of the consequences of climate change, they must consider the reef. It is hard to imagine that something you can see from space today could be gone in decades if the world does not act on climate change, and we will act here too. We will not be negligent.

We are acting to support communities as they adapt to climate change. Last week we held the South-East Queensland climate adaptation conference to discuss what we love about this region, how it will change under different climate conditions and how we can adapt. At the same time Minister Bailey is working on a renewable energy plan to make sure that our kids can have the clean energy jobs of the future.

### Queensland Economy

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.22 am): Isn't it great to get a lecture about science from a man who got a PhD by doing a thesis about how you increase trade union membership. Dr Miles, fantastic!

In spite of the protestations of those opposite, we all know that by their own admission this is a Labor government that was elected with very few promises, no plan for infrastructure, no plan for jobs and no plan for business confidence, no matter what they have said today. It is also interesting to see how they are able to walk both sides of the street depending on what forum they are in. When the member for Mount Coot-tha, who went to the UNESCO conference at Bonn, spoke to the World Wildlife Fund he was at great pains to say that there would be no support from this government for the Adani mine development. Yet last week at the Queensland Resources Council lunch when the Premier said, 'I support mining and agriculture', let us have a look at what—

**Dr MILES:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Accusations have been made about a statement I supposedly made. I have never said what the member—

**Mr SPEAKER:** You find those comments offensive and ask they be withdrawn?

**Dr MILES:** I ask they be withdrawn.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member has found those comments offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker. Let us have a look at an example of how they walk both sides of the street. The government response to the Queensland Plan was released last night, and in her report the Premier said, 'The Queensland Plan is everyone's plan.' That is a little bit at odds with what the Premier had to say this time last year in the debate about the bill. She said, 'We cannot support the Queensland Plan and we will not be supporting this because it is a waste of taxpayers' money.' I table a copy of that segment of the speech.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, containing an extract from *Hansard* including a statement from the former leader of the opposition, Ms Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, regarding the Queensland Plan [[1763](#)].

The other day at the Queensland Resources Council lunch the Premier said, 'I really value resources. I value mining. I value agriculture.' In that case the people in the mining sector—who sat there discomfited, of course, but respectful—were perplexed to understand why it is that this government keeps winding back LNP legislation, why they do not do anything about green tape, why

they are trying to stop mining on Stradbroke Island and why they are not supporting the Adani project. The member for Stafford claimed it was his personal crusade to see Adam Giles get the gas pipeline going. Queenslanders know this is a government that walks both sides of the street when it comes to mining and agriculture. Talking about vegetation management, the member for Stafford was completely sidelined by the Deputy Premier. There is only one side of the parliament here that understands the balance between the environment and the economy and community support for mining and agriculture, which are the staples of our economy as the Premier herself said last week. It is this side of the chamber, the LNP side; on that side they walk both sides of the street.

### Early Years Education

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (10.25 am): It is appropriate that I am following the member for Surfers Paradise. I would like to update the House on current negotiations between Queensland and the Commonwealth government on future kindergarten funding. Queensland is currently finalising negotiations with the Commonwealth on the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to early Childhood Education. As you would be aware, the Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that all children have access to at least 15 hours of kindergarten per week for 40 weeks per year in the year before they start school.

It was the Bligh government that initiated reforms in early childhood education in Queensland, securing \$252 million in Australian government funding as well as providing an additional \$221 million in state government funding to build more than 200 new kindergartens across our state. The Bligh government also provided more than \$192 million in extra kindergarten program funding to ensure that Queensland lifted overall participation rates from as low as 28 per cent to 95 per cent today. But in the last three years we have seen an overall reduction in funding for kindys. The former LNP government signed up to two agreements with the Commonwealth government that resulted in Queensland missing out on more than \$61 million between 2013 and 2015 to provide kindergarten programs. Despite losing \$60 million from the federal government, no additional funding was allocated by the former LNP government to deliver kindergarten programs in Queensland. The member for Surfers Paradise failed to fill this black hole for kindergarten funding in our state. While demand has grown and overall participation increased, the former government did nothing to ensure that funding was available to meet demand. Unlike the former government, we have been in lengthy negotiations to ensure that under the new agreement Queensland does get more funding and that we do get a better deal out of Canberra. I am confident that through the negotiations that both the Premier and I have had with the Commonwealth government, the next agreement will provide a better framework to ensure that Queensland receives its fair share and does not miss out on crucial kindergarten funding.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** The honourable member may not believe in kindergarten funding, but I do. I say loud and clear that there is a stark contrast between the former LNP government, which copped a \$60 million cut, and myself, who will always fight to ensure that Queensland kindergartens and Queensland education get the best possible deal we can out of Canberra. I am not going down there to sign up to a deal that rips \$60 million out of kindergarten funding from Queensland.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** The member for Burleigh might defend a \$60 million cut for kindergartens, but I never will. I will always fight to ensure that every single child gets access to quality education.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Chatsworth, those interjections are not accepted. If you persist you will be warned under standing order 253A. I now call the Leader of the Opposition.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.28 am): For the best part of the last month government members have been completely fixated on themselves. They have been talking about themselves, they have been talking about jobs for themselves and they have been talking about dividing up taxpayers' resources for themselves. In amongst that there has been the occasional bit of chatter about the future of the member for Bundamba. I suspect that the member for Bundamba is going absolutely nowhere. Over the past few weeks as I have moved around Queensland, from right up the top of the state to the bottom of the state, people have been asking me, 'Why is this government talking about jobs for themselves and not talking about jobs for Queenslanders?'

One of the few residual promises they have left is the promise to reduce the size of the cabinet in Queensland from 19 to 14 in order to save money for taxpayers of this state. What have we seen over the past couple of weeks? We have seen wild speculation about more jobs for more Labor cabinet ministers in Queensland. We have heard, quite modestly, the honourable member for Sandgate talking about himself, saying that he has some ability and that he would be very happy to take whatever job the Premier offered him—in the cabinet or whatever the case may be. We have seen speculation about the honourable member for Morayfield. Not to be outdone, the honourable member for Springwood has also injected himself into the equation. And then there is the honourable member for Brisbane Central.

While they are talking about themselves, they are not talking about jobs for Queenslanders. We have seen a range of quite extraordinary claims from those opposite. They have completely revised the history of this state. For example, Queen's Wharf is now their project. Apparently they thought of it! Apparently a gas pipeline which was an iteration of the Commonwealth government's Northern Australia white paper was the idea of the Minister for Mines and Energy! One thing that never goes away is the circumstances around the honourable member for Bundamba. Her own newspapers are now saying, 'It's time to go, Jo'.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the misuse of props. Mr Speaker, it is something you have been clear about in the past and I encourage you to remind the Leader of the Opposition of his obligations to the House.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Leader of the House. Leader of the Opposition, I would be appreciative if you did not continue to use that prop.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It was a rather fleeting use of that particular prop. I mean, it was not like last time, Mr Speaker, in deference to your ruling.

The long and the short of it is that all of these extra Labor union hacks creating jobs for themselves is absolutely irrelevant if the member for Bundamba continues to be in cabinet. That is the real mark of this government and its competence going into the future.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before proceeding to question time, I am pleased to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Hon. Tom McVeigh, former member for Darling Downs and later the member for Groom. Tom's son John McVeigh is the current member for Toowoomba South.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude at 11.32.

### Ethics Committee

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (10.32 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to media reports which suggest there has been a leak to the Labor Party on the Ethics Committee investigation into the matters of privilege relating to police minister Jo-Ann Miller, and I ask: can the Premier confirm whether such information has in fact been relayed to her on these matters and the potential breach of standing orders associated with it?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The answer is no.  
Interruption.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Unauthorised Release of Committee Documents

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Before I ask my second question, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I refer to newspaper reports dated 30 November 2015, specifically the *Queensland Times* where it states—

The Queensland Times understand the powerful parliamentary ethics committee has completed its investigation into the allegations.

It further states—

The QT understands the decision on whether the final report is tabled in parliament this week rests with the committee's acting-chair Di Farmer.

It is further understood the lengthy report, and its contents, will be discussed when the Labor Party meet today ahead of the final parliamentary sittings of the year.

Most alarmingly, it says—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, this is not an opportunity for a speech. What is your question?

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** It is a matter of privilege, Mr Speaker. The information contained in here can only have come from a leaked source. Mr Speaker, it is my intention to write to you about this matter and ask that the matter be referred to the Ethics Committee for further investigation and consideration.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, that was not a question; that was a statement.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I said that it was a matter of privilege.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That was not a matter of privilege suddenly arising. If you want to write to me about that matter, I will be happy to receive your letter.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed from p. 2944.

### Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** My second question without notice is to the Premier. Does the Premier have complete confidence in her police minister and the job she is doing?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have said this publicly and I will say it again: I have confidence in all of my ministers—every single one of my cabinet ministers. The real question today is: does the LNP have full confidence in the Leader of the Opposition? That is the real question today. The member for Mansfield—

**Mr STEVENS:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer you to standing order 118.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. Premier, I know that you were keen to debate the matter but now is not the opportune time. You have answered the question.

### Advancing Education

**Mr PEGG:** My question is of the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on feedback received about the Palaszczuk government's Advancing Education plan and the #codingcounts discussion paper, which is the centrepiece of the next wave of digital reform for Queensland students?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I was not able to hear that question because of the conversation involving the member for Nanango and whomever she was having a conversation with. Member for Stretton, please ask the question again.

**Mr PEGG:** My question is of the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on feedback received about the Palaszczuk government's Advancing Education plan and the #codingcounts discussion paper, which is the centrepiece of the next wave of digital reform for Queensland students?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Stretton for that question, because this is a topic that the people of Queensland are engaged with. They want to know about the education future for their students. There was nothing clearer when the Minister for Education and I released a discussion paper on which we are seeking community feedback about whether or not we should be teaching coding and robotics at a primary school level.

I am pleased to announce that over 1,000 people have attended the workshops across the state. Some 19 community forums were held throughout the state to discuss Advancing Education and our discussion paper on coding and robotics. The forums reinforced the importance of quality teaching, catering for all students including the most vulnerable, developing every student's digital literacy, opportunities to engage in STEM and of course focusing on Asian languages. We know that Queenslanders need to be in this space. If we are going to grapple with the jobs of the future and the technological revolution that is happening, we must prepare our young people for them.

When I was reading a recent newspaper article it came as a bit of a surprise to me that it appears Campbell Newman—do members remember that name?—has actually reappeared. He said about coding and robotics—

On the state front there are some really good things happening too.

I particularly applaud my nemesis minister Kate Jones for her coding initiative which is fantastic and I wish we had done it.

That is an endorsement from the former LNP premier. He and I did not agree on much, I must say, but I will give credit where credit is due because obviously he realises that this is the space we need to be in.

There appears to be another example in the *Longreach Leader* in that the member for Gregory has also come out in support of this, so we are seeing some bipartisan support in relation to this issue. We know we need to have the jobs for the future. We know we need to have the skills for our children, and nothing was clearer when the minister, myself and the member for Bulimba went to the Bulimba State School in her electorate and saw the year 4s teaching the prep students about coding and robotics. This is the future. This is where we need to be and we will drive this because it is the right thing to do. It is about giving young students the opportunities that they deserve.

### **Speaker's Ruling, Questions Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I want to remind members that standing order 271 states—

A matter referred to the ethics committee must not be debated in the House until such time as the ethics committee has reported on the matter if, in the opinion of the Speaker, such debate could prejudice the matter.

I now rule that I will not accept any questions this morning which may touch on that matter currently before the Ethics Committee as a result of the matters raised a few moments ago by the Leader of the Opposition.

### **Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General, as the first law officer of the state, tell the people of Queensland whether she has 100 per cent confidence in Labor's police minister and the job she is doing?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am happy to answer the question, although I do wonder how this is relevant to my portfolio as the Attorney-General. I am not responsible for other ministers or the choosing—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, one of the presumptions is that the question must relate to the portfolio responsibility of the minister. You have asked a question to the Attorney-General. Do you have anything further you want to add, Attorney-General? If not, I am happy to move on.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I do not need your assistance, member for Kawana.

### **Jobs**

**Mr BROWN:** My question without notice is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier please advise the House of any recent initiatives that will be rolled out shortly to create jobs in Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Capalaba very much for that question. Yesterday the Minister for Education and I had the great opportunity to visit Corinda State High School. Corinda State High School borders my electorate and a lot of young students from my electorate go to Corinda State High School. We were very pleased to talk to the principal. The newly elected school captains came back for the day and met with the minister and myself and spoke to us at length and showed us the school and in particular the trade centre. In relation to creating jobs, we know that over the summer school holidays there will be an incredible amount of maintenance work happening right throughout our schools right across Queensland. This was one of the key parts of our budget. It is about creating jobs for tradies in terms of school maintenance for the backlog that has been building up for many, many years so that tradies can access that much needed work over the school holidays. Some \$26 million will be spent over the Christmas period and in particular at Corinda State High School that money will be spent towards fixing up the trade centre, which is utilised by many young students, the special education unit as well as the hall. This is not just happening in one school; it is happening in hundreds of schools across the state. Well done to the Treasurer for making sure that this was a central plank of our budget. Well done to the minister for making sure that these jobs are there. This means jobs for tradies—for painters, for plumbers, for electricians. It has been advertised widely and people were able to apply for that work and we know that this is creating much needed jobs.

On the topic of jobs, I might pick up where I left off earlier about the key job that is on everyone's mind—the Leader of the Opposition's job. Last week we saw the member for Mansfield—the knives are out—not even being able to utter—

**Ms Trad:** Sixteen times!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Mansfield was not able to answer the question 16 times—not once, not twice, not three times but 16 times! But a little birdie tells me there is time to recover. I understand those opposite are going on a retreat next year to Twin Waters on, I think it is, 3 and 4 February. It is a love-in. They can all get together, feel the love and they can rebuild those relationships, because the tensions are there. The question for us is: will the Leader of the Opposition be here next year when we resume in February? That is going to be the question, because we know the traditional Christmas season—

*(Time expired)*

### **Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

**Ms DAVIS:** My question is to the Minister for Communities, and I ask: will the minister, whose portfolio works with police in relation to domestic and family violence, look straight down that camera lens and tell the people of Queensland that she has 100 per cent confidence in Labor's police minister and the job that she is doing?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order. You made a ruling just before, Mr Speaker, about suggesting that these questions need to be relevant to ministers' portfolio areas. There is some sort of latitude in relation to the Attorney-General and the Attorney-General's role as the first law officer, but very much only some. These are matters that I think you should rule on and rule the question out of order.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members. It looks like I am going to get into an issue about how remotely relevant is the question to the minister's portfolio. I will allow the minister to answer by saying what the minister chooses to say and then I am happy to move on to the next question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I am always happy to get up in this place and talk about how I am working with each of my cabinet colleagues in tackling domestic and family violence. This government was handed a report in February of this year from Dame Quentin Bryce and the task force with 140 recommendations—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** One moment, Minister. Member for Aspley, I have given you a significant degree of latitude to ask a question which I could have quite easily ruled out of order. Members from the opposition are unnecessarily interjecting. The minister has chosen to respond. I would urge you to allow her to respond in the way she feels fit if she has anything further to add. I call the minister.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** We were handed down 140 recommendations that this government has accepted. We accepted each and every one of those recommendations and I am working with all of my cabinet colleagues in bringing forward those recommendations. We have legislation coming back before the House this week. There will be more legislation introduced this week. On Sunday I stood with the Premier, the Attorney-General and Di Mangan from DVConnect to announce that for the first time we will create a new offence in the Criminal Code for strangulation, because we know that strangulation is a predictor to murder. If we can prevent any more brutal attacks from happening in our community, then this government is absolutely prepared to do that. We have brought together every director-general on a high-level interdepartmental committee to work methodically through that comprehensive report, *Not now, not ever*. There has been legislation introduced in this House. There has been an incredible community campaign run right across Queensland. We have seen community leaders stand up. We have seen sporting stars, businesspeople and everyone in this community coming together to say that enough is enough. We cannot tolerate domestic and family violence any longer in this community because we are facing a crisis.

The Queensland police receive 200 calls a day from women escaping domestic and family violence. We as a government know that we have to ensure that there is somewhere safe for them to go, and that is why I was so pleased on International Women's Day this year to announce two new 72-hour crisis shelters—the first new government funded shelters in more than 20 years. Not only that, we know that our local services are under pressure and that is why the Premier has announced an additional \$2.7 million this year for DVConnect just so it can meet the demand, because it has had a 40 per cent increase since October last year. This government will do absolutely everything we can to make sure that women and children are safe and, importantly, that perpetrators are held to account, and I know that each and every one of my cabinet colleagues are just as determined to tackle this issue

as I am. It is a priority for each of our ministers. It is a priority for the Palaszczuk government and I am so proud to be part of a government that is putting this issue on the agenda and doing everything we can to tackle it.

### **Railway Stations, Upgrades**

**Miss BOYD:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering on rail station upgrades in South-East Queensland and why the renewal of public assets is so important for governments to prioritise?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the honourable member for the question. As the Strathpine station is located in the member's electorate, I know that she is witnessing firsthand why it is important to upgrade, renew and revamp public assets. Of course, earlier this year we announced that we would be progressing upgrades at the Graceville, Dinmore, Alderley and Newmarket stations as the first tranche in our station upgrade program. I am pleased to inform the House that, as of today, passengers can hop online and preview the new look of these stations in this \$60 million upgrade and revamp. All Queensland rail commuters who use these stations—and I know that a number of members in this House have raised this issue with me personally—can now hop online and have a look at the upgrade designs.

These upgrades are about revamping and investing in our public assets and making sure that we get the most out of our public assets over the long term. These upgrades will also deliver 1,000 jobs during the construction phase of those four stations alone. These upgrades are about investment in productivity-lifting infrastructure, about delivering jobs for Queenslanders and, very importantly, about investing in the public assets that we have.

It is always important for governments and for oppositions to look at opportunities to upgrade, to revamp and revitalise what they do. I think it is important in government; I think it is important in opposition. That is why this week is so important to the member for Southern Downs. This week is all about whether he can renovate, upgrade or renew his leadership style in order to hang on to the top job—

**Ms Jones:** Mansfield's not convinced.

**Ms TRAD:** I will take that interjection from the member for Ashgrove. We know that the member for Mansfield is not convinced. We know that, for the member for Southern Downs, this week is all about hanging on. Everything—from the personal attacks on members on this side of the House, to taking regulation in this state back to the 1950s and putting a sledgehammer through the Queensland economy—is about the member for Southern Downs holding on to the top job, clinging on to the top job; not being the alternative government that Queenslanders deserve but being the opposition leader that the LNP deserves—the divided, unruly, backstabbing group that they are. This is the leader they deserve. They have a leader that Queenslanders have no faith in. This week will prove that just as much as all the other weeks we have had in this House.

### **Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Police. Is the Minister for Police aware of threats allegedly being made on her behalf to her local newspaper editor, including suggestions they catch the next bus out of town for their own safety?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, would you repeat the question, please?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Police. Is the Minister for Police aware of threats allegedly being made on her behalf to her local newspaper editor, including suggestions they catch the next bus out of town for their own safety?

**Mrs MILLER:** No.

### **Retail Sector**

**Mr KING:** My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer please update the House regarding recent developments in Queensland's retail sector?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the honourable member for Kallangur for his question. Last week, I joined the member for Kallangur as well as the members for Morayfield and Murrumba at Westfield North Lakes to announce a new \$140 million retail development with the Scentre Group. It is very encouraging to see the Christmas retail season off to such a good start. This Westfield North Lakes stage 2 development is an exciting new precinct that is going to create around 3,000 jobs during construction

and another 500 jobs ongoing. By the end of next year the area that we were standing in will be transformed into a 113,000-square-metre shopping mecca, with 280 retailers, an eight-screen Event Cinemas complex, Ikea and more.

As the member well knows, the Moreton Bay area is one of Queensland's fastest growing regions and Westfield North Lakes has been a part of this success story. The local unemployment rate in the Moreton Bay area is 5.8 per cent, which is below the state trend average of 6.3 per cent. But we are constantly working to chip away at the unemployment rate in Queensland with our \$1.6 billion Working Queensland jobs package.

Across the state Queenslanders are opening up their wallets, because they are more confident about the economy in which we are all operating. We know that Queensland businesses are more confident because over the past four months we have seen Queensland top the NAB Monthly Business Survey. Business is responding to our pro growth, pro jobs policies in Queensland. Since the election, in Queensland 43,800 new jobs have been created. That includes 9,000 full-time jobs. That is, on average, 1,000 jobs per month over those nine months. Over the three years that those opposite were in office, on average, 310 jobs were lost. That is a dismal record and it is one that they should be ashamed of.

The National Retailers Association has reported that its members have racked up a bumper week of sales. Trevor Evans, the NRA chief executive, has said that this could well be the best results in around seven years. That is something that we are very keen to see. Sales are expected to jump 4.1 per cent to \$44.5 billion across Australia over the Christmas season and we expect that people are going to be doing much shopping.

But Queensland's consumers are not the only ones who are going to be shopping around before Christmas. Of course, we know that those opposite in the LNP are shopping around for a new leader because of the dismal performance of the member for Southern Downs. The voters of Queensland felt a great degree of buyers' remorse with the LNP government. We also know that those opposite are looking to return the faulty goods that they have been given. I say to those opposite: know your rights. You can return faulty goods and you can return the member for Southern Downs if you need to.

### **Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

**Mrs SMITH:** Hilarious! My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to threats allegedly being made on the police minister's behalf to her local newspaper editor, and I ask: will the minister, as the police minister, have these matters investigated?

**Mrs MILLER:** I have no knowledge of these issues whatsoever.

### **Sexual Health**

**Ms GRACE:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. As today is World AIDS Day, will the minister update the House on what this government is doing in relation to sexual health, particularly the issue of HIV and AIDS?

**Mr DICK:** As the member for Brisbane Central knows, today is World AIDS Day, one of the most successful health commemorative days in history, recognised now in 109 countries in the world. It is a day for us to pause and reflect on the journey that we have taken to find a solution and a response to HIV and AIDS in our community and to remember those people who have lost their lives and those who have worked so hard over a long period to destigmatise HIV and AIDS in our community. No-one should live in our community with a stigma because they have a particular health condition. The Labor Party has a long and very proud tradition of supporting those people and supporting those organisations that help those people.

Today, I am delighted to announce \$8 million in funding that will be provided by the Department of Health to a number of non-government organisations. I know the member for Brisbane Central, the member for South Brisbane and a number of other members in this House have been strong supporters of those organisations—and I see the member for Redcliffe nodding—for many years. That funding will go to organisations such as the Queensland AIDS Council, whose funding was ripped away from it overnight by the member for Southern Downs when he was the minister. Funding will go back to that organisation as well as Queensland Positive People, the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council, Hepatitis Queensland and the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine. An amount of \$250,000 will be provided to conduct demonstration projects for pre-exposure prophylaxis—PrEP trials.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** The member for Caloundra can write as many press releases as he likes, but it is the Labor government that delivers these projects. We know that he is backing the member for Southern Downs because he said they had a proud history. What did they do? They cut funds to the Aids Council overnight, ripped out 30 jobs from Biala, a sexual health clinic that helped people with HIV, that helped homeless people and that helped visitors to our state. Those opposite axed funding to them. That is the legacy of those opposite. I do not think the member for Caloundra should be crowing about that legacy.

That funding is going back. The Cairns Sexual Health Service will be conducting a PrEP trial. It will occur in six places across Queensland including Cairns, Townsville, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Brisbane. It will help 50 people this year and 100 people next year. That is the start. We are committed to stopping HIV the best we can by 2020. We want to stop HIV as best we can in our community. That is our commitment as a government. We will not strip money away from community organisations like the member for Southern Downs did.

*(Time expired)*

### **Labor Party**

**Mr WALKER:** My question is to the Minister for Police. Does the police minister stand by her previous public statements that those such as the member for Woodridge who advocate a diminished role for unions in Labor Party internal affairs, for example leadership elections, appointment of ministers or privatisation policy within the police portfolio, are purely motivated by self-interest?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order. There is nothing whatsoever contained within the member for Mansfield's question that relates to the minister's portfolio and I ask you to rule the question out of order and we will move on.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mansfield, could you repeat your question and then I will rule on whether it is admissible.

**Mr WALKER:** Does the police minister stand by her previous public statements that those such as the member for Woodridge who advocate a diminished role for unions in Labor Party internal affairs, for example, leadership elections, appointment of ministers or, as the minister mentioned at the Labor Party conference, privatisation policy within, for example, her police portfolio, are purely motivated by self-interest?

### **Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** I rule that question out of order.

### **Mine Safety**

**Mr SAUNDERS:** My question is of the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. The 2014-15 annual performance report of the Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health notes the first case of coalminers' black lung in three decades, and I ask: what action is the minister taking on this potential issue?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for Maryborough for his question. I know he is very interested in this particular condition, as is the member for Mirani. The health and safety of workers everywhere is a fundamental concern of any Labor government. Every family should expect that when a family member goes to work they should come home and they should come home as healthy and as fit as when they left. As a medical professional this is also something very close to my heart. The Queensland Mines Inspectorate performance report was recently released and the 2014-15 Queensland mines and quarries safety performance and health report will soon follow. What they both note is the first cases of coalminers' pneumoconiosis in three decades, what coalminers refer to as black lung. Pneumoconiosis is an occupational lung disease that is the result of the cumulative long-term exposure to very fine airborne coal dust. There is a long latency period. As part of the monitoring for this disease, all coalmine workers are required to undergo a coal workers health scheme medical assessment prior to the start of their employment and then at least once every five years.

Three confirmed cases of pneumoconiosis have been reported by the Queensland coal industry during 2015. As a result, I have asked the director-general of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines to assess what improvements may be required to the coalmine workers health assessment process. The department has engaged the Monash Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health

to review our existing medical assessment methodologies. In fact, the Commissioner of Mine Safety and the director-general are meeting Professor Malcolm Simm in Melbourne tomorrow to finalise details.

I want to ensure that lung diseases such as pneumoconiosis are diagnosed early. More importantly, I want to prevent this from occurring at all. Mines inspectors continue to work with the mining industry to improve safety and health management systems. I am positive that the industry will work with us if and when action is required.

### **Labor Party**

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My question is to the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. Does the minister responsible for overseeing the government's union encouragement policy support his colleague the Minister for Health in his calls to slash union intervention in Labor Party internal affairs including in ministerial appointments?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the member for Clayfield for his question. I can see that even he looked pretty sheepish about having to ask that question. It is clearly part of a failed strategy this morning to have any sort of a link that they can to whatever was happening. He might well be a bit seedy, a bit under the weather, from a party last night. I do not know if that is the case or not. Everyone talks about what happens in our party, we should ask them what happened at theirs.

I have absolute faith in all the people I serve with in the cabinet. The Labor Party is about reform and progress. We are proud of our union heritage. We are proud of the fact that we work very closely with the union movement. At the same time we know that we are in a dynamic and evolving world and that means that we have to make sure that that relationship keeps pace.

I certainly think that everyone is broadly entitled to their views and I certainly support that people are allowed to have views. What I will say is that those opposite seem to have taken a sudden interest in unions when we know that for the previous three years they spent all their time bashing unions not realising that what they were doing was bashing workers. That is all they know over that side. I am surprised they have not wanted to have a crack about a few other matters. We are very proud of the fact that we have been able to achieve at least an in-principle agreement in terms of our core enterprise bargaining agreement, something that those opposite could not do in three years. We have a very fair, reasonable and balanced proposal on the table, one that we have worked through in the months we have been here. Not only were those opposite content to offer a wage rise of only 2.2 per cent which, quite frankly, was going to be below what we saw with the award with the state wage case coming out, we know that those opposite, at the same time as offering 2.2, were taking away job security, conditions and rights at work. Let us not forget that they were giving voluntary involuntary redundancies to tens of thousands of Queensland government workers—an absolute disgrace.

Those opposite have a real hide to come in here. The member for Clayfield was one of the key architects of this. That was one of his strong choices before we even heard of Strong Choices. That is one that apparently had to happen. This morning on radio I was asked by Steve Austin, when talking about jargon and office buzzwords, what was the buzzword that really annoyed me. Mine was 'fiscal repair'. The fiscal repair that the member for Clayfield was talking about was code for sack, cut and obliterate the Queensland economy. That is what they did. They had no regard for workers, they had no regard for the public sector that was trying to serve them as a government and they absolutely had no time and no regard for the Queensland economy, making the deep and severe cuts they did that thankfully this Labor government is now helping us recover from.

### **Agriculture Industry, Investment**

**Mr POWER:** My question is to the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. Will the minister advise the House about investment in agriculture and what the Queensland government is doing to encourage international investment in our primary industries and also whether there are any alternative views?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. Before I get to the specifics on that, I notice that the member for Nanango has come out and described me as a Labor bovver boy and that I have been bullying her in recent conversations. I really have to correct the public record and point out to the member for Nanango that I am her greatest supporter. I am here to do everything I possibly can to encourage her to have her position highlighted in the Liberal National Party and make sure that she succeeds in all of her wildest ambitions. That is why I am here today. That is what I am endeavouring to do. It is interesting, because we know that in the background the numbers are being done across the chamber.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, the member for Nanango has asked me a question about relevance. I ask you to come back to answering the question.

**Mr BYRNE:** Once again, I appreciate her assistance in these matters. I am happy to do anything that I can for the member for Nanango. Clearly the member for Nanango is working hard for the good cause of the Liberal National Party and we are here to help. We know that the numbers are being done across the chamber and we know that the Leader of the Opposition is in his 26th year of nonrelevance in terms of the community and in terms of holding onto the position. I am here to help the member for Nanango in every way, shape and form.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I ask you to come back to the relevance of the question.

**Mr BYRNE:** I will come back to the core issue here: over recent times in this House, it has been amazing to see how the position of the opposition changes. In government, they were all in favour of investment in agriculture. They were all in favour of statements that were going to see agriculture grow in this state, reliant on prudent and sensible foreign investment. What we have seen, both from those opposite and their federal colleagues, is a collage of nonsense put forward about agriculture, most notably by the federal agriculture minister. We have commentary that is reflected in the divisions across the chamber. One quarter talks about how important agricultural investment is, and I note the comments of Andrew Robb in particular to those from the federal agriculture minister, where he describes it essentially as a nonsense being put forward by the agrarian socialists that infect elements of conservative politics. What we see opposite is those who are absolutely opposed to free market economics and who are doing everything in their power to shore up their old-fashioned Country Party base, which is what the Leader of the Opposition is trying to appeal to in these times, at the expense of everything that Queensland depends on for growth in agriculture. The opposition should be ashamed and should embrace the 21st century economy that this state depends on.

### Labor Party

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier remain beholden to union bosses or support her cabinet colleague, the Minister for Health, in his calls to slash union intervention in Labor Party internal affairs, including ministerial appointments?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Is this all they have? Honestly, in the last sitting week we come into this chamber with Queenslanders wanting to know about jobs for their kids, their future, the economic agenda and making sure that Queensland remains competitive to attract international investment, and this is all they have! My government will stand up for economic development in this state. We will work with the business community. I am happy to talk about the business community because—

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. Before the Premier starts talking about matters that have no relation to the question, would she answer the question, under standing order 118 on relevance?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order. The nature of the question and the framing of the question were quite broad. I do suggest that the Premier has provided some opportunities, on her way to getting to the answer, to make reference to a few matters. I do not think there is a problem.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, thank you. I will ask the member for Maroochydore to repeat the question.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, because the Premier has not answered the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. Just repeat the question, please.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Does the Premier remain beholden to union bosses or support her cabinet colleague, the Minister for Health, in his calls to slash union intervention in Labor Party internal affairs, including ministerial appointments?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Maroochydore for trying to put a question that is not even in plain English. I will go through some issues. My government is pro-development in this state. What we have heard clearly from the Minister for Agriculture is that that is going to be put in jeopardy this week. Whether or not we create the jobs for the future and whether or not we attract international investment depends very clearly on how this side of the chamber votes this week. We will stand up for international investment in this state.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I rise to a point of order. My point of order is on relevance. I asked the Premier particularly about her Minister for Health and statements in regard to Labor Party union involvement, including ministerial appointments. The Premier is avoiding answering the question, particularly in respect to the comments of the Minister for Health.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Maroochydore. I call the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am happy to answer that question. In relation to any ministerial appointments, I will be making the decision. It is very clear that I will be making the decision. That is the role of the leader of the parliamentary Labor Party and the Premier of this state.

My government is a government of consultation. That is why we meet regularly with the business community and we meet regularly with the union movement. The other week, I was at an Australian Industry Group breakfast with representatives from our leading manufacturing base, industry representatives and members of the union movement. They were all there together. The kind of state I want to see and lead is one where industry and the union movement can work as one, because the union movement represents workers in this state.

Shall we look at the record of those opposite? I am more than happy to talk about their record. They cut and slashed jobs. They wound back workers' rights in this state. They treated workers with disdain and contempt. I will continue to lead a government of consultation. Why will I do that? Because that is what people want and that is what people expect. They want good government. They want government of integrity and accountability. It might do the opposition good to look at the Auditor-General's report that was tabled in the House today, which talks about how integrity and accountability mechanisms were not followed by the former deputy premier in this state, where questions about taxpayers' money—

*(Time expired)*

### Youth Crime

**Mr CRAWFORD:** My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the minister inform the House of the value to our community of an evidence based policy approach to reducing youth crime?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Barron River for his question. I know that he has a keen interest in seeing real reductions in youth crime. This week the Palaszczuk government will deliver on its election commitment to repeal the former LNP government's misguided approach to youth justice.

**Mr Bleijie:** How many cars were stolen last week?

**Mrs D'ATH:** There could not be a starker contrast in the approaches to youth crime as that between this government and the opposition, and we hear the former attorney-general who just cannot help himself.

**Mr Bleijie:** Youth gangs are back in Townsville.

**Mrs D'ATH:** He cannot help himself. A good example is this government's transition to success program, and the former attorney-general may want to listen to this. This program was developed in partnership—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, one moment. Member for Kawana, would you please desist your interjections. If you want to rise—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order. You have ruled in this place on many occasions before, when—

**Mr SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** When the member is subject to interjections or attack from the minister—

**Mr SPEAKER:** You were not personally under attack, member for Kawana.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Well, I was.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Resume your seat. Member for Kawana, it is not a point of order.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take personal—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, resume your seat.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take personal offense and I ask the minister to withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Resume your seat, member for Kawana. If you want to raise this matter further, I invite you to have a discussion with me outside the chamber. I am happy to refer to the *Hansard* records at the appropriate time, if need be. I now call the minister.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I simply asked the former attorney-general to listen. Mr Speaker, this program was developed in partnership with youth justice—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order. I find the comments of the Attorney-General offensive and I ask that she withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Rightly so; that point of order is in order. I call on the Attorney-General to please withdraw unequivocally.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I withdraw. This program was developed in partnership with youth justice, Education Queensland, schools, registered training organisations, businesses and non-government organisations. The program offers an intensive focus on each young person, their needs and their pathway. I am advised that of the 38 graduates from the most recent transition to success programs, there has been only a five per cent offending rate, compared to the failed youth boot camp policy of the previous LNP government. That policy represented poor value for money—as we know from the previous auditor-general's report—and, worst of all, the reoffending rate has now reached 78 per cent.

The advantage of evidence based policy is that it is focused on addressing the underlying causes of youth offending. Evidence based policy produces real outcomes for offenders and a real reduction in crime. The LNP's youth crime policies were a gimmick and have had no effect on reducing youth offending. Since 2010 the number of young offenders in Queensland has decreased by 16 per cent in line with worldwide trends. Of most concern, however, is that the number of young people who exit detention and return within 12 months has increased since the implementation of the LNP's failed policies.

This government is committed to actually tackling youth offending, turning the lives of young people around, stopping reoffending and helping build a safer community. The evidence is clear. Only 0.8 per cent of Queensland's young people between the ages of 10 and 16 offend. The needs and responses for this small number of children and young people are different from those for adults and must be acknowledged. In short, the Palaszczuk government's approach will be evidence based, will produce real reductions in youth offending and will produce real positive outcomes for people in the youth justice system.

### North Queensland, Drought

**Mr COSTIGAN:** My question is to the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. Can the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland advise what drought stricken communities she has visited in North Queensland and, furthermore, what the government is doing to support Palm Island and other communities in relation to their dwindling water supplies?

**Mrs O'ROURKE:** I thank the member for the question. I am very well aware that a substantial number of communities in Queensland are experiencing drought. We spoke earlier today in the chamber about the fundraiser that was held here at Parliament House to support those people experiencing difficulties as a result of the drought.

Some of the areas that I have visited that are experiencing drought include Mount Isa. The member for Mount Isa showed me around his area and talked specifically about the water infrastructure that is needed in that area. I have also worked very hard on planning my visits for next year to make sure that I address all areas across North Queensland.

In holding the six economic business round tables I have spoken to many key stakeholders and business leaders from a variety of areas about issues that are specifically impacting their regions. At those round tables one of the many issues raised was water. This government is focused on addressing those issues.

With regard to Palm Island, I am aware that they are in crisis with regard to water. A number of actions are progressing to support the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council and its community address their immediate water supply issues. The Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members of the opposition, an appropriate question has been asked and the minister's answer is relevant.

**Mrs O'ROURKE:**—has gathered information with regard to the issues facing Palm Island. An initial assessment of the options shows that Palm Island has two small dams providing water for the community and an additional small dam that is not connected to the network. I reiterate that we are working hard on these issues. That is exactly what this government will continue to do.

### Regional Tourism

**Mrs LAUGA:** My question is to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports. Will the minister outline to the House what assistance is available through the minister's department to support regional tourism?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for Keppel for her question. I certainly pay tribute to her commitment to her electorate. I worked with her in the first week after Tropical Cyclone Marcia. The member was working out of her car and doing a fantastic job representing her constituents even before her office was in place.

I can inform the House that we have a new program called the scenic lookout upgrade program. It is designed to augment our tourism policy and take advantage of the fact that the Australian dollar is back down around the 70-cent mark. This means that there are great opportunities to increase our tourism industry and jobs in the tourism industry. We are seeking to maximise that in every single way—not just in Minister Jones's portfolio but in all portfolios. In that vein, we have a \$3 million program to do up scenic lookouts throughout Queensland. It can involve rehabilitation, improving safety or a range of things to spruce up these lookouts. We want to make sure that those tourism experiences are of the highest quality.

Tourism numbers are starting to surge again. This is very pleasing for workers in the tourism sector. We want the friends and relatives of visitors to come here and those who have come here to come back. We want visitors to spread the word about the high-quality experience Queensland tourism is.

I know that the member for Keppel cares deeply about tourism in her electorate. I am sure that she, along with other members in this chamber, will be encouraging local councils to apply for this funding. Under this program local councils will be able to submit applications to revamp existing lookouts on local roads under a fifty-fifty funding arrangement with the state government. The program will encourage tourists to stop. It will certainly mean increased employment in regional areas—something that this government is very committed to.

An example is the Henry Ross Lookout that the member for Barron River showed me earlier this year. It is a superb lookout. It was looking pretty ratty and low grade, but there is a wonderful view from the lookout. It needs augmentation. That is the kind of thing we want to see in regional areas.

Each approved site will receive funding of up to \$300,000 for improvements. There is a cap so that there will be plenty of improvements happening across the state. I have written to local mayors right across Queensland to bring the new fund to their attention. I would encourage all members of this House to engage with their local councils to promote this fund further. All levels of government need to work together to maximise our tourism opportunities and maximise growing our tourism jobs in Queensland while there is the opportunity. We have to maximise those opportunities. I encourage all members to work with other levels of government to do this.

### Home Hill State High School, Cyclone Shelter

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Minister for Education. With reference to correspondence that I have received from the education department, which advises that it would consider the construction of a cyclone shelter at Home Hill State High School, I ask: will the minister undertake to have discussions with the public works minister, who has advised that her department will not construct any additional cyclone shelters in Queensland?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I am obviously happy to talk to my ministerial colleague about that. I know that there is a separate program that has been running out of the department of public works which has funds of \$40 million for community resilience. In addition, what we also have from a government that is getting on with the job and delivering for Queenslanders is a record \$9 billion in investment for schools in Queensland.

We will always prioritise education funding and make it a No. 1 concern of Labor governments. We know when we invest in education we invest in the future of the state. It is a very exciting time in schools at the moment. When I go visiting schools, like I did yesterday with the Premier—we visited Corinda State High School; we were very fortunate to have the captains come back from school holidays and don their school uniform—

**Mr LAST:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. My point of order relates to relevance. I asked a question with regard to cyclone shelters.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I would urge you to make your answer relevant to the question.

**Ms JONES:** Mr Speaker, as I said, it is actually a program that is run out of the minister for public works' department.

**Ms Trad:** Mine.

**Ms JONES:** Sorry, yours. I am happy to talk to my ministerial colleagues. I am also happy to talk to students in our schools. What they are very excited about is picking their leaders for 2016. That is the process they are going through right now—deciding who will be their leader in 2016. What are we seeing over there in the LNP? Exactly the same process. They are lining up to see who will back the member for Everton. Sixteen times the member for Mansfield would not back his leader.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. I think you have answered the question.

### **Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program**

**Mr STEWART:** My question is to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef. Can the minister inform the House of any programs underway in his departments that will support job opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Townsville for his question. I know how interested and committed he is in making sure there are opportunities for young Indigenous people in his area to find work. Last sitting week I had the very great pleasure of being joined by representatives of many of Queensland's biggest companies to launch a new prospectus for partnerships in the Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program. The land and sea ranger program is a great program. One only has to see the pride on the faces of our Indigenous land and sea rangers as they talk about their work and see the pride they have in being able to work and work on country for conservation outcomes. Once you meet these rangers you cannot help wanting to see more young Indigenous people have that opportunity.

The land and sea ranger program operates on an investment of \$9 million, which allows us to employ 65 land and sea rangers in 15 communities, but we would love to do more. That is what this prospectus is all about—creating opportunities for the corporate sector to partner with us to deliver more land and sea rangers. There are opportunities to be part of single projects or to be part of an ongoing partnership. I know the member for Townsville launched for me just last week a new boat that was funded through one such partnership with Glencore. I congratulate Glencore for partnering with us on the land and sea ranger program. That boat will allow us to do more turtle conservation on the Great Barrier Reef. It is a fantastic program. It is a great outcome for Glencore and a great outcome for the reef.

I would like to thank rangers Ron, Sophie and Eddie, who joined me for that prospectus launch and took me through their work on country and showed me beautiful photos of the country they are helping to conserve. With the help of Queensland's biggest companies, we can have more Indigenous land and sea rangers, we can create more jobs for young Indigenous people and we can deliver conservation programs in more parts of the state. It is a great program. I am pleased that the member for Townsville supports it and I am pleased to support it.

### **Independent Public Schools Policy**

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the minister confirm that her new independent public schools policy enables nominations to be vetoed by the Queensland Teachers' Union, even when the nomination has the full support of the school's parents?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members. Minister, the time for question time has now expired.

**Ms JONES:** I just want to say that this was publicly aired months ago. Just watch the ABC. Keep up!

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Auditor-General's Report, Royalties for the Regions**

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.32 am), by leave: The Auditor-General has just tabled his office's performance audit of the previous LNP government's Royalties for the Regions program. From my initial reading, can I say that this report is extremely serious. I am deeply disappointed for the regional communities of Queensland and for their hardworking local governments and their staff.

The report finds that the former deputy premier and minister for state development, infrastructure and planning did not follow departmental advice in approving funding or document his reasons for doing so and consistently favoured funding projects in LNP electorates. I am not going to editorialise, because the report says it all. From the conclusions on page 2, the report states that he funded projects 'where no departmental assessment was undertaken; and value for money was not considered'. Further, discussing the impact on government at state and local level—

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lockyer, you are now warned under standing order 253. I call the minister.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. There is no point of order.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Resume your seat. What is your point of order, member for Lockyer?

**Mr RICKUSS:** On a point of order, the minister blatantly misled the House. He stood up there and said it favoured LNP projects. I have read the document. It does not say anywhere that it favoured LNP projects. On a point of order, I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lockyer, there is no point of order. If you think a minister is misleading the House, I invite you to write to me as is the standard procedure.

**Dr LYNHAM:** Further, discussing the impact on government at state and local level, the report states—

The inconsistencies between program design and implementation speak to inefficiency and wasted effort. Not only on behalf of the department, but also on behalf of the councils that applied their resources and time to obtaining data and developing submissions, the content of which were partly or entirely ignored. In the final analysis, many unnecessarily invested their time, resources and money to demonstrate the value of their applications against criteria that were apparently irrelevant.

The list goes on. The report notes that the former deputy premier approved funding for 14 projects that the department had assessed as 'minimal'. He even approved one ineligible project. A new category was introduced in August 2014—the Strategic Projects Fund. The report notes that the previous government's property and infrastructure cabinet committee approved 10 projects at a cost of \$90.2 million. However, the Department of State Development had no opportunity to assess nine out of the 10 projects. The report notes further that all were in government electorates.

Then there were the special projects—seven of them, totalling \$17.4 million. The audit report notes that these were funded without councils even submitting an application. I turn to page 31 on the section about awarding of grants. The Auditor-General finds that 56.3 per cent of Royalties for the Regions funded was used for its purpose—that is, 56.3 per cent of the total funding was used for its actual purpose. The remainder was diverted to election commitments, special projects and strategic projects. The report states, 'He approved \$4.4 million of projects that were ineligible under the guidelines'—ineligible.

I refer honourable members to page 37, where the report describes the funding of three school drop-off zones. They all shared some common characteristics: there were no applications; they were all in government electorates; they were not assessed against any approved guidelines; there were no project plans and no cost-benefit analyses. Further, in the case of two of them, neither the school nor the local council were even aware that the projects were being considered for funding.

The report notes that there were no records kept of the reasons for funding many of these projects. We will never know what criteria was used. However, the report does make some statistical observations. On page 35 the report states, 'We found the former minister was more likely to fund projects in LNP electorates.' Further, only two—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Dr LYNHAM:** Obviously those opposite do not know about weighting and statistics. Statistical analysis shows that they were weighted towards government held electorates no matter how many electorates were held by our side or by their side of the House.

Further, only two of the 10 projects rated as strong or suitable were funded in non-government electorates. The Palaszczuk government is an open and accountable government. I am proud to say that I have taken heed of the Auditor-General's recommendations, and my department will be implementing all of them in the administration of the Building our Regions program. I will have the final approval for these projects. However, our assessment process is entirely independent, and I will only approve funds for eligible projects that meet criteria.

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Auditor-General's Reports

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.40 am): The previous speaker talked about Auditor-General reports. I would like to take the minister back to some really interesting Auditor-General reports of only a year or so ago. Whilst I have not yet had a chance to look through this one—and I will with some great degree of interest—I would like to remind those opposite of a couple of Auditor-General reports concerning Queensland Health, particularly one that came out only 12 months ago that said \$2.2 billion—\$2.2 thousand million—was lost to the people of Queensland because projects in Health were not properly planned, were not properly scoped and were not properly implemented. That was in relation to three hospitals only—the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital, the Gold Coast University Hospital and Lady Cilento Children's Hospital in Queensland. A total of \$2.2 billion was wasted by the Labor government and identified by the Auditor-General in Queensland.

Where were those opposite at that time? They said absolutely nothing. One can only imagine how many extra doctors, nurses and police officers could be employed with that money. How many extra paramedics could be employed in Queensland? How many extra national park rangers could be employed? How many extra hospitals could have been built? Indeed, Lady Cilento could have been built 3½ times over with regard to its original cost for the blowout alone on those three projects. That is what happened with the Labor government in Queensland. Let us not have this revisionism around how great they were and how saintly they were.

Let us also look at the issue of the private practice arrangements they put in place with Queensland's senior medical officers in 2006. Some \$800 million was provided under that scheme and the Auditor-General found that he could not apportion that for the benefit of public patients in Queensland, or much of it, because he was not able to measure properly time and motion because of lax systems and a whole range of failures around that. That alone is \$3 billion—\$3,000 million—of which there was little, if any, benefit to taxpayers in Queensland.

Let us look at some of the observations in the Auditor-General's report from the little bit that I saw this morning. He indicated that Royalties for the Regions was a good program. It was delivering much needed infrastructure and projects in communities around Queensland where it may not have been able to be delivered. I think there is also a reference that there may have been good and valid reasons these particular projects were funded in particular areas. There is great difficulty with regard to a direct overlay because of the disproportionate imbalance that existed in the previous term of parliament and the fact that the LNP held the majority of seats and all but a couple of seats in regional areas of the state.

Before we jump to too many conclusions, and we have the reading of this in the most hyperbolic way by the member for Stafford and others, I think we need to put some degree of context around this. It would be a great lesson for the honourable member for Stafford and those opposite to look at the losses, the mismanagement, the incompetence and the waste that occurred under their time in government which was found by the Auditor-General. There was \$3 billion—\$3,000 million alone—in the Health budget. That is a sad indictment on Labor and a lapse of public administration in this state.

It is very interesting to note that yesterday the government came to a conclusion with the Together union in Queensland on Public Service pay. The Together union appallingly let down its own members when it was supposed to be representing them over the previous three years. Other unions took a far more responsible position and got a better negotiated outcome for the Public Service employees they represented. What was not referenced by the Treasurer, who is responsible for this, and other government members was that the LNP government became very frustrated due to the intransigence of the Together union and gave an automatic 2.2 per cent pay rise backdated I think to 1 September 2013. Those 48,000 public servants who were let down by the Together union were not disadvantaged by the intransigence of their union.

In the time that I was health minister, so that the hardworking nurses—well over 30,000—who worked in Queensland Health were not going to be disadvantaged in a negotiating period, we gave them an automatic 2.2 per cent pay rise from the moment their last award expired so they had that comfort. Not only that; we indicated that we may be able to negotiate further incremental increases. I can bet that not one union will be able to negotiate an outcome for a single cohort of public servants of a 3.16 per cent increase as we did with the Queensland Nurses' Union. When we came to government

we found that the government's own budget draft indicated a 2.2 per cent pay rise only. We lifted that by almost one per cent such was the way we valued Queensland Health employees and in that case particularly nurses. The challenge today is: is this minister going to match what we did with nurses in Queensland, or is he going to reduce the rate of pay that we provided them with over that period? Other unions were far more constructive than the Together union with regard to the negotiated outcomes it was able to arrive at.

I think we need to talk about relativity when we talk about pay rises, because in the private sector in the quarter to September this year compared to the quarter last year we have a 1.9 per cent increase and in the June quarter 2.2 per cent over a similar period last year. There does need to be some proportionality and we need to consider those issues as well. The LNP recognised the concerns of public servants, and we were able to provide automatic pay rises and backdated them.

This morning we have had absolutely no assurance from this government that it is not self-obsessed; that it is not interested in itself over the people of Queensland and their jobs. The Premier stood up here this morning and said that she makes all of the decisions in relation to who is in her cabinet. That is news to us. It is probably news to a lot of people in the Labor Party, particularly the honourable member for Woodridge, who is also self-obsessed. He is absolutely obsessed with himself in the most narcissistic way, standing there preening himself piously in the mirror each day wondering why he cannot be the leader and how it is so terrible that all these terrible union people are dominating his future and his career—even though he recently stood up in this place and in relation to the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital threw away the outsourcing arrangements and said that this hospital is going to be proudly union owned, union run and union built.

Today we saw the most amazing concession from the Premier. If the Premier is in control, at the end of this period of realignment within the ministry in Queensland—whether there be more ministers, the same number of ministers or whatever the case may be—the decision on the future of the member for Bundamba, according to the Premier, will be hers and hers alone.

If the member for Bundamba continues to be in the ministry in Queensland it will be the Premier's decision and the Premier's decision alone. I think many of us would be quite surprised because we know that the left wing unions have said that the member for Bundamba is going nowhere. Therefore, we are seeing this very interesting death struggle, this death roll, that is happening within the Labor Party caucus: the domination between the left and the right. While this self-obsession is going on, the people of Queensland are missing out. When members opposite are obsessed with their own jobs, with creating more highly paid lucrative jobs for themselves, the people of Queensland miss out. That is completely against the covenant that the people of this state took from the Premier only nine months ago at the state election. This government needs to get on with running Queensland and unleashing the potential of the state, as we did and as we had the capability to do, not holding Queensland back, as they have clearly done for the past 10 months.

*(Time expired)*

### Thuringowa State High School

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (11.50 am): I would like to share with the House a great experience I had when attending the Thuringowa State High School awards and graduation night held at a sold-out Townsville Civic Theatre on Monday, 2 November this year. It was good timing as I had literally just left the first Advancing Education information and consultation forum at Kirwan State High School, a very well-attended and informative event.

It has become very apparent through my various positive interactions with Thuringowa State High school this year that we have an outstanding education facility that is leading the way not only in terms of student outcomes but also very much in the space of Advancing Education. Thuringowa State High School was established in 1987 and is a year 7-12 secondary school situated in the Upper Ross suburb of Condon and including in its catchment area the suburbs of Rasmussen, Kelso and Douglas. The school has been growing in numbers and now has an enrolment of just under 700. The school has 35 per cent Indigenous students, 10 per cent students with disabilities and many families with a low socio-economic background. Under the exceptional leadership of Principal Mr Grant Dale, Thuringowa State High School encourages strong community connections with a community Anzac Day commemoration, NAIDOC Day celebration and an outstanding theatre restaurant, which is now 27 years strong.

In 2014, two students from Thuringowa State High School achieved OP 1s and over 90 per cent of the Year 12s achieved a Queensland Certificate of Education or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement. In June, the honourable minister, Kate Jones, announced the opening of consultations regarding a strong partnership between James Cook University and the Department of Education and Training in the North Queensland region. It was a timely announcement with the recent release of the *Advancing education: an action plan for education in Queensland* and #codingcounts. Thuringowa and James Cook University are currently working together to develop a program of study that will create experiences for students which connect, inspire and develop aspiration for further education aligned with the strategic intent of both parties, that is, linking STEM subjects—science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects—as well as the digital technologies whilst shaping education for the global tropics future. The program is not only targeted to maximise the potential of gifted and capable students but also about strengthening outcomes for Indigenous students and those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. It is about bringing like-minded students together.

Whilst in this initial stage, the project has been referred to as the global tropics future young scholars program. The longitudinal focus of the initiative will be across students in years 5 to 12. However, the initial key focus and mobilisation of the partners in this project will be on engaging students in years 5 to 9. A key partner of this program will be the Queensland Academies' Young Scholars Program, which will provide a template for the establishment of delivery, both face-to-face and virtual, across the North Queensland region. The model, which has been established by the Queensland Academies with associated universities in the south-east corner, has proved quite successful. In collaboration with James Cook University, we have the opportunity to link with state schools in Northern Queensland, through Thuringowa State High School, to provide challenging enrichment opportunities for highly capable year 5 to 9 students, with an emphasis on the targeted groups. Furthermore, this project will utilise the successful outreach program as a template for further development in our region.

Whilst this project is very much in its infancy, on 25 November, Thuringowa State High School provided mentors from year 9 for 30 year 5 and 6 students from Weir, Kelso and Rasmussen schools, who attended the unique interactive workshop that introduced students to the global tropics future young scholars program, which is currently being developed in collaboration with James Cook University. Furthermore, these students would become ongoing participants in the Queensland Academies' community and program offerings—online and workshops—and the foundation students of the project version of this outreach program.

I thank Thuringowa State High School for the invitation to attend their graduation and congratulate all award recipients and those who are graduating from their senior year. This is an outstanding school which is to be commended, and is certainly in step with our Queensland Advancing Education policy.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (11.55 am): I rise to follow on from the private member's statement this morning made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and his comments about the performance of the Premier at the annual Queensland Resources Council lunch last week. The speech by the Premier certainly left the resources industry somewhat underwhelmed. It was a very lacklustre performance. When we examine the record of the Palaszczuk government during 2015 we can see why the Queensland resources sector was so disappointed with the lack of significant policy reform initiatives for the resources sector foreshadowed by the Premier at the QRC lunch. Let us examine the record and the performance of the Palaszczuk Labor government with respect to the resources sector this year.

We started the year in spectacular fashion, with the newly appointed mines minister moving to undermine confidence in the resources sector—confidence was sacrificed by the new Palaszczuk Labor government's pursuit of its backward-looking, ideological policy on uranium mining in Queensland. At the time the industry stated that the new Labor government's policy to reintroduce the ban on uranium mining lacked transparency, created confusion and left the resources sector feeling as though they had the carpet pulled out from underneath them. The Queensland Labor government's arbitrary policy on uranium mining is going to cost Queensland, particularly North-West Queensland and the north-west minerals province, new opportunities to diversify the resources sector and create new jobs. Labor and the mines minister certainly had no trouble taking credit for the hard work done by the former LNP government to encourage investment in the exploration sector, in particular, projects that had been announced under the collaborative drilling program that were funded as part of the LNP's

Future Resources initiative. The mines minister dressed the announcement up as Labor's own, but the reality is that he was handing in the LNP's homework. The minister talked up the expansion of the drill core library at Zillmere, another LNP approved project through the Future Resources initiative, and also boasted about signing a memorandum of understanding with South Australia in relation to the joint development of the Cooper Basin, another initiative that I announced as minister for mines. The real test for Labor, of course, will be when it runs out of LNP initiatives to develop and support for the resources sector.

Who can forget the appointment of the member for Mirani as the chair of a parliamentary inquiry into FIFO arrangements in the resources sector—a paid-up member of the CFMEU chairing the parliamentary inquiry into fly-in fly-out arrangements in the resources sector? After he had made and delivered to this House an extraordinary rant, a wideranging rant against mining companies involved in the resources sector, the Queensland Resources Council was so concerned it wrote directly to the Premier seeking an assurance that the extreme views of the member for Mirani did not reflect the views of the Labor government. Of course, when I asked the mines minister directly whether or not the member for Mirani's views reflected those of the government, the minister was forced to cut the member for Mirani loose.

We have had a range of unacceptable interventions in the approvals and assessment process in the resources sector from this government, including the intervention into the approvals process for stage 3 of the Acland mine on the Darling Downs. We had a petition from the local community of 1,250 people who voiced their support for the project. That was in stark contrast to the petition that was tabled in this House by the member for Nicklin, famously containing the signature of one Mr Broccoli Broccoli. That petition was also used as the basis for fast-tracking the piece of legislation through this parliament, in total contravention of the committee process, to put back in place green tape that had been removed by the former LNP government.

Another inappropriate intervention was the wild goose chase review into the appointment of Glencore as the preferred proponent of the Aurukun bauxite deposit. That was an unnecessary, baseless intervention that created uncertainty around the progress of that project. And speaking of base political purposes, what about the debacle that we saw with the EIS process for the port at Abbot Point. In March this year the Palaszczuk government announced that it would withdraw the application submitted by the previous LNP government and submit a new one, but we did not hear anything about the development of the EIS until later in the year. In the meantime, the clock was ticking for this critically important project for the development of the Galilee Basin and a range of communities in Central Queensland. I could go on and on about the record of this Labor government in the resources sector—

*(Time expired)*

### Queen's Wharf Development

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (12.00 pm): The Star, Brisbane is born and due to shine in 2022. The final deal on the \$3 billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane development, which happens to be in my electorate of Brisbane Central, has been sealed and promises to deliver more than 2,000 construction jobs and 8,000 operational jobs. In fact, the Queensland Investment Corporation estimates that with flow-on effects the final net increase in Queensland jobs will be more like 11,500. Just over two weeks ago the Palaszczuk government signed off with Destination Brisbane Consortium, DBC, led by the Star Entertainment Group, formerly Echo Entertainment Group, on the development. It will deliver: 12 football fields of enhanced public open space; a new pedestrian bridge from the CBD to South Bank; a \$3 billion world-class integrated resort development; more than \$1 billion to the state coffers; thousands of jobs and opportunities for Queensland businesses and workers; and a Queensland hotel and hospitality school partnership with TAFE Queensland. These are marvellous deliveries. This redevelopment is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for all of us. This is a key and exciting milestone because the DBC partners—now the official contractor—and the Palaszczuk government can get this project moving, which means that the benefits will start to flow soon with the first instalment of \$272 million delivered to the government a couple of weeks ago. Another guaranteed \$880 million will follow from casino taxes over the next 10 years of DBC's operations from 2022.

Together with government, the DBC partners now have the official green light to move on with development approvals, legislative changes, vacant possession of precinct buildings and the associated casino licence changes. Queen's Wharf Brisbane is all about jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders and Queensland businesses. As previously mentioned, the project will create thousands of jobs, but on top of that the flow-on economic benefits are estimated to be in the billions.

The Department of State Development, on behalf of the state, will be responsible for managing and overseeing the DBC's detailed design and stakeholder and important community engagement activities throughout construction from 2017 to 2022.

We know that already 300 businesses on the Sunshine Coast want to get on board with this incredible project in my electorate, and the Palaszczuk government will be working with businesses around the state to maximise the opportunities for them to supply goods and services. The extra big picture gains include a \$1.69 billion annual increase in tourism spend and around 1.39 million additional tourists per annum. This project will also deliver: an iconic signature Arc building, including a feature sky deck with restaurants and bars; five new hotels ranging from four to six star; Brisbane's first six-star hotel; three residential towers; around 50 food and beverage outlets; a riverfront moonlight cinema; improved access to heritage buildings; waterfront spaces; plazas for the public; and improved walking connectivity around the inner city from the mall and surrounding places. The head office of DBC partners—

**Mr Walker** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** Just wait, member for Mansfield—Star Entertainment Group, is relocating more than 300 staff from Sydney to Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is also commissioning a \$1.3 million business case for a 1,500-seat theatre to report back in 12 months. This government is committed to delivering a second theatre, but we first need to do a thorough study into the best location, size and management model—unlike those opposite. We also need to factor in this year's heritage listing of the Cultural Precinct, and this 12-month business case will give us the information we need to determine the best option.

I am also pleased that under this government the Queen's Wharf project has been secured with minimal public concern and that Brisbane will remain a one-casino city. I acknowledge that casinos are not everyone's cup of tea; however, the Star casino group has a strong record of supporting available services for problem gamblers and I note that gambling should always be viewed primarily as entertainment. This is an exciting project that will deliver thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in economic benefit. When the project is completed in 2022, I look forward to having a drink on the sky deck while enjoying the beautiful view of Brisbane.

### Queensland Health



**Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (12.05 pm): I will join the member for that cold drink to celebrate an LNP project which was announced by an LNP government. Well done to the LNP!

I rise today with the thought of speaking about a separate topic altogether, but when I heard the health minister use the phrase 'a proud tradition' with regard to Labor and health I could not resist. Let us just say they have a tradition, but I would not call it proud. I am prompted to run through a few things that spring to mind during the 12 years that I have been here. To begin with, let us go back to Gordon Nuttall.

**An opposition member:** Run the videotape.

**Mr McARDLE:** Run the videotape indeed! I will take the interjection by the member. Gordon Nuttall, what a wonderful health minister he was for this state. I remember him being called back into this chamber in late 2005 to be cleared of any illegality, yet two or three years later he was found guilty of serious criminal offences. Let us talk about Jayant Patel and the Bundaberg saga. What an absolute disgrace that was, and all because Labor could not put in place proper checks and balances. Patel was discovered to be someone who should not be practising medicine through a reporter's simple Google search. The payroll debacle has already been touched on. Let us go to the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital, which was deliberately delayed for over 12 months by the Labor government so they could finish hospitals in the seats that they thought were important. Who recalls the fake Tahitian prince: another proud tradition of the Labor Party. Wouldn't Gough be proud!

**An opposition member:** 'A thousand years'!

**Mr McARDLE:** A thousand years of traditional Labor. Remember the claim by Anna Bligh that she would have two silos building up? We would have not one mess but two going forward: another proud tradition of the Labor Party. She referred to Queensland Health as a 'basket case': another proud tradition of the Labor ALP government. The blowout of the waiting lists with hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders on the waiting list for surgery: another proud tradition of the Labor Party. The idea of ramping at our EDs with 13, 14 or 15 ambulances waiting outside the PA Hospital—I recall that photograph very clearly in the *Courier-Mail*: another proud tradition of the Labor Party. Dental was so

bad that they did not even keep a waiting list. More than 50,000 people had not been seen year in and year out. This is the Labor claim of a 'proud tradition', as government after government they led this state into health debacle and crisis.

The government claims they now know what they are doing. This afternoon a bill will be brought into the House with regard to nurse-to-patient ratios, but I have asked them on several occasions to produce the data. Produce the evidence that says we are doing the wrong thing at the moment but, more importantly, substantiate your claim that the nurse-to-patient ratio is going to work in Queensland. Show us the data and the readmission rates. Show us the infection rates and the length of stays in Queensland Health hospitals. What is the government going to do to achieve better outcomes?

This is a QNU payback. This is a payback for the support of the QNU during the election campaign in January 2015. As I have said before in this House, when you read the blurb of the ALP in the documentation surrounding the nurse-patient ratio you realise that they have cut and pasted the QNU data. They have cut and pasted what they purport to be their own research from the QNU documentation. They were so lazy that they could not even get their own research together. A lot of that documentation says that most jurisdictions in the United States do not have set ratios; they have guidelines. Two things are important: the acuity of the patient—that is, how sick is the patient; and how qualified is the nurse. Not once has any Labor member stood in this House and explained any of the data around how the nurse-patient ratio will make Queenslanders better off. If that can be established, they may have a case—

*(Time expired)*

### Queensland Economy

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (12.10 pm): I rise to talk about an important topic of interest to all Queenslanders: the state of the economy. Earlier this year the Palaszczuk government implemented Advance Queensland, a \$180 million investment designed to strengthen innovation, diversify the Queensland economy and deliver knowledge-based jobs now and into the future. Additionally, on 4 June this year the Treasurer, the Hon. Curtis Pitt, handed down the 2015-16 state budget. It was a positive and progressive budget that put people before numbers whilst leaving the state in excellent financial health. I have to say that I have received very positive feedback from my electorate. Most recently, the Palaszczuk government created the Queensland Productivity Commission to provide expert and independent advice to government on how to boost productivity and further drive growth in the Queensland economy. These are just a few of the things we have done to ensure Queensland has a modern and vibrant economy.

Let us compare this to the LNP's brief but eventful tenure as the custodians of Queensland in the last parliament. In 2012, after promising that nobody would be worse off, then premier Newman and the LNP implemented the most ruthless budget Queensland had seen for decades. Over 14,000 public servants were sacked, \$1.4 billion was—

**Mr HART:** Madam Deputy Speaker, the member is misleading the House and I will be writing to you about that.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Member for Stretton.

**Mr PEGG:** To clarify, Madam Deputy Speaker, I said 14,000. \$1.4 billion was wiped from the state's capital program, halting essential road and infrastructure upgrades. Also, let us not forget that the supposedly low-tax LNP increased taxes by \$600 million. Everyone knows that it was a truly heartless budget, but what many do not realise is how little it achieved, even on its own terms. This is where it gets very interesting. Let us look at the facts and see just what improvements Can-do Campbell and the LNP made to the economy during their reign.

In 2012 then premier Newman and the then treasurer, the member for Clayfield, promised that they would reduce government debt, move to restore Queensland's AAA credit rating and reduce unemployment to four per cent. This is what actually happened. Despite strident assurances, state government debt increased dramatically. It went from \$62.6 billion in 2011-12 to \$75.5 billion in 2014-15. That is a shockingly high increase in debt of over \$3 billion per year. I note that the member for Burleigh is not disputing that figure.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I have some more figures for the member for Burleigh.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Member for Burleigh, I think you have had some latitude.

**Mr PEGG:** Unemployment in Queensland skyrocketed from 5.7 per cent in early 2012 to 7.1 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms in October 2014.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** What a great achievement from the member for Clayfield!

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Clayfield, it was not an invitation for you to take the place of the member for Burleigh.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Clayfield, order!

**Mr PEGG:** Fortunately, we have been able to address this gross mismanagement of the economy, and unemployment is now 6.2 per cent and declining.

During the LNP's time in power, Queensland's credit rating was actually downgraded or put on watch by all three credit-rating agencies: Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch. The rating agencies were clearly signalling to the then government that the economic management had worsened under their leadership, but the LNP would not listen because they had complete faith in then premier Newman and his master plan.

By 2014 this Thatcherite shock therapy administered by the LNP to the people of Queensland had hurt many, but it failed to achieve any of its economic aims. It was then that the LNP desperately adopted its final plan, the so-called Strong Choices campaign—a last-ditch attempt to reduce debt through a fire sale of the state's prime silverware by liquidating \$37 billion in highly profitable state assets. Even then the LNP government could not keep its hands out of the cookie jar. Around \$8 billion from these sales was earmarked for a range of pork-barrelling and wild election promises—hardly a prudent and responsible approach to the economic management of Queensland.

Fortunately, the people of Queensland saw through this charade and since January 2015 we have been able to implement an operating surplus of \$1.2 billion in our first year, with the 2015-16 state budget, while reducing unemployment in Queensland by almost one per cent—without sacking anyone or selling government assets. I congratulate Treasurer Pitt on this outstanding result.

The LNP like to masquerade—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! The member has just a few seconds left. Can we please listen to him in silence. I am struggling to hear him.

**Mr PEGG:** Those opposite like to masquerade as the fiscally responsible party of government. As I have shown today, in their day they were the biggest spenders. I hope that today I have been able to set the economic record straight.

*(Time expired)*

### **Road Infrastructure; North Queensland Local Government Association Conference**

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.16 pm): We usually warn people about the dangers of hitchhiking; however, lately I have been hitching rides with trucks travelling the highways and byways of this great state as part of my responsibilities as the shadow minister for main roads. It has been a fantastic way to see these roads and to hear from those who travel them most. I have to say: it was organised hitchhiking, but I have received absolutely fantastic feedback. I will continue to do this as one way to connect with communities and everyday Queenslanders.

Before I report some of my findings and experiences, I will relay a couple of amusing things. When I got into the cabin of one of the trucks in Cairns I did not expect to smell lavender in the air. I felt it was a bit strange, so I asked the very burly truckie, 'Is there lavender in here?' In his considerate way he had actually tried to 'de-bloke-ify' the cabin and had sprayed a bit of lavender for the trip ahead. So there is such a thing as a sensitive new-age truckie. Also, in a strange and ironic way, one of the sections of road between Bowen and Rockhampton was so rough that the Fitbit I was wearing went off and told me that I had done 10,000 steps while I was sitting in the cabin!

Flying over these roads, looking at maps and in good faith being briefed on these roads is completely different from seeing them for yourself and riding with those who travel them the most. That is why I found it so invaluable, and I will continue to do this as one way of connecting with people.

I saw completed works that were outstanding—I will refer to some of them in a moment—but I also saw works that still need to be done. I saw how important these networks are for the jobs of this state, for the businesses that are moving goods to market and for the linking of communities to services and to their work. I also saw some of the valuable upgrades that have been occurring in recent years, particularly under the LNP's Bruce Highway Action Plan in partnership with our federal colleagues, with up to \$10 billion of work programmed over 10 years—record funding from the federal government. In addition to the significant works I saw safety upgrades which are so cost effective, particularly around places such as Gympie, Townsville and of course the Yeppen flood plain. I saw simple safety upgrades like the separation lines and rumble strips in the middle that are moving traffic further apart and the widening of verges. This has dramatically reduced head-on accidents in a number of places. That is due to the innovation of Main Roads and has been very successful.

Obviously there are still many areas that need to be upgraded and we will all continue to advocate and fight for that. When I travelled from Cairns to Brisbane with three different trucking companies it was an opportunity to talk with them and hear their feedback about the need for more overtaking lanes and safe rest areas. Recently I was on the Hann Highway for a section with Bob who was carrying hay bales from the Tablelands to Winton. That is a pretty rough bit of road and you learn firsthand why produce such as potatoes cannot be carried on that road because it is too rough and they will get bruised. While there are sections that are sealed, there are more that need to have a progressive program of upgrades. I thank the Singles family from outside of Mackay who are part of the Road Accident Action Group and who have been such passionate advocates particularly for roads like the Peak Downs Highway. I rode with them from the port to the pit—from Mackay to Moranbah. That is a road that has had significant improvements, but there is more that needs to be done. I acknowledge our federal colleagues with the Eton Range realignment works. It has invested \$167 million and the LNP government committed \$23 million. Hopefully those works will soon get underway because they are desperately needed. The Walkerston bypass needs to be a project where the design work is completed, the project properly costed and whatever needs to be done put in place in order to program that. I thank the companies and individual truckies who have been good enough to have me on board.

On a different note, I want to also acknowledge the Palm Island council which did an outstanding job hosting the North Queensland Local Government Association Conference earlier this year. I give a shout out to Alf Lacey, his councillors, his staff and the community. They shone—

*(Time expired)*

### **Early Childhood Education, Professional Wages**

 **Mr de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (12.21 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker Grace, I am sure you would agree that the education of our youngest Queenslanders should be one of the highest priorities for members in this place. I rise to discuss a matter of public importance not just for the residents of Springwood but also for parents across our state. Recently I had the opportunity to represent the Minister for Education at a gathering of early childhood educators together with parents and supporters in their case for professional wages. These educators—some of whom are here in the gallery today, in particular Bex, Marilyn and Annette—have all been part of a campaign to change the future of not only this sector but a better quality future for all our kids. Through their union and my union, United Voice, they have stood up and declared that they are professionals and that they deserve professional pay. For too long we have accepted the premise that child care is little more than babysitting. This Liberal federal government talks about it in terms of encouraging workforce participation—that a child-care centre is nothing more than a safe storage unit whilst an economic unit attends work. Those of us on this side of the House know it to be far more important than that. Quality education—whether your child is learning to walk or learning to drive—shapes our choices and our chances in life, and that education starts in the early years. For over 67,000 of Queensland's youngest, that education is happening in the early education and care sector. The early years pave the way for their future success, so the people teaching our youngest Australians should be given the wages and respect befitting their critical role in literally shaping the future.

You cannot spark curiosity, facilitate collaboration or learn new skills without a teacher, but when we look at our early education sector we are facing the risk that the high-quality educators we need will leave this sector. Dedicated professionals are struggling on scandalously low wages to prepare for our children's futures. We are asking them to build the foundation for our country's future prosperity. Over

90 per cent of people who work in early childhood education are women and early childhood education and care is one of the lowest paying professions in this nation, and that is no coincidence. Those of us on this side of the chamber know that early childhood educators get low pay because this has unfortunately been seen traditionally as women's work. There is an expectation that this is almost a service of devotion rather than a career. We know that educators do not have the luxury of working for love. Because these women cannot get a decent weekly wage, they are leaving this sector. That is why after years of campaigning by educators for professional wages the last federal Labor government took active steps to address the wage imbalance faced by early childhood educators and carers. It agreed to fund increased wages ahead of a permanent solution being delivered by the Fair Work Commission. However, one of the first acts of the Abbott government was to cancel that fund—a small amount of money that had the potential to make a huge amount of difference to so many educators. Did the shadow minister for education who sits opposite speak out against the Abbott government? What about the opposition leader? What about the member for Surfers Paradise when he was education minister? No, they did and said nothing.

Educators are still waiting for their opportunity to make their case to the Fair Work Commission, but while they wait the Palaszczuk government has started taking action to develop the capacity of Queensland's early childhood education and care workforce. Our government acknowledges that the early childhood workforce is an important profession and through the Workforce Action Plan for 2015-2018 we will provide tangible actions to assist Queenslanders to undertake and complete study to achieve an approved qualification. This includes training subsidies to assist aspiring early childhood educators to undertake a certificate III or a diploma in early childhood education and care. To meet teaching challenges facing the workforce, the plan also launches a new program of professional development and online support for current educators working with children with disabilities and complex needs. This Workforce Action Plan is an important part of the Queensland government's Working Queensland policy framework. By underpaying women striving to give our children the best possible start in life, we are short-changing our nation. The gender pay gap is all too real and when we short-change women anywhere it is unfair and it is unacceptable. But when we short-change anyone who cares for and educates the next generation of Australians, it is not simply unjust; it is also bad policy. It risks parents losing confidence in the quality of child care and working fewer days. Many dads I know rely on child-care professionals to help educate their children—dads like Dan, Brad and David whose children attend centres in my neighbourhood and dads like me who are not prepared to risk the sound preparation of our children for the increasingly challenging future. But most it is a reflection of who we are as a country. In Australia in the 21st century, your pay cheque should depend—

*(Time expired)*

### Drought

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (12.26 pm): I rise to speak about the growing concern in the north, the Far North and the west about the worsening of the drought. As of last week, a whopping 86 per cent of Queensland is now officially drought declared—and, incredibly, it is not just confined to areas west of the Great Divide. Townsville, the Burdekin, parts of the Cook shire, the vast majority of the Whitsunday local government area closer to home and most of the neighbouring Isaac local government area are now on the list of drought declared areas, along with other communities including Indigenous communities. Significantly for the Cook Shire Council, it is the first time it has been partially drought declared since 1978. Even our tropical islands are facing a water crisis. Places like Palm Island will run out of water sooner rather than later unless we get a decent wet season—not that the Deputy Premier and Minister for Local Government would know! I say this because when Mayor Alf Lacey and his Palm Island community hosted this year's North Queensland Local Government Association annual conference—an historic occasion for the Palm community and indeed all Indigenous communities in the north—the Minister for Local Government was nowhere to be seen. Conversely, the shadow minister was there, and I acknowledge the member for Maroochydore's earlier comments in the chamber today. I was pleased to join her to hear of some of the great things happening on Palm Island and the aspirations of a community, and I caught up with many old faces including local Rugby League legend Joshua Geia.

In the case of the Burdekin, water restrictions were imposed two months ago today—the first time that has happened in three decades—underlined by the fact that the mighty Burdekin Falls Dam is now down to less than 48 per cent capacity and the Ross River Dam servicing Townsville is sitting

at below 30 per cent, hence level 2 water restrictions came in in Townsville just over a month ago. In fact, the trigger point to tapping into the Burdekin Falls Dam is fast approaching and that will cost the ratepayers of the city of Townsville \$1 million every 42 days. Indeed, these are worrying times for the north. So what are Labor's plans to boost water storage? There is no plan—not for water, not for jobs, not for anything except a plan to keep working with the unions because it is the unions that are running the state! Many communities in Central and Northern Queensland are doing it tough economically, hence my dismay that Labor's Minister for State Development failed to show up at the recent Major Projects Summit in Bowen. Where was 'Doctor Who'? Was he swapping notes with Tom Baker? Maybe he is just in a different faction from the Chairman of Whitsundays Marketing and Development, former Labor deputy premier Jim Elder, whose organisation organised the summit in Bowen.

In his place the minister sent Labor's member for Mackay, the same MP who was seen celebrating with the Mackay Conservation Group after she won the seat of Mackay earlier this year. This is the same mob that has continued to delay and disrupt the sensible expansion of Abbot Point and the development of mines like Carmichael in our hinterland—a mob that has been supported by a coalition of crazies: the likes of GetUp!, Greenpeace, the World Wildlife Fund, and on it goes. Labor's member for Mackay had a hide coming to Bowen, because it is her and her comrades who have been central to these radical green groups blocking sustainable and sensible development for our region. As one delegate said to me at the summit, 'If we had all known that, this group would have lynched her.'

The worsening of the drought brings into focus the growing need to build dams, such as Nullinga in the Far North and Urannah, which I have championed for some time, particularly given the current economic state of our regions. The former member for Warrego, the former father of the House, the now retired Howard Hobbs, was a great fan of Urannah when he served in the Borbidge government. His report in 1998 was a blueprint for the future. The former member for Burdekin used to rave about Urannah and, unsurprisingly, the now member for Burdekin has talked about Urannah and taken up the fight, working alongside the good people of Bowen Collinsville Enterprise. Certainly, I have talked about following in the footsteps of the former member for Bowen, the late Sir Peter Delamothe. Back in the 1960s the Doc, as he was known, lobbied hard for Urannah. He was a visionary. That is what people want from their elected representatives: some vision so that they can leave a lasting legacy for future generations. If built, Urannah would be three times bigger than Peter Faust, which is near Proserpine, and even bigger than the Fairbairn Dam near Emerald, which as many people would remember transformed Emerald in the Central Highlands upon its opening in 1972. Unfortunately, Labor has no intention of building any such dam. It is in cahoots with the Greens. In fact, without them, Labor would not be in government. In conclusion, as this shocking drought continues to bite, I again ask this accidental government: when it comes to building dams, what is its plan? If the answer is 'Nothing,' I say, 'Damn you.'

*(Time expired)*

### **Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee**

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (12.31 pm): In accordance with standing order 211A, the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee has authorised me to make the following statement. I advise the House of the committee's recent consideration of the proposed nominees for the positions of part-time ordinary commissioners. On Monday, 9 November 2015, the Attorney-General wrote to inform the committee that, as a result of a comprehensive recruitment process undertaken in accordance with section 227(2) of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the government advised the names of two preferred nominees as part-time ordinary commissioners. Pursuant to section 228(1) of the act, the Attorney sought the committee's bipartisan support for these nominations. The Attorney's correspondence also enclosed copies of the curricula vitae for both nominees.

On Wednesday, 11 November 2015, the committee met to consider this matter. In the absence of the non-government members, the committee resolved to meet with the Attorney-General and the proposed nominees the following day. On Thursday, 12 November 2015, the committee met with the Attorney-General and, in accordance with past practice, conducted interviews with the proposed nominees. After the interviews, the committee discussed the nominations and requested the secretariat to provide a written overview of the appointment processes of the last 10 years. On Monday, 16 November 2015, the committee was provided with the research request.

Given that the requested research material had been provided to the committee on Wednesday, 18 November 2015, as acting chair, in accordance with standing order 198, I called a meeting for Friday, 20 November 2015, to further consider this matter. In issuing the meeting request, I outlined reasons

for the meeting. Those reasons included that the committee needed to make a determination to enable the Attorney to take matters to the Governor in Council by 26 November and that applicants should be afforded the courtesy of being advised of the success or otherwise of their application without undue delay.

On Thursday, 19 November 2015, the acting deputy chair advised that the LNP members of the committee would not be attending the meeting because they had not been given sufficient time to conduct research regarding the appointments and would therefore not be prepared to consider this matter until 30 November 2015 at the earliest. On Friday, 20 November 2015, the committee met to consider this matter. As only government members of the committee were present, the committee was not able to finalise its consideration of the nominations. The committee agreed to write to the Attorney-General to advise that the committee was yet to determine this matter. The committee resolved to meet again on Wednesday, 25 November 2015.

The records provided by the secretariat indicate that predecessors of this committee have, upon interviewing proposed nominees, quickly come to a decision. Given the publicity surrounding the nomination process for the chairman of the Crime and Corruption Commission earlier this year and the delay in the committee's decision-making process, I bring these latest delays to the attention of the House.

Although these roles were advertised some time ago, the Attorney advised that the delay in the committee finalising the chairman's appointment has, in turn, delayed the Attorney from being able to consult with the chairman of the CCC on these further appointments as required under the act. As the House is no doubt aware, these senior roles at the CCC have not been permanently filled for a significant period.

In addition to its important monitoring and reviewing responsibilities, the committee has an important role to play in ensuring the requisite staffing stability at the commission. To not respond to these matters in a timely way is an affront to the commission, a poor reflection on the committee and demonstrates disrespect for the parliamentary process and, indeed, this House. Through this committee, the parliament holds the commission to account. It follows that the parliament, through the committee, should not impede the commission from being able to perform its role effectively.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.37 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on a matter suddenly arising. There are matters here I cannot talk about because of the secrecy and privacy provisions of the PCCC, but I would like to write to the Clerk with a comment that I believe the statement that has been given at best is misrepresenting the truth of some of the discussions that have happened within our committee.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! This is not an area in which to debate the issue. If you wish to write to the Clerk, that is certainly within your domain to do so. Did you mention the Clerk or the Speaker?

**Mr WATTS:** The Speaker, but I would like to seek your guidance as to what I can speak about in this chamber. I am bound by the conditions—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand the circumstances, member for Toowoomba North. I suggest that you speak directly with the Speaker outside of the chamber. If you then wish to write to the Speaker you are within your full entitlement to do so. We will now move to government business.

## CRIME AND CORRUPTION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.38 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 and the acts mentioned in schedules 1 and 2 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2015 [[1764](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1765](#)].

I present a bill for an act to amend the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 to deliver on a number of the government's election commitments to restore the independence and integrity of the Crime and Corruption Commission. This government is strongly committed to a robust integrity system where oversight bodies can perform their vital functions independently and free from political interference. Successive Labor governments have introduced landmark reforms in Queensland to ensure those in government do what they are meant to do—serve the people of Queensland and not themselves. These reforms have helped ensure government officials perform their functions ethically and with the highest standards of integrity, taxpayers' money is used only for proper purposes and that the actions of government are not hidden from the public.

Today we take another step in rebuilding the capacity of one of our most important integrity bodies charged with preventing and addressing corruption in Queensland. Prior to the election the government committed to a package of reforms to address the erosion of the CCC's independence and integrity. We have already delivered on several of these commitments. For example, in May this year amendments commenced which provided the chair of the CCC with access to an improved salary and pension to provide for greater independence and to attract the best and the brightest to the role. Further, on 1 September, Mr Alan MacSporran QC commenced duties as the new permanent chair of the CCC. We are in the process of recruiting and appointing other commissioners and the chief executive officer. This bill further delivers on a broad range of the government's remaining CCC commitments. The bill ensures that the CCC CEO will not be a commissioner. This is consistent with best practice corporate governance and helps ensure that the CEO is answerable to the commission. The existing provisions regarding the CEO's appointment will continue to apply. The bill maintains a five-member commission, with a requirement for an additional ordinary commissioner because the CEO will no longer be a commissioner. This ensures the commission continues to have a broad range of expertise and skills.

There may be ways to further improve the CCC's governance. However, before making any further changes the government wants to carefully consider recommendations that may arise from the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee's current review of the CCC which is due to report by 30 June 2016. The bill also supports the CCC's independence by ensuring there is bipartisan support of the PCCC for particular appointments. Firstly, the bill requires the bipartisan support of the PCCC for the nomination of the chief executive officer. This will support transparency and accountability in that appointment. Currently the PCCC has a right of veto in relation to the nomination of the CEO. A right of veto is not the same as having bipartisan support of the PCCC. Bipartisan support ensures that the voices of non-government members also count and a nomination cannot just proceed with the support of government members. The bill also limits acting appointments for commissioners and the CEO to three months unless there is bipartisan support of the PCCC for the appointment. This will prevent long-term, politically partisan acting appointments being made. We have just heard the member for Sunnybank talk about these vacancies having existed for some time in relation to both the chair, the CEO and the ordinary commissioners' roles.

In 2014 the Newman government removed the CCC's important corruption prevention function. This removed the CCC's ability to proactively support public sector agencies in the prevention of corruption and created a critical gap in Queensland's integrity system. The bill reinstates the CCC's important corruption prevention function to enable the CCC to build the capacity of units of public administration to prevent corruption.

The Newman government also removed the CCC's independence and flexibility in being able to set its own research agenda by requiring the CCC to obtain ministerial approval for its research. The bill reinstates the CCC's research function to what it was prior to the 2014 amendments so that the CCC will not have to obtain ministerial approval for its research activities. This will enable the CCC to determine its own research priorities unfettered by political interference. Since 1 July 2014, as a result of amendments made by the previous government, complaints by members of the public to the CCC could not be made anonymously, they must be by way of statutory declaration unless the CCC decides, because of exceptional circumstances, that they do not need to be made this way. By removing the statutory declaration requirement the bill will foster a culture that encourages complaints about corruption to be made. The bill also restores gender neutral language to the position of the CCC chair by replacing references in the act and other legislation to the 'chairman' with CCC 'chairperson'. It was a regressive, petty, simply unnecessary move by the former government to amend the act to make this change given that for many years gender neutral language has been well accepted and used across the Queensland statute book.

The bill also supports the efficient performance of day-to-day financial management by the CCC by removing the current prohibition on the CEO subdelegating financial accountability functions. The CEO's ability to subdelegate these functions aligns with delegation powers departmental accountable officers have under the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

The government has also committed to widening the definition of corrupt conduct in the Crime and Corruption Act. The definition of corrupt conduct, or official misconduct as it was previously known, sets the parameters of the CCC's jurisdiction to address public sector corruption. The definition of corrupt conduct was narrowed under the previous government. The government wants to make sure that the definition of corrupt conduct establishes the necessary and appropriate jurisdiction for the CCC to adequately address public sector corruption. To achieve this the government will, in the new year, be releasing an issues paper on the definition of corrupt conduct for public consultation. This will provide the opportunity for all interested stakeholders to provide feedback and ensure that changes to the definition are carefully considered and we get the amendments right.

It is unfortunate that this bill was necessary. The CCC should never have had its independence stripped and its important corruption prevention and research functions limited as occurred in 2014. This bill rights the wrongs that occurred in 2014. The bill delivers on the government's commitment to restoring the CCC's independence and integrity and so ensuring Queenslanders have a government that lives up to the highest standards of integrity. I commend the bill to the House. I move that the bill be now read a first time.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.46 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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

## YOUTH JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.47 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Public Guardian Act 2014, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the acts mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes and I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [[1766](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1767](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The bill will give effect to the first stages of amendments to the Youth Justice Act 1992 to deliver on the government's commitment to repeal non-evidenced and ineffective amendments made to the Youth Justice Act by the former Liberal National Party government. In 2014 the previous government implemented a sweeping set of amendments to the Youth Justice Act and Children's Court Act 1992 to introduce stronger penalties and harsher consequences on the premise that these would reduce offending and deter children and young people from repeat offending.

In 2014 the previous government not only repealed legislative recognition of the common law sentencing principle that imprisonment is a sentence of last resort but also completely ousted the application of the common law in this regard for all offenders. As a result Queensland became the only

Australian jurisdiction to no longer apply this fundamental sentencing principle. The government's commitment to repeal the 2014 retrograde reforms reflects international evidence that increasing the severity of punishment is ineffective in reducing recidivism particularly by children and young people. Repealing these reforms will serve to reduce involvement of children and young people in the justice system rather than lead to their future entrenchment within it. Legal and community sector stakeholders, including the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association of Queensland, the Youth Advocacy Centre and Amnesty International, were strongly opposed to the 2014 reforms and have continued to make approaches to government to repeal these.

The bill progresses the first stage of legislative reform by: restoring section 234 of the Youth Justice Act to prohibit the publication of information identifying repeat offenders while maintaining the court's discretion to allow for the publication of identifying information for any particular offender the court deems to have committed particularly heinous and violent offences and where the publication is in the public interest; repealing part 5 division 2 of the Youth Justice Act, resulting in a finding of guilt for an offence committed by a young person while on bail no longer being an offence; restoring section 148 of the Youth Justice Act, making unrecorded childhood findings of guilt inadmissible in the sentencing of adult offenders, but leaving recorded convictions admissible; amending the sentencing principles in section 150 of the Youth Justice Act to reinstate the principle that a detention order should only be imposed as a last resort and omit the subsection ousting the equivalent common-law principle; the reinstatement of sentence review provisions under the Youth Justice Act, with this provision having previously been removed at the same time as the 2014 reforms in the face of criticism and opposition by the President of the Children's Court and other key legal and youth stakeholders; and removing provisions from the Youth Justice Act relating to the youth boot camp program based on the findings of an independent evaluation to cease and repeal this legislation.

Further, principle 17 of the charter of youth justice principles will also be reinstated, providing that a child should be detained in custody for an offence, whether on arrest or sentence, only as a last resort and for the least time that is justified in the circumstances. This bill also delivers on the government's commitment to return the sentencing regime in Queensland that existed before 2014 by amending the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to make it clear that prison is a sentence of last resort for adult offenders and that a penalty that allows for the person to remain in the community is preferable. However, for those offenders convicted of offences of violence, child sexual abuse or offences involving child exploitation material, the sentencing principle will continue to be displaced consistent with the position that existed before the 2014 changes. This recognises the serious and heinous nature of that offending and the need to protect the community. As a direct and immediate outcome of this amendment, courts will once again have a wide sentencing discretion to structure sentences that not only meet the community's need to punish and deter, but also recognise the need to rehabilitate offenders and protect the community through the use of noncustodial penalties. This government has confidence in the ability of the Queensland judiciary in the exercise of this discretion and to impose appropriate sentences.

Remaining government election commitments to repeal legislation relating to open proceedings of the Children's Court, the automatic transfer to adult correctional facilities of 17-year-olds who have at least six months left to serve in detention and the reinstatement of court referred youth justice conferencing require further consultation on enhancements and implementation and are being progressed as a second stage of amendments with targeted stakeholder consultation. Subject to the results of this consultation, the government intends to bring further amendments that give effect to these election commitments in early 2016. Both the bill and the next stage legislative amendments emphasise the government's early intervention and rehabilitative approach to reducing youth offending. These legislative reforms will be complemented by the development of a comprehensive youth justice policy that will be presented for public consultation in 2016. The policy will guide responsible investment in the youth justice system based on evidence of what works to effectively rehabilitate and deter young people from further entrenchment in the criminal justice system.

The future of the youth justice system in Queensland is one that values and supports the future of the children and young people it is responsible for as the most effective way to reduce the impact of offending in our communities, at the same time as acknowledging that young offenders need to be held to account. I believe that this bill gets the balance right and so will our youth justice policy going forward. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.52 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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

## FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TRAINING OMBUDSMAN) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (12.53 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Further Education and Training Act 2014 to establish the office of the training ombudsman and for related purposes, and to amend the Public Service Act 2008 for a particular purpose. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 [[1768](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1769](#)].

Today I rise to introduce the Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. The Palaszczuk government is committed to jobs: jobs now and jobs in the future. The role of the Palaszczuk government's Jobs Queensland is to consult with industry and other significant stakeholders to identify areas of future economic growth, so that Queensland is well placed to address future need. As these growth areas are identified, government needs to react through the provision of appropriate vocational education and training of the highest quality. The establishment of a training ombudsman is part of our broader plan to make Queensland's VET sector the strongest and most productive in the nation and to ensure that industry has access to the skills it needs to fuel this growth.

The Palaszczuk government is already acting on its commitment to develop the appropriately skilled work force to meet future industry growth. We have already: reintroduced the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative; enacted components of our Rescuing TAFE plan, which incorporates the repeal of the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act 2015; and established Jobs Queensland. Currently, Queensland's consumers of VET do not have access to a sector-specific independent complaints mechanism for VET matters. Given the broad and diverse range of stakeholders within the sector, it can be challenging for VET consumers to identify the most appropriate avenue for lodging concerns, as there is no clear pathway to raise concerns about systemic issues in the VET sector. This is important to help navigate the system and identify areas of reform and improvement.

The bill amends the Further Education and Training Act 2014 to establish the Training Ombudsman. One of the key functions of the Training Ombudsman will be to receive complaints about the provision and quality of VET by registered training organisations and assist complainants to have their issues addressed by the most appropriate agency. It is important to note that complainants are not just apprentices and trainees; they are also employers, trainers and other significant stakeholders. The Training Ombudsman will be able to support complainants to seek a resolution of their issues by mediating the matter with the other relevant parties. This also will help to get real outcomes for students and providers alike. Where a resolution cannot be reached, the Training Ombudsman will be able to assist complainants to take the matter up with appropriate agencies. This might include the Department of Education and Training and other Queensland agencies such as the Office of Fair Trading, as well as the national VET regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority.

If issues are raised about the quality of training provided by an RTO that receives government funding under the Certificate 3 Guarantee or User Choice programs, the Training Ombudsman can investigate the concerns and make recommendations to DET about whether to continue the arrangements or take other action under the funding arrangements to address the concerns. While DET has strict requirements on prequalified supplier RTOs and closely monitors the provision of VET by funded prequalified suppliers, having oversight from the Training Ombudsman will be a significant measure in ensuring Queensland government funding is targeted to quality VET providers into the future.

The Training Ombudsman will also assess complaints in relation to compliance with the FET Act by apprentices, trainees, employers and supervising RTOs and make recommendations to the DET chief executive about the complaints. This may also include concerns about the range of work, supervision, training or facilities provided to an apprentice by their employer or supervising RTO. Further, the Training Ombudsman will be able to assess complaints and make recommendations about certain decisions of the DET chief executive. These are called 'prescribed decisions' in the bill and include decisions about training contracts and certificates of achievement, for example, the decision to refuse an application for the extension of a nominal term of a registered training contract. Currently, there are no external review rights for these decisions. Giving the Training Ombudsman capacity to consider complaints about such decisions will ensure parties aggrieved by any decisions can have their concerns heard and recommendations made by an independent person.

Importantly, the Training Ombudsman will have a function to monitor the outcome of complaints, including where complaints are referred to relevant agencies, including DET or ASQA. This will provide wraparound services for complainants and assist the Training Ombudsman in his or her function to identify and report to me as minister about issues relating to the provision and quality of VET in Queensland. The Training Ombudsman will also have a function to make recommendations to me about: ways to improve DET's systems, policies and processes relating to pre-qualified suppliers and supervising RTOs; matters relating to apprenticeships and traineeships; and strategies to improve the quality of VET in Queensland.

The VET sector does a great job and the sector wants someone to advocate for them. The Training Ombudsman will promote and carry out educational activities relating to VET in Queensland. The Training Ombudsman will improve consumer and stakeholder awareness and strengthen the quality of VET in Queensland. ASQA and other key industry stakeholders support us in establishing a Queensland Training Ombudsman.

Funding of up to \$5 million over three years has been allocated to establish and operate an independent training ombudsman in Queensland. On 14 September 2015, through a ministerial charter I established an interim Training Ombudsman role to give individuals in Queensland immediate assistance. The interim Training Ombudsman has established an online and telephone presence to support complainants and has begun the important work of developing relationships with other regulatory agencies. It is important to note that the interim Training Ombudsman has already been involved in resolving issues raised by Queenslanders in relation to the VET sector, including issues referred from members opposite.

Following assent of the bill, I will undertake a merit based process for appointment of the new Training Ombudsman. The Training Ombudsman will be supported by the Office of the Training Ombudsman. The independence of the Training Ombudsman from government control is enshrined in the bill. As I have mentioned, the bill ensures that the Training Ombudsman is not subject to direction from anyone, including the government, around the performance of its functions. The bill ensures that the Training Ombudsman, and no-one else, controls the staff of the office.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering on its promise for the VET sector in Queensland. The Training Ombudsman will provide a dedicated, independent one-stop shop for VET sector related issues, with a high level of individual support to VET stakeholders. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (1.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

## Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

## DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Visitors to Public Gallery

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Before calling the minister, I acknowledge in the gallery nurses and midwives and members of the Queensland Nurses' Union, together with secretary Beth Mohle and staff of the Queensland Nurses' Union. I welcome you to the gallery.

## HOSPITAL AND HEALTH BOARDS (SAFE NURSE-TO-PATIENT AND MIDWIFE-TO-PATIENT RATIOS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 to provide for minimum nurse-to-patient ratios and midwife-to-patient ratios and other workload matters for public sector health services to ensure patient safety and the delivery of high quality health services. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health and Ambulance Services Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015 [\[1770\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [\[1771\]](#).

The Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015 delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to legislate for safe ratios and workload provisions to ensure better patient safety and better quality health care. Over decades it has been Labor governments which have introduced significant legislation in this place to improve the health system.

In 1923, under the government of Labor premier EG Theodore, the Hospitals Act established hospital districts and boards, with state and local governments guaranteeing board funding. In 1945, under the government of Labor premier Frank Cooper, the Hospital Benefits Act, which established free hospitals in Queensland, was passed. This legislation came into effect on 1 July 1946 when Ned Hanlon, another reforming Labor figure, was premier.

In 2015, under the leadership of Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, another Labor government will introduce legislation that will significantly improve our state's health system. It is with great pride that I stand in the same place as health ministers in 1923 and 1945 to introduce another piece of health legislation that will benefit both patients in the health system and those who work in that system.

In standing here, I can see in the public gallery today representatives of the nursing profession in our state and the Queensland Nurses' Union. They understand the historic importance of this legislation. Nurses, represented by the QNU, have been instrumental in advocating for this legislation. Nurses and their union have been critical in helping us develop this legislation. Nurses and their union will be essential to implementing this legislation. I want to thank nurses and their QNU representatives here today for their advocacy and their assistance in developing this legislation. I thank them and say, because of you, we will have a better system of health in Queensland that will be safer for patients.

We know this because there is such strong research evidence. Research has been published in a range of prestigious academic journals, such as the *British Medical Journal*, the *Lancet* and the *International Journal of Nursing Studies*. One paper in particular, published in 2002 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, found that for each additional patient beyond four assigned to a registered nurse the risk of death increases by seven per cent for all patients.

There are, of course, also benefits for staff. For nurses and midwives it provides a safer workload and that, in turn, enables them to deliver a better level of expert professional service to their patients. The bill establishes the legislative framework to enable minimum nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios and workload provisions to be mandated in public sector health service

facilities. In particular, it provides a head of power to enable minimum nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios and requirements relating to the nursing and midwifery skill mix to be prescribed via a regulation known as a nursing and midwifery regulation.

It also provides flexibility for ratios to be prescribed by stated hospital and health services, by stated facilities or parts of facilities, at stated times and in stated circumstances. This flexibility will enable ratios to be gradually implemented in hospital and health services in a phased manner from 1 July 2016.

The bill enables the minister to grant a hospital and health service a temporary exemption from compliance with a nursing and midwifery regulation for a stated period of up to three months. The exemption may exempt a service from all or part of the regulation or vary the application of the regulation so that it imposes a lesser requirement on the service. The bill also enables the minister to place conditions on a temporary exemption and to extend the temporary exemption for a further period up to three months if required.

The bill provides that, before deciding to apply a nursing and midwifery regulation to a service or grant or extend a temporary exemption, the minister will be required to consider the service's capability to comply with the regulation and the likely effects of compliance. The bill also includes examples of matters that the minister may consider when making the decision.

In addition to requiring prescribed facilities to comply with ratios, the bill requires prescribed facilities to comply with workload provisions as a means of ensuring safe staffing levels. To achieve this, the bill enables the chief executive of the department to make a standard that outlines requirements about nursing and midwifery workload management by a hospital and health service. The standard may include requirements for how a service calculates its nursing and midwifery staffing requirements, develops and implements strategies to manage staff supply and demand or evaluates staff performance. A standard made by the chief executive will be binding on a hospital and health service in respect of those hospital wards to which ratios apply.

Finally, the bill includes provisions enabling the chief executive of the department to require hospital and health services to provide the chief executive with nursing and midwifery workload information, and also enabling the chief executive to publish that information.

As previously mentioned, aspects of the legislative framework will be prescribed in a nursing and midwifery regulation. A draft version of the regulation has been prepared by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. The regulation will amend the Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012. I table the draft amendment regulation and explanatory notes to assist the Health and Ambulance Services Committee and the House in its consideration of the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Hospital and Health Boards Amendment Regulation (No. ...) 2016: tabling draft [\[1772\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Hospital and Health Boards Amendment Regulation (No. ...) 2016: tabling draft, explanatory notes [\[1773\]](#).

The amendment regulation prescribes ratios of one nurse or midwife to every four patients for morning and afternoon shifts and one nurse or midwife to every seven patients for a night shift. In addition to prescribing the minimum nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios, the amendment regulation defines what is meant by a morning shift, afternoon shift and night shift for the purpose of applying the ratios on a ward.

It also details a methodology to assist hospital and health services to calculate the correct number of nurses or midwives required when the application of the required ratio to the number of patients on a ward does not result in a whole number of nurses or midwives. The amendment regulation also prescribes the Queensland public sector hospitals, and acute wards within those hospitals, to which ratios are proposed to apply from 1 July 2016.

Honourable members will note that nearly all of the major facilities in Queensland are covered. I am advised that the regulation will cover 80 per cent of the medical and surgical beds in Queensland. We know that the majority of hospitalisations in the public system are characterised as medical or surgical in nature.

I also want to assure those nurses here today that this is not the end of our commitment to safe nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios. This is just the first step. We will be working with nurses and their representatives to look at those areas not covered by the regulation to consider the appropriate ratios for those areas.

As I said at the outset, this legislation fulfils an election commitment. It is notable that the Premier joins us in the House today for this historic occasion when this legislation is introduced into the Legislative Assembly. This legislation benefits both patients and the people who look after them. For

patients, it is part of our broader commitment to ensuring that our public hospitals provide safe, quality health care and the best possible outcomes. For our hardworking nurses and midwives, this legislation will empower them to deliver safe nursing and midwifery services. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.39 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee.

## DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Visitors to Public Gallery

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Before I call the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation, I acknowledge in the public gallery a guest of the member for Bulimba, the retiring chair of Foodbank, Mr Ian Brusasco, and his wife, Patsy, and other members of Foodbank. Mr Brusasco is retiring after 19 years of dedicated service to Foodbank, including his incredible service to the public in other forms including as a councillor and as a public servant for many years. Welcome to Ian and Patsy Brusasco.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

## PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.40 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Housing Act 2003, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and the Sustainable Planning Act 2009. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [[1774](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1775](#)].

It is a great honour to present this bill to the House today. This is a bill that is about certainty and fairness for Queenslanders. This is also a bill that delivers on our election commitment to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. To maintain public health and the environment, we must have a strong plumbing industry. This government understands the benefits of a strong industry with the best possible standards. And this government is committed to working with, not against, Queensland's plumbing industry.

The former government abolished the Plumbing Industry Council, transferring its functions to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. This was a move that was not supported by the plumbing industry, as it weakened the industry's voice. This government takes the concerns of the plumbing industry seriously. We have listened to these concerns, and we have consulted with industry stakeholders on this matter.

Our commitment has been publically available since July 2014, and a draft of this bill was released to key industry stakeholders on 17 July 2015. During a five-week consultation period, nine submissions were received, and all of these submissions supported the importance of a dedicated

plumbing industry regulatory body. The reinstated regulatory body, to be called the Service Trades Council, will replace the disbanded Plumbing Industry Council. Establishing the Service Trades Council within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission will allow the improved service delivery outcomes being achieved by the commission to be maintained.

The Service Trades Council will have a number of critical roles in its representation of the plumbing industry. These include conferring on national policy development—for example, licensing, discipline and other related matters—and reporting to the minister on issues related to plumbing and drainage. The Service Trades Council will also be able to make recommendations to the Queensland Building and Construction Commissioner about the performance of any of the commissioner's functions under the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002.

In relation to licensing plumbers and drainers, the Service Trades Council will establish a panel of industry and training experts to consider complex licence applications, such as migrant applications, and provide recommendations to the commissioner on the appropriateness of issuing the applicant a licence. The council will also have an important role in the disciplining of licensees by taking on the function of internal reviewer for disciplinary decisions made by the commissioner.

This bill identifies the membership of the Service Trades Council, which will consist of a range of industry and government representatives, and sets out the process for appointing members and conducting the business of the council. This bill also provides for the appointment of an assistant commissioner to assist the Service Trades Council to perform its functions. This will include reporting to the council on licensing and disciplinary matters and, where necessary, representing the council in proceedings of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. This bill is about keeping Queensland's plumbing industry strong, and it is about working with industry to deliver the best possible outcomes for Queenslanders.

This is also a bill that delivers on our commitment to fairness for Queenslanders. For prospective tenants, out-of-date or inaccurate information on residential tenancy databases can have significant consequences. It can have particularly significant impacts on our most vulnerable, by placing them at an increased risk of homelessness.

This bill seeks to introduce the national uniform law on residential tenancy databases to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to provide extra protection for tenants. By ensuring these databases contain only current and accurate information, tenants can be protected from unfair disadvantage, and their rights when it comes to their personal information can be safeguarded. These provisions also allow databases to continue to be used as a screening tool by lessors and agents to manage investor risk.

The act already has provisions regulating the listing of information on tenancy databases. These provisions were first introduced in Queensland in 2003, and were developed to deal with incorrect, unfair or misleading listings. This bill maintains those existing provisions, with some changes, and places a number of further obligations on lessors and their agents. These include obligations to disclose information to applicants about databases they are using, to advise applicants if they are on a tenancy database and to advise a database operator if a listing needs to be amended or removed.

Database operators are obligated to amend or remove listings consistent with advice from lessors and agents. Lessors, agents and operators who made the listing are obligated to provide a copy of the information on the database to a tenant on request once any associated fee is paid. The bill will also ensure listings do not remain on databases for longer than three years.

These amendments have been in train for some time. Public and industry consultation on these amendments was undertaken between November and December 2009, and the national uniform law on residential tenancy databases was adopted by the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs in December 2010.

In May 2011, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Amendment Bill 2011 was introduced into parliament. It was subsequently referred to the community affairs committee, which considered the bill and tabled a report on 17 November 2011. The 2011 bill lapsed when parliament was dissolved in February 2012, so the adoption of these amendments is well and truly overdue. Further targeted consultation with industry stakeholders was undertaken in September 2015, and consultation with other jurisdictions where this model has been adopted indicate that the provisions are working well.

I am pleased to bring this bill to the House today, because the adoption of these provisions will help protect the rights of Queensland tenants. This government is committed to making sure all Queenslanders get a fair go and have the opportunity to get ahead. A secure place to live is the foundation block for opportunity.

To this end, this bill also seeks to amend the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to ensure more Queenslanders can grasp the opportunity to sustain a private market tenancy when they are in a position to do so. My department's RentConnect product has helped thousands of Queensland families to access the private rental market. Tenancy guarantees are part of this offering. A tenancy guarantee is an undertaking to pay up to a stated amount to cover loss or expense to lessors caused by a breach from a tenant where the tenant's rental bond is insufficient to cover the amount owing.

The proposed amendment will allow the department to approve housing providers to also provide tenancy guarantees. This will ensure that tenants in properties transferred to community housing providers will continue to have access to the same opportunity when they are able to participate in the private rental market.

Under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, the construction of public housing and associated developments is exempt from development approvals, with building work self-assessable by the department against applicable codes. Subsequently, these properties do not have the local authority development or building approvals normally expected in the private sector.

This bill further seeks to introduce a deeming provision to the Housing Act 2003 to allay potential concerns and to provide security and certainty for future owners and financiers in relation to public housing that may be transferred. The proposed deeming provision will provide that, when and if properties approved or used as public housing are transferred to another entity, all development and building work has been done lawfully and in accordance with the relevant laws at the time.

This bill is about providing security, certainty and fairness for Queenslanders. It is about protecting tenants' rights, respecting the voice of the plumbing industry and increasing opportunity and certainty for investors and tenants. The benefits of this bill are clearly demonstrated and contribute to our vision for Queensland as a state where everyone has a chance to get ahead and everyone can get a fair go. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.49 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee.

## DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (2.50 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Coroners Act 2003, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 [[1776](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1777](#)].

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a new way of providing supports to people with disability. It is a game changer—a once-in-a-generation reform that will benefit the lives of people with disability, their families, carers and the community as a whole. As Queenslanders transition to the NDIS, people with disability will receive funding directly from the National Disability Insurance Agency to purchase their supports.

As I announced in September with the Premier, the Palaszczuk government is proud to be bringing the NDIS to Queensland earlier than anticipated through an early launch in North Queensland. From January 2016 planning will commence with children and young people under the age of 18 in Townsville and Charters Towers and all eligible people with disability on Palm Island so that they can become the first Queenslanders to access the NDIS. I am very excited that things are progressing well with the transition and that these participants will start receiving supports through the NDIS from April 2016. I recently announced the appointment of 10 local area coordinators to oversee the transition, and information sessions are underway for participants and service providers.

In making sure that we are ready for the early launch of the NDIS, our government has led a review of all legislation to identify the amendments required to support Queensland's transition to NDIS. The Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 is the culmination of this process. The majority of the amendments relate to the operation of Queensland's Disability Services and quality and safeguards system. A functioning quality and safeguards system is absolutely vital to ensure vulnerable people have the necessary protections and receive supports that are of a high quality.

Queensland already has some of the most robust quality and safeguards frameworks in place to ensure the safety of people with disability. The federal government is designing a national quality and safeguards framework for the NDIS in partnership with the states and territories. However, this framework is unlikely to be implemented during transition. As a result, Queensland will continue to operate its existing quality and safeguards system during the transition to the full scheme. This means Queensland's existing robust quality and safeguards system will be extended to all NDIS participants and providers who will deliver disability services under the NDIS in Queensland during the period to June 2019.

Three legislative safeguards are provided for in the Disability Services Act 2006. These include complaints management processes, criminal history screening and a restrictive practices framework. To date, these safeguards have applied only to Queensland government funded and direct delivered disability services. Without these amendments being introduced today, funding contracts between the Queensland government and disability service providers would be gradually phased out as Queensland transitions to the NDIS, meaning the authority of the Queensland government would diminish and many of the existing safeguards would be lost.

It is critical that all Queenslanders receiving disability supports under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders in receipt of disability supports funded by Queensland. Safeguards are important to ensure consistent and transparent processes are in place to support people with disability. This is the key objective of the bill. Amendments are required to redefine the scope of the Disability Services Act 2006 so that it extends to providers who deliver disability services not funded by Queensland.

Through some important definitional changes, the act will be extended to organisations that provide disability services prescribed by regulation to an NDIS participant under that participant's plan. The scope of these definitional changes will be limited to non-government providers delivering specific types of disability services. The services will be prescribed by regulation and the development of this regulation is currently in progress. These changes will not impact on government providers of NDIS supports. For example, the amendments will not capture Queensland Health's Hospital and Health Services, as they are already subject to their own significant and comprehensive quality and safeguards framework.

Through transition, the Queensland government will continue its investigative role to ensure providers comply with Queensland's quality and safeguards standards. As a result, the bill introduces a new part 6A into the Disability Services Act to provide the necessary powers to monitor the compliance of NDIS non-government service providers with safeguards. The bill includes provisions which provide authorised officers with the power to require relevant information and documents from NDIS non-government service providers, and enter places if the entry is authorised by a warrant. These powers will only be triggered on certain grounds—for example, to protect an NDIS participant from risk of harm because of abuse, neglect or exploitation or to check whether an NDIS non-government service provider complies with the Disability Services Act.

Queensland will have a complaints and investigative role in relation to disability support services funded through an NDIS participant's plan. However, all enforcement action against providers, including deregistration, will be the responsibility of the NDIA. The amendments will not replace the NDIA's responsibilities for managing reviews and appeals related to NDIA decisions about the administration of the scheme and any other decisions taken under the NDIS Act 2013. Queensland will not have a role in these processes.

To round off the quality and safeguards component, the bill also amends the definition of 'visitable site' under the Public Guardian Regulation 2014. This will extend the application of the adult community visitor program so that community visitors will be able to visit NDIS participants. Amendments to this regulation are considered appropriate for inclusion in the bill given the importance of the community visitor program to the quality and safeguarding system.

These frameworks are in place to ensure the safety of people with disability in our communities. However, it is necessary that minor amendments are also included which will change the definition of 'death in care' in the Coroners Act 2003. This will allow the coroner's office to investigate the deaths of an NDIS participant living in accommodation provided to persons with disability or living in a residential service and receiving services paid for in accordance with the participant's plan.

On a separate matter, the bill makes provision for the chief executive of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to request identifiable client information from other agencies for the purpose of monitoring and reconciliation against NDIA invoices. Client information includes the person's full name; the person's unique client identifier; date of birth; gender; residential address; and the name of any carer or appointed guardian, if applicable. This power will only be necessary through the transition period. This will ensure Queensland meets the reconciliation time frames and Queensland Audit Office requirements. This information is also critical to Queensland's phasing of the NDIS to differentiate between existing and other clients, and directly impacts on Queensland's financial contributions towards the scheme. Under these arrangements, the chief executive will also be authorised to disclose to departments the relevant personal information of their former clients who have now transitioned to the NDIS.

On a final note, I draw the attention of the House to the inclusion of a sunset and a review provision. First, the bill includes a sunset clause which will bring about the expiration of part 6A of the Disability Services Act on 30 June 2019. Second, the Minister for Disability Services will be required to conduct a full review of the act in light of the amendments made by this bill. This review must be completed by 30 June 2019. The timing of this review is so that Queensland can consider the status of the national NDIS quality and safeguards framework.

Keeping Queenslanders with disability safe and ensuring they can uphold their rights are matters of critical importance to this government. We are committed to improving the lives of people with disability and maximising the opportunities that the NDIS will offer to thousands of Queenslanders. This bill will ensure the robust safeguards provided under Queensland legislation will continue to operate throughout the NDIS transition period. I commend the bill to the House.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (2.59 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### **Referral to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee**

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

## CONSTITUTION (FIXED TERM PARLIAMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

### Division of Bill

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That so much of Standing and Sessional Orders be suspended so as to permit—

- (1) The Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 being divided into two Bills—
  - (a) A Bill for an Act to amend the Constitution of Queensland 2001 to provide for fixed terms for the Legislative Assembly and to amend the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1934 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1890 to be known as the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015.
  - (b) A Bill for an Act to amend the Electoral Act 1992 for particular purposes to be known as the Electoral (Constitutional) Amendment Bill 2015.
- (2) The Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 will incorporate:
  - the title (an Act to amend the Constitution of Queensland 2001 to provide for fixed terms for the Legislative Assembly and to amend the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1934 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1890);
  - the enacting words “The Parliament of Queensland with the consent of the electors of Queensland enacts”;
  - clauses 1—10 and 17 of the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 introduced on 17 September 2015;
  - any consequential and necessary amendments to reflect this order, including renumbering.
- (3) The Electoral (Constitutional) Amendment Bill 2015 will incorporate:
  - the title (an Act to amend the Electoral Act 1992 for particular purposes);
  - the enacting words “The Parliament of Queensland enacts”;
  - a clause incorporating the short title (the Act to be cited as the Electoral (Constitutional) Amendment Act 2015);
  - clauses 11—16 of the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 introduced on 17 September 2015;
  - any consequential and necessary amendments to reflect this order, including renumbering.
- (4) If the question that the Bill be divided as proposed in paragraphs (1)-(3) is agreed to, then further consideration of the debate stands adjourned as an Order of the Day until copies of the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 and the Electoral (Constitutional) Amendment Bill 2015 in accordance with paragraphs (1)-(3) are presented and copies supplied to members.
- (5) Once presented and copies of the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 and the Electoral (Constitutional) Amendment Bill 2015 have been supplied to Members, the question before the Chair will be:
 

“That the House accepts the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015 and the Electoral (Constitutional) Amendment Bill 2015 presented and circulated to members as complying with the order of the House to divide the Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Bill 2015, introduced on 17 September 2015, and orders that each Bill is deemed read a first time and now stands as an Order of the Day for the second reading to be moved”.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 13 October (see p. 2083).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (3.04 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its consideration of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. I note that the committee tabled its report on 6 November and it recommended that the bill be passed. The committee has made five recommendations and I intend to deal with all of them in turn. At the outset, however, I would like to make some general comments about the content and intent of this bill.

The bill seeks to amend the provisions of the Family Responsibilities Commission Act—or the act—so that the Family Responsibilities Commission, known as the FRC, can operate more effectively and, most significantly, address incidents of domestic violence in the welfare reform community areas of Aurukun, Cohen, Hope Vale, Mossman Gorge and Doomadgee. The FRC is an independent statutory authority established under the act and is a key mechanism for supporting the welfare reform program.

Welfare reform operates in partnership with the Commonwealth government and the Cape York Institute. Part of the Queensland government's commitment is to work with identified communities to: restore social norms and local authority; change behaviours in response to chronic levels of welfare dependency, social dysfunction and economic exclusion; and provide alcohol and treatment support, improved educational opportunities, better health services, economic development and income management support. As part of this program, as stated in the act, the FRC is designed to: support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas; and help people in welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of the community.

The FRC includes the commissioner, a deputy commissioner and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander local commissioners. The local commissioners themselves come from the communities in which they sit when they constitute the FRC. The way that the FRC achieves the act's stated aims is by holding conferences with community residents who are in receipt of welfare payments and who are the subject of an agency notice provided to the FRC. An agency notice is provided by a relevant Queensland government agency when a community resident breaches a trigger. The current 'triggers' are: non-attendance or non-enrolment of a child in school; alleged harm or alleged risk of harm to a child; conviction of an offence before a court, including the Children's Court; or breach of a residential tenancy agreement or use of premises for an illegal purpose.

The purpose of the FRC's conference with the community member who is the subject of an agency notice is to address the behaviour and issues that gave rise to the trigger being breached. A conference, organised by the FRC and held with the community member can result in: referring individuals to community support services to assist them to address their behaviours; entering into agreements with people to set standards of behaviour; and directing the person's income to be managed by Centrelink to pay for the priority needs of their family—this is referred to as conditional income management. In the 2013-14 financial year, a total of 3,392 agency notices were received which resulted in 1,794 conferences being held; 435 referrals to service providers; and 14 per cent of clients on case plans as at 30 June 2014. A total of 304 conditional income management orders were issued throughout the same period. I should point out that the FRC does not simply respond to agency notifications. A community resident is also able to enter into a voluntary agreement with the FRC to be referred to services or have their welfare payments income managed as part of a family responsibilities agreement.

Turning now to the bill, a key purpose of this bill is to implement part of the government's response to the *Not now, not ever: putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland* report provided to the Premier in February 2015 by the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland. I would ask the House to be aware that Ms Ada Panawya Woolla, Aurukun local commissioner and now deputy mayor, was a member of the task force. I want to thank all members of the task force for their work.

Recommendation 93 of the *Not now, not ever* report was that the Queensland government amend the Family Responsibilities Commission Act to require a court to notify the FRC when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent to the order. The bill provides exactly for this. The proposed amendment will replace the provision that contains the current trigger relating to criminal convictions. The new provision will combine the conviction trigger and the new domestic violence trigger. In line with the current provision that deals with criminal convictions, where a protection order is made against a person, a court sitting in a welfare reform community area, Cooktown or Mossman, or another court that learns that the person lives or has lived in a welfare reform community area will be required to give the FRC an agency notice.

The proposed provision will require that the notice, to be called a court advice notice, includes the person's name and address; the conditions, if any, of the protection order; and the day on which the court made the protection order. Not only does this reflect the government's commitment to ensuring that the recommendations of the *Not now, not ever* report are implemented and respond to this critical issue; as far as the welfare reform communities are concerned, it also provides another pathway for the FRC to help the community and community members address and correct unacceptable behaviour.

The other significant component of this legislation is to expand on the FRC commissioner's power to delegate to appropriate members of the FRC. The FRC is constituted by a commissioner, deputy commissioner and 31 local commissioners. Three FRC local commissioners are able to convene a conference with a community member, enter into a family responsibilities agreement or direct that person to attend community support services. Local commissioners can also recommend that the FRC client's welfare payments are income managed. On receipt of the recommendation, the commissioner will review the recommendation and endorse the making of the conditional income management order.

What this last point means is that, while the commissioner may not necessarily be involved in the particular conference, the commissioner must, subject to a particular exception, endorse a family responsibilities agreement that involves the person being subject to a conditional income management order. What the proposed amendment does is take another step towards restoring local authority by allowing for the delegation of the commissioner's functions to a local commissioner who has been appointed as the chairperson of a commission hearing and who the commissioner considers is appropriately qualified to perform the commissioner's functions for the conference. The basis for providing for this delegation is in recognition of the experience and local authority of the local commissioners, who I believe have been an unheralded success.

Throughout the community consultation undertaken in the preparation of the bill, community members advised that this extension of the powers and responsibilities to be undertaken by the local commissioners was in keeping with the scope and practice of the act. Results from the community consultation also supported another key recommendation in the bill. This amendment proposes to remove the requirement that the registrar of the FRC have appropriate expertise and experience in matters relating to the operation of a registry of a court or tribunal. This will be replaced with a requirement that the person be appropriately qualified to perform the functions of the registrar. This extension of the eligibility requirements for appointment as registrar was considered by community members to be a positive amendment that may further increase the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' involvement in the operations of the FRC.

I am now pleased to address questions raised by the committee in its report. Firstly, the committee recommends that the bill be passed. I note this recommendation and thank the committee for its consideration of the bill. I would like to point out also, as noted in the committee report, that the FRC commissioner in his submission to the committee noted—

It is the view of the Commission that the amendments will assist the Commission to more effectively and efficiently conduct its core business of restoring social responsibility and local authority to the welfare reform communities.

Secondly, the committee recommends that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships ensure that appropriate domestic and family violence specific support services are available to the FRC to refer community members following a conference. The government supports this recommendation.

As part of its ongoing administration of the act and the operation of the FRC, DATSIP will work closely with the FRC to monitor the adequacy of the service system and ensure that appropriate specific support is available. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to remind the members of the House that the government has accepted all 140 recommendations made by the task force in the *Not now, not ever* report.

Of the five recommendations included under the heading *Laying the foundations: building a framework to protect at-risk Queenslanders*, recommendation No. 9 of the *Not now, not ever* report is that the Queensland government, in collaboration with local communities, develop a place-based, culturally appropriate integrated response to domestic and family violence in discrete Indigenous communities which includes (1) a trial of integrated service provision in one discrete Indigenous community utilising a locally based shelter as a hub for the provision of wraparound support services for women and children affected by domestic and family violence; (2) considering an expanded role of community justice groups in design and implementation of the collocated service response, ensuring that they are properly resourced and supported to undertake this role; (3) increasing the funding for, and availability of, community driven and holistic responses to Indigenous male perpetrators.

Responding to this recommendation will also be a critical contribution to the work that the FRC does with communities. The third recommendation made by the committee in their report was that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the FRC monitor the number of agency notices received from the courts as a result of a community member being the subject of a protection order and a community member being convicted for a breach of a protection order. Once

again the government supports this recommendation. In addition, in line with recommendation 94 of the *Not now, not ever* report, DATSIP and the FRC are working on a reporting strategy that will assist both entities monitor any resource or financial impact resulting from the introduction of the domestic and family violence trigger.

The committee's fourth recommendation was that I require the FRC to report in its annual report on the number of agency notices it receives in the following circumstances: when a court makes a protection order against a community member; and when a court convicts a community member of a breach of a protection order. Again the government supports this recommendation. I am pleased to advise the House that DATSIP has confirmed with the FRC commissioner that the FRC's annual report will, in addition to its current reporting on agency notices, report on the number of agency notices it receives in line with the committee's recommendation.

In relation to the fifth and final recommendation made by the committee, the committee supported the delegation of the commissioner's functions to local Indigenous community leaders and considered that the amendments will enhance local empowerment and have practical and resource benefits for the commissioner and the FRC. They also sought an amendment to the bill to identify clearly which functions the commissioner may delegate to the chairperson of the commission for a conference constituted under section 50A of the act. Once more the government supports this recommendation.

I will propose an amendment during consideration in detail which will clarify that the commissioner's functions are the commissioner's functions for endorsing a requirement for a person to be subject to income management. I would like to take a moment to observe that the proposed amendment will not provide for a delegation of the power to issue a show cause notice. Currently the act allows for a commission comprising of the commissioner and two local commissioners to issue a show cause notice when an individual has breached their case plan. Show cause notices can result in increasing the proportion of income management and/or increasing the duration of the income management order. At this time this power should remain as described in the act and not be delegated because it can result in a more punitive measure and is more complex in relation to case management. Further policy and practice work must be undertaken prior to any such delegation. I now table the government's response to the committee report.

*Tabled paper:* Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 9—Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015, government response [1778].

The FRC is an essential element of welfare reform and it is a key mechanism to help the community restore local authority and individual responsibility. This bill will further empower the FRC and thereby seek to further empower communities themselves take more responsibility for community members' behaviour. In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge the work and continuing efforts of the commissioner, David Glasgow, and the staff of the FRC. In particular I want to pay my respects and commend the local commissioners who live and work in their communities and who have continually demonstrated their desire to re-establish and affirm local authority. They have a tough job and it is one that they really do perform with aplomb. I would like to point out also that their service to their communities was recognised with the presentation of awards at the 2015 Australian honours and awards investiture ceremony. Commissioner Glasgow was made a Member of the Order of Australia and the following local commissioners were each presented with an Order of Australia award by His Excellency, the Hon. Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland: Mr Edgar Kerindun, Ms Vera Koomeeta, Ms Doris Poonkamelya, Ms Sarah Wolmby and Ms Ada Woolla from Aurukun; Ms May Kepple, Ms Elaine Liddy, Mr Peter Peter and Mr Garry Port from Coen; Mr Brian Cobus, Mr Victor Gibson and Ms Doreen Hart from Hope Vale; and Ms Karen Gibson and Ms Loretta Spratt from Mossman Gorge. Madam Deputy Speaker, this is an extraordinary achievement which I would like the House to particularly acknowledge.

I will make some further statements regarding current events in one of the communities in particular, Aurukun, after a recent visit which I have undertaken. I am pleased that the opposition is supporting this bill, and I look forward to working with it for the continued success of the FRC in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (3.18 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill, and, in the spirit of Christmas, the opposition will not be opposing this bill. The objective of the bill is to make amendments to the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 and, as the Treasurer said, to increase the effectiveness of the Family Responsibilities Commission. The FRC is an independent statutory authority established under the act to support the program, known as welfare reform, which operates in its designated communities.

It currently operates in five communities: Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. The main objectives of the act are: to support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas; and to help people in welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of that community.

The bill seeks to enhance the operation of the act and the FRC through the addition of a domestic violence trigger, which the minister spoke at length about; expanding the scope for delegation of the FRC Commissioner's powers and responsibilities; broadening suitability requirements for the FRC Registrar; removing redundant provisions from the act; and clarifying the process for generating agency notices under the existing youth justice trigger. What does this mean in practical terms? How does the legislation we make actually play out in the communities on which it will impact?

The Treasurer mentioned that he had just embarked on what I call his 'Contiki trip'. Last month my colleague the member for Caloundra and I spent a few days at Hope Vale with the commissioners, learning about their role and how the FRC actually operates. David Glasgow has been the one constant since the FRC was set up. He has mentored the commissioners and given them confidence and expertise such that they are now running their own conferences.

The days we spent in Hope Vale were such an eye-opener. We were able to sit in on the conferences and see how they work and were able to look at the town and meet the local commissioners. It was lovely to see that Erica Deeral, the daughter of former member for Cook Eric Deeral, is one of the local commissioners. It was most impressive to look around Hope Vale—the school and the hospital—and see the difference that the Family Responsibilities Commission has made. Firstly, you can tell that the commissioners have gained the respect of the town. Secondly, they have started up little projects, one of which is called Pride of Place. Pride of Place is about getting people to clean up their yards and beautify their gardens, which are then judged. Everyone loves that little bit of competitiveness. We saw that, but we also saw the difference. A lot of these little things that have been put in place directly result from the Family Responsibilities Commission.

Interestingly, people are actually keen to volunteer to have their income managed. I think that is a wonderful way of people saying, 'We do need a little bit of assistance,' and getting that guidance. After visiting for a couple of days, being involved and seeing these things I can see that this is a good piece of legislation that will benefit the communities.

It was interesting to go to Hope Vale primary school and talk to the teachers. One of the teachers said to us that four years ago they could not get the kids into the classroom. Four years on, kids are in there. We watched them learning. The member for Caloundra and I loved the band presentation. Students are engaging in extracurricular activities.

**Mr McArdle:** *Blue Suede Shoes.*

**Mrs SMITH:** That rock band is now travelling around the cape and getting a lot of support. They are busting out some beautiful blues songs. They do a great rendition of Michael Jackson's *Bad*. The point is that they have a behaviour manager. One of the commissioners, Gary Allport, showed us around. He is a terrific bloke. His wife is actually the behaviour management person. They are getting involved and getting the parents to come in. There is a visible difference because the Family Responsibilities Commission is actually working. The Hope Vale school band is excellent. I highly recommend them. It is interesting to note that Ernie Dingo's grandson was the drummer. I think he has a very bright career ahead of him.

I highlight that expanding the scope for the delegation is really important, because they now have gained that experience and it is showing through in their decision-making and their abilities. I also make mention of the Order of Australia medals gifted to 14 commissioners. That just shows the outstanding work they are doing in those particular communities.

The Treasurer covered off on the domestic violence trigger, and committee members will probably like to go into more detail about clarifying the processes for generating agency notices. There is one aspect I hope the minister can give more clarity to. The explanatory notes to the bill state—

It is not expected that the Queensland Government will incur any additional costs associated with implementation of the proposed amendments.

They further state—

Should the operation of the additional trigger result in an identified need for further resources to access family violence support or other relevant programs, funding will be available to assist in the development and delivery of such services.

Can the minister clarify the amount of money that would be available, how quickly it could be released and which agencies would be responsible for funding these activities?

**Mr Pitt:** I will ask the Treasurer.

**Mrs SMITH:** Excellent. I would like that clarified. The *Not now, not ever* report speaks about domestic violence and how bleak is the situation in the communities. With the Family Responsibilities Commission taking on this role in relation to the trigger, if the report and the money are at odds then I think that needs to be clarified or further detail given.

At the end of the day, people in the chamber who have not gone and seen things for themselves might gloss over the dot points. Having gone up there, talked to the commissioners and local people and seen the town I can say that this has actually been quite a successful program. I again commend Commissioner Glasgow. He has been there from day one. He has been a constant in this process. He has encouraged and led the local commissioners. They now have the expertise. We will not be opposing this bill.

 **Ms DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.28 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill. I commend the work of my fellow committee members on this report as well as the hardworking secretariat for supporting the committee to do its work. This bill delivers on part of the suite of changes needed to implement the findings of the *Not now, not ever* report, a landmark report into domestic and family violence. The suite of changes is needed to engender cultural change as we endeavour to rid ourselves of the scourge of domestic and family violence. To do so, we need to take action on all 140 recommendations.

Some \$31.3 million will be invested by the Palaszczuk government to implement the high priority initiatives recommended in the *Not now, not ever* report. During 2015-16, government funding to tackle domestic and family violence, including existing programs and measures, will total more than \$66 million, so it is very clear that our response to *Not now, not ever* is a comprehensive framework of cultural change measures and priority actions. This bill is a very important part of that framework. This bill supports the Family Responsibilities Commission and the independent statutory authority established under the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008. The Family Responsibilities Commission was created to support the program known as welfare reform in Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge and is a successful tripartite partnership between the Australian government, the Queensland government and the Cape York Institute.

The Family Responsibilities Commission works to restore the socially responsible standards of behaviour. Its work is crucial in securing more resilient communities in Far North Queensland. We know that all communities are weakened or torn by family and domestic violence but especially those close-knit, remote or regional communities in Queensland. It is one of the most devastating afflictions that undermines resilience of these communities and in all of our communities. The work of the special task force and the work of the Family Responsibilities Commission has intersected at this point to improve the lives of community members. The special task force recommended that the Queensland government amend the act to require a court to notify the FRC when a protection order is made against a person under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 who is a welfare reform community resident and respondent. As I said, the main focus of this bill is that the domestic violence trigger be added to the existing triggers and that that does not actually happen when an order is being sought but only when an order is being made. In fact, this was recommendation 93 of the task force report.

The amendment also enables the FRC commissioner to delegate some responsibilities to a local commissioner who is the chairperson of a hearing. They will receive particular functions and powers, especially about income management provisions. The delegation of powers is only where the commissioner is satisfied that the qualifications of that chairperson are relevant. This is a positive move which recognises the experience that local commissioners have in dealing with local issues and increases the authority of the local commissioners in their communities. Currently, a person can only be eligible for appointment if they have appropriate understanding of the history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the person is also a lawyer or has expertise and experience in relating to a court or registry. This bill expands this narrow eligibility to also include a person who has an understanding of the history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and is appropriately qualified to undertake the role as well as acknowledging the changing nature of the role. The bill also deletes the outdated references to the CDEP scheme which was phased out by the federal government. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (3.32 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill before the House. I congratulate the government for introducing the bill, which is being supported by the opposition. I join with other members of the committee in congratulating the staff of the committee—Karl, Lucy and Carla—for the work that they do in helping us come to what is a sound conclusion. Like other members of the chamber, I want to praise David Glasgow, who is a lawyer and for 10 years a magistrate. He therefore has a depth of experience in relation to the law with regard to how the law can affect and effect people in a positive manner. As the shadow minister indicated, she and I spent two days with David Glasgow and I was very impressed by the fact that he was very steady in how he approached things, was not flappable and came to a conclusion based upon facts and not emotional feelings or other bases for making a rational determination. David Glasgow is of course coming to a point where he will decide that he is going to retire at some point in time and that will then pose a major problem because he will be very hard to replace. He is a man who has been at the helm of the FRC since day one and has provided exceptional leadership.

There are, however, still some major problems within the FRC communities and indeed in the Torres Strait as a whole, and I refer to the article that appeared in yesterday's *Courier-Mail* that detailed a number of concerns with regard to Lockhart, Doomadgee, Aurukun and in particular Mareeba where there were 49 casks of wine, 132 cans of beer and four bottles of bourbon confiscated when headed towards a dry community. I remember some years ago the Aurukun nine when a young girl had been raped by a number of young men from Aurukun. They were given a very light penalty which was visited again by the courts. I only bring that to the attention of the House because this is the sort of thing that David Glasgow had to deal with in the past and now we see much better outcomes because of his involvement and that of the deputy commissioners. I also want to praise the commission of inquiry or the task force for the great work that it did. Ian Kaye, Kerry Millard, Liz Cunningham and Desley Scott were the MPs who sat on that task force—a bipartisan task force headed by Dame Quentin Bryce—that came down with 140-odd recommendations, all having been taken up by the government. It is a blueprint that was charted by then premier Campbell Newman as he foresaw, as many of us did, the plight and the incredible pain that goes with domestic violence. I think it is important to remember that it was then premier Campbell Newman who put the task force in train that resulted in the recommendations now in part before the House.

In essence the bill before the House deals with two matters. One is that the making of a protection order is a trigger for the FRC to become involved, and I will be keen as time goes on to see the number of matters that are referred to the FRC by the relevant courts. Once the trigger is made, the notification forwarded to the FRC includes any conditions that are made in the order, the date of the order, the person's name and address, the court that made the order and details of the conduct complained of. The FRC commissioner or deputy commissioners can then determine what action is to be taken, including a referral to support services, the issuance of a conditional income management notice or case management for clients. Indeed, when in Hope Vale the shadow minister and I spoke to an organisation that does exactly that. It case manages domestic violence clients, both male and female perpetrators. It is certainly a difficult task in those areas and it is one that I suspect will need greater attention in times to come.

The reason I make that comment is that when you go to page 120 of the *Not now, not ever* report it deals in particular with Torres Strait and Aboriginal Islander people. Page 120 states—

... that violence and abuse is so prevalent in some communities, it has become normalised to the extent that people who live there regard it as inevitable, and a 'language of minimisation'—describing ... violence as 'everyday' ...

In addition to that, at page 121 it says that in 2012-13 the rate of hospitalisation for non-fatal family violence related assaults among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was over seven times higher in remote areas than it was in major cities and that in 2011-12 the rate of homicide in these areas was 10.4 per 100,000 population—twice as high as in regional areas and five times the rate in major cities. It is clear from what David Glasgow and other people said to us that, as the report highlights, domestic violence in these regions is out of all proportion to population levels and certainly well and truly above that of the average across the state, let alone the rates of homicide.

The notifications that are going to be the trigger to the FRC are in part the answer, but I think all of us in this House understand quite clearly that in that arena there is a lot more work to be done. The FRC does a great deal of work, but I repeat that, when David Glasgow stands down, there will be an enormous gap to fill with somebody who has the expertise, the qualifications and the regard of the community to take that task on board.

The second point is the delegation of commissioners' powers. That issue has been dealt with very well by the shadow minister. I recommend that the bill be passed, but I want to make it quite clear that, in my opinion, the *Not now, not ever* report highlights that this bill will touch only the tip of the iceberg. How we deal with the underlying problems is a matter of enormous concern. Although major advances have taken place because of the FRC and David Glasgow, there are still major problems in those regions. The sad part is that I think those concerns and those problems are virtually unknown in the south-east corner, because people in the south-east corner do not quite understand what takes place in these communities and do not comprehend the outcome that it inflicts upon the women, children and, in some cases, men who live in these communities. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Miss BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. The Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 is a central feature of the welfare reform program centred on communities in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale, Mossman Gorge and Doomadgee. The welfare reform program is aimed at restoring social norms and social responsibilities while re-establishing local leadership and increasing economic participation. The act does this by creating the Family Responsibilities Commission as a central pillar of welfare reform in these communities. Welfare reform is a joint initiative of the Queensland and Australian governments and the Cape York institute.

The FRC, through its ability to conference community members, aims to change and rebuild social norms and behaviours, including those attached to violence, and support improved parenting practices. That is done through the delivery of conferencing and referral services to community members who have either requested its service or have been subject to an agency notification to the FRC. Currently, the FRC receives agency notices if a child in the community is not attending school without a reasonable excuse; when a child safety and welfare notice has been issued; when a person, including a child, is convicted of a criminal offence; or a social housing tenancy agreement has been breached. In those circumstances, the FRC will direct parents of the children in question, the convicted individual or the social housing tenant to attend a conference. The FRC conference is aimed at focusing on the substance of the agency notice and then helping the person to address the issues that led to them being conferenced.

As the FRC is aimed at helping the person explore the relevant factors and issues that gave rise to the offending behaviour, the conference will also explore any issues, problems or concerns that the person may wish to raise. This holistic and collaborative approach enables the FRC to work with the person to determine the most appropriate course of action and help restore socially responsible behaviour. That may include developing a case management plan, involving referral to appropriate support services, further conferencing and, if the FRC considers it necessary, income management. Income management involves a portion of the person's welfare payment to be put on a basics card.

Having outlined the role and the purpose of the FRC, I would like to address two key elements of the bill, namely, the introduction of the domestic and family violence trigger, which means that when a protection order is made the FRC will receive an agency notification, and, secondly, amending the act to allow that the commissioner can delegate functions to an appropriate, clearly qualified and appointed local commissioner.

In February 2015, the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland delivered to the Premier its final report, the *Not now, not ever: putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland*. The task force undertook a thorough investigation and review of the issues surrounding the rates and occurrences of domestic and family violence in Queensland. As part of the findings of the *Not now, not ever* report, it was noted that there is an urgent need to develop sustainable and culturally appropriate services for women, children and men affected by domestic and family violence in discrete Indigenous communities. Recommendation 93 of the *Not now, not ever* report recommended that the act be amended to require a court to notify the FRC when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 naming a welfare reform community resident as a respondent is made.

Given the focus of the FRC and its ability to order conferencing and refer a person to relevant support services, it is very apt that the bill directly answers the *Not now, not ever* report's recommendation and includes a proposed amendment. In practice, it will mean that the person will be directed to the FRC, which can then work with them to help them address their offending behaviour. In turn, that will help the community enforce its standards and expectations. Moreover, as local commissioners are drawn from the local community, the proposed amendment will strengthen local authority, which is a central objective of the act.

The second key element of the bill that I want to address is the proposal to allow the delegation of the commissioner's functions to a duly appointed local commissioner to sit as a chairperson of a commission conference. That will occur after the commissioner has directed that the particular FRC hearing will be constituted by three local commissioners appointed for the particular welfare reform community area in which the person, the subject of the conference, lives or has lived. If accepted, that amendment will create cost savings in terms of travel for the commissioner and improved flexibility of the FRC model. More significantly than the expected savings, the amendment will increase the recognition of the authority of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local commissioners. It will also allow the local commissioners who are community members to assert responsible and appropriate community standards. That will achieve a central aim of the welfare reform program. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.46 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. The objective of the bill is to make amendments to the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 to increase the effectiveness of the Family Responsibilities Commission, an independent statutory authority established under the act to support the program known as welfare reform. In this case, welfare reform is applicable to five communities in North Queensland: Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. In the past I have visited the communities of Aurukun, Coen and Hope Vale and I reiterate the comments of my colleague that those communities are very different places and face very different challenges.

I would like to thank the committee staff for their assistance with the inquiry and the professionalism in which they undertook the task within the time frame assigned. Owing to the time frame, the committee was unable to travel to the five communities to speak firsthand with the members of the communities or the community leaders. I would like to thank the shadow minister and also the member for Caloundra for spending time in Hope Vale. I can assure the House that the people in that community would have appreciated that support and also the input that they gave to those members when they were in Hope Vale. As a member representing a regional area, I know how important it is for communities and community members and leaders to talk firsthand with members of parliament about changes to legislation. It was disappointing to not be able to give the communities the opportunity to meet with the committee and the committee members to hear firsthand from the community members.

However, the committee invited submissions from 157 stakeholder organisations and received two submissions. During the public briefing the committee was advised by the department that, on its consultation on the bill, meetings were held in relation to welfare reform in those community areas. The department advised that community consultations confirmed that each of the communities were supportive of the proposed amendments. I hope that in future the committee is able to hear firsthand from such affected communities on important legislative changes and not just rely on departmental consultation advice. I would also like to thank my fellow committee members from both sides of the House for their participation and input in relation to working our way through this legislation.

The bill implements the recommendations of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, and I commend the former LNP government for establishing that task force. The task force recommended the introduction of a domestic and family violence trigger related to the making of a protection order by the court. The bill proposes an amendment to introduce a new domestic violence trigger for agency notices to the Family Responsibilities Commission.

It also provides for clarification on the processes for existing youth justice agency notices and the delegation of the commissioners' functions to local Indigenous community leaders. The bill enables enhancements to the registrar position of the Family Responsibilities Commission to allow for the position to perform the role of general manager and make budgetary and human resources decisions. That is particularly important when you are operating in a rural and remote area.

The bill also removes outdated references to the CDEP scheme. The CDEP scheme was a federal government program. It has now been phased out in many areas. I am, however, advised by constituents of my electorate that they found the CDEP scheme to be a successful one in their area. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (3.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. Put simply, this bill will extend and improve the operation of the Family Responsibilities Commission, or the FRC, and align the FRC with recommendation 93 of the final report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in

Queensland, the now well-known report *Not now, not ever: putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland*. I would also like to note that recommendation 93 is not a stand-alone response to the *Not now, not ever* report.

That task force made 140 recommendations and each was accepted by government. In this regard I draw members' attention to recommendation 9 of the *Not now, not ever* report, which requires that the Queensland government, in collaboration with local communities, develops a place based, culturally appropriate, integrated response to domestic and family violence in discrete Indigenous communities; secondly, recommendation 92, which includes that the Queensland government works with discrete Indigenous communities to develop and support an effective local authority model to respond to crime and violence in those communities; and, thirdly, recommendation 94 which requires that the government reviews the resourcing impact of the new domestic and family violence trigger and ensures sufficient funding is available to manage the anticipated increase in referrals to the Family Responsibilities Commission.

As I noted, the bill's inclusion of the domestic and family violence trigger is not an isolated or stand-alone measure. It is part of an holistic approach taken by the government to address and halt the occurrence of domestic and family violence. I would also like to note that the government's commitment to implementing the *Not now, not ever* report will hopefully address the concerns raised by the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report tabled on 6 November. The committee has recommended that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, or DATSIP, ensure that appropriate domestic and family violence specific support services are available for the FRC to refer community members following a conference. In addition, the committee has also recommended that DATSIP and the FRC monitor the number of agency notices received from the courts relating to domestic and family violence. As part of its acceptance and implementation of the recommendations in the *Not now, not ever* report, the government is responding to the committee's concerns and is further progressing its commitment to the relevant communities. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McEACHAN** (Redlands—LNP) (3.52 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. I will keep this brief, acknowledging the comments of those who have spoken before me in support of this bill. I want to start by thanking the committee secretariat and my fellow committee members. I commend this bill for continuing the good work of the LNP in supporting stronger communities. We support the amendments to the current act, including the addition of a domestic violence trigger and expanding the scope of the commissioners' powers.

The Family Responsibilities Commission works with community members through voluntary agreement or through an order of the commission and can recommend that a person's welfare be managed should they fail to comply with an order of the FRC. This bill seeks to further enhance these provisions of the act by expanding the scope of the commissioners' powers and responsibilities. The inclusion of a domestic violence trigger arises from the *Not now, not ever* report that recommended that the act be amended to require a court to notify the FRC when a protection order is made, namely, a family welfare reform resident, as a respondent. This is one of the most important amendments proposed in the bill, as I am sure that my colleagues on both sides of the House would agree. Much has been spoken about domestic violence in this 55th Parliament, but it is good to see practical changes being made to further protect the most vulnerable in our society. I support these amendments as recommended by the *Not now, not ever* report.

I conclude by saying that while I support these amendments, I would have appreciated the opportunity to visit the communities in question. I certainly commend the work of the committee secretariat and departmental staff, but I do believe that committee members would benefit from the insight gained by visiting the communities to which these amendments refer. I support these amendments and commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (3.54 pm): I rise to speak very briefly in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill. I do so as a member of this House but also reflecting my role as chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, which has a monitor and review function in relation to the performance of the functions of the Family Responsibilities Commission. In doing so I would like to congratulate and echo the statements that many other speakers have made in support of David Glasgow, the Family Responsibilities Commissioner, and the other commissioners who work in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and the Mossman Gorge.

We have heard many references to the *Not now, not ever* task force report and we have all heard, unfortunately, over the last few months too many statistics about the prevalence of domestic violence, but I note in particular the words in the introduction of the *Not now, not ever* report where they quote a number of those statistics and then they talk about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and about the even bleaker situation there. The reports states—

Violence and abuse is reported as being so prevalent in some communities as to have become normalised—the people who live there consider violence to be a part of ‘every day’ life. The lack of support services and poor access to the justice system compound the violence and make it virtually impossible for victims, who are predominantly women and children, to escape.

This act, under recommendations 93 and 94, not only provides an additional trigger for conferences with community members who are the subject of formal notification and creates an additional one for domestic and family violence; it also reviews the resourcing impact of that trigger and makes sure that there is sufficient support available to the Family Responsibilities Commission. For that support alone and for the resourcing and the enabling of that commission to actually deal with this scourge in their communities, I support the bill.

 **Mr ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (3.56 pm): I rise to speak for a few minutes on the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. I will not go into too much detail on the bill because the Treasurer and minister certainly set out the objectives of the bill very well, along with the history of it and where it is going with the amendments being debated today. As has been said, and it is worth repeating, there are a few triggers that already exist—that is, failing to send children to school, coming to the notice of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services on account of alleged harm to children, an offence before the Children’s Court, a tenancy agreement breakdown or using the premises for an illegal purpose. This bill seeks to put in a specific clause with regard to domestic violence. Unfortunately, anyone who has spent some time in these communities knows that domestic violence is very prevalent and as such having a specific trigger coming under the FRC I think is very much a step in the right direction. This applies to people who are on welfare so that income management can be taken into consideration.

This bill provides a domestic violence trigger and expands the scope for delegation to the FRC commissioners’ powers and responsibilities. Earlier this afternoon a couple of people mentioned David Glasgow. One could not debate this bill without mentioning David Glasgow, the Family Responsibilities Commissioner. I got to know Commissioner Glasgow very well in the time that I was the minister. It is certainly worth placing on the record that he is an outstanding individual who has put so much of himself into this role—and not just because he is paid to do it. The award Commissioner Glasgow received on Australia Day is very much due recognition of the excellent work that he and his staff have done over the years.

The other thing that excites me about this bill is the continuing empowerment of the commissioners. As I went around the four communities—Doomadgee came later in the piece—I had the wonderful opportunity of meeting the commissioners. At lunchtime, I used to sneak out the back where generally I would find half a dozen women, or thereabouts, sitting under a tree, having a smoke and a chat. I would plant myself in the middle of a group of ladies and talk to them about their community, their expectations and the way they want things to go. When you talk to half a dozen women of a town, you get a good idea of their expectations and what they see as the problems in their community. The commissioners, who are overwhelmingly women, do a fantastic job. The more that we can do to further empower them, as this legislation does, is a very good thing. We had an opportunity one night in Cairns to bring them together for a function. I think maybe 25 to 30 of the commissioners were present. As I said, overwhelmingly they are women. They are very keen and very strong willed in terms of where they see their responsibilities and what they want to achieve for the betterment of the communities in which they serve. I will come back to the empowering part of the legislation a little later on.

In the lead-up to the debate on the bill before us today, a couple of newspaper articles have appeared, as one would expect. On Saturday the *Australian* contained an article by Marcia Langton in which she and Warren Entsch had a bit of a to-do. I do not know about anyone else here, but I would not like to be between Marcia Langton and Warren Entsch for any period. The article highlights the degree of confusion that there is in some cases with quotations about the amount of money that is being spent, where it is being spent and whether it is hitting the ground. Unfortunately, in many instances with Indigenous spending the money does not hit the ground. Nevertheless, the article did contain information about school attendance figures. For me, kids getting an education has always been at the core of this matter, which is why during our term of government we included Doomadgee as one of the communities, as the school attendance figures in Doomadgee were tragic. Places such

as Coen and, to a degree Aurukun, and so forth have their highs and lows. At the start of the year rates are pretty high, but they tend to whittle away as the year goes on. However, the ingrained problems in Doomadgee are very sad and have kept me awake at night, trying to figure out what we can do. We have done a lot to try to make things a little better than they were.

I have absolutely no doubt that the Family Responsibilities Commission is doing a lot of very good work, but we have to do more to address some of the problems that beset these communities and there are two main ones: alcohol and drugs. I have seen some figures. The member for Caloundra mentioned the arrest made over some sly grog that was heading towards Pormpuraaw. In Aurukun, a bottle of rum will cost between \$250 and \$300. Unfortunately, the sly grogging is being done by friends, neighbours, parents and brothers and sisters of people who live in the communities. They are feeding off the misery of those people. We were starting to work on an idea to clamp the vehicles or the boats used by people caught trafficking, with a three-step process that would eventually see the vehicle confiscated. Perhaps we need to look at that further. While all sorts of good things are happening through the FRC, we have to look outside of it. We have to look at what is happening not only in the five communities that we are talking about today, but also in all Indigenous communities. We have to look at how the problems, particularly alcohol and drugs, can be controlled.

One of the problems that I have talked to the mayors about is that too often there is a passing parade of ministers who come into communities and then disappear. In the last years of the Bligh government—and I am not apportioning any blame here; this is a matter of fact—every year there was a new minister. I was lucky enough to be there for three years. If it is not the minister, it is the government: after three years, a government can change and the priorities change. With Indigenous affairs, there is a genuine bipartisan attitude in this place. We need to take a much longer view of what we do and how we go about it, so that when governments or ministers change, it is done fairly seamlessly because the plans that are put in place are there for a long period, not a short period, which burns a lot of money and certainly burns a lot of goodwill in communities. Progress is virtually halted while a new minister or a new government comes into play and tries to figure out their priorities. I have only eight seconds to go, so I close by saying that the FRC is working well and I recommend—

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.06 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak in favour of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill. It is relevant to so many areas of my portfolio, but in particular I want to talk about the role this bill will play in tackling domestic and family violence. As the Treasurer and the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships stated in his explanatory speech, the objects of the Family Responsibilities Commission—

... are to support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas and to help community members resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of the community.

Currently, there are four triggers for the commission to consider the convening of a conference with relevant community members: a child not attending or not enrolled in school; a child safety report is made; a person is convicted of an offence before the court, including the Childrens Court; a tenancy agreement is breached or the premises are used for an illegal purpose.

As minister with lead responsibility for the government's actions to tackle domestic and family violence, I am particularly pleased that domestic violence is now being added as a trigger. This was a recommendation of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland in the *Not now, not ever* report. Recommendation 93 suggested that courts be required to notify the Family Responsibilities Commission when a protection order is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent. Family responsibilities commissioners will be provided with training to understand the nature and dynamics of domestic and family violence and to ensure that any response or intervention always prioritises victim safety. This is a further step in delivering on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to implementing all 140 of the recommendations in *Not now, not ever*. We know that the impact of domestic and family violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities is a major concern for Indigenous leaders and elders. We are committed to working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to prevent violence and address the trauma caused by domestic and family violence. The involvement of the Family Responsibilities Commission is part of this approach. We know that there is a need also for the provision of early intervention support for families, addressing the over-representation of Indigenous children in our child protection system and tackling domestic violence which underpins so many problems within families.

Since coming to office we have rolled out Family and Child Connect services, connecting struggling families with the services they need, and intensive family support services, which provides in-depth support for families with multiple problems at risk of crisis. These new services are part of an overall aim of prevention and helping to give families the support they need so children do not end up in our child protection system.

The first Family and Child Connect specifically for Indigenous families in Brisbane will be set up by mid next year. The first Indigenous led Family and Child Connect was set up in July by the Kummara Association. This provides help to the whole community, not specifically Indigenous families.

We have also provided \$2.4 million over three years to the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak, QATSICPP, to work on capacity building so we can have more Indigenous led organisations working within our child protection system supporting families. Across government we are working with Indigenous communities to support families and vulnerable people.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (4.10 pm): I rise to address the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. I note the policy objective of the bill is to make amendments to the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 to increase the effectiveness of the Family Responsibilities Commission, the FRC.

The FRC is an independent statutory authority established under the act to support the program known as the welfare reform program where it operates in designated communities. It currently operates in five communities: Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. The main objects of the act are to support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas and to help people in welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of those communities.

The FRC works with members of welfare reform communities who come to its attention through notices from government agencies. The act requires the issue of an agency notice where a resident: fails to enrol their children in or send them to school; comes to the notice of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services on account of alleged harm or alleged risk of harm to their child; is convicted of an offence before a court, including the Children's Court; or fails to remedy a breach of a tenancy agreement or uses premises for an illegal purpose.

The FRC works with relevant community members through a combination of case conferencing and referrals to services either by voluntary agreement or through an order of the FRC. If a person does not comply with an order of the FRC, the FRC can recommend to Centrelink that the person's welfare income is managed through a conditional income management order.

The bill seeks to enhance the operation of the act and the FRC through: adding a domestic violence trigger; expanding the scope for delegation of the FRC commissioner's powers and responsibilities; broadening suitability requirements for the FRC register; removing redundant provisions from the act; and clarifying the process for generating agency notices under the existing youth justice trigger.

This bill seeks to address issues that are important to various communities but particularly remote communities, and the principles contained also apply to other communities that are not so much remote but are impacted by isolation. One such community that has to deal with a level of isolation and some similar dynamics is that of the community of Minjerribah, or North Stradbroke Island. Minjerribah is a well-functioning community that has had comparatively high and good standards of education, health and aged-care services, amongst other services, historically.

In terms of education, the Dunwich State School has provided a good education standard for Indigenous Quandamooka people as well as non-Indigenous people for a long time. I certainly commend the principal and staff of the school for the work they do in supporting both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. I look forward to being with them on Monday morning at the awards morning.

My time in Townsville in the area of Indigenous education was very useful in understanding the issues with regard to Indigenous families and communities and their responsibilities in terms of education and the importance of it. Even though Townsville is obviously not a remote community and not even an isolated community, it is certainly a regional community. I saw a number of factors at work within Indigenous families as a tutor and a TAFE lecturer working with Indigenous students and their families. I saw the incredible value of a consistent education and continuity. We picked up children in their high school years and tutored them in their homes and through homework programs in schools.

We certainly saw the importance of students being there and the families encouraging them to attend school and the subsequent homework programs. We certainly saw the impact of that investment in the families in terms of the jobs, opportunities and wellbeing of those students. Numbers of those students are now adults and they are doing a great job in their communities and doing a great job in terms of the opportunities they have had through education. They have made the most of those. It has been fantastic to see that over the years.

The Nareeba Moopi Moopi Pa Aged Care Hostel is based in Dunwich. It has provided aged-care services for seniors on Minjerriabah for many years. The expansion plans that Sibelco has proposed would see that capacity almost doubled. This is a generous offer and would be—

**Mr BROWN:** I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. This relates to the mining bill that the member for Dalrymple has brought before the House.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I would suggest that there has been no mention of the date when mining closes, which is the subject of the bill before the House. I have kept away from that topic. I am talking about Indigenous issues in an isolated community. I believe that is consistent with the bill.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Member for Capalaba, with respect to your point of order, I did not particularly hear where the member for Cleveland spoke specifically with respect to the member for Dalrymple's bill. However, I remind the member for Cleveland that there is a bill before the House related to mining and it would not be appropriate for him to make reference to the bill before the House.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Yulu-Burri-Ba Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health that operates in Dunwich and Capalaba provides a medical centre, a women's health service, a diabetes program, emergency relief counselling, a naturopath, a drug and alcohol counsellor and dental and eye clinics. These are very important services in the community. They are part of creating strong and robust Indigenous communities.

In terms of other community services, the Minjerriabah Moorgumpin Elders in Council do a great job in supporting the Indigenous community. I want to commend Aunty Margaret Iselin and many of the aunts who do a fantastic job in supporting those members of their community in need. Aunty Margaret is most well known for her care for Indigenous youth and seeing young offenders gainfully employed and not caught up in the juvenile justice system. That is one of the reasons she has been a big supporter of creating local jobs on North Stradbroke Island. Jubbin is a new organisation that has formed to create jobs and economic and employment opportunities amongst the Indigenous people of the island. QYAC is the native title organisation.

It was an honour to recently host the visit of LNP Senator Joanna Lindgren to North Stradbroke Island. Senator Lindgren is the niece of the late Neville Bonner and is proud of her political and cultural heritage. She visited the island to meet with Indigenous women and families and female workers to talk about women's business and opportunities on Straddie. What she found was a community that was very concerned—concerned that they have not been properly consulted about recent state government decisions, and they expressed their hope that the Premier would visit soon, as she committed to do so in the parliament.

I thank Senator Jo for her interest and her insights into Indigenous need and things that governments, both state and federal, can do to better the circumstances and to close the gap that in some communities unfortunately is not closing. Despite some good efforts and despite sometimes some very poor decisions of government, the gap is not closing.

Provision of a range of government services in isolated Indigenous communities is vital. That is one of the reasons that I have joined the community in Dunwich to fight the closure of the QGAP office there. The QGAP office offers transport and other government departmental services that are vital to the community. Again, being on an island in the south-east does create isolation factors in providing services. I will continue to fight against the current government's attempts to close that office.

The provision of services to families and assistance to families in remote and isolated communities is vital to closing the gap. Providing good solid jobs is also important to the future welfare of Indigenous communities. It has been a privilege to serve the Quandamooka people of North Stradbroke Island over the last 6½ years as their local member, and I will continue to do all that I can to support the families. Today I stand with them, the Indigenous community, against the current Labor government's plans to sack 50 Indigenous workers on North Stradbroke Island. I am very concerned about that and it is a great shame.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (4.21 pm): The Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill will do a few things, but I would like to speak about one important part of it, and that is the adding of a domestic violence trigger to the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008. I note that many speakers have focused on this element, and I think it is demonstrative of how strong this particular parliament has been on the issue of domestic violence.

Violence against women is a disgrace. As a husband, as a father of two boys and a girl, and as an MP, I will use every opportunity I have to speak out against violence against women. The Palaszczuk government announced earlier this year that it will implement all 140 recommendations in Dame Quentin Bryce's landmark *Not now, not ever* report into domestic and family violence. This bill directly addresses recommendation 93 of the report by requiring a court to notify the Family Responsibilities Commission when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 is made that names a welfare reform community resident as the respondent.

Domestic violence affects women across Queensland. It is not localised to one area or demographic. Because it affects such a wide range of people and families, its solution cannot be one size fits all. We have a particular responsibility to our remote communities such as the Cape York welfare reform communities. Dealing with domestic violence in these areas is a significant challenge. Considerable distances between a woman's residence and support services can make it more difficult for women to find and access support. Then there is the problem of the disconnect between these services which can prevent vital information sharing and integrated case management.

The Family Responsibilities Commission works with Cape York welfare reform communities to provide essential services for local residents. This domestic violence trigger will notify the commission that a protection order has been made and assist them in coordinating vital services for the family. It is another important step in integrating our service response for domestic violence victims and making sure that families in remote and Indigenous communities have access to the care they need. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (4.24 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. The bill gives effect to recommendation 93 of the *Not now, not ever* report into domestic and family violence to require a court to notify the Family Responsibilities Commission when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent.

The introduction of a new domestic violence trigger for agency notices to the commission will assist the Family Responsibilities Commission in the early identification of domestic and family violence issues in welfare communities and ensure that the commission is well placed to take action to address such issues. I believe that the domestic violence trigger contained in the bill is important to ensure that those affected by incidents of domestic and family violence that give rise to a protection order within welfare communities have access to the benefits of conferencing. Currently, the act provides for four trigger events. Following receipt of a notification, the commission will then decide whether to request the person attend a conference in order to address the offending behaviour.

The opportunity to participate in a conference in a local language in an informal and confidential setting and to be referred to support services where required are all strengths of conferencing. Conferencing under the act is aimed at restoring socially responsible standards of behaviour and helping community members to resume primary responsibility for themselves, other community members and families. The bill provides the commission with a mechanism by which these procedures are triggered for domestic and family violence events. The bill also makes a number of additional amendments to administrative provisions relating to the commission's operations and functions to improve administrative efficiency of the act.

I note importantly that consultation occurred on the bill with the five welfare reform community areas within which the Family Responsibilities Commission operates at Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge, that public meetings were held by the department and that each of the communities were supportive of the proposals. I also note the comments of the FRC commissioner conveyed during the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee deliberations that the amendments will assist the commission to more effectively conduct its core business of restoring social responsibility and local authority to welfare reform communities. Accordingly, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (4.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. Domestic and family violence is a serious issue affecting communities across

our state—no matter their culture, geographic location or socio-economic status. However, it is a sad fact that for too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities the story of domestic and family violence is one that is far too familiar.

According to the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service, statistics indicate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are significantly more likely to experience domestic and family violence than non-Indigenous women and, furthermore, that Indigenous women are 35 times more likely to be hospitalised for assault and 10 times more likely to die from assault than non-Indigenous women. This is an issue that acts to destabilise and fragment communities, to disturb and disrupt social norms and impact families in a way that ripples across generations. In the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, domestic and family violence may occur in the context of complex kinship structures, creating a further layer of complexity—something that I am very familiar with and have a firsthand understanding of.

This bill will facilitate a prevention strategy that is sensitive to cultural complexities as it addresses domestic and family violence in the welfare reform program communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale, Mossman Gorge and Doomadgee. Specifically, the bill introduces a trigger for courts to notify the Family Responsibilities Commission when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent.

In August this year the Palaszczuk government accepted all 121 recommendations from the *Not now, not ever* report. The domestic and family violence trigger proposed in this bill was recommendation 93 of that report. Once there has been a trigger, the FRC will have the option to conference that person and determine if, in the first instance, a referral should be made to a relevant support service to assist the person to address their behaviour. This is about putting structures in place to help rid our communities of domestic violence.

Unfortunately, like too many Aboriginal women, I witnessed domestic and family violence as a child. Watching women in my community suffer abuse at the hands of their partner was confusing to say the least. It is a roller-coaster, a cycle that plays over and over and after a while starts to feel like the norm. I remember promising myself as a child that I would never allow myself to be in an abusive relationship. However, I found myself in that exact position in my first serious adult relationship. Being physically assaulted by your partner is not just terrifying and confusing; it is something that can affect all other relationships in your life, including those important relationships with your community, your family, your country and yourself. I was lucky that I had my elders—elders from Minjerribah, Quandamooka elders—and my family, who intervened and helped me navigate the consequent interactions with the police and the system more broadly and to also navigate the impact this whole situation had on my community and on my kinship structure with people from Quandamooka.

Our elders and community leaders have an important role to play in addressing domestic and family violence in our communities. The Family Responsibilities Commission consists of the commissioner, the deputy commissioner and 31 local commissioners—local commissioners who are respected elders and members of their communities. They have intimate knowledge of families, kinship structures and relationships in their communities and bring with them experience and knowledge that will guide a prevention approach that is aimed at addressing and preventing domestic and family violence.

Eliminating domestic violence is a key priority of this government. When governments, courts, community groups and community elders work together we can deliver a safer, more secure Queensland, and that is what these amendments to the Family Responsibilities Commission are all about. This bill is another way the Palaszczuk government are saying not now, not ever to domestic violence. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (4.30 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. One of the central elements of the bill is to introduce a domestic and family violence trigger into the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 and make a number of other amendments which will increase the efficiency of the Family Responsibilities Commission. The FRC is an independent statutory authority with a commissioner, deputy commissioner and 31 local commissioners. It was established under the act and is a key feature of the welfare reform program operating in the Indigenous communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. In September I had the opportunity to visit the cape and meet with the members of a number of communities including Aurukun. During this visit I met with the members of the FRC. This meeting highlighted the important yet complex work that the commission undertakes. I

left the cape heartened by the great work being done on the ground by many people in the community committed to making life better for some of our most disadvantaged Queenslanders. I also left with a strong realisation of the challenges faced by these communities and how much work we still have to do.

Like all Queenslanders, I was saddened to see recent events take place in our state that highlighted the all too frequent fatal outcomes of domestic and family violence. It is a shameful reflection of our society that members of the community are at risk from their partners or family members. In a concerted attempt to address domestic and family violence within the welfare reform communities, the introduction of the domestic and family violence trigger will implement an important recommendation of the *Not now, not ever: putting an end to domestic violence in Queensland* report. The particular recommendation No. 93 was to require a court to notify the FRC when a protection order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent. The proposed provision of this bill does exactly this. Once the FRC receives the notice from the court it can decide to hold a conference with the person to reach a decision that is in the best interests of all involved.

Including the domestic and family violence trigger aims to get people to address their offending behaviour, ensure the safety and wellbeing of victims and promote socially responsible behaviour. It will also clarify the process for generating agency notices under the existing offence trigger relating to children convicted of an offence. Currently, the act only requires a notice if a court is advised a child's parent lives or has lived in a welfare reform community. Unfortunately, the court may not always be advised of the address details of a parent, meaning no notice is provided. The proposed amendment will require that the Children's Court provide a notice when it is advised that a child, in addition to the child's parent, lives or has lived in a welfare reform community.

The bill also proposes the FRC commissioner is able to delegate certain powers and functions to appointed and qualified local commissioners. This would enable local commissioners to enter into a family responsibilities agreement requiring a person to be subject to income management. This not only relieves the commissioner of this requirement but, more importantly, it also recognises the increased authority and experience of the local commissioners. This concept of local authority and local responsibility is a central aim of welfare reform. In addition, the bill will expand the eligibility requirements for the FRC registrar position to recognise the managerial and executive elements of the role while ensuring candidates are appropriately qualified for the position.

Finally, as the Australian government has phased out its Community Development Employment Projects scheme, the bill will also remove outdated references to the scheme participants. For the reasons I have outlined today I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

 **Mr PITT** (4.35 pm): It appears it is the quick and the dead around here! I was proposing to speak to clause 1 to at least deliver the speech in reply and address some of the members' questions. So with your indulgence I may at least try to respond to the shadow minister given that there has been limited opportunity to get the speech in reply onto the record. With your indulgence, I will respond to the shadow minister before I introduce this amendment.

I will speak to a few of the points raised. Certainly let me thank all members for their contribution to this particular debate. It is one that has shown that there are very rare glimpses but very welcome glimpses of bipartisanship. Certainly, Christmas is almost upon us and we thank the opposition for their support of the bill. Very quickly I will address some of the issues that were raised. There were some very specific points that were raised and I will get to the member's particular question.

The member for Mount Ommaney asked what the expected issues may be in terms of the cost of the proposed amendments. I will address those questions in order. Welfare reform, including the FRC, was provided with ongoing funding of \$8 million per year adjusted for growth in the 2015-16 Queensland budget, which I handed down in July. This funding includes an allocation for service procurement to assist in the development and delivery of relevant referral services in each community.

Should the FRC require further resources to access family violence support or other relevant programs, the Welfare Reform Service Procurement Fund will be available to assist the FRC. In response to the question about who will be responsible for funding the difference, I can also inform the House that DATSIP will be responsible in collaboration with the federal government.

I would like to also thank the member for Caloundra for his praise of Commissioner Glasgow. I join him in his praise as well as the member for Noosa in raising concerns regarding the issue of sly grogging. Both the member for Caloundra and the member for Noosa would understand that, while the FRC is responsible for re-establishing aspects of social norms in participating communities, it is not the be-all and end-all solution to each and every issue which affects communities. I can assure both members that DATSIP is working closely with police to ensure that sly grogging is tackled head on. It is also something on which I am engaging with the federal Indigenous affairs minister, Nigel Scullion. We have had particular communication around the community of Aurukun. It is important for all members to note that the recent incident in Aurukun was the culmination of many events which had been building for some time. Very clearly, my concern and the concern of the federal minister was shared that there have been incidents of sly grogging, which had contributed to the incident at hand. One thing I do know is that, having visited Aurukun recently as well several other communities—and I believe there was a reference to some kind of a tour, but I will let that one go for today—the important thing is that it was not my first visit to any of those communities and it will not be my last.

Having caught up with many of the people with whom I have worked with over the years, it was again pressed home to me that this is still a particularly challenging policy area for government. But it cannot be limited to just being a challenging policy area because this is real. This bill deals with people's lives and circumstances, and it is very important that we take the politics out of it and continue to work through the issues. I thank the mayors I recently caught up with in Yarrabah. As I said to all of them at the Community Futures Summit, we as a government are listening and we will do our very best to empower those local communities, particularly the councils, to do the job they have been elected to do. That is my role as the minister and a senior member of this government. Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you for your indulgence. I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 3 (Amendment of s 24 (Delegation by commissioner))**

Page 4, lines 20 to 23—

*omit, insert—*

(2B) For subsection (2A), the commissioner's functions are the commissioner's functions for endorsing a requirement for a person to be subject to income management.

**Mr PITT:** I table the explanatory notes to my amendment.

*Tabled paper:* Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes to Hon. Curtis Pitt's amendments [1779].

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.41 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.41 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## LIQUID FUEL SUPPLY (ETHANOL AND OTHER BIOFUELS MANDATE) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 15 September (see p. 1737).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (4.41 pm): I would like to thank the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee for its consideration of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. I thank the chair of the committee, the member for Kallangur, and all other committee members for their comprehensive and well-considered report of 17 November 2015. I also acknowledge the hard work of our committee staff in supporting the committee during its examination of the bill and in preparing the committee's report. I also thank the many people and organisations who took the time to make submissions to the committee and to appear as witnesses at the committee's public hearings.

The committee held public hearings in Brisbane and also travelled to Mackay, which is one of the many regions in Queensland that will benefit from the policy objectives of the bill. The committee's public hearing in Mackay also coincided with the government's first meeting of the Biofutures Cabinet Committee which was chaired by the Premier. That meeting was held at Mackay Sugar's Racecourse Mill and included a tour of the Queensland University of Technology's Mackay Renewable Biocommodities Pilot Plant. I also thank my Department of Energy and Water Supply for its contributions to the committee and the bill.

The government is committed to developing a sustainable biofuels and industrial biotechnology sector here in Queensland. This has been an objective of Labor in Queensland for over a decade. The Queensland government has provided a range of support for the biofuels industry in the past, including consumer education campaigns and research grants and funding. While biofuels mandates have been proposed in Queensland before, none have eventuated. In 2006 the Labor government proposed a five per cent ethanol mandate across the regular unleaded petrol market to take effect from 31 December 2010. On 28 October 2010, due to ethanol supply constraints and uncertainty around the federal fuel excise, the government placed the introduction of the mandate on hold and as a consequence no progress really resulted.

The Palaszczuk government was elected with the goal of diversifying our economy. Industrial biotechnology is a real opportunity to diversify the Queensland economy and help create thousands of regional jobs and a new high-value knowledge-intensive industry. The biofuels mandates will help Queensland transition to a clean energy economy, grow our biofuels and biomanufacturing sectors and boost jobs across the industry, especially in regional Queensland. The biobased chemicals industry is estimated by QUT research to be worth between \$240 billion and \$570 billion by 2024 worldwide. Bioplastic consumption is expected to reach between 10 to 20 per cent of all plastics by 2020, and ethanol is now a common fuel in more than 60 nations.

Queensland is well placed to take advantage of this industry. We have a highly appropriate climate, available biomass, an advanced agricultural sector and world-class research capabilities and established partnerships with the leaders in international industry. The key elements of the bill include mandating that certain fuel retailers sell at least the minimum prescribed percentage of sustainable biobased petrol. I would like to point out that this is the mandated minimum and not an aspirational target. As a result of the feedback received through the committee process directly to me, I am proposing that the mandate for biobased petrol commence at three per cent. However, to ensure that there is sufficient time for the industry to adjust, both the mandate for biobased petrol and biodiesel will now commence 1 January 2017.

Currently the most available biobased petrol is ethanol, which is blended with mineral based petrol and sold as E10. The bill nevertheless allows for new types of biobased petrol that may be developed in the future to count toward the mandate, further helping to stimulate investment and innovation in the biotechnology sector in Queensland. The bill also mandates that fuel wholesalers sell at least the minimum prescribed percentage of sustainable biobased diesel. The bill applies the biobased diesel mandate to wholesalers and not retailers. This is because the diesel fuel market differs to petrol in that most diesel fuel in Queensland is sold to large commercial customers rather than to motorists at retail service stations.

The bill establishes starting percentages for the biofuels mandates. These starting percentages may be changed by regulation. The bill establishes a fuel sellers' register. This register will allow the government to track not only how well the biofuels policy is working, but to monitor the performance of fuel sellers in meeting their minimum biofuel sales under the mandates. It is intended that the provisions of establishing the fuel sellers' register will commence in early 2016, which is well ahead of the mandates commencing. The bill provides that fuel sellers can apply to the minister for an exemption from a mandate in certain circumstances. An exception may be refused or granted with or without conditions.

The government recognises that some fuel retailers will need time to fully adjust to the mandate requirements and to make infrastructure changes in order to sell E10. The bill also allows for the mandate to be temporarily suspended for stated periods of not more than 12 months in limited circumstances. A suspension may apply to either or both of the ethanol or biobased diesel mandates for all or just a stated class of fuel sellers. Suspension decisions are subordinate legislation and therefore are potentially subject to disallowance motions in the House.

I am pleased to say that the members of the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee have unanimously recommended that the bill be passed. The committee members have unanimously agreed to a total of 13 recommendations about the bill and its objectives. The committee report also states—

The Committee has agreed to recommend that the Bill be passed, and is strongly of the view that bipartisan support is required for the biofuels mandate to succeed in achieving their policy objectives over the longer term.

It is a great credit to the consultative approach of this government that it has seen such a clear statement of bipartisan support to pass this bill.

The committee also expressed concern that the starting mandate percentage of two per cent for the ethanol mandate is not sufficient by itself to encourage additional investment in Queensland's biofuels industry. I concur with the committee's assessment and will move an amendment to commence the mandate at three per cent. I also note that there was some concern as to whether the expected start date of 1 July 2016 for the mandates will allow sufficient lead-in time for implementation. Given the higher starting mandate, I am proposing to commence the mandates from 1 January 2017.

The committee has done thorough work in relation to the bill, and I congratulate them on fulfilling their role so well. Mr Speaker, I now table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee: Report No. 8, 55th Parliament—Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015, government response [\[1780\]](#).

I will now address a number of the committee's recommendations that propose amendments to be made to the bill or that seek clarification during this debate. It was initially the government's intention that the biobased petrol mandate and the biobased diesel mandate would start on 1 July 2016. The committee's second recommendation is that the minister 'when making a final decision on the commencement date for the biobased petrol mandate ensure there is sufficient lead-in time for the finalisation' of a number of implementation matters. The government accepts this recommendation of the committee. The bill allows for the starting mandates to be commenced by proclamation. Therefore, I will commence the mandates from 1 January 2017.

The government has already commenced work on implementation issues, in consultation with key industry partners. Representatives of the RACQ, the Biofuels Association of Australia, the Australasian Convenience and Petroleum Marketers Association and the Australian Institute of Petroleum have been meeting with Department of Energy and Water Supply officers regularly, with the next meeting of this group scheduled for early this month. Work is underway on the development of an exemptions framework, the education and awareness campaign, and compliance and enforcement measures to support the commencement of the mandate. The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is also holding workshops with stakeholders to support the development of the sustainability criteria over the next few months. I thank them for their work and support in terms of this bill.

Further, I can assure the House that my department will work expeditiously to determine if the volumetric threshold as set out in the bill is appropriate or should change and will advise fuel retailers whether they will be liable to comply with the biobased petrol mandate as soon as possible after reporting has commenced. My department will be working to ensure all fuel sellers understand and are readily able to comply with these reporting requirements. My department will also be working with industry over the coming months to understand what infrastructure changes fuel sellers will need to make in preparation for the mandates, including planning and development approvals. The committee raised a concern about the need for timely planning approvals for service station operators needing to undertake infrastructure upgrades to enable the sale of ethanol.

The committee also recommends that the bill be amended to ensure there are no unintended consequences for fuel retailers in the areas where low-aromatic fuel is required to replace regular unleaded petrol including E10. The government also accepts this recommendation. My department became aware during the later stages of public consultation that there was a potential inconsistency between the bill and the Australian government's Petrol Sniffing Strategy, under which low-aromatic fuel is being rolled out to more communities in North and North-West Queensland where petrol sniffing is a problem. Low-aromatic unleaded fuel is specifically designed to contain low levels of aromatic compounds such as benzene, toluene and xylene which give people who sniff petrol a high. At the locations where low-aromatic fuel is introduced, regular unleaded petrol is removed from sale. Regular grade E10 must also be removed from sale in those communities, which would be inconsistent with the ethanol mandate for those fuel retailers. I will move amendments to the bill during consideration in detail that will exempt retailers selling low-aromatic fuels in those communities from having to comply with the biobased petrol mandate.

Recommendation 4 of the committee is that, in order to provide assurance to existing ethanol and biodiesel producers, the bill be amended to provide that 'the minimum percentage for the biofuels mandate cannot be prescribed by regulation to be less than the initial mandates' set out in the legislation and that only increases to the biofuels mandate can be prescribed by regulation, requiring any reduction in the mandated targets to be introduced through an amendment to the act.

The government accepts the first part of this recommendation, and I will move amendments to the bill during consideration in detail to prevent regulations from prescribing biofuels mandate percentages any less than the starting percentages stated in the bill. However, the second part of the recommendation would remove the flexibility to respond to changes in the petrol and biofuels markets. For example, there is a long-term supply issue for biofuels in Queensland. Instead of suspending the mandate the minister may choose to decrease the mandate, for example from six per cent to five per cent, to ensure continuation of production of fuels in Queensland while acknowledging supply capacity issues, rather than import the difference from other sources.

The committee, in recommendation 4, asks that I explain how the bill precludes the remaking of a further suspension declaration following an initial 12-month suspension and, if it does not preclude a further declaration, recommends the bill be amended to ensure that the mandate can only be suspended for more than 12 months through an amendment to the act. The bill as drafted does not preclude the making of a further suspension declaration once an initial 12-month declaration has ended. The committee raised concerns that this suspension power has the potential to be used repeatedly to suspend the mandate statewide and undermine the policy intent of the bill. It is not intended that the suspension power be used in this way. This is one of the reasons the bill subjects suspension decisions to parliamentary scrutiny. Whether they be new suspension decisions, remade suspension decisions or a decision to cancel a suspension, all are potentially subject to a disallowance motion in this House. However, suspension decisions may also be made for a regional area in response to a natural disaster or a public health and safety issue.

Unfortunately, Queensland has more than its fair share of natural disasters. It is possible that a region of Queensland is impacted by a natural disaster such as a cyclone and floods in the wet season and again impacted one year later in the following wet season. If a suspension is already in place for a region recovering from a natural disaster and the same area is again hit by a further natural disaster in the next season, it is entirely appropriate that a minister be able to make another suspension decision. Therefore, the government has partially accepted this recommendation of the committee. I will move amendments to the bill during consideration in detail that will only allow remaking of suspension decisions for those extraordinary circumstances such as a natural disaster or for public health and safety reasons.

Recommendation 6 of the committee is that the bill be amended to provide that the volumetric threshold amount for fuel retailers cannot be prescribed to be lower than 250,000 litres and if an increase in the threshold amount is required following analysis of the fuel sales data in 2016 the amendment be made in reasonable time for petrol retailers to undertake infrastructure upgrades. The government partially accepts this recommendation. The government will expeditiously analyse fuel sales data in 2016 to determine whether the threshold is an appropriate starting point. An increase to the threshold, if any, will be prescribed as soon as practicable, and months before the mandate starts, to give as much time as possible to fuel retailers to prepare for the commencement. But the government needs to retain the flexibility in the bill, to accommodate the growth in the use of other fuels in the future,

to be able to reduce the threshold. While it is unlikely that any decrease to the 250,000-litre threshold will be made in the near future, the government should have the flexibility over time to respond to potential changes in the fuel supply market that may happen in years to come.

Recommendation 10 of the committee is that in my second reading speech I commit to the government providing funds towards and leading a comprehensive consumer education and awareness campaign in conjunction with industry and consumer groups to dispel myths and negative perceptions on the use of fuel ethanol in vehicles and to promote its benefits. The government accepts this recommendation and shares the committee's view on the importance of an education campaign to help consumers understand their fuel choices and, where possible, select biofuels as their preferred fuel. I can assure the House that the government is already working to develop a comprehensive consumer education and awareness campaign in conjunction with industry and consumer groups and is quite advanced in this regard. The government has committed funding to the development of options for an effective, evidence based campaign, and a market research firm and creative agency has already been engaged to assist. This campaign will support consumer understanding of biofuels, motivate consumers to try biofuels and equip industry partners such as consumer groups, mechanics and fuel sellers to participate in the campaign as far as possible. The government will lead the campaign but will work with key stakeholders to ensure the best possible outcome.

Further to the consumer education and awareness campaign, the committee also recommended that the department work with organisations such as the MTA Institute of Technology and the Institute of Automotive Mechanical Engineers to ensure educational materials about ethanol blended fuels are available to educate mechanics and automotive trainees as well as others. The government accepts this recommendation and this work will form part of the education campaign I have just outlined. This campaign will include developing targeted resources and information for mechanics and motor trades groups to ensure that they have the most current information on ethanol blended fuel, compatibility of vehicles and the benefits of using biofuels.

Although not a matter concerning the bill, I will mention recommendation 12 of the committee because it asks that the government lead by example by including a requirement for the Queensland government motor vehicle fleet to refuel using E10 where practicable. The government agrees with this recommendation and fully intends to lead by example. QFleet falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation. Following the passage of the bill, I will certainly work with the minister and member for Algeester to find the best way to get QFleet vehicles to use E10. I have already personally raised the issue with the minister and I have certainly been using E10 myself throughout the year and encourage all other members to do so as well to boost Queensland jobs.

Lastly, recommendation 13 of the committee is that in my second reading speech I make a statement that the regulatory mechanism for applying the ethanol mandate to wholesalers may be triggered if the full price differential between biobased petrol and regular unleaded petrol is not passed through by the wholesalers to the retailers to ensure an adequate price differential to encourage consumers to buy biobased petrol. The government supports the principle that motorists should be able to access biofuels at a fair price and that biofuels are not subject to unacceptable profit margins by fuel sellers, particularly fuel wholesalers. The bill applies the biobased petrol mandate only to fuel retailers and not at this stage to fuel wholesalers. The bill does, however, allow for a regulation to prescribe a wholesale percentage and thus apply the mandate to fuel wholesalers if it becomes apparent that such action is necessary for the mandate to succeed. Under the bill the government has no powers to intervene in or regulate fuel prices, but I would say to fuel wholesalers that if the price differential between biobased petrol and regular unleaded petrol is not passed through then the government can consider taking action by applying the biobased petrol mandate to fuel wholesalers.

I thank committee members very much for their well considered and comprehensive report and recommendations about the bill and its implementation. Again, I am pleased that committee members not only made unanimous recommendations, including to pass the bill, but also made a strong point that bipartisan support is required for the biofuels mandate to succeed in achieving the policy objectives over the long term. This government is committed to the success of the biofuels mandates in this bill and the broader objective of an industrial biotechnology revolution that will diversify our Queensland economy, help create thousands of regional jobs and a new, high-value knowledge-intensive industry. Biofuels and ethanol jobs were not an election commitment, but there has been a long-term Labor commitment to renewables, to renewable jobs and to economic opportunities. I commend the bill to the House. I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.03 pm): As the minister outlined in his contribution this afternoon, there has been an outbreak of bipartisanship in this chamber. As the minister concluded, if the ethanol mandate is to work it does require bipartisan support and it is certainly the intent of the LNP opposition to provide that support. Having said that, there are a number of challenges that, in moving forward, may present themselves to the government. I feel it is my responsibility to highlight some of those for the minister and his department's ongoing consideration, but suffice to say that the LNP will not be opposing this bill nor, for that matter, the amendments that the minister has alluded to.

As the minister highlighted, this has been an issue that has been discussed at length in Queensland for a considerable period of time—for more than a decade. For example, as the minister said, it was the previous Labor government in 2010 that broke its 2006 election commitment to introduce an ethanol mandate. That decision was made by then treasurer Andrew Fraser just two months before the mandate was set to begin in 2010. While the current Labor government has had a road to Damascus conversion on the benefits of biofuels and expanding the ethanol industry in Queensland, the LNP has long had a view that a mandate would be beneficial. LNP members have previously introduced legislation aimed at implementing an ethanol mandate, only to have that legislation voted down by those Labor MPs opposite.

The LNP under the leadership of the member for Southern Downs made the commitment again at the start of this year to introduce a bill to mandate ethanol in fuel, with an implementation board to consult with industry bodies to determine content levels and an agreed phased time frame to achieve that level. In May I introduced a motion calling on this Labor government to look into this issue, and I said at the time—

It is in the spirit of this new parliament that the LNP opposition believes there is a genuine and real opportunity for all members of parliament to fully consider the potential benefits that this industry holds, not just for regional Queensland but also for the state as a whole.

Our continued advocacy in this space has forced the Labor government's hand and that is precisely why we are standing here today debating the benefits of a biofuels mandate.

I will echo the words of the minister and commend the parliamentary committee's consideration of this bill. I had the benefit of being able to participate on a couple of occasions in the committee's considerations and I think the outbreak of bipartisanship which we are seeing here this afternoon actually commenced during that committee. I do commend all members and both the chair and the deputy chair, who are present and about to speak on this bill, for the way in which they approached this issue. I also want to commend the committee secretariat on the committee's very detailed report. If members and those listening have not had a chance to view that committee's report, I really recommend that they do.

All up the committee received 18 submissions to the bill from a range of stakeholders representing a vast array of industries. This included various sections of the agricultural industry, the biofuels industry and those operating Queensland's biorefineries, fuel retailers, motor traders, Queensland motoring groups and fuel wholesalers. Suffice to say there were a range of views out there on this bill. Some felt the two per cent biobased mandate was too low while others argued any mandate was too high. Some submitters were concerned a biofuels mandate would increase costs and impose more red tape on fuel retailers.

There was a concern about the adequacy of the 250,000-litre volumetric threshold per calendar quarter amount for fuel retailers. There was a concern there would be a rush to the sale of premium unleaded petrol because people did not fully understand whether an ethanol blended fuel would work in their car. There was a concern that this bill did not include future time frames for increasing the mandate, thereby providing those in the biofuels industry with no certainty. The need for a clearly articulated advertising campaign to educate consumers about biofuel blends was also another particularly important point of committee consideration. Another prevailing concern was the implementation date of 1 July 2016, because that was considered too early for people in the industry to prepare for the introduction of these mandates.

In considering this legislation, it is important to weigh up all of these views and it was my view and clearly that of the committee that the legislation struck a workable balance. However, the committee did recommend a number of improvements, and I note that the minister has addressed all of those and taken them on board either partially or fully. As I said, we will be supporting those amendments later this evening. However, I note here—and I do need to digress a little bit—that the minister has potentially gone a little further than what the committee recommended, particularly with the two per cent going to

three per cent, and it does appear to be an example of policy on the run. I thank the minister for availing his departmental and ministerial staff for the briefing yesterday, but yesterday officials from the Department of Energy and Water Supply briefed me on the government's proposed amendments to the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill and at no time during that briefing was the amendment that the minister referred to raising the initial mandate to three per cent discussed. The first I heard of this amendment, which did not form a recommendation of the parliamentary committee, was this afternoon when I received a phone call from the minister. I again thank him for taking the time to do that, but suffice it to say it has come out of the blue.

In my response, firstly, I would like to ask: what has changed between yesterday afternoon and today? If it were the minister's intention to introduce a higher biofuels mandate with a delayed implementation date, then why not have those departmental officers discuss these changes with me yesterday afternoon? Is it a case that the minister has only come to this final position today? As I said, the LNP will not be opposing the government's amendment; it would simply ask the government to provide further information as to why it has come to such a sudden change in policy direction.

I want to reflect on the advice that the Department of Energy and Water Supply provided the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee as part of its consideration of this bill. This information was provided in response to feedback that the mandate should be set at a higher volume. I refer to DEWS response to written submissions, which are available on the committee's website. It states—

A minimum two per cent is an appropriate starting point for the biobased petrol mandate. In determining the starting point, government consulted widely and is taking a measured approach.

...

It is important for the success of the mandate that fuel sellers are given enough lead time to upgrade their retail sites and supply chain infrastructure to physically supply E10 to motorists. Another factor just as critical as production capacity and fuel supply infrastructure is that motorists must buy E10 in sufficient quantities to meet or exceed the mandate. It is important to recognise the mandate is the minimum level of ethanol that must be sold, with offences for non-compliance, and is not an aspirational target. Time is needed for consumer behaviour at the fuel bowers to change.

This document goes on to say—

The initial mandate level for biobased petrol (ethanol) is set at two per cent of regular unleaded petrol (RULP) sold in Queensland and will be based on sales of RULP and E10. A starting mandate of two per cent followed extensive consultation and balances existing supply capacity, supporting consumer choice at the bowser, and to ensure that the mandate is achievable by providing sufficient lead in time for industry, particularly retailers, to undertake infrastructure adjustments to sell ethanol blended fuels.

I would also like to reflect on the department's advice provided to the committee during public hearings into this bill. It was my colleague the member for Whitsunday who asked the following question—

Right. Thank you, Ms Standen—

who is the General Manager of Energy Regulation and Governance in the Department of Energy and Water Supply—

I have one final question, if I may. Mr Barr, can you or any of your colleagues advise us why we got to two per cent as the starting point for the mandate rather than a higher percentage? Perhaps there were many people in regional Queensland who were licking their lips to see a higher percentage, but we are at two. Can you enlighten us, please, on that?

**Ms Standen:** I will take that one, too. Yes, two per cent was an interesting exercise in consultation, I have to be honest with you. We undertook nine workshops across Queensland over a very short period of time. I think I ended up going to five or six in a two-week period. We talked to people about what the starting rate should be and we also received a number of submissions. It was a very contentious issue across-the-board. In regional Queensland, people did want a higher percentage, but then a number of industry players also wanted no percentage at all.

So when we were looking at the potential impacts on retailers, as we talked about before, and weighing them up against the potential development that this mandate could actually provide the biofuels industry in Queensland, we thought two per cent was a reasonable start. It would not unfairly burden retailers to a large extent but at the same time it would give policy certainty to the existing players in the biofuels space—so the facilities at both Sarina and Dalby—but also show that new industry would be welcome in Queensland by putting in a commencing rate of two per cent. That is reasonable and that will not necessarily fall over within the first year.

I just want to pause there because, as I said at the outset, we are committed to seeing this mandate work. We in the LNP do not want to see this mandate fall over. That is why I am raising these concerns with the proposed increase to three per cent. Ms Standen went on to say—

We are confident that two per cent can be reached with the support that government needs to do ... an education campaign and also working with our industry partners to work through some of the implementation issues with them. That is how we got to the two per cent and at this point in time we think that is a reasonable rate compared to the experiences that New South Wales and other places have had, too.

That was the evidence from the minister's own department provided to the committee as part of its consideration of the bill. At no time—at no time—was the appropriateness of an initial mandate of three per cent broached, which is why it is not reflected in the committee's report.

It should also be noted that the committee report highlights the potential for future increases. It expressly mentions the minister's pathways options. The committee's report states—

On 11 November 2015, while the Committee was in the process of finalising this report, options for pathways to increase the mandate percentages were published on the DEWS website.

The proposed options provided for the biobased petrol mandate pathways are:

- Option 1: The mandate to increase to 4 per cent of sales from 1 July 2019
- Option 2: The mandate to increase to 4 per cent of sales from 1 July 2020

So while the committee was still considering the introduction of a mandate, the minister was already consulting with the community about potential pathways for increasing the mandate. The department's website states—

The ethanol mandate will start at 2% of regular unleaded petrol sales to be bio-based petrol. In practice, this means that at least 20% of regular unleaded petrol sales must be E10 (E10 is 10% ethanol blended with regular unleaded petrol).

It goes on to outline the two pathway options. Then the website states—

Have your say

We're seeking industry and community feedback on potential pathways to increase the mandate percentages over time and welcomes other suggestions.

With input from industry and the community, we can develop a measured and sensible approach to help achieve sustainable biofuel and bio-manufacturing industries for Queensland. Consultation will open for four weeks until 11 December 2015.

So before that consultation closes, the minister is already changing the goalposts.

In my contribution I would also like to reflect on what the explanatory notes to this bill state. On page 2 of the explanatory notes it states—

The Government's decision however to increase the biobased petrol mandate from 2 per cent and similarly to increase the 0.5 per cent for biobased diesel will be subject to a review and recommendation from the Queensland Productivity Commission. The Commission will consider the economic, social and environmental benefits of the mandated targets and how they support domestic production of biofuels, and support growth in Queensland's bio-manufacturing industry, as opposed to growing an importation market from interstate or abroad for biobased fuels and other biobased products.

Again, the minister's amendment is in direct contrast to this commitment made in the explanatory notes to his own bill. The minister has made this decision to increase the initial biofuels mandate to three per cent without the review and recommendation being provided by the Queensland Productivity Commission. The minister's amendments provide a delay in implementing the mandate to 1 January 2017. One of the issues highlighted through much of the committee's deliberation on this bill was the fact that the decision to implement a mandate was done without a regulatory impact statement first being undertaken. Indeed, I put this point to the departmental officers at the hearing. I refer the minister to the transcript of the hearing held on that day. I asked—

Was a regulatory impact statement done as part of the development of this bill and explanatory notes?

Ms Standen, who I referred to previously, stated—

No.

**Mr POWELL:** Why not?

**Ms Standen:** The government decided that at a level of two per cent there was not necessarily a need because the impact would be minimal at that point.

**Mr POWELL:** Yet every person we have heard from this morning has talked about the impact one way or another, particularly the last two or three groupings. They have spoken about an impact on them, their businesses, franchisees.

**Mr WHITING:** Even the producers at four per cent.

**Mr POWELL:** So it was a government decision not to produce—

**Mr MOLHOEK:** Even the producers have raised concerns about the volatile nature of the mandate in terms of flexibility and certainty.

**Ms Standen:** What government committed to at the time was that we would approach each increase through the Queensland Productivity Commission. So any increase from the two per cent would have to be subject to a review by the Queensland Productivity Commission prior to that which would obviously involve a public process.

**Mr POWELL:** I understand that, but I find it rather concerning that a mandate that will clearly have an impact on a range of individuals and stakeholders has not had a regulatory impact statement done.

**Ms Standen:** I think that is a question for our minister.

I will certainly put that to the minister. Given that the minister has now raised the mandate to three per cent, given that he is deferring the implementation date to 1 January 2017, I believe that gives the government time to do a regulatory impact statement. I think that would be a sensible move by the government. Given the known impacts on all stakeholders in this matter, that would assist in some of the further issues that I will be raising in my speech. It might be a sensible solution for all involved as we move forward.

I would also highlight the contribution of Mr Mark McKenzie, the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Convenience and Petroleum Marketers Association at that public hearing. He stated—

Finally, our concern is that if there was any argument about lifting above two per cent, which is the position that we have worked cooperatively with the government on, we would fully expect that the government would undertake a regulatory impact statement that would actually look at the costs of moving above two per cent. Our cautious, if you like, qualified support to date has been provided on the basis that this initial regulation starts at two per cent and does not go anywhere above it in terms of E10, and it remains at the biofuel level that has actually been set in the regulation.

Will the minister undertake to have that regulatory impact statement done before that three per cent mandate starts on 1 January 2017?

The department highlighted the lack of data that currently exists regarding the volume of fuel sales here in Queensland. The department's advice was that in 2013-14 ethanol consumption was about 35 megalitres, or 1.2 per cent, of regular unleaded fuel in Queensland. The mandate would see an increase, initially to two per cent, of about two-thirds of that. We are now more than doubling it. Noting the lack of available data which was highlighted throughout the parliamentary committee's report, it would be interesting to know how the minister has arrived at this last moment three per cent mandate target. Again, if he has some information that I am not privy to I would be keen to hear that in his summing-up at the end of this afternoon.

If I could return to some of the other aspects that the committee and I have concerns with, many of which the minister has addressed. We have seen that the total production capacity of Queensland's ethanol producers is around 140 megalitres per year, which the department estimates is capable in the longer term of meeting a mandate between 2.8 and 4.7 per cent depending on Queensland's future fuel sales. But one of the issues highlighted during the public hearings was again that lack of information available in this space. There currently is no conclusive data on the breakdown of fuel sales here in Queensland and what the percentage of ethanol consumption is. As the department does not hold or have access to existing reliable data on the fuel industry in Queensland, it is necessary to oblige all fuel sellers to be registered and to keep the register up to date, as well as to provide an initial report on fuel sales to provide a reliable baseline for data. The collection of that data is a particularly important part of this legislation. We need as much information as possible to measure fuel sales against targets and to carefully determine time frames for any future increases to a biobased fuel mandate. As I will discuss shortly, we also need it to ensure that volumetric thresholds are accurate and appropriate.

Whilst the LNP is broadly supportive of this legislation, we do have some concerns and, as I have said, some of those have been addressed but others remain and we will certainly be monitoring them carefully over the course of the next 12 months. One of the key concerns we did have was the July 2016 start date. I have listened carefully to the minister's contribution today and I do acknowledge that that now has been pushed out to 1 January 2017. I think in the end that will be a good outcome because it does allow the minister and his department and all stakeholders to consider a range of aspects: firstly, will fuel retailers have the appropriate infrastructure installed in time to meet the deadline; and will the start lead to widescale exemptions for fuel retailers rendering the mandate pointless? When it was 1 July there was a concern that, rather than do the work needed to install the appropriate tanks and bowsers, a number of smaller operators who did not feel that the volumetric threshold was accurate were going to seek exemptions and the department could have potentially been inundated by those exemption requests therefore rendering the mandate useless. The extra time now gives the minister and the department the opportunity to have a look at that data I mentioned and make sure those things are right.

Another important issue was would there be enough time for an effective public campaign to educate citizens about their car's ability to use biofuels and the benefits of this fuel type? A couple of former ministers on this side of the chamber have had some experience with the Government and Advertising Communication Committee, GACC. Some of us had not very pleasant experiences with GACC.

**Mr Nicholls:** Gag!

**Mr POWELL:** I will take the member for Clayfield's interjection. Gag is probably more appropriate. At the hearing the feedback to the department was that the education campaign needed to start and it needed to start soon. When I asked had they started going through GACC the answer was no, but they were confident that they could have got it through in time for the 1 July starting date. I think my word then was 'heroic'. My word is still 'heroic'. Twelve months will give the minister and his department a lot more time in which to develop an effective public campaign. I think if the minister reflected on what went wrong between 2006 and 2010 he would see that the public education campaign did not keep pace with the installation of the E10 fuel bowsers. Misinformation was being fed to Queenslanders around the benefits or otherwise of ethanol in their fuel tanks. There was a whispering campaign from a lot of mechanics that basically undercut it. People were looking for choice as a result. They were not getting it because of the then higher mandate. All of these things can be solved through an effective education campaign and one that is done in consultation with all the stakeholders.

I also note that it is better to collate the data for a longer period of time to fully understand trends in fuel sales in Queensland so that we can put in place a regulatory regime that best reflects those trends. Those concerns were highlighted in many submissions. I refer members to pages 34 and 35 of the committee's report where it goes on to say—

Other concerns raised about whether the proposed commencement date will provide sufficient lead-in time, include:

- the data on fuel sale volumes and locations is required to determine appropriate threshold levels but will not be provided to the Government until January 2016 at the earliest
- the sustainability criteria and compliance model, the exemptions framework and the compliance and enforcement regime are still to be finalised
- fuel retailers need adequate time to plan for, and undertake, any required infrastructure upgrades
- an extensive education and awareness campaign is required to facilitate increased consumer demand prior to commencement of the mandates.

Those concerns are also reflected in committee recommendation 2, which the minister addressed at length in his speech.

As I indicated earlier, there are a range of views on this bill and the committee has put quite considerable work into its report. It might benefit the House if I focus the remainder of my contribution on some of the amendments proposed by the committee and the government's response to those recommendations. The committee did recommend that the bill be amended to ensure there are no unintended consequences for fuel retailers in areas where low aromatic fuel is required to replace regular unleaded petrol. This recommendation reflected submissions from the Australian Institute of Petroleum and Viva Energy. I listened to the minister's contribution in relation to this recommendation. I note the proposed amendments to the legislation. The LNP opposition will not be opposing any amendments to reflect the committee's recommendation in this particular area.

Committee recommendation 4 reflects a considerable number of submissions highlighting the need for those in the biofuels industry to have more certainty regarding future increases in the mandate. For example, AgForce Grains made this contribution—

AgForce Grains believes that tying incremental increases into the Bill will provide further assurances to industry of market growth and supply.

Manildra Group made this submission—

To generate assurance and investment in new capacity and achieve the objectives of the Bill, the rate of ethanol level increasing over time should be outlined in the Act, not via a regulation.

However, the Australasian Convenience and Petroleum Marketers Association made this submission—

Any decision to set an escalation for growth in the biofuel target beyond an initial starting point of 2% of RULP sales, should only be made after careful consideration of the substantial body of literature showing that past government investment in the development of the biofuels industry has delivered sub-optimal returns to Australian taxpayers.

This once more illustrates the diversity of views and the opposing views and this is all fed into the committee's recommendation 4, which reads—

The Committee recommends that in order to provide assurance to existing ethanol and biodiesel producers and to stimulate investment in the biofuels industry in Queensland sections 35B(3) and 35C(3) of the Bill be amended to provide that:

- the minimum percentage for the biofuels mandate cannot be prescribed by regulation to be less than the initial targets of 2 per cent for biobased petrol and 0.5 per cent for biodiesel.
- only increases to the biofuels mandate can be prescribed by regulation, requiring any reduction in the mandated targets to be introduced through an amendment to the Act.

The government has partially accepted this recommendation. Amendments will prevent a future regulation prescribing a percentage lower than two—I understand that now will be three—per cent for ethanol and 0.5 per cent for biodiesel, but a regulation will be able to adjust the mandate percentages downward from above two per cent—so, for example, from six per cent down to five per cent. I think that the minister has proposed a sensible outcome there.

In its submissions, AgForce Grains raised concerns that the suspension provisions included in section 35J of the bill are not prescriptive enough to ensure a suspension decision is made with sufficient justification. They went on to express the view that stakeholder consultation on a proposed suspension should not be optional for the minister. The committee was concerned that, in a response from the department in relation to this aspect of the bill, the minister would be able to remake a suspension provision if the situation which triggered the suspension does not improve by the end of the first year. The committee was concerned that this could lead to a situation where the mandate is indefinitely suspended. This view was reflected in recommendation 5, which states—

The Committee recommends that:

- the Minister, in his second reading speech, explain how section 35J of the Bill precludes the remaking a further suspension declaration following an initial 12 month suspension, and if it does not preclude a further declaration
- the Bill be amended to ensure that the mandate can only be suspended for more than 12 months through an amendment to the Act.

The minister has mentioned that he will be moving an amendment so that the minister will only be able to suspend for a period of longer than 12 months if sellers are not able to get enough biofuel or blend or if there is not enough demand and if compliance with the mandate is having an adverse impact on the Queensland economy. For example, this will leave in place the power to further suspend the mandate to protect public health and safety because of extraordinary circumstances, such as a natural disaster. Amendment will limit the ability to make a further suspension declaration beyond one year in any two-year period. I am fairly satisfied that the government has weighed up the concerns of those in the industry with the need to be able to act when there are prevailing circumstances that require the biofuels mandate to be suspended, and we will be supporting that amendment.

Undoubtedly, these changes will impact fuel retailers across the state. The legislation has been drafted in such a way that smaller fuel retailers will be exempt from meeting any biobased petrol mandate. I mentioned this before and I will spend a bit of time focusing on it. Fuel retailers will only be liable to meet the mandate if they own or operate more than 10 service stations or sell more than the threshold amount of petrol in a calendar quarter at any one of the service stations that they own or operate, the initial threshold being 250,000 litres. This can also be changed by regulation.

The volumetric threshold amount was yet another aspect of the bill that was widely debated. I share the committee's concerns, as highlighted on pages 55 and 56 of the report into this bill. The department's advice to the committee indicated that good independent data is not available for government to make an assessment of what level the volumetric threshold should be. The department has indicated the volumetric threshold will be able to be amended by regulation once fuel retailers begin providing information to the department, as prescribed in section 60 of the bill. Like the committee, I am concerned that this approach may result in fuel retailers that sell marginally more than the 250,000-litre threshold undertaking costly infrastructure upgrades and finding that they are no longer captured if the threshold is increased following analysis of the data. Clearly, one thing that the delayed start date provides is an opportunity to get that threshold right.

I understand that ACAPMA, for instance, raised significant concerns that many fuel retailers would not be able to meet the time frame needed in order to comply with the introduction of the mandate. The potential infrastructure upgrades come at a cost to fuel retailers, as indicated by Paul Wessel from Wessel Petroleum, who estimated a cost of \$6 million to make his 20 sites compliant with the mandate. He also highlighted the issues regarding having the tanks installed in time to meet the mandate, particularly noting the need for local government approvals. This all goes back to the issue of an appropriate start date. As we were saying before, extending that to 1 January 2017 will negate the need for some fuel retailers to invest in that infrastructure upgrade until they have certainty that the department and, indeed, the minister and the government are comfortable with that 250,000-litre threshold per calendar quarter.

Again, I point out that many on the fuel retail supply side and, I understand, the RACQ feel that the threshold should be more like one million litres per calendar quarter but would easily settle for 500,000 litres as opposed to 250,000 litres. Again, when the data starts coming in, I recommend that the minister and the department start looking at that threshold. Perhaps the RIS that I and others

have suggested is the way that that could be looked at, to ensure that the cost burden on those small businesses, in many cases, which is then passed on to the consumer, are not cost prohibitive and do not negate the benefits of the mandate.

Previously, we spoke about the public awareness campaign, which obviously will be vital to the success of the mandate and this legislation. Somewhere between 85 and 95 per cent of Queensland's car fleets are compatible with ethanol. However, many consumers believe blends such as E10 may damage their cars. There is evidence to suggest that the low uptake of E10 as seen in New South Wales may be due to factors such as customers not fully understanding whether their cars are compatible, misleading advice from mechanics and car retailers and deliberate misinformation to consumers by vehicle sellers, including applying 'no ethanol' and 'no biodiesel' stickers on cars that are clearly compliant against manufacturing warranties. Departmental officials indicated that there was already considerable work underway on an education campaign because, as we have said, the success of the mandate is inextricably linked to a campaign to let consumers know about the potential benefits of biofuels. The minister addressed this in responding to the committee's recommendation 10. I trust that the 12-month implementation period will now prove to be time enough for that campaign to get going and be successful.

Before I conclude, I want to reiterate the benefits that this mandate will have for Queensland, particularly regional Queensland. Biofuels do have lower emissions than fossil fuels. Mandating a minimum amount of ethanol will not only improve the quality of petrol but also improve environmental outcomes such as air quality. It will help improve fuel security. It will help stimulate regional economic development through the creation of an alternative and stable market for grain, cane and other feedstocks produced in Queensland. Importantly, it will help to diversify our rural industries and stimulate employment growth in our regional communities. Two of Australia's three ethanol producers are based in regional Queensland: the Dalby Bio-Refinery in the Condamine electorate and the Sarina distillery in the electorate of Mirani. Both are major employers in each town. An ethanol mandate could help to facilitate further plants throughout Queensland, as well as expanding existing capacity at the Sarina and Dalby plants. There are also potential benefits for farmers by providing a reliable alternative market for grain grown by Queensland producers. That is not to say that there are not complexities and impacts that need to be fully considered before we adopt a mandate here in Queensland. I do hope that, through the course of my discourse this afternoon, I have raised some of those concerns that potentially still need to be addressed between now and the implementation date.

I believe the legislation strikes a balance between supporting the biofuels industry by introducing a mandate, while at the same time allowing sufficient time for fuel retailers and fuel wholesalers to adjust to the changes through a three per cent initial mandate—previously, two per cent—that may subsequently rise incrementally. I understand that many industry groups were pushing for a higher mandate but, if we do overreach and set a mandate too high, it could impact the viability of an ethanol mandate in the long term. If this is implemented in the wrong way, those most in favour of a higher mandate could potentially lose out because the future of the industry becomes uncertain and the future of the industry becomes impacted. This is all about providing the biofuels industry with more certainty regarding the future of the industry. It is a building block. If we get the three per cent mandate right, we get the appropriate data and we use the data to map out the next stage in the development of the biofuels industry, it should be a win for the state of Queensland.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (5.37 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. The purpose of the bill is to drive investment and develop the ethanol and biofuel industry in Queensland. It will contribute to regional growth and job creation. It will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lead to advanced biofuel production technologies. The mandate will help us achieve this vision by requiring fuel sellers to sell specified percentages of biobased petrol and biobased diesel in Queensland. In simple terms, biobased petrol includes ethanol and biobased diesel includes diesel. This distinction is important. The government could have introduced an ethanol and biodiesel mandate only. However, this would have shut out the new and emerging biofuels that are under development in Queensland and that have enormous potential, under our vision, for a biofuture.

The percentage mandates suggested in the bill were based on the department's research. The government intends that the mandate will increase over time to drive investment in the biofuels and biomanufacturing industries. Allowing those increases to be made by regulation, rather than prescribing them directly in the legislation, means they will be able to be made appropriately for market conditions at the time. However, prior to increasing these mandated percentages, it is proposed that the Queensland Productivity Commission will undertake a review.

This bill will contribute considerably to regional growth and job creation and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions for motor vehicles. In the case of ethanol production, the by-products of sugar manufacturing will produce the ethanol and the by-product of this then becomes stock feed or fertiliser. In the case of biodiesel, the manufacturing process uses cooking oil and tallow to create the biodiesel. The glycerine produced as part of the process is used by companies such as Bio Processing Australia to produce high-margin yeasts which are in demand worldwide as an element in animal feedstocks.

As a committee we held several public hearings—one in Mackay and one in Brisbane—to get—

**Mr Costigan:** That's two, not several.

**Mr KING:** That is several. Let us not quibble over figures. We held several public hearings to get the story from a wide range of stakeholders which included the growers of biofuel feedstocks and their representatives, ethanol and biodiesel manufacturers, fuel suppliers and their representatives, the motoring industry and the RACQ.

Our committee worked through all the evidence provided in the submissions and given by each of the witnesses as well as looked at the advice given by the Department of Energy and Water Supply and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. We decided to recommend some amendments to the bill as well as some changes to the implementation process. I am pleased to inform the House that each of the recommendations made in the report were agreed to by committee members. We are of the view that the recommendations that we made, if endorsed by this House, will provide acceptable solutions to many of the stakeholder issues.

As reported, we all agreed the biodiesel mandate should be from 1 July 2016—that may change—and we all agreed on the level of the biodiesel mandate. The ethanol component was not quite as simple to agree on at the time, but we all ended up in a happy place.

During our examination of the bill, the department reported that Queensland has already had E10 ethanol levels of 2.68 per cent in 2010 and they are currently still above one per cent. From the evidence submitted from the ethanol producers we saw a higher initial ethanol mandate than the suggested two per cent could drive faster investment in the industry. However, we also saw a much higher—say, above four per cent—initial ethanol mandate would be an immediate burden on the fuel industry which would require varying infrastructure upgrades and, as was the case elsewhere, would cause an unreasonable number of exemptions and negative campaigning which would compromise what we are trying to achieve.

During the finalisation of our deliberations DEWS published the pathways for the biofuels mandate. We were able to agree on option 1 of the pathway—that is, four per cent from 1 July 2019. We would support a four per cent mandate being implemented even earlier if it were determined to be achievable.

An extensive public education and awareness campaign, which will be developed with stakeholders, will start before the mandate is applied to help educate on the value of using biofuels for our economy and our environment. The bill also includes provisions for exemptions and possible suspension of the mandate should circumstances arise that make the continuation of the mandate untenable.

Fuel sellers will be able to apply to the minister for an exemption from meeting the mandate—for example, where supply constraints occur or if compliance with the mandate threatens the viability of the fuel sellers' businesses. The government will be working with industry and other stakeholders to develop a more detailed policy to assist industry with exemption applications and guide decisions on applications.

There will also be an exemption from the mandate to appease concerns for smaller retailers who use under 250,000 litres per calendar quarter per station or have under 10 service stations. Fuel retailers will also be required to register with the department and report their fuel sales either annually or quarterly. Those that trigger the requirement to meet the mandate will report quarterly while all others will report annually.

The information collected through this process will be critical to the success of the biofuel mandate. It will be used to determine fuel seller compliance as well as build a data set on the volumes and types of fuel being sold at individual fuel facilities. This information will also be important for assessing which sites may be better prepared for selling biofuels.

Another key aspect of the biofuel mandate is the sustainability criteria that biofuels will need to comply with to be counted towards the mandate. The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection will develop these criteria and is assessing existing policies, practices and accreditation

schemes for their potential to address the proposed sustainability principles. Thorough consultation with key stakeholders will be undertaken over the coming months to develop the sustainability criteria and compliance model. This bill provides a solid foundation to grow biofuel production in Queensland. It is one important step on the journey towards achieving a vibrant biofuels and industrial biotechnology sector for our state.

In concluding, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their positive interaction during the deliberations on this bill. I would also like to thank all the submitters and witnesses during our public hearings. Most of all, I would like to thank our secretariat staff—Kate, Rachelle, Lisa and Julie—for their tireless work to get this all prepared by the deadline. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (5.45 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. I want to draw to the attention of the House the comments of the chairman, Mr Shane King MP, in his report. He stated—

The Government and non-Government members of the Committee hold differing views on whether the expected commencement date for the biofuels mandate will allow sufficient lead-in time for implementation of the mandates. Non-Government members are of the view that a delay of six months, to 1 January 2017, would provide sufficient additional lead-in time. Government members are of the view that the proposed commencement date of 1 July 2016 will provide sufficient lead-in time.

I am pleased that the minister has taken on board the comments of opposition members. I am particularly pleased that the government is willing to provide more time before the implementation of this policy. One of the concerns we identified through the committee process was the real concern around the potential for policy failure. As part of the review we considered what has gone on in New South Wales over the last number of years in terms of the mandate that was introduced there. Unfortunately, so many exemptions were granted in the early stages the New South Wales government actually set itself up for significant policy failure.

I am pleased that the minister has gone down this path. I am also pleased that the minister has agreed to increase the starting mandate from two to three per cent. The other thing that we heard very strongly during the hearings in Mackay and at Parliament House was the real concern from the ethanol industry about whether the lower mandate would actually encourage or inspire any significant new or reinvestment in the ethanol industry and whether in fact it would actually create any more jobs. The industry is already producing at somewhere around the two per cent level.

Importantly, we heard the minister speak about the need to educate motorists. That is one of the reasons the opposition members held the very strong view that there should be more time for the implementation of the mandate and the policy. I am pleased that the government will have all of next year to work through the challenges around the policy. It will provide time to educate motorists across the state about some of the great myths around ethanol in fuel. I am pleased the government has taken on board our recommendation for a later start.

I mentioned earlier that the committee conducted hearings in Mackay and at Parliament House. There were a number of significant submissions received through the process. There was a great turnout at the hearings.

It was a pleasure to spend a morning at Wilmar in Mackay and visit their ethanol production facilities. I congratulate the family on their incredible drive and passion for the ethanol industry and their hard work. When one tours the facilities one gets the sense that on the one hand it is a high-tech facility—the facilities are quite incredible—but on the other hand it is built on the back of a sugar mill that has seen better times. It is just so important for Mackay and for Queensland that we introduce a mandate and have a policy around this that will actually drive jobs and new investment in the sector.

When we were in Mackay we received submissions from Mackay Sugar. In their submission they drew attention to the fact that there were some 1,000 cane growers and shareholders that produce around 6½ million tonnes of cane annually. In their submission they asked that we consider a higher ethanol target and recommended a start of four per cent. They also raised concerns around the process for ramping up that mandate over time. I note that both in the committee report and in the minister's comments there has been due consideration of that, and I am pleased that is the case.

We also had a significant submission from Canegrowers. They too were advocating for a higher start at four per cent. They argued very strongly around the lack of certainty that a two per cent mandate would provide and expressed concerns about the ability of the minister, through regulation, to adjust the mandate both up and down. That is one of the reasons in the committee process we highlighted the need for a mandate that would increase over time but that it should come back to the House for review if it were to be reduced at any stage over the implementation phase of the policy.

We also heard from Consolidated Bio Diesel around the mandate on diesel. Their comments were that it was a sensible start and that there was already around that level of biodiesel being produced. They were very supportive of the submission to consider moving that forward. As I mentioned earlier, we had a wonderful visit to Wilmar, but we also heard from them that the mandate was not high enough. I am sure they will be pleased to hear today that the mandate will start at three per cent.

On the other side of the debate though we heard some interesting submissions from some of the fuel companies, particularly some fairly extensive submissions from the Australasian Convenience and Petroleum Marketers Association. They expressed concerns around previous mandates and the way the policy had been implemented and the fact that there was a lack of certainty. They also highlighted for us the fact that three out of every four petrol stations in Queensland are independently owned or franchisee operations. They particularly expressed concern around the cost of developing the facilities at those stations to support the mandate.

I am glad that the minister in his second reading speech took note of the recommendation that the committee raised in respect of consideration for the planning and approval processes that needed to be looked at. One of the great concerns is that—and I am sure that many of you would be aware of this—when you go to council or to Main Roads to make some sort of change at a petrol station, one of the unintended consequences can be that it will trigger a whole lot of other planning requirements around drainage and soil disposal. We heard from this particular organisation a real concern that on occasions in the past when the last mandate was implemented it was taking Main Roads up to two years to deal with approvals for new tanks and works at some of those stations. We also heard from this organisation that some councils can take up to 12 months to process those approvals. I look forward with interest to see what direction and policy the minister will implement in respect of ensuring that the fuel stations are given both the opportunity and the support they need to implement the mandate.

We also heard from Viva Energy Australia, or Shell, about some broader concerns around the mandate. Their commentary was that they did not support a mandate and they believe that consumers should be given a choice to buy the fuel and that if the policy was effective and the incentives were there then market forces would drive the sales of ethanol rather than relying on regulation. We heard from the RACQ, who were very supportive of the mandate. In their submission to the committee they suggested that they would support a three per cent mandated starting point. So I am sure they will be pleased to hear the minister's comments today and the starting position that we hopefully will agree on as we vote on this bill a little later today.

We had great encouragement from AgForce Grains. They wanted the starting point to be four per cent. So I am sure they will be pleased to hear that we have a higher starting mandate as we move forward with this policy. We also heard from the Motor Trades Association of Queensland. They expressed some concern around the cost of implementing the mandate. They were a little apprehensive about what the cost impost would be to retailers. Again, they expressed concerns around the planning issues with councils and Main Roads in terms of making sure that any changes to independent sites around the state or company owned sites around the state would be given a fair go in terms of getting the approvals they need so they can implement whatever changes they need to support this policy. We also had a submission from the Australian Sugar Milling Council. They absolutely supported the need for a higher mandate.

I am very pleased to be able to stand in the House today and speak in support of this legislation. I too want to acknowledge the work of the secretariat staff who did a tremendous amount of work not only in helping to put together the final committee report but also in organising the logistics around our travel and the hearings and in managing the many submitters who came to see us over those two days in Mackay and here at Parliament House.

I am pleased to commend this bill to the House. I also want to thank my fellow committee members for the hard work that they put into the review and also for the spirit of bipartisanship that occurred throughout the committee. There was some robust debate. I am pleased that the minister has come around to the opposition's way of thinking on some of the issues and matters that were raised in the committee process in spite of the fact that the government members were trying to hold us to the original line. But I am sure that this will be a great policy direction for the government. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Molhoek, adjourned.

## WITHDRAWAL OF NOTICE OF MOTION

### Department of Education and Training, Security Breach

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.57 pm): I give notice to the House that I am withdrawing today's motion.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Referral of Auditor-General's Reports and Reporting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.57 pm): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 3 of 2015-16 titled *Agricultural research, development and extension programs and projects* be referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 4 of 2015-16 titled *Royalties for the regions* be referred to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee; and the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 5 of 2015-16 titled *Hospital and Health Services: 2014-15 financial statements* be referred to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee.

The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report on the Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2015 by 1 March 2016 and the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 1 March 2016; the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee report on the Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 by 15 February 2016; the Health and Ambulance Services Committee report on the Hospital and Health Boards (Safe Nurse-to-Patient and Midwife-to-Patient Ratios) Amendment Bill 2015 by 29 April 2016; the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee report on the Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 1 March 2016; and the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report on the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 1 March 2016.

## LIQUID FUEL SUPPLY (ETHANOL AND OTHER BIOFUELS MANDATE) AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3012, on motion of Mr Bailey—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (5.59 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. Firstly, I would like to give my thanks to the other committee members, particularly the chair, the member for Kallangur. As the member for Southport has stated, the spirit in which all committee members came to review this bill was definitely bipartisan. We wanted to get the best outcome possible for all those parties involved and for the people of Queensland. I would also like to thank the secretariat for their hard work in preparing the report.

This bill introduces a mandate for biofuels to support the development of a vibrant and sustainable biofuels industry in Queensland. Biofuels have been available in Queensland for some time with E10, a blend of 10 per cent ethanol and regular unleaded petrol, on sale here for over a decade. However, in Queensland the biofuels industry and, in particular, ethanol has struggled to advance due to a lack of long-term policy certainty.

The possibility of a biofuel mandate has been raised before, with an ethanol mandate proposed to start in January 2011. In 2010 in the lead-up to the proposed mandate, the use of ethanol blended fuels peaked at around 900 megalitres, or approximately 2.7 per cent of regular unleaded petrol sold, but has since fallen to around 350 megalitres in 2013-14, or about 1.2 per cent of regular unleaded petrol. The increased use of ethanol blended fuels was achieved through an education campaign and increased availability through petrol stations across Queensland as fuel sellers made preparations to meet the mandate. When the mandate did not proceed, we saw a gradual decline in the availability of E10 across the state. This has led to a lack of certainty for biofuel producers.

There are currently two plants in Queensland, one in Dalby and one in Sarina which we had the ability to visit. I do thank the staff of Wilmar for their courtesy in showing us around the plant. It did take me back to my university days as a microbiologist and looking at the fermentation process of the *saccharomyces cerevisiae* with regard to the production of ethanol. There are also several proposed ethanol plants that could be developed. What these proposed plants need is certainty to invest, which the legislated biofuels mandate will provide. The submissions to the committee were consistent. Investment in biofuels is significant and requires long time frames to allow the return of capital. We heard loud and clear that our biofuel producers need long-term certainty to invest. Long-term certainty is especially important for those institutions providing finance for potential biofuel producers. The providers of feedstock, the growers, need certainty to ensure the feedstock is available. The biofuel mandate is a practical way to support existing biofuel producers and feedstock growers and to encourage investment to grow a vibrant and sustainable biofuels industry in Queensland.

Finally, I would like to address the amendments that have been foreshadowed during the debate of this bill. I do acknowledge the comments made by the member for Southport with regard to the minister's ability to listen to different proposals in the report that was released and be able to take those into consideration. It shows a willingness from this minister to put away petty Labor versus Liberal politics and actually do the best thing for Queenslanders. With regard to that, the six-month delay in the start date to 1 January 2017 is important and allows us the ability to increase the percentage to three per cent. This will rise to four per cent over 18 months. I do note, however, there is also an amendment to be moved by the member for Dalrymple in regard to a four per cent start. We have found that this will put off other parties, in particular the retailers. The consensus view was that a delay to 1 January 2017 and also a three per cent start is the best thing. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak tonight in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. I will not replicate the contribution of our shadow minister, particularly in relation to the history of this debate. However, it would be remiss of me not to single out the former member for Burdekin, who did her best to bring this to a head when she served in this place some years ago, well before I came here to represent the good people of the neighbouring electorate of Whitsunday. I know this is a subject that is very dear to the heart of the current member for Burdekin as well, given the constituency that he represents which is not too different to mine.

As a member of the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee, I was pleased to hear some of the differing views in relation to this subject, which certainly stirs quite a bit of a passion in regional communities including North Queensland, especially in the so-called sugar seats. That is why I made a point of ensuring that our committee conducted at least one public hearing in the north to get the views of stakeholders such as the sugarmilling companies, canegrowers and other parties with a strong interest in developing Queensland's biofuels industry. The public hearing conducted in Mackay on 22 October this year was quite well attended. I thank everyone for coming along. I also want to acknowledge what the department did in conducting its public forums—nine of them if memory serves me correctly—right across Queensland from Brisbane to Bundaberg and Mackay to Mareeba. Almost 300 people attended those public forums across the length and breadth of our state thanks to the work of the department.

Personally, I certainly want to see this industry kick on, help the environment, create jobs and help grow the economy. That should come as no surprise, given that North Queensland's only ethanol plant is situated at Sarina, just 30 minutes by car from my electorate of Whitsunday. A number of my constituents work there too. Whitsunday, my electorate, is well known for its sugar production with mills at both the northern and southern ends of the electorate. I want to thank Garry Mulvay and his team from Wilmar and its ethanol plant at Sarina on the banks of Plane Creek for their show and tell and for their hospitality. I am sure I speak on behalf of our committee chair, the member for Kallangur, as well as government and non-government members because it was a great insight into the ethanol plant and a town that was once home to my good self. It has a great history, of course. As I recall, it has been going in some way, shape or form since as far back as the dark days of World War II. As we were learning on the job that day, it became quite obvious that the facility would have been of great interest to Japanese war planes in those days such was its strategic importance at a pivotal time in Australia's history.

The central district, as we call it in sugar talk, between Sarina and Proserpine is in fact home to five sugarmills owned by two different milling companies—not just Wilmar, but of course Mackay Sugar as well. We heard the views of Mackay Sugar as relayed by the member for Southport, the deputy chair of the committee, earlier in this debate. Of course, Wilmar's ethanol plant at Sarina is also able to draw on its other milling operations in the Burdekin to the north.

It is not just the sugar industry that can and does contribute to the biofuels industry here in Queensland, with the grains industry central to the operation of Queensland's other ethanol plant located at Dalby on the western Darling Downs. I acknowledge the member for Condamine; of course it is in his electorate. We know that between them they can produce a lot more ethanol if the demand is there and if they have the opportunity. One day I believe that collectively they will produce a lot more ethanol, and I also believe that one day we will see other ethanol plants popping up. Perhaps there may be one in the Burdekin; I know that is something that the member for Burdekin is passionate about. He has had ongoing discussions with members of the Cox family. In fact, we caught up with them at the Burdekin Growers Race Day at Home Hill last year, and it is always a source of great discussion on either side of the Silver Link. I know that it is the dream of the member for Burdekin to one day see an ethanol plant in his part of North Queensland, and in my role as shadow assistant minister to the opposition leader for North Queensland I wish him well in those endeavours.

But for more ethanol to be produced there needs to be certainty, because without certainty there will be limited or no further investment and that does nothing for jobs, particularly in regional Queensland. As I said in my opening remarks, the Wilmar ethanol plant at Sarina is home to a number of my constituents, many of whom have worked there for a number of years. Regrettably, we have seen a reduction in the use of ethanol throughout Queensland in recent times, and many of my constituents lament that. I would have thought that many constituents in regional electorates lament that, particularly in the sugar seats. Some stakeholders clearly do not want ethanol production ramped up. We have heard the views of the Australian Institute of Petroleum, and while I respect their views and those of others, they are on a different page to me and a few others in this House.

It is my hope that as we move forward we will see an increased mandate. We have come to three per cent, and whether it has come out of left field today in the spirit of Christmas or whatever, there are a lot of people in my electorate who will be pleased to see that figure of three per cent. It is not the four per cent that was advocated by Mackay Sugar and other stakeholders who have weighed into this debate—and I thank all those stakeholders for weighing into this debate—but it is a good starting point, and I think we have the balance right and we can go to four per cent in due course. It is important that the time frames are adjusted accordingly, and we are seeing that. I think it is encouraging to see both sides of the House working for the betterment of Queensland, particularly regional Queensland, because people outside this place probably do not see that very often. I think that is refreshing for Queenslanders, because they see the argy-bargy in here but they do not often see both sides of the House working together for the common good. I think here we are seeing some of that, and it makes me feel good and it should make all members feel good because there are people here that are looking for alternative industries and employment opportunities. A lot of people are struggling in regional Queensland—Central North, Far North, Western Queensland—and something like this gives them hope. Without hope, what have we?

As I say, I think that three per cent is a great starting point. Having said that, we need to get it right. I want to come back to the shadow minister, because his wise counsel has come to the fore here. Government members may snigger at that remark, but his wise counsel does resonate here because a number of times during his contribution to this debate he has made the point that a very well-executed public awareness program needs to be rolled out so that we do get it right. There is no doubt that there are a lot of old wives tales, furbies—call them what you like—which continue to do the rounds such as the old chestnut that engines in motor cars will all conk out once you put ethanol in them. Some of those myths are perpetuated to this day, and I am sure that it must drive those who are passionate about the biofuels industry nuts. I want to bring to the attention of honourable members the comments of the committee chair, who stated—

While the Committee does not make a recommendation on the level of the initial biobased petrol mandate (2 per cent), it is concerned that this mandate level is unlikely to encourage additional investment in Queensland's biofuel industry. The Committee strongly supports an increase in the mandate level, as soon as practicable, to encourage further investment in the industry.

I think that says it all, and I thank the minister on behalf of my constituents for listening. You are probably not going to hear that too many times. Is it perfect? Probably not, but I think it is a good starting point. Minister, I thank you for listening and getting us to that starting point.

In conclusion, I want to thank the committee secretariat, in particular our research director Kate McGuckin and her staff, for their professionalism, support and guidance in taking us through this process. Not to mention their patience, given that I was out of action for a little while and had to read up on things pretty quickly to get back up to speed. I would also like to thank everyone who has weighed into this debate, those who provided public submissions and those who fronted our public hearings

particularly in the city that I represent, the city of Mackay which is still seen—and I say this with a wry smile—as the sugar capital. I am not sure if the member for Burdekin wants to go out to the car park, but we will have dinner first.

It is certainly great to see people who are passionate about biofuels stepping up to the plate and weighing into this debate. I think three per cent is a good starting point with the associated time lines that have been adjusted so that we do get it right. The educational program that the shadow minister has pointed out more than once here tonight is so critical to us getting it right. I support the bill.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (6.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. Mr Deputy Speaker, Queensland is in the best position possible to take full advantage of global growth in biomanufacturing. Our tropical and subtropical climate is second to none. We are technically advanced in the agricultural sector, and we have the availability of large biomass supplies, including waste. Our aim is to make the most of these strengths by growing Queensland's biofuel and biomanufacturing industries to create new jobs, contribute to regional growth, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pave the way for advanced biofuel production technologies. This will be done by introducing a mandate for biofuels to support the development of a sustainable biofuels industry.

We want to get the balance right between increasing consumer demand for the product and growing the industry. We have learned from other biofuel schemes across the globe and taken great notice of what has and has not worked in the past. One of those lessons was that a sound sustainability criteria is important to avoid possible and unintentional environmental impacts caused by an increase in biofuel production. This sustainability criteria will work to ensure that biofuels support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the long term while protecting our environment.

As Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, I am dedicated to protecting some of our state's most valuable natural assets such as the Great Barrier Reef. Not only is our reef an environmental drawcard, but it is also a significant contributor to the Queensland economy which is why our commitment to protecting it is so important, both environmentally and economically. In this bill, only biofuels that meet the sustainability criteria will be able to count towards meeting the mandate. This is an important aspect of protecting our environment. We understand that developing the sustainability criteria requires consultation with key stakeholders and a careful design.

As a government that listens, we have consulted widely on how to give this emerging industry the best chance of expanding and creating jobs in Queensland. This began with the discussion paper in June 2015 that provided draft sustainability principles. During this time I attended a community consultation in my home town of Townsville to listen to my community's thoughts about biofuels mandates. The message I received was clear: North Queensland needs more jobs. This bill is all about regional growth and job creation and is therefore something I am proud to support. Additional consultation took place with key stakeholders and industry experts to develop the sustainability criteria. This criteria is expected to be implemented by 1 July 2017. Interim provisions will provide certainty for the mandate requirements.

Our immediate priority is sustainability criteria for the potential expansion of sugarcane growing as a result of the mandate, making sugarcane growers part of the sustainable energy solution. This is expected to be followed by refined sustainability criteria for other priorities such as greenhouse gas emissions and other biofuel feedstocks. Achieving these objectives through the introduction of a biofuels mandate will not only ensure Queensland is playing a vital role in developing a sustainable biofuels industry but also promote our state as an industry leader. It is for the reasons I have detailed that I support this bill and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (6.21 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill. As a member of the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee and as the member representing the sugarcane-farming community of the Burdekin electorate, I wholeheartedly support the introduction of a mandate for the use of ethanol and other biofuels in Queensland.

The mandating of ethanol and other biofuels in Queensland has been a long time coming, and the fact that so many individuals, companies and organisations took the time to give evidence during public hearings is testament to the interest this bill has generated in the broader community. The committee had 88 submissions from a range of stakeholders including oil companies, community members, fuel wholesalers and retailers, canegrowers, tertiary institutions, the meat and livestock

industry, biofuels refineries and proponents, the motor industry and peak agricultural bodies. I thank them all for their contributions to this debate, along with my fellow committee members and secretariat researchers.

A joint Deloitte, Access Economics and QUT study has predicted that biorefining can contribute more than \$1.8 billion in gross state product to Queensland and create up to 6,640 jobs during the next 20 years. I certainly welcome any jobs, especially in my electorate of Burdekin, that biorefining will create. Of course, any further demand for sugarcane by-products like molasses and other grain crops grown in the Burdekin would also be beneficial for industry moving forward.

The recommendations contained within the report provide a clear direction going forward. Whilst the initial target of two per cent—at this point I acknowledge the minister for raising it to three per cent and taking on board the views of the committee—may be seen in some circles as too low, I believe that it provides a platform from which a pathway can be built. Certainly, feedback from my electorate is that a 10 per cent target by 2020 would provide the stimulus needed to drive investment in this industry.

At present, ethanol production in Queensland will comfortably meet the mandated two per cent introductory level, which means that future investment will be put on hold until such time as mandated ethanol levels increase to a level that makes investment in this industry profitable. In its submission to the committee Canegrowers recommended the introduction of a mandate with clear provisions for ramping up of the mandate in line with the lead time for increasing production as this will provide the surety and targets required to stimulate new investment in biofuel production. Figures of four to five per cent have been mentioned by my Burdekin canegrowers as the level which would stimulate that investment. If we are to see immediate expansion of the ethanol and biofuels industry, this needs to be taken into consideration.

Canegrowers also raised the point that the mandate requires wide parliamentary support and that a stable, long-term policy approach is required in order to provide regulatory certainty for potential new investors. If we are to encourage new entrants to the biofuels industry they must have sufficient security, financing and the confidence to start to build a world-class renewable fuels industry in Queensland. I know that there are several investors in the Burdekin who are very keen to finally see this mandate occur, and I hope it provides the stimulus and momentum required to get their projects up and running.

I would also like to say that there have been reservations from some cattle producers, particularly those operating feedlots, who believe that the cattle industry would be disadvantaged if the access to and price of molasses is affected through any ethanol mandate. They have genuine concerns as they access both grain and molasses and they do not want the demand for these products affecting their ability to access these products or increasing the prices they pay for these products. I certainly would not like to see this, and I do not believe this will be the case. I note the comment from AgForce that a domestic renewable biofuel industry would add diversity and security to the supply of fuel in addition to providing a reliable alternative market for grain grown by Queensland producers. Can I say, following a question from the member for Beaudesert, that producers such as dairy farmers, who rely on grain to feed their stock, should not fear an escalation in the price of grain because of this mandate.

A key component of the recommendations is the need for a comprehensive education program across Queensland. There can be no shortcuts here. We need to dispel the myths associated with ethanol blended fuels because people still need to be convinced. There will still be the choice between ethanol blended petrol and other unleaded fuels at the bowser, so consumers will still be able to choose the fuel that is best suited for their engines. I note that consumer education was also raised on a number of occasions by stakeholders, so it is imperative that government liaises closely with motoring and industry groups to ensure this consumer education takes place. Government also needs to work with the automotive trades institute of technology and the Institute of Automotive Mechanical Engineers to ensure educational materials around the validity of ethanol blended fuels are used to educate mechanics and automotive trainees. The government also needs to lead by example by including a requirement in the QFleet Fleet Efficiency and Utilisation Policy for the government motor vehicle fleet that drivers of QFleet cars refuel using ethanol blend where practicable.

There is still substantial work to be done in the areas of compliance and enforcement regimes, exemptions and upgrades to service station infrastructure. Fuel retailers and wholesalers need sufficient time to upgrade and implement necessary equipment changes to meet the fuel industry's targets for the sale of biobased petrol such as E10, ethanol blended petrol and biobased diesel. A key recommendation in the report is that the minister consult with relevant planning authorities to ensure mechanisms are put in place to facilitate timely and rapid planning approvals for service station operations needing to undertake infrastructure upgrades to enable the sale of ethanol blended petrol.

There have been several attempts to legislate an ethanol mandate in Queensland. I am pleased that this bill will be a key part of the biofutures strategy, providing certainty to the biofuels industry that it can invest, innovate, grow and create jobs in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Last, adjourned.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Comments by Member for Mudgeeraba

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (6.28 pm): I refer to the statement made by the member for Mudgeeraba in the House this morning in relation to the referral of matters to the Office of the Health Ombudsman. I made a statement in this House on 11 November 2015. In that statement I said—

I have written to the Queensland Health Ombudsman in relation to those matters raised by the conduct of the member for Mudgeeraba to seek a full independent investigation of these matters.

I table for the benefit of the House a copy of my letter and its attachments sent to the Office of the Health Ombudsman on 11 November 2015.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, undated, from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. CR Dick) to the Queensland Health Ombudsman in relation to potentially improper conduct by a registered health practitioner, and attachments [1781].

The Office of the Health Ombudsman is an independent statutory office holder. I am advised that the Health Ombudsman is currently assessing the material and that this assessment has not been completed. These documents demonstrate clearly that I have been fulsome, timely and accurate in all my statements to the House.

Sitting suspended from 6.29 pm to 7.30 pm.

## LIQUID FUEL SUPPLY (ETHANOL AND OTHER BIOFUELS MANDATE) AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (7.30 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. As we know, the Queensland government is committed to developing Queensland's biofuels and industrial biotechnology sectors so that these industries can invest, innovate, grow and create jobs for Queensland—jobs now and jobs for the future—and the biofuel mandate is an important step towards achieving this vision. With this biofuel mandate we are breaking new ground. Only one other state has a biofuel mandate—New South Wales. It is only fitting that our state, a state with a greater capacity for producing biofuel, takes on board the lessons as to how we can improve on what it has done. The Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015 avoids the problem of the New South Wales mandate or more precisely improves on its system.

The submissions to our inquiry pointed out that the exemptions for fuel suppliers in New South Wales are wide in that only retailers with 20 service stations have to comply. There are also exemptions from the minister given for companies failing to meet the biofuels mandate. The effect of the exemptions granted to fuel companies means that New South Wales has hit a ceiling in the amount of ethanol blends that have been sold. We think placing liability on the wholesaler has been a weakness in the New South Wales model and we are going to focus on retailers because that is where you drive market demand—at the bowser. The inability to improve that consumer demand has led to another problem in New South Wales. People are unsure about biofuels and they have opted to invest or to purchase premium fuels instead. Premium petrol sales rose from 21.6 per cent of total sales in January 2010 to 30.9 per cent in December 2010 and premium petrol is now 44 per cent of all petrol sales in New South Wales. This is a case where they have to build up their consumer confidence in biofuels.

All industry players agree that we need to rebuild our consumer confidence in ethanol blended fuel, and we all recognise that we will start off at an achievable mandate level and build up from there. It is crucial and it is critical that we create consumer trust in this product. There was a survey by ACAPMA, the fuel retailers association, saying that 31 per cent of consumers would purchase ethanol

blended petrol, with 45 per cent showing some resistance to buying ethanol blends. Only 21 per cent of people in the survey under 25 are prepared to purchase ethanol blends, so it is very clear this is where we need to make the biggest efforts. If we are to have a biofuels industry in Queensland, we need to change the consumer habits of Queenslanders. If we want Queenslanders to make biofuels, we have to get Queenslanders to buy biofuels. I certainly acknowledge what the minister said earlier in his speech about the centrality of the consumer awareness campaign—the public education campaign. That is absolutely crucial to the success of this bill and this mandate, and I am pleased to see that we are already fast riding down the path on that issue.

I know the millers and growers in regional Queensland do want this emerging industry to strike roots and thrive, and I know that regional representatives in this parliament from all sides do want this industry to succeed. If we all want this—and I am talking to everyone in Labor, the LNP and also the Katter's Australian Party representatives—we all need to go out and be champions for E10. We do not just need to be champions in here; we need to be champions out there as well. We have to lead by example. We have to talk it up and urge Queenslanders to make the choice at the bowser. In this process of implementing the mandate, we know that local fuel sellers need time to adjust. It is clear to me from the submissions that we have to look after the retailers who are going to be liable for this mandate. We understand that there will be a need for a change and a need for reinvestment on their behalf. The process we have, some parts of which I will outline, allows us to introduce our policy with a lesser impact for those retailers.

This government will continue to work with fuel sellers to ensure biofuels can be offered to a large number of Queensland motorists in an efficient way, minimising costs to fuel sellers. Here is how the process of implementing the biofuels mandate will happen: fuel sellers will give an initial report on fuel sale volumes for each fuel type for a calendar quarter and these reporting provisions are expected to commence six months in advance of the mandate itself. The government will analyse the data to ensure that the threshold amounts for small fuel retailers is set at the right level, and the threshold amount may be modified through regulation. The mandate will apply to a smaller fuel retailer who owns or operates less than 10 service stations but sells more than 250,000 litres of petrol fuel in a calendar quarter at any one of their service stations. The retailer can also count sales of regular and premium blended fuels sold at any of their service stations towards the mandate, and this means that small fuel retailers will have a choice about which of their service stations will offer those biobased petrol blends, minimising their compliance costs.

In addition, the exemption provisions in the bill take into account situations where complying with the mandate would threaten the viability of the fuel seller's business. The department will continue to work with stakeholders in the coming months on the criteria for the exemptions framework and will make any necessary adjustments to the thresholds for retail liabilities before the biofuels mandates commence. I feel we have given great consideration to the needs of fuel retailers and I do understand their concerns about the potential costs. I note claims by fuel retailers that it may cost them around \$25,000 or \$30,000, and it has even been claimed that it could cost up to \$900,000 in some cases. The industry body claims that it will cost between \$213 million to \$319 million to upgrade all 1,300 sites in Queensland. I also note the counterclaims by ethanol processing producers and growers refuting this, stating that there would be a lesser need to bring in new equipment and infrastructure. Despite the conjecture about costs, I am confident that we can bring it in without incurring unnecessary burdens on retailers and therefore customers. Despite the disagreement about costs of infrastructure and equipment, I am confident that we will get the starting points and the percentage right.

I note that the member for Glass House said that it was policy on the run, but I would say to look at the submissions that we have received. Many of them said two per cent was too low and others said that four per cent was way too difficult. I believe we have landed it where it is right. What I am also confident about is that we can deliver surety and certainty. It is clear to all stakeholders that this state has the capacity to introduce this mandate. In its submission Caltex said that 1,381 petrol retail sites in Queensland already sell E10. That is 28 per cent of total sites, and I believe that is a great starting point for selling bioblended fuels. We have already heard that most cars in Queensland are ready for it. The Biofuels Association stated that 95 per cent of the 2.5 million Queensland vehicle fleet are compatible with biofuels. Not only that, we have the capacity to produce the biofuel. The TfA Project Group said that only 27 per cent of the annual 140 megalitre production capacity of existing ethanol plants is currently being used.

A two per cent mandate would utilise 42 per cent of the existing capacity. Considering all of those points, I am confident that we have the capacity to deliver this product and we have the capacity to deliver surety and certainty to the industry. After the failure to introduce the mandate the last time, I

believe that that is absolutely crucial. It is clear that all parties in this House want to avoid another policy breakdown in this area. In late 2010, the proposed ethanol mandate was deferred and no policy decision followed. I have seen the impact of that deferral graphically in my own electorate. In the Narangba Innovation Precinct there are two diesel plants—or there were. One closed down at the time and it is now a storage location for a chemical company. I think that all sides of this House are determined to avoid that and want to deliver surety and certainty to the industry and to stakeholders. After listening to this debate tonight, I think it is very clear that we have listened and we have created a pathway that engenders that certainty.

I also have confidence that the mandate will work. Despite the problems in New South Wales, consumers in that state are most likely to purchase ethanol blends. Forty-five per cent of New South Wales drivers say that they are happy with E10, and 82 per cent of all the ethanol sold in Australia is sold in New South Wales. What will also provide certainty and surety is that fact that the mandate can be increased through regulation but cannot be reduced through regulation. In order to reduce the mandate, it would have to come back to parliament.

In conclusion, I believe that what we have before us is the best model for a biofuels mandate in Australia. We have learned from the New South Wales experience. This bill lays down a sure pathway for manufacturers and producers and it allays the burden on retailers and wholesalers. It delivers that certainty and surety, which is what all stakeholders want. If we have want to have a biofuels industry in Queensland, this legislation is the best foundation for that. If we want to build up the industry, the biggest thing we can do is increase consumer confidence. All of us in this House have a role in doing that by becoming a champion for our own locally produced biofuels. I place great faith in that public awareness and public education campaign that will be following soon. I believe that the bill creates more opportunities for jobs now and jobs in the future.

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (7.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. I listened to the contribution to the second reading debate of the Minister for Energy and noticed that he attempted some historical revision in terms of how this bill has eventuated. So I will start by providing a more balanced and accurate potted history of the politics of ethanol mandates as they have played out in the Queensland parliament in recent times.

This bill is here today thanks to the LNP and the motion moved by the shadow minister for energy, the member for Glass House, on 6 May this year. During the debate on that motion, I noted that the LNP had moved it in order to provide a way forward for what had undoubtedly been a very tortured area of public policy in Queensland over many years. I also pointed out that on three occasions—in 2002, in 2004 and in 2008—the LNP had introduced private members' bills seeking to establish an ethanol mandate and a renewable fuels industry in Queensland and that on each occasion those bills had been defeated by the Beattie and then Bligh Labor governments.

Over the years the debate on the issue of establishing an ethanol mandate, other biofuels and a renewable fuels industry in Queensland has identified a number of implementation questions. That process of debate and discovery has continued in terms of the committee report on this bill, its recommendations and the foreshadowed amendments circulated by the minister.

Since 2006, Labor's interest in an ethanol mandate has been episodic, inconsistent and opportunistic. There was a 2006 election commitment to introduce a five per cent ethanol mandate in Queensland, which Labor reneged on in late 2010. A decade after first committing to introduce an ethanol mandate, Labor again started talking about ethanol. It has been provided with some direction by this House via the LNP's motion on 6 May this year. It has consulted on a discussion paper and introduced this bill.

As I mentioned earlier, the LNP's earlier legislative efforts were continually providing for emerging issues in this space. For example, the LNP's 2008 bill included moving the mandated level of ethanol into regulation to provide for administrative flexibility, allowing exemptions to be granted in certain circumstances and encouraging emerging second-generation lignocellulosic technology to reduce the conflict between using traditional food and feed crops to produce fuel.

During the debate on the LNP's motion in May, I recognised that introducing an ethanol mandate into any jurisdiction was problematic. That fact is acknowledged in the explanatory notes accompanying this bill. There are practical considerations, such as continuity of supply, the interests of consumers, the concerns of other stakeholders and the complexity of the federal government being responsible for applying excise rates.

The question of an ethanol mandate in establishing a renewable fuels industry was discussed during the last parliament, and in April 2014 a bill was introduced by the Katter party that replicated the LNP's 2008 bill without providing for developments around the implementation of an ethanol mandate and establishing a renewable fuels industry in Queensland. As a result, the then State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee recommended that the Katter party bill not be passed. However, it made other recommendations that, once again, updated the public policy debate around what is required to successfully put a mandate in place and establish a new industry, which was a worthwhile process. The former LNP government supported the committee's recommendations.

I am a strong, long-term supporter of an ethanol mandate and the establishment of a renewable fuels industry in Queensland. My first motor vehicle was a 1993 Holden VR Commodore sedan. It was known as the 'grey ghost' and it ran very happily and without any incidents on E10. My second motor vehicle was a 2006 VZ Commodore sedan. It was known as the 'Hinchinbrook express' and also ran happily and without incident on E10. My third motor vehicle was a 2006 Holden Adventra CX6 wagon. I loved that car but, unfortunately, like me, it was getting pretty old and it racked up many kilometres. It had a dark, charcoal coloured paint job with heavily tinted windows, resulting in it becoming—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Order! Members, I appreciate the member has said something funny, but let us calm down.

**Mr CRIPPS:** That resulted in the vehicle being known, unsurprisingly in North Queensland, as the 'Mafia wagon'. But it also ran very well and served me very faithfully for many years on E10.

Late last year, I acquired my fourth motor vehicle, which was a 2014 Holden Colorado 7 wagon. In one respect, it is unfortunate that this model is a diesel. So for the last 12 months I have not been purchasing E10, but I am looking forward to a commercial biodiesel industry being established in Queensland as soon as possible, hopefully assisted by the provisions of this bill.

Nevertheless, supporters of establishing a renewable fuels industry, including me, have to realise that others are not so enthusiastic and we have to address their concerns. Those stakeholders include some motoring groups, intensive animal feedlot operators and many service station operators. We need to make sure that the initial mandated level is appropriate and can be met by existing production capacity in Queensland. Nothing would be more embarrassing than commencing a mandate at such a level that could not be met by current production levels within Queensland and for fuel retailers being forced to import ethanol from other states or other countries to avoid being in breach of the legislation. Therefore, I accept it as sensible the pragmatic and practical proposal to commence the ethanol mandate at two per cent for petrol and 0.5 per cent for biodiesel, as provided for in this bill. My understanding is that these figures were proposed as minimums by the parliamentary committee after its inquiry into the bill, taking into consideration the submissions and the evidence given to it by stakeholders and witness, including advice from the Department of Energy and Water Supply.

However, I note the amendments circulated this afternoon in the name of the Minister for Energy that propose to commence the mandates for petrol and biodiesel at three per cent and one per cent respectively rather than the two per cent and 0.5 per cent as originally provided for in the bill. At the same time, the minister's amendment also delays the commencement of the mandates for both petrol and biodiesel from 1 July 2016 to 1 January 2017.

There certainly are practical implementation issues which must be managed during the implementation of these mandates. As a supporter of the mandates I hope the delay can be utilised to ensure a smooth introduction of these arrangements throughout Queensland as of 1 January 2017. I hope this supports confidence in the industry and provides certainty for investment in infrastructure and supply of these renewable fuels.

I am enthusiastic about an increase in these volumetric mandates in the future for both ethanol in petrol and biodiesel fuels. I again temper that statement by asserting that those increases need to occur in an orderly fashion, in particular when Queensland is capable of supplying it. I note the administrative flexibility provided for in this bill where the volumetric mandate can be amended via legislation rather than legislative amendment. While it is certainly not the intention of this bill to create an artificially high demand for feedstocks that are processed into renewable fuels, one of the potential benefits of this legislation is that it will send positive signals to farmers across Queensland who produce those feedstocks that there is an additional demand and market for their product. That is why I have never agreed with people who oppose a mandate to establish a renewable fuels industry in Queensland that this legislation will artificially increase prices for these agricultural products. In contrast, I think it will send a positive signal to producers to have confidence to produce more of these feedstock crops and to grow their agricultural businesses.

I do subscribe to the view that this legislation can help stimulate regional economic development through the creation of alternative and stable markets for crops like grain, sugar cane and other feedstocks. This can help diversify the market demand for farmers involved in these rural industries and stimulate economic and job growth in regional communities. I also subscribe to the argument that the establishment of a domestic renewable fuels industry reduces Queensland's exposure to the international oil market and the relative decline in the fuel refining capacity across Australia. Improving Queensland's fuel security is not a bad thing. Improving Queensland's terms of trade, however minimal in the first instance, is also not a bad thing.

It might be an understatement to say that this bill is the culmination of a long and difficult journey in terms of public policy debate on the issue of ethanol and the establishment of a renewable fuels industry in Queensland. However, it is somewhat of a relief to see the debate resolved as it has. The contribution of the member for Glass House was balanced and reasonable, and I think it was made out of an abundance of caution about the complexity and practical issues associated with the development of this new initiative. This is a good outcome for Queensland and for my electorate of Hinchinbrook.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (7.51 pm): I rise this evening to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015 and wish to outline to this House the impact this bill will have on Queensland and, in particular, on the Townsville region. I will not spend my time talking about some of the great cars that I had, unlike the honourable member for Hinchinbrook, but I did learn to drive in a 1956 Ford Zephyr Mark III. The speedometer was in miles per hour, there were no seat belts and we actually used leaded fuel back in those days. I will not fill in the rest of the blanks to the car I have now.

I had the opportunity to attend two of the early community consultation forums instigated by the Palaszczuk government regarding the *Towards a clean energy economy* discussion paper. The first was in Townsville and the second was in my home district of the Burdekin. Both were well attended by the public and both had high levels of positive interest, particularly from sugarcane and grain growers alike. In Queensland ethanol is generally sourced from sugar cane or molasses and grain or sorghum. There are currently two operating ethanol plants in Dalby and Sarina, both producing 140 megalitres per year. Ethanol blended fuel in Queensland is referred to as E10. It contains up to 10 per cent ethanol and 90 per cent petrol. E10, as we all know, has been available in Queensland for more than a decade. During its peak production consumption period in 2010-11 ethanol blended fuel was around 900 million litres, or around 2.7 per cent, of regular unleaded fuel sold, but it has subsequently fallen to around about 350 litres in 2013-14, or around about 1.2 per cent of regular unleaded petrol. Approximately 345 petrol stations in Queensland currently offer ethanol blended fuels with more than half of these being located, unfortunately, in the south-east corner of Queensland.

On a global comparison, Queensland and Australia are only scratching the surface of ethanol blended fuel production and use. Biofuels production on a large scale occurs in China, Brazil and the United States, with the latter two countries contributing approximately 87 per cent of the world's ethanol production in 2011. Brazil relies heavily on the sugarcane industry to supply the production of ethanol, while the United States relies on its corn production to supply its biofuels industry. As at 1 January 2015 the USA had a production capacity of around about 56 billion litres per year and around about 4.5 billion litres of biodiesel. Queensland University of Technology Phd researcher Dylan Cronin, a North Queensland boy, is undertaking research into the potential of sugarcane waste as a renewable energy source. Unlocking the potential of biorefinery manufacturing in Australia, which is an industry predicted to be worth around about US\$160 billion globally by the year 2020, would be, in Cronin's words, a game changer for the country's manufacturing and agricultural sectors.

The impact that ethanol blended fuels will bring to the people of North Queensland is immense. I quote aspects taken from a story in the *North Queensland Register* newspaper by journalist Matt Sherrington on 13 November this year when covering a story about North Queensland bioethanol fuels. He wrote—

The Charters Towers region is set to receive a minimum \$200 million annual boost to the local economy in addition to the creation of 650 jobs when the Pentland Bio-Energy project becomes a reality.

Speaking at the Charters Towers Prosperity Forum last week Renewable Developments Australia Pty Ltd (RDA) managing director Tony D'Alessandro briefed guests in attendance on the exciting prospects that lie ahead for those in the region.

...

It's predicted that by 2022 there will be a 145 billion litre demand for bio-ethanol, and demand from Asia will double in that time as well.

They already have 20 investors on board for the project, including a US Fortune 100 company that will purchase all bioethanol produced at the facility for at least 15 years. He goes on to say that once completed the facility will produce the lowest cost bioethanol in the world. The Pentland plant is expecting to produce 250 million litres of fuel grade bioethanol by 2018-19. A further 344 million litres will be produced between June 2019-20, which is what will be expected to be the output on an annual basis from that point forth. If that is not a good thing for the people of Pentland, Charters Towers and the Queensland economy then I will eat my hat.

This story will be replicated in Ingham and the Burdekin where ethanol production plants are shovel ready and waiting for the green light to start. The impact on those local economies will certainly give them a kick-along that is well needed at this particular time. What is more important about this bill is that it gives the green light to further development and production of biodiesel. Including a mandate for biodiesel in the bill provides a more holistic industry solution with the potential to deliver more regional development opportunities and jobs and more investment opportunities for producers. The growth in diesel fuel in Queensland is around about nine per cent annually with approximately 80 per cent of Queensland service stations offering diesel fuel. Up to five per cent of biodiesel can be added to mineral diesel without having to label it to the consumer. Therefore, many diesel consumers will be unaware they already probably have biodiesel blended fuel when they fill up at the bowser right now. More importantly for the people of Townsville, the future opportunity to supply the US Navy's South Pacific fleet with biodiesel will have a profound impact on the region. While not only supplying the ships with a green fuel option, the flow-on effect will give the local area the ability to supply the fleet with fresh food sourced from across the region. Furthermore, regular dockings of Navy ships brings a boost to the local economy with sailors spending their hard-earned cash when visiting ports. Townsville is set to be a vibrant hub of North Queensland when these opportunities come to life. The importance of ethanol as a greener fuel source has far-reaching impacts on the economy in North Queensland and will be of great importance to our region. I therefore commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Order! Before calling the next speaker, I recognise members of the Brisbane and Logan Islamic community who are in the gallery tonight.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (7.59 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill. It is with some excitement that I speak on the bill, because it represents a great opportunity for the state of Queensland. I reflect that this is the fifth time that this bill has been before the House. While I have a lot of notes on the history of the issue in the parliament, I do not think it is appropriate to reflect too much on that tonight, because the important thing is that in the House tonight we have a general consensus that this is what is needed. I congratulate opposition members and the Leader of the Opposition for their contributions so far to the debate tonight. I congratulate the minister, the Premier and the government for making this a reality.

On my journey with the issue of ethanol, in about 2002 in Townsville I attended a forum where the RACQ told us that the sky would fall; that cars would break down a kilometre up the road because of the use of ethanol. At that time, I thought that I would like to know more about it. The same vehicles with the same standards and modifications are still driving around; magically, they have not failed. Thankfully, I was introduced to the Institute of Automotive Mechanical Engineers, which is the authority on motor vehicles. If there is a problem with specifications or engine damage in a vehicle, the institute is our ultimate authority. I was pleased to learn that the institute is a strong supporter of ethanol. I found it interesting that the Institute of Automotive Mechanical Engineers supports ethanol, firstly because it believes it will bring the price of fuel down and secondly because it says the majority of cars in the rest of the world—we have been left behind—are specifically designed for ethanol. Specifications that make sense to engineers but that do not make sense to me mean that cars run better on ethanol fuel. In the not-too-distant future, Australia will no longer be producing cars, so we will be importing cars from places that use ethanol. Either way, the tide is coming in and we may as well jump in. However, that is not the only reason that we want it and it is not the only reason that 63 other countries have implemented a biofuels mandate.

When talking about this subject, it is difficult to identify the big driver. I am not too sure what the big driver is. Perhaps we should say it is the health benefits. According to Associate Professor Dr Ray Kearney, the New South Wales Department of Health has estimated that almost three times more people die—that is, up to 1,400 deaths per annum—from exposure to vehicle exhaust pollution than from road accidents. The Australian Medical Association identified that in one year in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, the number of deaths from vehicle emissions was greater than the number of deaths

from road accidents, which is why the AMA is a strong supporter of ethanol. On that basis alone one would think we should be pushing for ethanol to help save lives in the City of Brisbane. However, it does not stop there, because to me that is not the biggest driver.

We turn to fuel security. Last year in Mackay I attended a conference on biofuels. The head of the NRMA, who has a defence background, talked about fuel security. You might think he was joking, but he was quite serious when he said that there is an al-Qaeda newsletter that makes references to cutting off supply routes to countries. He said that we import a lot of our fuel from the Middle East, through the Indonesian Straits and up into Singapore, where it is processed. Ninety per cent of our fuel now comes from overseas. Not so long ago in Western Australia, a couple of tankers had issues with fuel. They started to run out of fuel in Western Australia. In Australia, we have about 21 days of fuel security. We are not meeting our international obligations in terms of the amount of fuel that we are supposed to keep in this country. If you take that further, most countries will have 70 or 90 days worth of fuel, but the governments own a portion of that fuel. In this country, our government owns zero per cent of our fuel reserves. Therefore, we have really serious concerns about fuel security. Outside of biofuels, there is zero policy to address that. If we look forward, everyone admits that the 10 per cent that we are producing will be shut down, so we will have to import 100 per cent of our fuel in the not-too-distant future. Even still, I do not think fuel security is the biggest driver.

We could look at the environment. One of the benchmarks that I have heard is that a 10 per cent ethanol fuel can reduce tailpipe emissions by 30 per cent. Last year I was with the Deputy Speaker in New Zealand, which has adopted a mandate. I believe that initiative was influenced by the Greens. New Zealand has adopted a mandate based on its environmental benefits. There is definitely a thirst and a growing appetite for renewable resources. Only today I was told of recent comments by Bill Gates and other notable associates about producing a fund for renewable resources. There is a growing appetite for this type of product. Ethanol has some wonderful environmental benefits. Many countries have seen the benefits of it and have adopted it on that basis. An independent analysis from United Ethanol Australia indicates that ethanol reduces GHG emissions by more than 30 per cent. However, I do not think that is the main driver.

Arguably, the greatest driver is the economy. Robert Carey in Ingham and the Cox family in the Burdekin have both been champions of this issue. The Manildra Group in New South Wales and United Petroleum, which bought the ethanol plant in Dalby, have been champions of the industry. They are begging for a sign from governments. Tonight, both sides of government have said that they are keen to drive this, because this is not about setting a mandate and setting a figure; this is about driving it beyond that, even beyond the term of this parliament. There will be resistance. There will be hurdles and pitfalls in driving this industry to the point where it can create new factories. However, it would be a wonderful thing to do for the state of Queensland. This is a new industry in which we will forever be competitive. In Queensland, it will do something that is very difficult to do these days, that is, generate regional jobs. We will be producing fuel that pays taxes at the point of production. That is of enormous benefit. It is a very important point to make in the federal debate, because while they talk about subsidies on fuel excise that does not take into account the fact that taxes are paid at the point of production and 90 per cent of our fuel is produced overseas. There are enormous benefits federally to producing fuel in Australia.

For me, probably the biggest factor involves second generation technology. In conversations leading up to this point, the minister has quite rightly made strong reference to this. In the previous parliament, I was lucky enough to be part of a parliamentary tour to the plant in Mackay. At that time, comment was made that we can outcompete China and Brazil in bioplastics and bio-oils. I was surprised that we could compete with China on anything and I was curious to know why that would be. The answer is that those countries have a large population with a high demand for a diminished or a given size of biomass. In Australia, we have enormous resources of biomass that are uneconomical to export, but will come off the back end of the first generation technology as free input to second generation technology, which could see wonderful new large industries pop up everywhere in regional Queensland and, we hope, regional Australia. However, that will not start if we do not start the first generation technology and its practical application, that is, ethanol and fuel.

We are doing a wonderful thing. There might be some challenges and some risks, but certainly the benefits are nothing short of magnificent. I think what we are doing tonight is a great thing for the future of Queensland.



**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (8.09 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. It is a rare thing

in this place to receive cross-party support and unanimous committee support for such an important policy initiative. At the outset, I congratulate the minister for bringing this bill to the parliament. It is something that I have enjoyed working on with him from the very early stages. It is a terrific achievement. It is great to have support right across the chamber.

Reflecting on why the House shares this view, it is clear that a burgeoning biofuels industry in Queensland aligns with a number of fundamental aspirations we collectively share for our state. A growing biofuels industry means regional development and diversification of uses for agricultural outputs such as grains and sugar cane. A growing biofuels industry encourages technological advancement, consistent with the Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland strategy and building on Queensland's tropical expertise and links to the tropical economies of the Asia Pacific.

A growing biofuels industry can help the state achieve a cleaner, greener energy future and greater fuel security from renewable resources. A growing biofuels industry is good for motorists, with the prospects of more efficient, quality fuel being delivered and a positive cost differential to regular unleaded, putting downward pressure on prices at the bowser while maintaining consumer choice. A growing biofuels industry will support economic growth and help deliver the jobs of the future.

Last year Deloitte Access Economics, in partnership with QUT, studied the economic impact of a future tropical biorefinery industry in Queensland. The study found potential for all forms of biorefining to contribute more than \$1.8 billion in annual gross state product to Queensland and increase employment across the state by 6,640 full-time equivalent jobs over the next 20 years.

The introduction of ethanol and biodiesel mandates is central to the delivery of the biofuel benefits I have just listed. Following the release of the biofuels discussion paper in June, the Palaszczuk government undertook extensive public consultation about the most appropriate mechanisms for introducing the mandate. This included public forums in key regions across the state.

In my capacity as Treasurer but also as the member for Mulgrave, I was particularly pleased to attend the Innisfail consultation session. Local canegrowers joined with millers, ethanol industry representatives and other key stakeholders to express their support for the introduction of a mandate. I was advised that there is strong interest from a range of private sector proponents across North Queensland who recognise that an ethanol mandate will help deliver the demand needed to invest capital in regional Queensland and build new refinery capacity.

Independent analysis by Deloitte identified that Queensland has a comparative advantage in biorefining, with our climate and agricultural sector ensuring the availability of natural materials that can produce not only cleaner fuel but also cleaner energy and the manufacturing of plastics and chemicals from renewable inputs such as crop waste.

Over 60 countries around the world currently have some form of biofuels mandate, with Brazil the most notable example. In the United States the use of ethanol blended fuel is ubiquitous. Labor has a proud tradition of supporting smart, bio initiatives and as a result Queensland now has some of the best minds in the world working at facilities like the QUT Mackay Renewable Biocommodities Pilot Plant which opened in 2010 with funding of \$3.1 million from the former Labor government.

Queensland's biofuels strategy and our biofuels mandates continue this Labor tradition of supporting innovative economic development and regional development. Biofuels are a key component of our \$180 million Advance Queensland investment in science and innovation, helping to diversify the Queensland economy and deliver the jobs of the future.

It is important to comment briefly on the key components of the bill, in particular the starting point for the mandate and the pathway forward. The Palaszczuk government is acutely aware of the need for a smooth transition into the mandate. That is why the bill proposes that fuel retailers be registered with the Department of Energy and Water Supply ahead of the commencement of the mandate, providing details including retail sites, types of fuel and fuel sales volumes. These reporting requirements will not only provide a complete picture of the retail industry but also ensure threshold volumes for small retailers are set at the right level.

It is important that a responsible exemptions framework be in place for fuel retailers who have legitimate reasons for not being able to comply. However, we must also learn from the New South Wales experience where retailers and in particular large franchises were found to have been utilising exemptions to avoid supply.

We are committed to working collaboratively with fuel sellers to ensure that biofuels can be offered to a large number of Queensland motorists in the most efficient way, in order to minimise transition costs. I note that a number of retailers have already undertaken site conversions following the original proposal for an ethanol mandate several years ago.

I am aware that the committee has raised concerns that the initial starting point of the mandate may not in itself result in immediate new refining capacity, given the two existing ethanol producers at Sarina and Dalby are capable of supplying the initial level of ethanol from their existing facilities. The minister has recognised this in the amendments circulated and the proposed three per cent starting point for the ethanol mandate and the 1 January 2017 commencement date reflects the willingness of the Palaszczuk government to respond to feedback received during consultation.

I have said from day one that the ramp-up of the biofuels mandate must align with the productive capacity required to supply this biofuel from Queensland. It is our desire to encourage the majority of biofuels sold in Queensland to come from Queensland. Investment in new biorefining capacity is a long-term prospect. The mandate provides the foundational demand and the government's published pathways options provide the impetus for new capital investment as the mandate ramps up over time. The mechanism in the bill which allows the mandate to be increased by regulation, informed by the newly established Queensland Productivity Commission, will allow the market and motorists to gradually respond, with supply and demand growing as one.

I digress for a moment to join with the member for Mount Isa in recognising some of the people he mentioned who have contributed to this process over many years. I have already thanked the minister for his great work and for partnering with us at an early stage to help bring the legislation to this stage. I think he has done a fantastic job. The previous Labor government had an awful lot of people working in this space, some of whom helped us get to a point where we thought we would not need to be having this debate today.

I know that there have been some very powerful advocates for this. Certainly people took the time to speak with me to give me the information I required and to educate me as to exactly how much benefit this would be to regional communities, as well as what it would mean in terms of jobs in those communities. A few people I have spoken to on this include Robert Carey and—it pains me to say it—Belinda Johnson, who is a passionate advocate for the Burdekin. She introduced me to Geoff Cox and Dave Cox, who have an absolute wealth of knowledge and are terrific people who deserve our thanks because they are very passionate advocates for the industry. I should also mention people like Allan Parker, as well as Dick Honan. These are people who have played a very important role in shaping my thinking. It is important to make sure that I acknowledge some of those people who have allowed this process to get to where it is today.

While the biofuels mandate will ensure appropriate levels of E10 and biodiesel in the market, this must be accompanied by a prominent consumer education campaign to ensure demand matches growth in supply. The need for a strong and attitude-changing consumer awareness campaign was one of the strongest pieces of feedback arising from the government's biofuels discussion paper and the report of the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee.

This consumer campaign needs to address concerns about vehicle compatibility, quality of fuel and value for money, as well as conveying to Queenslanders the broader benefits I spoke about earlier. Those benefits are: regional development, industry development, jobs, technology and economic growth.

It is a very important piece of legislation. It is one that I think many of us in this House will look back on in future years and say that this is where we took the very important next step in changing the dynamic in terms of the way we drive our cars and in the way that we see regional Queensland and the opportunities that are afforded to those regional communities. With those words, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (8.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. I commend the state government on its initiative to make these things happen and for there to be tangible legislation in this House. For many years we have seen this debate. I think there have been three or four private members' bills on the issue. There have been token gestures and rejection. Sometimes it has been a rock show when it comes to ethanol.

I commend the government. As the Treasurer indicated, it has been a steady approach. They have all the stakeholders on board. They have communicated with the industry that needs to invest in this area. They have spoken to those who have concerns. They have been able to convey the message of the importance of the industry to Queensland and probably Australia. I believe that this is going to be an emerging industry from here on.

The KAP have pushed this issue in two different areas: one is the environment with regard to clean energy and renewable energy and the second is cheaper fuel. There are going to be great benefits. We see an emerging fuel industry as well. The member for Mount Isa mentioned before that \$23 billion of fuel is exported from the Middle East. So we see this as an opportunity. I know that in the United States of America 250 million cars run on 10 per cent ethanol. I know that there is a lot of scaremongering out there but, if it can be done in the United States of America, it can be done here. I believe that the grain industry is a very powerful and prosperous industry in America. So this is an opportunity.

Being a member from a rural electorate, I see the opportunities. We have billions of megalitres of water running into the ocean every year. This is an opportunity for us to own our own fuel. We do not know the percentage that the mandate will get to one day. Our goal is probably 10 per cent. It might be pie in the sky to others, but the fact is that it is happening overseas and they are prospering quite well. We can work towards that. We have the mandate starting at three per cent. We commend the minister for moving it from two to three per cent. We have indicated very strongly that we would like to see the mandate at four per cent. The reason is that there are a lot of industries out there that want to invest but feel that three per cent may be not enough. We have always been determined to have that four per cent mandate. But we commend the minister for his initiative in moving it from two to three per cent. I have read the committee's report, and it says—

The Committee strongly supports an increase in the mandate level, as soon as practicable, to encourage further investment in the industry. It is therefore in favour of option 1 for the proposed mandate pathway (4 percent from 1 July 2019) and would support a 4 per cent mandate being implemented even earlier if this is determined to be achievable.

At the public hearings where the government heard from different communities and different stakeholders, there was much talk about increasing the mandate from two per cent to possibly four per cent. The KAP will be moving an amendment to that effect, but we are not moving an amendment to say move it to four per cent now or within 12 months. We want to be smart about this too. We will be moving an amendment to increase the mandate to four per cent by mid-2018. That is very close to the time frame that the committee was talking about.

I commend both the opposition and the government. This is supported by all parties—the government, the opposition and the crossbenches. That is good. I commend the government for taking the initiative and making it happen. It is actually happening tonight, and I am very proud and greatly honoured to be a part of this parliament where we will see this come to fruition. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (8.22 pm): I rise to support the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015. I would like to congratulate the minister and the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee for their work on this valuable bill. I note that the inquiry report from the committee and debate so far demonstrates the broad support for this bill.

Submissions to the inquiry largely reinforced the view that the mandate in the bill provides certainty to the biofuel industry so that it can invest, innovate, grow and importantly create jobs. The mandate will contribute to regional growth, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage innovation in biofuel production technologies. We have learned from the experiences of biofuel schemes around the world that sustainability criteria are important to avoid unintended environmental impacts from an expansion in biofuels production. This is particularly important given the amount of work underway at the moment to reduce the impact of broadscale agriculture on the Great Barrier Reef.

In this bill, only biofuels that meet sustainability criteria will be able to count towards meeting the mandate. These sustainability criteria will be prescribed by regulation. Robust sustainability criteria will take time to develop. Before the sustainability criteria are finalised, an interim regulation will be drafted to clarify that existing biofuels will be eligible until the sustainability criteria are prescribed. This will ensure industry certainty and investment in Queensland's biofuel industry from the start.

The sustainability criteria and the compliance model are being developed in consultation with stakeholders including feedstock growers, biofuel producers, fuel wholesalers and retailers, and associated interest and community groups such as the RACQ. The first such consultation meeting has already been held with biofuel producers, and further groups will be consulted in the next few months and throughout the development of the sustainability criteria.

The objectives of the sustainability criteria intersect with the key environmental priorities and commitments of this government such as the health of the Great Barrier Reef and climate change. High level principles for the criteria were set out in the June 2015 discussion paper for the biofuels mandate. There are also international standards and regimes that will need to be considered.

The government is aware that parties in the supply chain for biofuels already participate in a range of industry led and government accredited schemes, environmental regulation and sustainability programs. The development of the sustainability criteria will look to enable these to be used to demonstrate compliance with the biofuels sustainability criteria where they are relevant and meet the government's environmental requirements.

The objective is to establish an environmental outcome in regard to biofuels and to articulate how stakeholders can demonstrate their compliance with that outcome. What form this takes is central to consultation that is currently underway for the development of the criteria. Alongside this work, there will be modelling for a life cycle analysis of greenhouse gas emissions from various biofuels compared to conventional fuels. With these measures, the House can be confident that the biofuels mandate contained in this bill will be implemented without unforeseen environmental impacts or jeopardising the good work underway to improve water quality in the Great Barrier Reef. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (8.26 pm): It is a pleasure to rise in support of the Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill 2015 before the House. I want to make a brief contribution to the debate. I want to acknowledge the importance of sugar cane and grain production in the Mirani electorate not only for the purpose of feeding our population and livestock but also for the new opportunities that are coming online—and I refer to biofuels and the value that we will be able to add to growing sugar cane and grain crops.

Sugar alone delivered around 69,000 hectares of harvesting over the 2014 sugar year to Mackay Sugar, which has been operating for some 140 years. I still have a lot to learn about sugar, and I am not afraid to say so. Even though I came off the land myself, it was an area where we grew sorghum, wheat and sunflowers—all those types of grains. Whilst when growing cane there are a lot of similar practices to growing those other crops, there are certainly different practices that somebody like me would have to learn. I am trying to educate myself by driving around the electorate of Mirani. I am not sure but I think it would have to be close to the second or third biggest sugar electorate in Queensland. I am trying to learn from watching. I do have an opportunity to go and spend a couple of days on a cane farm early next year. I will be doing that because from my own experience I want to learn exactly what happens out there. I want to learn the language and get to know the industry in the way that I would like to.

One thing I do notice about sugar growers is that they are like farmers: they are hardworking and there is a consistency with the way they work. They have similar issues to farmers and livestock owners in the seasons that fall within the year. There are pressures on underground water, water costs in particular, and electricity—all important things to the grain growers that eat into the margins of whatever they can produce and make a profit from.

I am excited for the people of the Mackay region and I am excited for the people of Central Queensland because I can see us moving into an era—I will probably be too old to worry about it except to sit on the front porch and watch the trucks go by. It is the security for industry that I like. It is going to continue to provide jobs because of all this new technology and the new direction we will be taking. All I can say to the people of that area is, 'Yes, we are going through a tough time at the moment, but things will get better. We will have security of crops, security of workers and security across the economy.' I do see a good future. Like I said, I want to encourage people to hang in there. Hopefully, we can all be significant beneficiaries from what will happen in the future.

Introducing mandated levels for biofuels, biobased petrol and biobased diesel will support the growth of new regional industries in Queensland in the transition to a clean energy economy. That is important with regard to the way that our environment is travelling at the moment. You can be positive and negative about the future of our environment. Somebody like me who has travelled across a lot of country and has been up and down a few ridges and dry gullies can tell honourable members that I can see a change out there in what is happening across our country. I believe that we have problems and we need to be taking them seriously.

Growing the biofuels industry supports cleaner energy production as well as new biobased industries that result in fossil fuel—that is my nickname, 'Fossil'—inputs being replaced by renewable resources and building regional economies in the process. Next generation facilities will be biofineries

able to make biofuels and a wide range of products and manufacturing inputs ranging from soil enhancers and fertilisers to cleaning products, plastics, paints and building materials. That is all the exciting stuff that I refer to. It is happening now, but it will get bigger as time goes on.

Making more products from biobased sources including waste streams means less disposal to landfills, greater resource efficiency and less greenhouse gas emissions. That says enough, does it not? They are the positive things that we should be looking for as we move forward. My grandchildren have a habit of saying to me, 'Poppy, please don't sing or dance,' but they will be saying in the future, 'Poppy did the right thing here because they started to bring on the change that was necessary to keep our world a liveable place and to make sure we are able to survive as a population in a much cleaner way.'

The Queensland government is committed to developing Queensland biofuels and industrial biotechnology sectors so that these industries can invest, innovate, grow and create jobs. I love those words 'create jobs' because being a Labor member and coming from a hands-on work background, I love to see people get jobs. It is one of the most important things for our economy. If people do not have jobs, they cannot spend, they do not have a cash flow, there is no cash flow in the community, so everyone misses out on work including our young people. That is another area of concern where we as leaders should be focused on trying to do more for our young people so they can have security in work, so they can look forward to a relationship, a marriage, children, buying a new car and buying a house. However, if we continue down this track of casualisation of workforces, we are not going to see those sorts of good things happen for the younger families in the coming years.

This government will continue to work with fuel sellers to ensure biofuels can be offered to a large number of Queensland motorists in an efficient way, minimising cost for fuel sellers. Critically, without this bill and these mandates, Queensland may miss the opportunity to join the global move to greater resource efficiency, renewable energy and renewable products. There has been a lot of discussion here tonight about whether there should be a two per cent or three per cent mandate. I can remember talking—and Minister Bailey might have been with me—with the people at Sarina who told us that they only needed two per cent at the moment because they wanted to grow with the industry, not be forced to put in massive infrastructure and plants because of what appeared to be a demand that does not really exist. As we get the community to understand the new fuels of the future are not going to impact on the way their car works and we as leaders in the community ensure that we deliver a message to the people, they can have confidence in the future because that is where things went wrong in the past with regard to ethanol in fuel. There were too many negatives out there, too many people talking about it negatively, rather than community leaders, members of parliament and the media trying to deliver a message to the community that it was a safe product to use.

I believe the bill provides the driver and an important means for achieving the government's biofutures ambitions and aligns with the Advance Queensland objectives. I like the bill. It is about the future and we should do everything we can to move forward and, most importantly, take the people of Queensland with us. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (8.36 pm), in reply: First of all, I thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate. I will take this opportunity to respond to a number of issues raised in the debate. Before I do, I would like to take a minute to recap on the objectives of the bill and its key components. The bill's objectives are to provide an assurance to existing ethanol and biodiesel producers and stimulate investment in a biofuels industry in Queensland.

The bill's objectives include: to contribute to regional growth and jobs creation, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles and to take advantage of the emerging second generation technologies for biofuels from a range of feedstock. As I said in my second reading speech, the government is committed to developing a sustainable biofuels and industrial biotechnology sector in Queensland. Industrial biotechnology is a real opportunity to diversify our economy and help create regional jobs and a new high-value, knowledge-intensive industry. Industrial biotechnology is the creation of fuel, chemicals, plastics and other materials. It encompasses a broad spectrum of scientific and industrial technologies to convert renewable feedstock into a diverse range of products. Queensland is well placed to take advantage of the opportunities in biotech with a favourable climate, strong agricultural sector and access to a range of feedstock and infrastructure. The Queensland government has backed this vision with its \$25 million Advance Queensland Innovation Partnerships program with grants of up to \$1.5 million available to universities and research organisations to accelerate the development of emerging industries and technologies.

The biofuels mandates will help Queensland transition to a clean energy economy, grow our biofuels and biomanufacturing sectors and boost jobs across the industry, especially in regional Queensland. The bill achieves these objectives by introducing a biofuels mandate starting at three per cent for biobased petrol—that is ethanol—and half a per cent for biobased diesel. The bill requires certain fuel retailers sell at least the minimum prescribed percentage of sustainable biobased petrol such as ethanol which is blended with mineral based petrol and sold as E10.

The bill nevertheless allows for new types of biobased petrol that may be developed in the future to count towards the mandate. The bill also mandates that fuel wholesalers sell at least the minimum prescribed percentage of sustainable biobased diesel. The bill establishes a fuel sellers' register that will allow the government to track how well the biofuels policy is working and monitor the performance of fuel sellers in meeting their minimum biofuels targets. The bill provides that fuel sellers can apply to the minister for an exemption from a mandate in certain circumstances. An exemption may be refused or granted with or without conditions. The bill also allows for the mandates to be temporarily suspended for stated periods of not more than 12 months in limited circumstances.

I will now take the opportunity to respond to a few of the issues raised during the debate by opposition members and the crossbench. Firstly, can I respond and thank the member for Glass House for his comments and contribution to the debate here today. I also thank the opposition members of the committee for what was a very cooperative, deliberative and thorough process. The member for Glass House asked how I, as the minister, arrived at three per cent. In the end it is a judgement call. It took me a while to be convinced about three, to be honest, but in the end I believe that we have to make a clear commitment to grow the industry in this state and that became a determining factor for me. I thought that three per cent gave us a much stronger base to build from, given the opportunities that we have in second generation, bio and other technologies that are emerging. We have to get going with this industry. We have to get the pedal to the metal, and that was a determining factor. It is a stronger statement of intent and a stronger commitment to jobs and regional jobs growth in Queensland right across this state. It is my view that, not only will we see an increase in capacity in Sarina and Dalby, but I think we will see new proponents and new plants as well. I think we will see some considerable growth, but to do that you have to have a bigger marketplace. That is what we are seeking here: a bigger marketplace, more investment and more jobs. That is where we have to go.

The member for Glass House asked, 'Will we have enough time for an effective campaign?' I think we will. We are already working on that. I think it has to be a really strong campaign, and I am very keen to see something outside of your ordinary advertising campaign. It has to be something where they are hungry and they want to 'go for it'. That is my intention and I am watching that process very closely. A number of other factors were raised. The member for Glass House raised the issue of a RIS, and I am willing to consider that. We will review this down the track, probably through the QPC, but I am certainly willing to consider that suggestion from the member for Glass House.

It was good to see the spirit of bipartisanship on this bill. There were many positive contributions, and I acknowledge all of the members who contributed in that vein. I do have to correct one little thing because I think there has been a little rewriting of history. This place certainly had an opportunity over the last three years to do this and a record majority. Was this side perfect in the past? Maybe not, but we started it and we committed to it. This has been a very strong Labor policy over time. We got this industry started. We have form on this probably for longer than anybody in this place, and we are proud of that. Let me just say that the evidence over the last three years does not back the idea that the opposition has always supported this. You had the opportunity. I am not going to get stuck into you too much about it today, but I had to get that out of my system. One factor in this was the tight time frame, and we did listen to the committee's contribution on that. Once we decided to adjust the time frame that certainly gave us more scope as well in terms of process and development to get that firmer foundation. That was also another factor in my thinking which might be of interest.

Can I just offer a couple of reflections as well in terms of my experience as a minister. I will freely confess that I was certainly not a biofuels or ethanol expert, nor am I now, but I certainly know a lot more than I did eight or nine months ago as a newly elected member of parliament. I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of industry players and the highly knowledgeable and skilful people who have given up a lot of time over the last seven to eight months to offer their views, to give their time, to inform debate, to inform this place and to inform the members here about this important issue. The people that come to mind are the people who I met at the forums. I went to four of the nine forums across the state, and sorghum farmers, millers, sugarcane farmers and proponents came up to me and spoke about the importance of this issue and what they wanted to do. There are tremendous

opportunities here, not just in the obvious ethanol and biodiesel areas, but second gen and other opportunities. A lot of the attention is on ethanol here for obvious reasons, but the biodiesel aspect of this is important as well. The demand for diesel in this state went up over nine per cent in the last financial year. It is a huge growth market, and in some ways the biodiesel aspect of this, while it is only half a per cent, is actually a really important factor in terms of this biofuels bill. I look forward to that aspect of industrial development in this state really getting some growth as this market expands under this bill. So it is not just about ethanol; it is also about biodiesel. I certainly would like to pay tribute in that regard, as there are opportunities there for Queensland workers, Queensland investment and jobs.

I acknowledge the contributions of the member for Mount Isa and the member for Dalrymple. The member for Mount Isa mentioned health benefits, and I agree with him on that: I think there are health benefits. This is not quite exactly the same thing as E10, but at our biofuels stand at the exhibition this year we had Jamie Whincup, the V8 driver, who is a very strong supporter of ethanol. I hope he does not mind me mentioning him in the debate. He said to me that it is not the same thing because he is talking about E85, but from somebody who is in an industry obviously involving automotive racing the difference between ethanol in the pit lane compared to when they used to run off traditional fuel was absolutely enormous for all those people involved in that industry. To a lesser extent, I have no doubt that generally getting more of a renewable energy source into our fuel mix has to have some health benefits, so I note his comments in that regard. I certainly noticed that this year. I have two brothers who like car racing and I inherited an interest in that when I was younger. I recently went to my first motor race at Bathurst with my nephew Dylan, and the difference from the last time I had been 20 years ago in terms of the fumes was really quite significant. That is a variation on what we are talking about, but in terms of having a renewable energy mix which is more widespread across the state there has to be health benefits.

There certainly are environmental benefits, as the minister for the environment outlined very succinctly and accurately, and I support his comments in that regard. I will not go back over them. Certainly there are economic benefits, as indicated in the study by Deloitte Access Economics and QUT which looked at a 20-year fully realised biofuture for Queensland. Even if we get halfway there, that is an extraordinarily exciting opportunity to create more than 6,000 jobs. We are an advanced economy in a tropical-subtropical climate with a lot of space, an advanced agriculture sector and first world knowledge. It all comes together, and the Premier has made it clear that she is very supportive of this vision for this state and I acknowledge her leadership in that regard. This is smart policy as well. It is part of our renewable energy vision as a government for this state. We believe in the transition to clean energy in this state in any form that we can achieve, and this is another variation of that outside our other commitments in terms of energy generation and distribution. I think we should be unashamed about and should be supporting any opportunity to create and develop Australian industry, Australian skills and Australian jobs when often Australian industry is under attack from international competition as they have much lower costs.

I again acknowledge the role of the Katter's Australian Party members on this. They have been very strong advocates in this regard. I have been very happy to involve them in this process and to work with them. I have found their commitment to the area honourable and their dealings always honourable. While they may be recent converts, given our Labor commitment since the middle of the 2000s, it has been good working with them and I acknowledge their very strong advocacy in that regard. I now table the explanatory notes to the amendments that will be moved during consideration in detail.

*Tabled paper:* Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Bill, explanatory notes to Hon. Mark Bailey's amendments [\[1782\]](#).

The proposed amendments are in response to a number of recommendations made by the committee in its report on the bill. First, the amendments will deal with the interaction between the biofuel mandate for biobased petrol—that is, ethanol—and the sale of low-aromatic fuel in a number of locations in Queensland. The Australian government is currently expanding the rollout of low-aromatic fuel to additional locations in the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York Peninsula where petrol sniffing is a social problem. Where low-aromatic fuel is introduced, regular unleaded petrol, including any regular blend, is removed from sale. As the bill requires a liable fuel retailer to sell a mandated volume of biobased petrol such as E10, there is a potential conflict between the Commonwealth's Low Aromatic Fuel Act 2013 and its strategy to reduce harmful petrol sniffing. The committee recommended that the bill be amended to ensure there are no unintended consequences for fuel retailers in the areas where low-aromatic fuel is required to replace regular unleaded petrol.

In addition, the amendments will ensure future regulations to prescribe a biofuels mandate percentage of three per cent for biobased petrol and 0.5 per cent for biobased diesel. The amendments will also ensure that a biofuels mandate cannot be suspended for more than 12 months in any two-year period based on certain grounds.

I thank my departmental and ministerial staff for their hard work during 2015 in developing the biofuels policy, working closely with and consulting industry groups to refine aspects of the framework and in the preparation of the bill for introduction to parliament. In particular I thank Kathie Standen and her DEWS team and David Shankey, my energy adviser, who are both in the advisers box today. In particular, I thank the energy regulation and governance team within the Department of Energy and Water Supply for their hard work and dedication. Without their commitment to going the extra distance, the biofuels policy and the bill would not have happened at all. Finally, I thank all of the stakeholders who have actively participated in the development of this bill over the last period of time. I look forward to working with them to implement the mandates. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—



**Mr BAILEY** (8.53 pm): I move the following amendments—

**1 Clause 4 (Amendment of s 5 (Interpretation))**

Page 5, after line 33—

*insert—*

*low aromatic fuel* means petrol, or petrol-biobased petrol blend, that is low aromatic fuel under the *Low Aromatic Fuel Act 2013* (Cwlth).

*low aromatic fuel service station* means a service station—

(a) where low aromatic fuel is sold to the public; or

(b) that is in a low aromatic fuel area, or fuel control area, under the *Low Aromatic Fuel Act 2013* (Cwlth).

**2 Clause 4 (Amendment of s 5 (Interpretation))**

Page 7, after line 2—

*insert—*

*standard service station* means a service station that is not a low aromatic fuel service station.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—

**Mr BAILEY** (8.54 pm): I move the following amendments—

**3 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 8, lines 23 and 27, before 'service'—

*insert—*

standard

**4 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 10, line 10, before 'service'—

*insert—*

standard

**5 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 10, line 15, after 'quarter'—

*insert—*

at the fuel seller's standard service stations

Amendments agreed to.

**Mr BAILEY:** I move the following amendment—

**6 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 10, lines 18 to 20—

*omit, insert—*

- (a) for the first 18 months after the commencement—3%; and
- (b) after that period—
  - (i) if a percentage higher than 3% is prescribed by regulation for this definition—the prescribed percentage; or
  - (ii) otherwise—3%.

**Mr KATTER:** I move the following amendment to the amendment—

**1 Amendment to Minister's Amendments, Amendment 6, as circulated**

Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))—

In paragraph (b) omit 3% and insert 4%.

Clause 6 refers to three per cent, and the amendment seeks to replace it with four per cent. The three per cent target at the end of 2017 is a starting point. What we are talking about here is setting some goals. There will always be some tension in terms of how hard we push this in the public arena. I refer to the introduction of unleaded petrol in Australia some 30 years ago. That was forced on us for public benefit. There is good reason for the government to force this on to people so that the great benefits it will have for this state and this country can be realised.

The four per cent target can be reached with Queensland's existing production capacity, which is over four per cent. One of the objectives of the bill is to promote development in this space. We believe that until we move beyond four per cent there will not be a shortage of supply because the Dalby plant and the Sarina plant currently produce in excess of four per cent. That target must be in this bill if we are serious about pushing production. It has been discussed and acknowledged by the committee. Then we can argue about the date that comes in. I think 18 months is more than enough time for people who really want this to happen to make it happen.

We all know that there will be a lot of pushback. Oil companies make \$23 billion a year out of selling oil in Australia. Until they are made to embrace this—I believe they will embrace it—we will not enjoy the benefits. It will create cheaper fuel, create a cleaner environment, create regional jobs and boost our regional economy, but it needs a push. That push needs to go beyond the three per cent. We welcome the three per cent but we must push to four per cent. They will have 18 months after that point in time. That is plenty of time to ramp up.

It is a more ambitious target that meets the objective of the bill which is to promote and facilitate development in the industry. That is a vital component of this bill. I think it is one that we can all agree is achievable. It is not highly ambitious. It is ambitious at best. It will facilitate development. I certainly support the move to four per cent after 18 months.

**Mr KNUTH:** I support the amendment. I believe that the minister has moved an amendment to amend it to three per cent. That remains, but 18 months after that—1 July 2018—it would extend to four per cent. I believe that the state is ready for that. The mandate is about investment. I believe that Queensland is ready for it.

Just to clarify that, I want to read this again. The committee report states—

The Committee strongly supports an increase in the mandate level, as soon as practicable, to encourage further investment in the industry. It is therefore in favour of option 1 for the proposed mandate pathway (4 percent from 1 July 2019) and would support a 4 per cent mandate being implemented even earlier if this is determined to be achievable.

So it is achievable and that is what our amendment does. It brings it to the transition period from 1 January 2017 at three per cent and then it transitions on 1 July 2018 at four per cent, and that is fair enough.

**Mr BAILEY:** I rise to speak in support of the proposed amendment moved by the member for Mount Isa to my amendment No. 6. The amendment proposes to increase the biobased petrol mandate from three per cent to four per cent after 18 months. The amendment also provides that a future regulation will be able to reduce the mandated percentage for biobased petrol after the increase to

four per cent. However, it cannot reduce the percentage below four per cent. However, with a higher starting mandate percentage of three per cent, obviously industry, particularly fuel retailers, will need more time to prepare their sites before the commencement. Therefore, I propose that both mandates for biobased petrol and biobased diesel will not commence before 1 January 2017—six months later than was the government's intended commencement of 1 July 2016. The government supports this amendment.

**Mr POWELL:** I return to my opening comments—that is, this mandate is only going to work if there is bipartisan support. There is support throughout the chamber and therefore we, too, will allow this amendment to pass. But let me say this, particularly to the minister: in doing this, we have done a couple of things. First of all, we have made a mockery of the commitment to get the Queensland Productivity Commission to review this. Secondly, it has made a mockery of the consultation that has gone on to date. People entered into that consultation on the basis of good faith that they were doing it at two per cent with subsequent increases to occur on the basis of the Productivity Commission's review. It makes a mockery and redundant the ongoing consultation that the minister's own department has around his pathways for the future of the mandate—consultation that is still open until 11 December this year. So there will be people who will feel blindsided. There will be people and there will be organisations out there who will be disappointed by the lack of consultation around this, and I think all of us need to take some responsibility for that.

I acknowledge that what we are talking about is an increase in 2½ years. I accept that. But, again, I would stress that we need to be using that time wisely. If you are not undertaking a regulatory impact statement in that time—which again I would stress you strongly consider doing—you should at least ensure that the Queensland Productivity Commission is reviewing these proposed steps because, as the member for Dalrymple himself said, the original intent of those future pathways was to be directed by the Queensland Productivity Commission to see whether they are achievable. I am all for setting targets and I am all for setting bold targets, but the original intent and the one that we have consulted with the broader community, with the people of Queensland and with stakeholders is one whereby we would determine through the Queensland Productivity Commission if that was achievable.

Tonight we are taking a step that will see that happen regardless. I ask that the government, through the Queensland Productivity Commission, review this step to ensure that we have in place all the necessary supports, particularly for the retailers, to make sure that they are able to continue to offer choice to customers. If we cannot offer choice to customers, we will see the mandate fail and we need to make sure that if we are going to put this through the House tonight it has support and it has the ability to work.

Non-government amendment (Mr Katter) agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.



**Mr BAILEY (9.04 pm):** I move the following amendments—

**7 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 11, lines 5 and 6—

*omit, insert—*

- (a) if a percentage higher than 0.5% is prescribed by regulation for this definition—the prescribed percentage; or
- (b) otherwise—0.5%.

**8 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 12, line 3, after 'quarter'—

*insert—*

at each of the fuel seller's fuel facilities

**9 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 12, lines 7 to 10—

*omit, insert—*

- (d) premium petrol;
- (e) premium petrol-biobased petrol blend;
- (f) sustainable biobased petrol sold in petrol-biobased petrol blend;
- (g) low aromatic fuel;
- (h) for a fuel wholesaler—

**10 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 12, line 21, 'calender'—

*omit, insert—*

calendar

**11 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 16, after line 3—

*insert—*

- (5) The Minister may not make a declaration in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1)(a) or (c) for fuel sellers if the making of the declaration would mean the sum of the periods of all declarations, in either of the circumstances, for the fuel sellers in the last 2 years is more than 1 year.

**12 Clause 6 (Replacement of pt 5A (Ethanol substitution))**

Page 16, line 4, '(5)'—

*omit, insert—*

(6)

**Mr POWELL:** The amendments relate to the remaining part of clause 6. Again, I just want to put on the record for the minister's benefit the fact that we do really now have with the protracted implementation date of 1 January 2017 an opportunity to make sure that we have some of the remaining concerns right. In particular, is that volumetric threshold that was set at 250,000 litres per calendar quarter accurate? Can the government use the data that it will be collecting from 1 January 2016 to ensure that it has set that at the right benchmark? Again, I am saying this in lieu of the fact that we do not have a RIS in place and we do not know what the full cost to the retailers, particularly the small business retailers, around this state will be. The government needs to use the 12 months that it now has available to it to ensure that it has all of the things that it appears it has taken a bit of a stab in the dark at are accurate and achievable so that, again, the mandate has the best opportunity to succeed.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 and 8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—

**Mr BAILEY** (9.06 pm): I move the following amendment—**13 Clause 9 (Insertion of new pt 8)**

Page 21, line 33—

*omit, insert—*

- (3) Section 35Q applies to information in the report as if the information were given under part 5A.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10, as read, agreed to.

**Third Reading**

**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.06 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

**Long Title**

**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.07 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 29 October (see p. 2635).

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (9.07 pm), continuing: As I was saying before I was interrupted on 14 October, I just want to conclude by saying a few words about the election campaign earlier this year that concluded with the election on 31 January. I want to commence by acknowledging the others who contested that election in the electorate of Sandgate. Kerry Millard, the former member for Sandgate, and the other candidates who contested that election all did so in the best and most positive of spirits. It always remains one of the great tests in standards of our democracy that all of these contests of ideas and contests of holding the great privilege and opportunity to be a representative in this place are done in largely, as I see it, the best of possible spirits.

That has certainly been my experience and I want to thank those other contestants of the election on 31 January in the electorate of Sandgate for the attitude which they took into the election and the way in which it was conducted. I think that was emblematic on the last day of the prepoll, when our campaign teams got together as we were helping each other pack down our gear and had a photograph taken of us all together in an acknowledgment that we had all worked together on supporting the festival of democracy in the electorate of Sandgate.

By way of reference to that festival of democracy, I acknowledge that on this occasion it resulted in an outcome that some people have suggested was somehow extraordinary, an amazing turnaround, an amazing outcome. My analysis is that the election result on 31 January 2015 showed the basis of politics in Queensland as it has been over the past 25 years: the Labor Party and the conservative parties are about even and there is an interesting mix of others to pepper the meal. That is why we must understand that the March 2012 election result was an aberration—an aberration that the people of Queensland realised was going to deliver bad government, where there was arrogance and an inability to listen and understand. That was my experience from the electors in the electorate of Sandgate, particularly around the totemic issue of the treatment of Eventide.

I want to thank all the members of my campaign team who supported me and all of the members of the other Labor Party branches and other supporters who supported my campaign. I particularly want to acknowledge the great work of my campaign manager, Jared Cassidy, who, since the election, has become Councillor Jared Cassidy in the Brisbane City Council.

I also want to thank and acknowledge the role my family have played in supporting me to come back to this House and be part of this great opportunity. In 2006, in my first speech in this place, I acknowledged the delight and inspiration that I received from my three young children. They are not so little anymore, but they remain a great inspiration.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (9.11 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I begin by congratulating the Speaker on his appointment and election to office and I ask that you convey those congratulations to him. I look forward to the execution of his duties of the high office of Speaker in accordance with his often stated principles of being an independent, fair and judicious judge of the events and affairs that occur in this House.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I say that after nine months of experience, too. I am honoured to address the 55th Parliament as the member for Clayfield in my fourth term in this place. I am also pleased to serve as the shadow minister for infrastructure, planning, small business, employment and trade. I will touch on each of those shadow portfolios in my address-in-reply. I want to thank His Excellency the Governor for his welcome to Government House at the occasion of the swearing in of the new government.

I also take this opportunity to welcome all the new members of parliament. In particular, I want to welcome the new Liberal National Party members who have made their way into this House. I say to them that they are all very welcome here in the Queensland parliament. I offer all members my best wishes and congratulations as they each begin their unique journey in the Queensland parliament. If I do not wish some members a long journey, at least I hope they have a fulfilling one while they are here.

I also want to reflect on the many fine members of the 54th Parliament from the LNP who were unsuccessful in their bid to be returned to the 55th Parliament. I am sure that I speak for many on this side of the House when I say that we certainly wish their results were otherwise. For those among them for whom the desire to serve in this place remains strong, I say to them to keep the faith. We will be doing all we can to bring them back to this place for the 56th Parliament.

I also want to thank the former premier, Campbell Newman, for the opportunity that he afforded me to serve as treasurer and minister for trade in this great state. It is indeed a rare privilege for the time granted to any of us to lead one of the great and enduring departments of the state. I also want to acknowledge the power of work accomplished by the ministry and the Public Service under premier Newman in all areas. I refer particularly to the efforts spent modernising and renewing our state, sweeping away entrenched cultures of complacency and ideas of privilege and preference and renewing our dedication to the ideals of an effective and outcomes focused government elected to drive prosperity, jobs and services for the people of Queensland. I disagree with the member for Sandgate entirely. The result of 2012 was a judgement on 20 long years of Labor in government in this state and it was a clear repudiation of that style of government.

I also acknowledge the message sent to the former government by the electorate on 31 January. As a party we received the majority of first preference votes, but that did not translate into a majority in this place. Although it might be said that the outcome is the result of a protest vote gone wrong, that is the system we have and we take our licks. I acknowledge that and I say to the electorate: we understand your disappointment in the way in which some of the things were done and some of the policies that we implemented. Although in many instances they were necessary, they were not explained fully and, in essence, we needed to explain more and listen more carefully. But that does not mean that we needed to abdicate responsibility or not take action after 20 long years of Labor mismanagement.

I have had the benefit of not only having listened to His Excellency's speech setting out the government's program at the opening of parliament but also having seen play out the first nine months of the government's agenda. When I first started writing this speech I was going to say 'the first three weeks of this government's agenda'. But as we enter the declining days of 2015, I am now on to version 19.1. So I have had an opportunity to revise this speech and add more to it in terms of what we have seen.

The agenda of this current government is, of course, living down to all expectations. By its own admission, little was promised by this government and even less is being delivered: a ramshackle policy agenda driven by the old Labor politics of preference for unions and disdain for the private sector focused on division and discord rather than excellence and achievement; a government whose first nine months has been all about paying its debts to its union bosses—and how many times have we heard that spoken about in this House by those opposite; a government that has viciously been undoing anything undertaken by the previous government irrespective of how well it worked or what it delivered; a government that is more about entrenching privilege for union bosses rather than about creating jobs and prosperity for and the security and safety of Queenslanders; a government that eschews reform and abandons the heritage of its great leaders, Hawke and Keating; a government that will forever be timid as it appeases its union paymasters. Like light beer, light milk and light cheese, this government is lightweight in both policy depth and execution—a pale imitation of what meaningful government should be.

If I look at the chaos that ensued after the first 100 days of the Palaszczuk government, I see that there is no comparison with the LNP's first 100 days of achievement. Under the LNP, on day one we saw the director-general instructed to put in motion the machinery-of-government changes that created individual departments, moving away from the mega departments that were created under Anna Bligh—departments like agriculture and racing that were abandoned under Labor, mega departments like the late and unlamented department of environment and resource management, although I feel that it is creeping its way back again. I feel that the dreaded DERM is growing again. Somewhere in a dark corner there is a dream that is held by the Labor government. It wants the department of environment and resource management back again to stifle prosperity, to make it harder for anyone to make a dollar in this great state. I say to the member for Hinchinbrook that we all remember the department of employment and economic development and industry—DEEDI. Those departments not only confused and alienated their stakeholders but also confused and alienated their employees. They left people wondering what was going on, who was doing it and where it was being done.

So we did that on day one. Under the Labor Party, on day one there were selfies in front of Parliament House. That was their achievement. Under the LNP, after 30 days it was receiving a full briefing from Treasury on the state accounts. Members will know that I have a favourite. I have brought it along today. Earlier today I heard the member for Stretton trying to talk about economics and finances. I realised that the hunt was on among the factions over there for the vote of the member for Stretton. Where was he going to go? Is he with the AWU? Is he with the old guard, or unity, the mudguard, the left wing, or the right wing?

Whoever secures the vote of the member for Stretton is going to regret it very shortly. Whoever loses him is going to say, 'Thank goodness we got rid of that economic genius.' I heard the Treasurer on radio this morning talking about jargon. He was asked what words he hated most and he said, 'The two words I hate most are fiscal reform.' Being able to hate them presupposes being able to understand them in the first place and I do not think that is the case. The words on the front of the incoming government brief in 2012 from Queensland Treasury were *Fiscal Reform Blueprint*. It is no wonder that the member for Mulgrave hates those words because they are the signature words of the government that he was part of up until 2012. What was contained in the blueprint was—

Sustainability of Queensland's Fiscal position.

Queensland's fiscal position and outlook is unsustainable and restoration must be an urgent priority for this term of Government. Up to 2005-06, Queensland debt levels were low and stable. In the period from 2005-06 to 2009-10 the level of State debt more than doubled. Debt in 2014-15 is expected to be almost 5 times greater than 10 years prior.

**Mr Hinchliffe:** That's right.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** The member for Sandgate was there. He was one of the authors. He sat around the table that made this happen—

In the period from 2005-06 to 2010-11, General Government expenses grew at almost double the rate of revenue.

The economic geniuses over there, aided by the member for Stretton who has made his way back into the House, were spending at this rate but the income is coming in at this rate and there was a big gap in the middle. And what did they do? They borrowed. They put it on the MasterCard. And what happened? The people who looked at the MasterCard said, 'Sorry, you can't keep doing that. By the way, we're going to take away your credit rating. We're going to drop your credit rating down', and Queenslanders ended up paying \$200 million-plus more in interest expenses than they would otherwise have done. The fastest single growing item of expenditure in the Queensland accounts in 2012-13 was not health, it was not education, it was not police, it was not law and order services—

**Mr Minnikin:** Pick me! Pick me!

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I am not going to ask the member for Chatsworth. He knows the answer. The fastest single growing expense in the Queensland government expenses was interest—interest going around the world to pay for the money that we borrowed because Labor was spending at double the rate that it was earning—\$575,000 an hour going out the door. That was the situation that we found. What had happened in that time? Even though they sold assets without telling people—went out and sold Aurizon and the Gateway Motorway company and a couple of others—even though they made all that money the debt was still going up. It never went down. It just kept going up every year like a balloon full of helium and about as worthwhile under that mob. They know they got it wrong. They even had blues with their own unions. I see the member for Woodridge opposite, then the member for Greenslopes, who has been reincarnated and come back. What did he say in an interview with Madonna King on 24 September 2010? They were even fighting with their own mates in the union. They reconciled, of course. The member for Woodridge said—

What a surprise, Madonna, that Peter Simpson—

Where is the member for Kallangur? He will be listening—

friend of the ETU who has been opposed to the asset sales from go, says this week, and it was all personally based this week, it was an attack on the leader directly, the former member for South Brisbane, Anna Bligh. That's, you know—Peter Simpson's the media mouth for hire in the trade union movement when it comes to asset sales.

The media mouth for hire in the trade union movement according to the member for Woodridge. I am still on day 30. We appointed the Commission of Audit to undertake a full audit of the state's finances and commence a war on waste, including cutting travel expenses by 20 per cent and advertising by 20 per cent. We acted to freeze family car registration for our entire term. We froze electricity bills that were set to rise at 11.8 per cent just seven days after we were elected. We commenced drafting legislation that would make it illegal again to not tell the truth to the parliament when you were being examined by a parliamentary committee. We all remember Gordon Nuttall and what he did. We drafted that and implemented that legislation. We drafted legislation to reduce real estate red tape by scrapping the sustainability declarations and streamlining home loan sale contracts and statements. We consulted with the police union and the commissioner to begin getting around 50 police out of the office, out from behind office desks, and back on the beat as part of our commitment to increase police numbers by over 1,000, which we are delivering on which this government still continues to claim credit for. And we started to repeal Labor's \$372 million industry waste levy to cut costs for Queensland businesses that would have been another blow for small businesses throughout the state.

In 30 days under Labor what did we see? They axed the surgery wait-time guarantee, succumbing to their union masters. There was review after review after review. We are now up to more than 74 reviews. We saw cancellation or review of major projects from resources to tourism and everything in between threatening the creation of thousands of jobs.

In 100 days under the LNP we removed the Labor stamp duty slug of \$7,000 on the family home. We restored the Coordinator-General's power and authority to coordinate and facilitate major projects. We established Infrastructure Queensland for long-term infrastructure planning prioritisation and ongoing management and maintenance. We established Projects Queensland in Queensland Treasury, driving cooperative funding models to maximise private investment in Queensland infrastructure and review the unsolicited projects framework now claimed by the member for Mulgrave. He stood up in this place during the budget and said, 'Look at this new framework for dealing with it.' The work was done before he got in the door. All he had to do was pick up the paper out of the out-tray and say, 'Here it is. I am yet again delivering LNP homework on behalf of the people of Queensland.'

What else did we do? We established the framework to begin Royalties for the Regions delivering nearly \$400-plus million worth of jobs and employment to people all throughout the state who had been ignored for too long. I had a look at the Auditor-General's report this morning. What did it say? It said it had achieved its aims. The opening paragraph states that it achieved its aims. It delivered jobs and activity to rural Queensland. Because it did not meet the requirements of the ALP's narrowly focused 'you are not in the grants program you don't get a program', we would never have seen jobs like in the member for Gregory's electorate.

We were only just talking about the kindergartens that were being delivered around the state, the jobs in the electorate of the member for Warrego and in Whitsunday where we are delivering roads that would never otherwise have been delivered outside of the normal programs which we still continue to deliver. It is an extra bonus for those regions that had been abandoned by Labor. They took the royalties, the income, but they never spent a cent out there. That is what we did.

We also delivered exit 54 and the Gateway merge. We established the Bruce Highway Crisis Management Group. We got \$10 billion out of the feds to upgrade the Bruce Highway, something that this government will never be able to achieve, and we started the regional planning process for the Darling Downs and Central Queensland giving regional Queenslanders access to planning laws like they have in the cities and major regional centres.

What do we have after 100 days under Labor? The member for Cook, the member for Pumicestone, the member for Bundamba, a police protection racket around the member for Bundamba, the member for Bundamba having a police protection racket around the member for Pumicestone and everyone having a protection racket around the member for Cook. We had turf warfare between the member for Stafford and the member for South Brisbane and they still have not quite settled that yet. I do not know about you, but my money is on the member for South Brisbane. I reckon that is a winner. Not much doing but a lot of reviewing.

What did they do? They called in, cancelled or otherwise placed under a cloud projects, which in turn has reduced job prospects: the BaT tunnel, Trinity Inlet, the Gold Coast cruise ship development, the Kurilpa riverfront and Cedar Woods. But they did make some announcements. They announced LNP projects that were already well underway under the LNP and none more so than Queen's Wharf. I heard the member for Brisbane Central crow about Queen's Wharf and, as I predicted at the time, there was not one mention of 1 William Street. They need 1 William Street if everything else is to happen, but they do not want to think about it. We can compare the changes.

I probably need another 20 minutes to go through the rest of this, because this is such a good story. Now we have seen that that cancellation of infrastructure has damaged business confidence. We need look no further than the trip that we took to Darwin last week. I was getting onto the plane and a fellow stopped me on the gangway and said, 'Tim, what's happening in Queensland? I have a job with Leightons. We are finishing up with INPEX in Darwin. There are no jobs in Queensland. We will be going to New South Wales. We will be going to a state where they are progressing infrastructure, where they are recycling assets and where they are getting on with the job of building.'

Employment growth was forecast to average 2.25 per cent under the LNP; over the same period under Labor, growth is forecast to be 1.67 per cent. Economic growth, which was forecast to be 5.75 per cent under us, has been revised down to 4.5 per cent. We see a state that under the LNP had positive prospects, a rosy future and that was going places come to a screaming halt under a clueless Labor government that does not have a plan. It is still talking about a plan, but it has no way of paying for it.

I have just received from the member for Chatsworth a message that is dead right: I want to thank my family, who, by pure chance, are here in the gallery tonight. I thank my wife, Mary, and my three children, Jeremy, Duncan and Kate, who have supported me through all of my endeavours. During our term in government, Mary bore the brunt of family trials and tribulations, absences and long days dealing with the three kids by herself. Seeing that I have more time at home these days, of course I have provided an interruption to the well-established routine of family life that is not always appreciated. Nonetheless, I thank them and all family members for the chance to be here yet again in the 55th Parliament.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.31 pm): In the electorate of Woodridge there is a road named Defiance. It runs through the heart of the suburb of Woodridge itself. In many ways, defiance lies at the heart of the people of the electorate of Woodridge. Woodridge is a strong and defiant community. It is also a community that is welcoming and generous. It is hardworking and determined. It is loyal, compassionate and kind. Woodridge is a welcoming and generous community. I know this to be true as I have felt welcomed and embraced by the Woodridge electorate following my endorsement in March 2014 as the Australian Labor Party candidate for Woodridge for the 2015 state election.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! Just a moment, Minister. I am sorry, members, but there is too much audible conversation. I am struggling to hear the member. The minister has the call.

**Mr DICK:** In 1885, the suburb now known as Woodridge was a timber reserve. It was divided for settlement, with the first families arriving in 1888. Those first settlers were hardy and created a new community with their hands and their hearts. While some families have lived in our community for many generations, the Woodridge electorate has also welcomed many people from around the globe who now call our community home. Our community is one of the most multicultural electorates in Australia. Almost one-third of the residents of Woodridge were born outside Australia. More than 50 per cent of our residents speak a language other than English in their homes. Of the 200 nationalities and ethnicities who call Logan City home, most have a presence in the electorate either through residence or through one of the many multicultural community organisations based in Woodridge.

While the diversity of our vibrant multicultural community brings strength to the Woodridge electorate, I acknowledge and pay tribute to the traditional owners of the land that constitutes the Woodridge electorate, in particular, the Jagera and the Yugambeh-speaking people. I have been privileged to form friendships with many of the Indigenous elders and leaders of Logan City. In the spirit of reconciliation and in the home of our state's democracy, I acknowledge the first Queenslanders and formally acknowledge the past, present and emerging Indigenous elders of the Woodridge electorate. I look forward to my relationship with the Indigenous communities of Woodridge deepening during my period of service as their elected representative in this parliament.

Woodridge is a community that values hard work. I have seen firsthand how hard the people of the Woodridge electorate work. This includes our dynamic business community in Underwood and our hardworking tradies in Marsden and Crestmead; our small business owners on Station Road and Railway Parade, Woodridge; those residents with professional qualifications who work across the electorate; the stallholders at the Logan Central markets and Croydon Road markets; the doctors, nurses and allied health workers who work in our great Logan Hospital; and the teachers and childcare workers who work in our schools, our childcare centres and our kindergartens.

Woodridge is a community of service and goodwill. Our community is one where people strive to look after and to look out for one another. Wherever I go in the Woodridge electorate, I am inspired by those individuals and organisations that work so hard to make our community a better place. They are organisations that work tirelessly to strengthen and support our community. Many of those organisations also promote and foster cultural understanding. It has been my privilege to meet and work alongside many organisations, such as Access Community Services; Boystown; YFS Ltd, including its amazing Substation 33 social enterprise; the Kingston East Neighbourhood Group; the Crestmead 40 Plus Club; the Working Against Violence Support Service; the Logan and District RSL Subbranch; the Logan City and the Crestmead PCYCs; our dedicated Neighbourhood Watch groups, Parents & Citizens and Parents & Friends organisations; and sporting groups such as the mighty Logan Brothers Junior Rugby League Club and the Logan City Netball Association. I look forward to working with and for local community groups during my period of service as the state member for Woodridge.

Woodridge is a community that has generously and faithfully supported the Australian Labor Party for many decades. The electorate of Woodridge is a community that has consistently returned a Labor member to this parliament since the electorate was first declared in 1977. In the 38 years that the electorate of Woodridge has existed, I am only its fourth member. The support that my community has provided to the Australian Labor Party is something that I will never take for granted. I am honoured to be the first member for Woodridge to serve as a Queensland cabinet minister. When I enter the cabinet room, I enter that room first and foremost as the member for Woodridge.

Serving as member for Woodridge and as a cabinet minister, I recognise the very great challenges that lie ahead for my cabinet and state parliamentary Labor Party colleagues because, like so many Queensland communities, the Woodridge community was the sort of community that the Newman LNP government left behind. The LNP's ideological approach to government, their disrespect for the institution of parliament and other institutions of state such as our judiciary, their cuts to public sector jobs and services, their appalling treatment of public servants and the silencing of civil society organisations all speak for themselves. But worst of all, it was people such as the people whom I represent, the people of electorates such as Woodridge, who suffered the most because of the Newman Liberal National Party government. People in my electorate continued to lose their jobs as the Newman government careered out of control and continued its ideologically driven programs, even in the face of strong and defiant community resistance. Young people were particularly vulnerable.

On the change of government, our government inherited a situation where almost one in four young people were unemployed in the Woodridge electorate. Job training and employment programs such as the highly successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program were axed from our community. Skilling Queenslanders for Work began as a Labor initiative designed to support young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, mature aged jobseekers and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. People who would otherwise have benefitted from those programs, such as the people of Woodridge, were consigned to the scrap heap by the LNP. But the Woodridge community remained defiant in the face of the worst excesses of the Newman government.

During the election campaign, I made it clear that I would support any pathway that created education, employment, training, investment and job opportunities for Woodridge and its people. Axing the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program was a devastating blow for our community, but I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk Labor government has reinstated the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. In the first round of projects allocated under the reinstated program, Woodridge was the most successful electorate in Queensland, receiving funding of \$2.6 million, which will fund eight organisations to deliver 18 projects that will create 660 jobs. That is the difference that Labor governments can make. In our first budget, our government has allocated over \$2 million for a new transport logistics trade training centre at the Woodridge State High School, which will create more employment pathways for the young people of our community. Those are real and tangible commitments delivered by Labor governments, which are designed to help young people in my electorate obtain employment.

That is what Labor governments are about—empowering individuals to improve themselves so they can develop lives of hope, aspiration and success through the dignity of work. As I am supported by the Woodridge community, I have the privilege of serving as our state's Minister for Health and our state's inaugural Minister for Ambulance Services. In the Health portfolio the Newman government removed over 4,000 health workers from our state's public health system, including nurses, midwives and allied health professionals, increasing the pressure and stress on our remaining staff.

The former minister for health, the now Leader of the Opposition, also abolished the school nursing services which served the people of Woodridge and other communities and which provided vital health screening and education programs for Queensland children. As health minister I will deliver on Labor's election commitment to restore the school nurse program—a program that will help young people and their families in Woodridge, amongst many others.

Our government has already taken action to improve health outcomes in the Woodridge electorate. I was very proud in my role as member for the Woodridge and health minister to announce earlier this year at the Logan Hospital \$30 million in new funding for additional ear, nose and throat treatment services over the next two years. This funding will help address the backlog of patients waiting beyond the clinically recommended time for an outpatient appointment and treatment at Queensland public hospitals, including Logan Hospital—patients that were left behind by the former LNP government.

Importantly, some of this additional funding will be used to train local general practitioners to deliver ear, nose and throat procedures so that some people can have their medical needs addressed by their local general practitioner without having to go to hospital. This will also be a hallmark of this Labor government: working with our Public Service and with community and private sector leaders to find new ways to address old problems. We will listen to the people of Queensland rather than denigrate, demean and deride those with contrary views—something that was the hallmark of the Newman LNP government.

The people of Woodridge remained defiant in the face of this assault by the LNP. So much so that at the election held on 31 January 2015 there was a swing to the Australian Labor Party in the state electorate of Woodridge of over 20 per cent on a two-party preferred basis against the LNP. In the electorate of Woodridge the Australian Labor Party returned the largest two-party preferred vote of any party in any electorate in Queensland, being 75.95 per cent.

I and the party that I represent in this place are incredibly humbled to receive such significant support from the Woodridge community. This electoral result reflects the outstanding grassroots community campaign run by local ALP branch members, trade unionists and local community activists. To all of those in the Woodridge community who worked tirelessly on my campaign, I thank you. If not for you, I would not be standing here today. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Woodridge.

In particular, I would like to thank my campaign director, Stewart Dalley, and his wife, Logan City councillor Cherie Dalley, John and Judy Wilson, Tilly Tillgren, Jeanette and Kevin Condren, Therese and Crystell Lane, Lisa Banyard and Nelson Reed-Banyard, Leif Bremmerman, Dolly and Anton Chang, amongst so many others—in fact, all of the branch members in the Woodridge ALP branches. I wish to make special mention of Jon Raven, Josef Chick and John Bosco Ngendakurio who worked tirelessly for me from my endorsement right through until election day. Like so many of my campaign workers, you did not falter or flinch when it came to the hard work that was required to achieve victory in Woodridge. I also thank Jim Chalmers MP, federal member for Rankin, and his staff for their encouragement and support.

I wish to acknowledge and thank community leaders like Josephine Aufai and her husband, Pastor Tala Aufai, Jamal El-Kholed, Mauala Timoteo, Sovannary Uk, Sarat Son, Than Thach and so many others who pledged their support to me and assisted me during the campaign. I also wish to acknowledge and thank Hussein Ahmed from the Somali community; Kamal from the South Sudanese community and who is also a local small business owner; Payam Mahaki from the Iranian community; Muktar Ali from the Pakistani community; Girmay Gebremedhin from the Eritrean community; Deo Nahimana, Joseline Ilumva, Happiness Munezero and Prosper Munezero from the Burundian community; Emmanuel Karekezi from the Rwandan community; Allierey Iremeyiwaci; Alain Hobabantu; Nezia Irakoze; Belise and her sister Yvette from the suburb of Woodridge; Freznelle Abbas; Moseka Atanani; Bomedien Ndayishimiye; Odette Tewfik; Eric Irabaruta; Aimee Gikundiro; Besta Batamuriza; Alexis Serugo; Patricia Welsby; Xin Zhang; Teng-Hoay Murray; Anthony Lin and so many others.

I also wish to thank my electorate office staff, Kylie Slater and Peter Wood. They are passionate about helping the people of Woodridge. Kylie is an outstanding campaigner and contributed enormously to my electoral success. Peter is one of our true believers, and has provided unstinting encouragement to me since I first joined the ALP more than a quarter of a century ago. I express my heartfelt thanks to both of them for their friendship and support.

I thank my LNP opponent—in fact, all candidates who ran in the election. Each of them ran decent, community minded campaigns, and I thank them for the fair and generous way that they conducted themselves during the campaign.

I also want to pay tribute to my predecessor, Desley Scott, for her work and her commitment to the Woodridge electorate. Desley served for 14 years as the state member for Woodridge and, prior to her election, she worked for 16 years in the Woodridge electorate office. Very few people in this place could ever boast of 30 years continuous involvement with the one electorate. Desley believed in a fair go and advocated strongly and passionately for the people of Woodridge—a path I intend to follow. As has often been mentioned to me, Desley Scott's shoes will be very big shoes indeed to fill.

I also want to acknowledge a number of members of the current state parliamentary Labor Party with whom I served in the 53rd Parliament and who fought with passion and genuine commitment to secure re-election to the Queensland parliament following their defeat at the 2012 state election. They represent what is best about the fighting spirit and the tenacity of the Australian Labor Party. Those members include my good friend the Leader of the House, assistant minister and member for Sandgate,

Stirling Hinchliffe, who is in the chamber this evening; my cabinet colleague and member for Ashgrove, Kate Jones; the member for Bulimba, Di Farmer; the member for Morayfield, Mark Ryan; and the member for Brisbane Central, Madam Deputy Speaker Grace Grace.

It is rare in politics that one is given a second chance, but that is the gift that has been given to me by the electors of Woodridge and the Australian Labor Party. I am extremely grateful to both the electors of Woodridge and the Australian Labor Party for enabling this to happen. In particular I thank state campaign director and now candidate for election to the Australian Senate, Anthony Chisholm—he will make a fine Australian senator—for his support, along with my friends in the trade union movement, including Ben Swan, Peter Biaginni, Scott Connolly, Chris Gazenbeek, Troy Spence, Charis Mullen, Mark Raguse and Sarah Mawhiney, as well as the Australian Workers' Union, the Transport Workers' Union and the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association for their support.

Each one of us in this House are volunteers in the cause of public service, none of us are conscripts, yet it is so often our own loved ones who have to face the burden associated with what we do. To my mother, Joan, to my brother, Milton, to my sister, Susan, to my brother-in-law, Dermot, and to my extended family, you never lost faith in me.

My late father, Allan, in particular was delighted that I was re-elected at the 2015 state election. I feel so blessed that at the end of his long and worthy life he could see me re-elected to the Queensland parliament. His first words to me after my election were, 'Good on you, Cam. At least you are on steady money now.' So speaks the voice of a boy who grew up in the Great Depression.

The people of Woodridge will be pleased to know that the only question he ever asked me following the election was, 'How is the electorate?' My father knew that, for each of us in this place, unless we have the ongoing support of our communities, we can achieve nothing as members of parliament.

I wish to make special mention of my wife Therese's family. To Rol, Bev, June, Suzanne, Billy, Cathy, Steve, David, Wonita, Dorothea and Brett, you have been incredibly supportive of our family. This day would not have come without your help, for which I express my profound thanks.

To my wife Therese and my sons, Samuel and Jonathan, words cannot express how I feel in my heart about you. Six years ago in this chamber I said of Sam and Jonny that they represent the future that all of us who serve in this place dedicate ourselves to improving. They are, and remain, my greatest achievement and inspiration. To Therese, your belief that I should return to public life in Queensland was unshakable. Words cannot express how I feel about you and all that you have done to make this day come to pass.

In conclusion, I reach back into history as I did in my first speech in this chamber six years ago. This year marks 100 years since TJ Ryan was elected premier of Queensland. Thomas Joseph Ryan led a transformative government, becoming premier just as the First World War started and serving until just after the Great War finished. At a time when society was changing, Ryan, a classics teacher and a barrister before entering parliament, led Queensland through a period of social and economic change which laid the foundation for almost 40 years of unbroken Labor governments in this state.

Ryan's government passed legislation which gave women the right to stand for parliament, while his government also introduced equitable workers' rights. This included creating Queensland's first compulsory workers compensation scheme that was extended to almost every worker in the state. While he challenged the power of big business, he was also supportive of business, particularly farmers and rural businesses. Ryan had a consultative style. He took people with him. Everyone knew where he stood and he was unafraid to take on vested interests.

Ryan set the standard for reforming Labor governments. Progressive Labor administrations in recent times, led by Labor premiers Wayne Goss, Peter Beattie, Anna Bligh and now Annastacia Palaszczuk, have risen to the challenge of matching that legacy. In the century since the 1915 election, Labor has been and remains the transforming, modernising, progressive and reforming force in Queensland politics and public administration. So it should remain for Labor.

The example of Ryan and his government speaks to us to this day. After Ryan's premature death in Barcaldine at the age of 45 years, Charles Bernays, a former clerk of this parliament, described Ryan as a 'generous, big hearted fighter' and a man 'broad-minded and big, and out of the common'. All of us in this place should aspire to be generous and big hearted fighters who are broad-minded and out of the common.

In reflecting on my journey through public life, the journey that brought me to this moment, I reflect in particular on all of the people whom I have met and who have supported me and helped me in so many ways, big and small, on that journey. During my campaign for Woodridge, I recall meeting three young people whose own life journeys began in Africa and who are now very proud to call

Queensland their home. Their names are Justice, Happiness and Prosperity. Those three words—justice, happiness and prosperity—are my hope for all the citizens of Woodridge. My pledge to the people of Woodridge is that I will do my utmost to deliver justice, happiness and prosperity for our community during my period of service in this House.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.52 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### Blackwater; Springsure-Tambo Road

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (9.52 pm): Tonight I would like to talk about a very important town in the seat of Gregory, and that is Blackwater. I acknowledge the member for Mirani, Jim Pearce, who helped chair a recent meeting there. A young fellow called Kealhan O'Brien has become the champion of Blackwater. He is a school captain of the Blackwater North State School and he is in grade 6. I would quickly like to read a bit from his letter that he read out at that meeting in Blackwater and what it means to young kids living in Blackwater at the moment. He said—

As a local kid and a footballer, I have seen many of my mates already leave, as well as my boxing coach, who did not want to go. I have listened to mums and dads who are volunteers in our clubs and they are all concerned about being able to have teams to compete in the future. I worry about the future of our town, especially for the kids who grew up here. Things to do there are being taken away every day and will continue because there are less people to use them. Just recently our skate park and the BMX track were demolished, which made myself and a lot of my mates quite angry, and we have to find other places to ride.

I am in grade 6 and one of the school captains at Blackwater North. I am supposed to be enjoying everything about growing up, like sports and time with my mates, but with everything leaving this is now challenging. I wish I could get back to where the town that I heard so much about—the old stories told by the mums and dads who grew up in Blackwater. Blackwater really sounded like a great town to live in. I truly hope that mining companies will listen to people like me and the rest of the community, proud of what Blackwater has.

I would like to move on to a different subject that is just as important as continuing to make sure that towns like Blackwater in the Bowen Basin survive as we go through a mining downturn. The other issue, which is an issue that I continue to go on about, is Western Queensland roads and the reason we need these roads upgraded and continue to need them to be upgraded. I had the privilege of being welcomed to the Tresswell community, which is about 60 kilometres south-west of Tambo. They wrote a letter to me. It said—

Dear Lachlan,

Welcome to Tresswell. Sorry about the road after the bitumen.

As our local State MP, we the undersigned require you to make representations to the Transport Minister—  
and the Minister for Main Roads—

We wish to see the ongoing program renewed. This program lapsed in 2005.

Of course we are talking about the Tambo-Springsure road. The letter continues—

It was designed to improve the upkeep of the whole and the permanent sealing of five kilometres per year.

The country needs this road—

which is the Springsure-Tambo road—

to be good, to promote exports.

Springsure—

and Tambo—

needs this road to be good to breathe life into it.

The local school—

which is the Tresswell school—

needs this road to be good for everyday interaction.

Lachlan, we need your input.

Kindest regards,

That letter is from the Tresswell community. I call on the government of the day to make sure that the Springsure-Tambo road is maintained and upgraded as we need that road.

### Premier's Reading Challenge

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (9.55 pm): During my short time as the member for Lytton, I have been privileged to participate in many wonderful community events and activities. I have had some truly wonderful experiences and have met so many interesting and colourful baysiders. Among some of my most enjoyable experiences has been meeting and engaging with the young people in the bayside through our local schools. Our schools are full of bright, brave, intelligent, funny and innovative young people.

At recent celebrations of learning and awards and graduating ceremonies, I have heard about the many achievements and contributions of the students in their learning to their schools and to the greater community. These celebrations have reinforced the dedication and professionalism of the teachers and all staff at the bayside schools—all of whom encourage, support and nurture these students. I would like to acknowledge and thank the many dedicated teachers and school staff in all of our bayside schools. Their commitment and professionalism is much appreciated.

One of my most pleasurable experiences during the year has been engaging with local schools regarding the 2015 Premier's Reading Challenge. The reading challenge, which is in its 10th year, sparked a great deal of interest and participation in the bayside. I was fortunate to attend many of our local school assemblies and libraries, talking to the students about the challenge and the importance of reading and the absolute delight that you can get from escaping into a book.

From the delightful young preppers at Manly and Manly West State School, the year 3s at St John Vianney's, the boys at Iona and Moreton Bay Boys' College to the year 9s at Brisbane Bayside State College, each and every school has embraced and excelled in this challenge. Reading to a class of Brisbane Bayside State College high school students will go down as one of my most memorable experiences this year. I certainly enjoyed reading to the students and I am told that the students enjoyed it too.

I thoroughly enjoyed all the wonderful book readings and I have been delighted to return to the schools in recent days to present certificates to students who completed the challenge. It was great to see students that I had read or spoken to earlier in the year collecting their certificates, and I congratulate all students on their achievements. I also thank each of the schools—the teachers, the library and other staff—for their participation in this great challenge and for giving their time to ensure that the students participated in the Premier's Reading Challenge. The bayside local schools are already looking forward to the 2016 Premier's Reading Challenge.

### Anzac Day, Centenary

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (9.58 pm): As the year draws to a close, I want to place on record my gratitude to those men and women of our defence forces, current and former, who have served our nation and like-minded nations, especially with that service rightfully coming into focus 100 years after the Gallipoli landings.

In Mackay and the Whitsundays, the centenary of Anzac was commemorated magnificently with dinners, historical displays and the traditional dawn and daytime services, which attracted record crowds everywhere. I always make a point of going to different places on Anzac Day, and this year I attended a very special dawn service at Mackay's Town Beach—and what a moving service it was. Congratulations to Dennis Paidley, Col Benson and the Mackay RSL sub-branch on your outstanding work in paying tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, not only on the day itself but at other events—in particular, the Centenary of Anzac Dinner at the MECC, next to the cenotaph.

After Town Beach, I ventured up the highway to attend the annual dawn service at Hampden State School, organised by the Kuttabul sub-branch of the RSL. I salute John Fenner, Frosty McLean, Monty Edmonds, Ron Turner and co. on their wonderful commemoration, not only for a service that is now viewed as one of the best of its kind anywhere in the nation but also for your centenary dinner at The Leap, where I was privileged to speak.

After that it was on to Airlie Beach for the main service and parade hosted by the Airlie Beach-Whitsunday sub-branch of the RSL. Again, it was an outstanding service attended by a huge crowd of locals and visitors. Again, I was privileged to speak, and I congratulate Terry Brown and his team on their commemorations. Finally, it was on to the great sugarmilling town of Proserpine. Not surprisingly, I again addressed a record crowd in a town that per capita did more than its share in sending fine young men away with the Australian Imperial Force including the legendary sniper Billy Sing, who worked in the canefields before enlisting. I say congratulations to Jason Raiteri, Paul Eakin and co. from the Proserpine sub-branch on their contribution. In fact, I say well done to all the other

sub-branches in Whitsunday, Greg Smith, Ralph Strecker and co. from Farleigh and northern beaches, noting the contribution of the late Bill McKenzie in engaging our local community on the fast-growing northern beaches. I also say well done to Burt Benson, Ron Cameron and co. at Seaforth and Peter Wright and his crew at St Helens.

I also wish to acknowledge the Bloomsbury State School, which won a national Anzac centenary prize offered by the federal government. We had a great afternoon in the company of local World War II veteran Arthur Dobe. There are many others in the Whitsundays who deserve recognition: John and Gay Gillies and their mates from the Proserpine Historical Museum, Lyn Burke, bugler Bryce Fraser, the Proserpine Citizens Band and Mick Patullo, whose work on the bagpipes was first-class. I want to thank his counterpart in Mackay, the legendary Alex Cameron, aged 80, father of the band in the Mackay & District Pipe Band. I might add that Alex was the lone piper playing *Amazing Grace* at my dear mother's funeral on 6 November, something that our family greatly appreciated. Thank you, Alex, for what you do and have done for our community. From memory, Alex has missed just one Anzac Day service in decades and it was because of a triple bypass. Lest we forget.

### **Aussie Concrete Products; RV Solar Supplies**

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (10.01 pm): I find myself rising tonight with good news for the House. The Redlands Business Awards has a long and respected history in my community, having been going for 23 years. This year I am pleased to say that the overall winner of the coveted Business of the Year Award was Aussie Concrete Products which is on the border of the Chatsworth electorate and my electorate. They do identify themselves as the quintessential Capalaba business. This is also the second year in a row that they have won the award. They were also fortunate enough to win Best Medium Size Business as well.

Some months ago I had the privilege of visiting Aussie Concrete Products and getting a tour of their facility. I spent some time with the owner, Andrew Taylor, and his team. Andrew employs over 60 locals and is pleased to help facilitate the engagement as an industry partner with the Department of Education and Training. I often run into Andrew supporting various causes and events in our community. He is always quick to lobby me on regulatory changes that would help his business to grow. I am not always able to help, but I do value his thoughts greatly.

Aussie Concrete Products is a local family business that hits well above its weight. Andrew's daughter, Jessica, accepted the awards on the night and told the audience of how the company came from humble beginnings 11 years ago. They continue to grow and, most importantly, they continue to employ more locals. They give back to the community as well, working with the local Capalaba PCYC's Project Booyah to take on young people and give them a pathway to employment and further learning. I was fortunate to go back to visit Aussie Concrete Products again to meet Taite, who had done so well in his Booyah placement that Aussie Concrete Products had offered him a full-time job. I was pleased to hear on the night from Andrew that Taite had been doing such a tremendous job in his role and loved his work. This is the sort of good outcome that can come from business and government working together with the community for better outcomes. Aussie Concrete Products is a respected corporate citizen that participates and engages fully with my local community in a way that only a local family business truly can. Aussie Concrete Products deserve this award and I congratulate them on their success.

I would also like to congratulate RV Solar Supplies from Capalaba, who won the Sustainability Award. Spencer Smith said on the night that he did not just sell solar panels; he sold freedom—freedom for caravaners and outback four-wheel drivers to roam our far-reaching country without the need to be linked into the electricity grid.

Finally, I would like to thank and congratulate the Redlands Chamber of Commerce, Garry Hargrave and his team for such a successful night. It was enjoyed by all.

### **Gold Coast Seniors Health and Lifestyle Expo; Compass Housing; Christmas Kids in Care Christmas Lunch**

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (10.04 pm): On 19 November I had the pleasure of participating in the Gold Coast Seniors Health and Lifestyle Expo at the Southport Community Centre. It was fantastic to see so many people in attendance. This year we had a record number, which shows just how valuable these events have become. The attendees were able to engage with a range of service providers from seniors travel, hearing and eyesight tests, finance providers, Centrelink, aged care facilities and in-home care providers all in one place.

I would especially like to thank Warren Elwell for his great work in bringing all these people together for the seniors of the Gold Coast. Warren and I have worked together previously in the media. Warren has spent some 30 years in the media before he decided to use his skills and knowledge to bring this expo to life, first back in 2008. He has now been doing it for the best part of eight years.

Also on 5 November I had the pleasure of attending the Compass Housing Services' celebration of 30 years of excellence held in Customs House here in Brisbane. I would like to table their book as a historical record.

*Tabled paper.* Book titled *Navigating Change, A History of Compass Housing, 30 Years, 1985-2015* [1783].

The book is entitled *Navigating Change: A History of Compass Housing from 1985 to 2015* by Tony Gilmour. This book is an excellent reference document, very well researched and provides a historical perspective of how Compass has grown and adapted over the last 30 years. Compass has met with many challenges and has had many victories and successes. To quote the book, the current position of Compass has been built upon the efforts of many significant people who are recognised throughout the book. The path to success has not always been easy, but with the commitment of all involved over those 30 years, we see a very successful Compass of today. I would like to commend the chair, Paul Johnson, in particular for his efforts. I can only hope that Compass Housing continues to receive great support from the government in their efforts to assist the community of Logan. I am particularly passionate to see Compass and other community housing providers like them thrive. It is one of the reasons I became so passionate about the Logan and Gold Coast housing renewal initiatives. I sincerely hope they will be progressed as soon as possible.

Finally, I want to mention that it is only a matter of weeks until my fourth annual Christmas Kids in Care Christmas lunch at the Parkwood International Golf Course. We have run the event every year in support of local charities but with a particular focus on FSG, the Family Services Group, one of the great disability service providers on the Gold Coast but, more importantly, to raise money for gifts for kids in foster care. This year and every year we have had a great response. I am expecting that in the coming weeks we will see a lot of money raised for disadvantaged kids on the Gold Coast.

### Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (10.07 pm): I rise to speak about the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation, or QATSIF. Recently I was privileged to represent the Treasurer in his capacity as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships at a very special event. The QATSIF graduation ceremony at the University of Queensland on 22 October was a fantastic event to celebrate the year 12 graduation this year of hundreds of QATSIF scholarship recipients from 47 state, Catholic and independent schools from the greater Brisbane area.

QATSIF is an independent public foundation established by the Bligh government in 2008 to provide scholarships for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. I was pleased to see QATSIF scholarship recipient Javier Thompson from Bremer State High School in my electorate speak about his passion to become a teacher to help make Indigenous studies a subject for all students. Javier has served his school this year as a vice captain and is an Indigenous mentor at the school. He was chosen to attend the National Schools Constitutional Convention in Canberra earlier this year. Javier is a role model among his peers at Bremer and his fantastic achievements are a testament to the great work done at this Ipswich state school, as well as to the conscientiousness and dedication of Javier himself. I was very pleased to hear about the support QATSIF has provided to Javier in his senior schooling.

QATSIF is supported by the funds remaining from the former Aborigines Welfare Fund and the Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparation Scheme after the distribution of stolen wages money to claimants. The interest earned from this fund, as well as funds from donations, is used to provide scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander year 11 and 12 students. The scholarships currently provide \$1,000 per year and are intended to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention in the senior years of schooling, to help close the gap in year 12 attainment.

I congratulate Bremer State High School for producing outstanding year 12 graduates like Javier, and I wish Javier well in his quest to become a teacher. I commend QATSIF for providing valuable support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people like Javier who are the leaders and role models of tomorrow.

## Queensland Racing

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.09 pm): We are now into the eleventh month since the Labor government took over the reins of racing in Queensland, and in the words of the famous baseball coach Yogi Berra, 'It is déjà vu all over again.' We have the same crowd that we had with Bob Bentley, which is wonderful for us but terrible for the racing industry. They have sacked the board. It is leaderless, rudderless. They have a Labor mate consultant in there running it at great expense to racing industry funds. They have basically ignored 30,000 participants in the racing industry who are hanging by a thread: the strappers, farriers and good working class people that the Labor Party should be supporting plus hundreds of thousands of punters out there that rely on this industry. The Labor Party hates the racing industry. It is Bob Bentley all over again being guided by Bill Byrne. We have the Magic Millions and the wonderful carnival coming up this January, yet there is a big cloud over the racing industry because they are worried that this government is strangling racing in Queensland.

They are absolutely crippling country racing, and country racing is the social fabric of those Queensland communities that do not have a netball team or other opportunities. Country racing is their social interaction and part of the fabric of their society. It is very, very important once a year because they do not have too many other times to enjoy themselves like a lot of city people do. This government is going to strangle country racing, and all those people that rely on that industry for their entertainment, pleasure and jobs can look back again and say, 'I'm sorry! We forgot what Bob Bentley did to Queensland Racing.' We have a new mob in here, and they are doing exactly the same thing. I would like to talk about the rough end of a pineapple, but I will not mention that in the House.

Not only is country racing in trouble, but so is the major course in Queensland, Eagle Farm. The people over there are extremely worried. The breeders are panicking about what is going to happen to the Queensland bonus system up here and the sale in March which is run by the Magic Millions people. This is going to cripple the racing industry. I do not know what is in the DNA of Labor that makes them hate racing. It goes back to Bob Gibbs, who thought that rich people run it. But a lot of battlers like myself have horses, and we rely on the government to drive this industry appropriately and not into the ground, which they are currently doing. They need to sack the consultant and put in a board straight away.

## Caboolture Electorate, Domestic and Family Violence

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (10.12 pm): The people of the Caboolture region are taking action to eliminate domestic and family violence. Recently I convened a local family and domestic violence working group to engage with our community about what we can all do to eliminate family and domestic violence. Over a period of three months and three forums, over 200 people from the Caboolture region and surrounding areas turned out to work positively together to develop goodwill and a collaborative approach to taking action. Our forums were attended by many people from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

At our forums local service providers, community groups and concerned residents spoke about the impact of family and domestic violence on our community. Some people spoke from personal experience of violence and others from their professional experience helping those affected by violence, but all were united behind a push to end family and domestic violence in our community. I sincerely thank all those people for their time and their genuine willingness to make a difference.

Our local working group identified existing services, needs and local action and worked with our special guest facilitator, the Hon. Karen Struthers, a former minister for women and former member of this House, to develop a local action plan. In the spirit of the *Not now, not ever* report by Dame Quentin Bryce, this plan is especially important for our community because it will inform government action in our local area and represents our collaborative vision that community challenges require community solutions. Our local action plan identifies areas of need in our community and outlines what our community believes should be done to address that need. Our local action plan sets out 10 key priority actions.

These priority actions include: making available more education and intervention programs for men; delivering respectful relationship courses at local sporting clubs; introducing a respectful relationships program in local schools; providing trauma informed counselling awareness and education training; establishing a women's wellbeing centre in the Caboolture region to provide a safe place for women and a space for the coordination and delivery of education, empowerment, support and prevention programs; funding a local project officer to map existing services and encourage collaboration; delivering more and smoother local pathways for people in need of emergency and

short-term housing; establishing a dedicated family and domestic violence court at Caboolture; allocating dedicated DV support officers to local police stations and dedicated DV duty lawyers to local courthouses; and trialling a streamlined DVO application process in the Caboolture region.

Along with the people of the Caboolture region, I affirm my commitment that family and domestic violence is never acceptable: not now, not ever.

### Single-Use Plastic Bags

 **Mr ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (10.15 pm): Last week I met with a concerned group of Noosa residents who came to my electorate office and presented me with the results of their campaign to get rid of single-use plastic bags. This campaign is being spearheaded by the Noosa Community Biosphere Association, who have been extremely active in securing support from members of the local, national and even international communities. Support has been received from the local business community and local organisations as well as the Noosa council and mayor, Tourism Noosa, Australia Zoo and Bob Irwin. Thirteen hundred signatures were collected in short order, and for the benefit of the House I table the non-conforming petition and letters of support.

*Tabled paper:* Non-conforming petition regarding a proposed ban on plastic bags [\[1784\]](#).

Research articles from the *Guardian* newspaper in London, Taronga Zoo, the American Chemical Society and our own Queensland Wildlife Preservation Society have reported that plastics are found inside animals across the ocean food chain, and this ingestion has caused the death of countless seabirds, ocean mammals and turtles, some of which are part of our food chain. I have read that, not only are these small pieces of plastic being ingested by marine creatures, but that the larger pieces can and do strangle or suffocate animals such as seals, and the chemicals contained within these plastics pollute both the environment and animal life. Biodegradable bags might degrade in soil, but they are certainly not degradable in the ocean. Plastic just breaks down into smaller and smaller parts which are mostly invisible to our eyes. Last month's American Chemical Society article states—

Most diners in China who season their meals with sea salt may be unwittingly consuming microscopic pieces of plastic pollution.

Single-use plastic bags do not just affect our oceans but have some significant impact on our land environment as well. Whether it is the exorbitant and ever-increasing cost borne by local councils who have to clean up plastic litter to the high cost of production of single-use plastic bags, there can be no doubting the urgency of a sensible management strategy. In the Noosa community, people power has seen a push which began largely at Peregian Beach and has spread throughout the shire. Noosa prides itself via its biosphere status on being a natural and sustainable environment, and single-use plastic bags have no place in it. Other jurisdictions have already acted. In Queensland we are yet to decide whether this is an issue to be tackled top down from the state government or bottom up through local people in local communities taking local action. Mr Speaker, I will support either of the two.

### Cairns Electorate, Climate March

 **Mr PYNE** (Cairns—ALP) (10.18 pm): I rise to talk about the climate march that took place in Cairns last Saturday, 28 November. I would like to acknowledge Andy McPherson, Nina Bailey and the organisers from the Cairns Climate Action Network who helped organise the march. I was speaking to a journalist and I tried to ascertain why climate change is not covered more in the local media. The reason that I was given is that people are more concerned with what is happening today than what may be happening in five or 10 years. I did my best to set this journalist straight and explained that the impacts of climate change are being felt now. In many Pacific countries, saltwater intrusion is taking place as people lose their village homes. In the Torres Strait, seawalls are being built to protect people's homes from rising sea levels. Of course, this is not just a problem for Pacific nations; it is also a problem for low-lying cities such as Cairns.

Every level of government should be doing something to address climate change and sea-level rise. This includes local councils. Councils have responsibility for planning, and they should base their planning schemes around climate change and sea-level rise. Of course, it is very hard when your council consists, as it does in Cairns, of a group of people who are climate sceptics. People such as councillors Terry James, John Schilling and Mayor Bob Manning either completely deny climate change or say, 'The climate always changes. It is not really a problem, is it?' Of course, Mayor Bob Manning had his heyday in the 1970s. That is fine, but he wants to take our city back there. We cannot be going back to the 1970s. We need to address the problems now and the problems of the future. Climate change is just one of those. We also need to be creating the jobs for the economy of the future, not looking for jobs in the industries of the past.

I would love to hear more people in this place talk about climate change and sea-level rise. I do hear about it sometimes from those opposite, but it normally takes the form of giggling, which I find quite bizarre, especially when it comes from members who represent the Gold Coast or the Sunshine Coast, where climate change and sea-level rise are very real threats for those who live there. The changing face of the federal government should be no cause for comfort, with the only solution an emissions trading scheme. We will never see that under the LNP.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.21 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, 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, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams