



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 13 October 2016

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THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2016



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

PRIVILEGE

Comments by Minister for Communities, Women and Youth



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. On 1 September I made a statement to the House regarding the change in shadow ministerial title for the member for Mudgeeraba following the public announcement of the LNP shadow ministry. In that statement I referred to a letter from the member. It has since been brought to my attention that this was an error and I apologise to the House unreservedly.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Annual General Meeting



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I remind members that the annual general meeting of the Queensland branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will be held in the Legislative Assembly chamber this afternoon at 1.05 pm.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 16 September 2016 the member for Moggill wrote to me alleging that the member for Capalaba deliberately misled parliament during his contribution to the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I have circulated a ruling on this matter. On the information before me, I consider that the member for Capalaba has made an adequate explanation for the basis for his statement and apologised. I have therefore decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter. I seek leave to incorporate the ruling.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Members,

On 16 September 2016, the Member for Moggill wrote to me alleging that the Member for Capalaba deliberately misled Parliament during his contribution to the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 when addressing research regarding what other countries are doing with respect to immunisation when he stated:

The member for Moggill, the good doctor, made a contribution last Thursday in which he stated—

We also need to be very careful with respect to the agenda of the increasingly radical left-wing elements of the Palaszczuk Labor government. Those socialists opposite who support the now disgraced Safe Schools program have been unmasked as Marxist ideologues who are promulgating a socialist cultural agenda at the expense of the welfare of our developing children and young people. Those socialists opposite want to destroy families and harm the existence of humanity itself in Queensland.

After that speech, I added one more country. I asked the research department to include Cuba.

In his letter to me, the Member for Moggill contended that by quoting a passage of the Member for Moggill's Private Member's Statement given on the 1st of September 2016 related to the general performance of the Government and linking it to the Member for Capalaba's statement on vaccinations and immunisation as a part of the debate on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, the Member for Capalaba misled the House with respect to the Member for Moggill's stance on immunisation.

I sought further information from the Member for Capalaba about the allegations made against him, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5).

The Member for Capalaba contended that he used the Member for Moggill's contribution as motivation for his research into the topic and was expressing that context to the House.

Yesterday, the Member for Capalaba made a statement to the House explaining the matter and apologising.

Standing Order 269(4) requires:

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

On the information before me, I considered that the Member for Capalaba has made an adequate explanation for the basis for his statement, and there is no evidence to suggest that the statement was in any way linked to the Member for Moggill's stance on immunisation.

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

I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 September 2016, from the member for Moggill, Dr Christian Rowan MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an allegation of deliberately misleading the House [\[1851\]](#).

Tabled paper: Email, dated 20 September 2016, from the member for Capalaba, Mr Don Brown MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an allegation of deliberately misleading the House [\[1852\]](#).

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled—

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills (Hon. Y D'Ath)—

[1853](#) Electoral Commission of Queensland—Annual Report 2015-16

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Barrett Adolescent Centre

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.33 am): The closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre at Wacol by the former government in January 2014 was a bad decision with far-reaching consequences. I urged the then government and the then minister not to close the centre. The member for Bundamba argued against the centre's closure as well. The patients and the families of the patients urged the government not to close the centre. Despite these pleas, the centre was closed. Tragically, we lost three young Queenslanders who had received treatment and support at the centre. In government I commissioned an inquiry into the closure and the transitional arrangements for those receiving treatment at the centre. The inquiry found the reasons provided for the former government's decision did not support its closure. In fact, the reasons provided for the closure actually supported the need for a review and an update of the appropriate model of care and consideration of a new or replacement facility.

The commission also made criticisms regarding systemic issues associated with the redirection of funding from the Redlands project, which was originally planned as a replacement facility for Barrett. When I released the inquiry's report in July, I committed the government to implement all of its recommendations. I reaffirm that commitment today. Specifically, the inquiry recommended to the government that it should—

... consider a new building in south-east Queensland offering a range of mental health services for young people, including bed-based services.

Later today the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and I will announce the next steps the government is taking to deliver a new bed based extended treatment and rehabilitation facility that the inquiry recommended. We are building a new centre and construction of it should start by the end of next year. We are also developing a new model of care that will support at-risk Queensland adolescents in the most appropriate way. To do this, the government will work closely with the individuals and families associated with the former Barrett centre, as their ongoing involvement is integral to the development of this new model. I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Minister for Health for developing this response.

Domestic and Family Violence, COAG Summit

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.35 am): Later this month, on 28 October, Queensland will host the national COAG summit on reducing violence against women and their children. The Prime Minister and I will co-host the summit and it will be attended by first ministers from other states and territories and the president of the Australian Local Government Association. The summit provides an important opportunity for governments, key community leaders and experts to come together, discuss preventative strategies and actions to address the violence against women and their children and to build on our achievements. The summit will profile best practice and review progress across the country.

Communities across Australia are taking action to prevent this violence. Work is underway at all levels of government to change the way domestic and family violence is dealt with. My government is firmly committed to action on this national issue, developing a 10-year reform program in response to the recommendations of the landmark *Not now, not ever* report. This summit is about outlining to the rest of the nation what works for Queensland and, in turn, learning from other states what works best for them. We still need to do more in our communities to prevent family and domestic violence from happening. I am determined to ensure Queensland plays a leadership role in this debate, which is why I volunteered our state to host this summit. Having the national leaders in one room is a will that we work together as a nation to address family and domestic violence.

Townsville

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): Last week I took the cabinet to Townsville and the Deputy Premier and I spent the rest of the week up there governing from the north. It was the perfect opportunity to listen to members of the community about their needs and aspirations. I heard from them about their need for more and better front-line services. I heard from them about the need for economic development in their city and the entire region. I heard from them about their concerns surrounding youth crime. Just under a month ago the Townsville Strikeforce was created, sending 30 additional officers to Townsville for a 30-day blitz to tackle those issues. After 22 days we have seen 455 arrests on 833 charges, mostly around property crime, drug and traffic offences. There have been 967 street checks conducted and 1,503 traffic infringement notices issued, and this is a fantastic effort from police. I was fortunate enough to visit the Townsville Rapid Action and Patrols headquarters along with the Minister for Police, Minister O'Rourke and local members to personally thank the officers for the great work that they are doing, and they have done it in consultation with the Stronger Communities working group looking at a whole-of-government approach that runs parallel with the front-line police response.

It is a wonderful start, but we know the job is not done yet. Today I can announce that the Queensland Police Service will enter into phase 2 of Operation Oscar Merchant. A minimum of 10 additional officers will remain in Townsville to continue to focus on youth crime issues. The Police Commissioner will continue to assess operational needs on a monthly basis and I am assured that, if the need arises, more officers will be sent in. The acting commissioner has advised that, as part of phase 2, police will continue the operation's momentum by using intelligence already gathered to target recidivist offenders and will continue to include specialist policing units including the Rapid Action and Patrols group, the Tactical Crime Squad and the Dog Squad. I want to thank the Police Service and the Minister for Police for their willingness to respond swiftly and strongly to these challenges. I also want to thank Minister O'Rourke and the local members for Townsville and Thuringowa, who have been very strong advocates for action on this issue. Most of all, I want to thank the Townsville community. Townsville is a fantastic place to live and raise a family, and we want it to be the safest place to raise a family. The community has worked in partnership with the government and police and we are determined to deliver for them.

Natural Disasters, Preparedness

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.39 am): This week is RACQ Get Ready Week, a week that focuses on the need for all Queenslanders to be as prepared as possible for potential natural disasters, which we unfortunately experience far too often in Queensland. I can also inform the House that today is International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. Ahead of summer the government is asking everyone across the state, 'What is your plan?' This is about making sure that we do the little things to prepare ourselves, our family and our property no matter where in Queensland we live.

The message of preparedness is particularly vital this summer. Last season, we were incredibly lucky that no tropical cyclones crossed the Queensland coast. However, the last thing that we can afford to be this season is complacent. The Bureau of Meteorology's tropical cyclone season outlook, which was released on Monday, is for an average to above-average number of cyclones between November and April.

Of course, natural disasters do not just come in the form of cyclones. The Get Ready message of having a plan is just as important in relation to floods, severe storms, bushfires and heatwaves. The RACQ Get Ready Queensland is a year-round, all-hazards disaster preparedness and resilience building program. It is supported by more than \$2 million in state grants to local governments to educate and encourage community participation in disaster preparedness and there are Get Ready events being held by councils across the state this week. These include Logan's Big Safe Day Out, Toowoomba's Emergency Services Day, the Cairns Local Disaster Coordination Centre Open Day and a family fun day at Thompson Estate Reserve in Greenslopes this Sunday. The program works with individuals, community groups, emergency services, businesses and schools to help promote awareness and preparedness. It is also about encouraging people to look out for their friends, neighbours and elderly relatives, to make a plan and play their part in ensuring that their community is as resilient as possible.

This government has proven that disaster preparedness and resilience is a top priority, delivering an additional \$10 million in this year's budget for the Community Resilience Fund on top of last year's \$40 million. It is also why the Queensland Reconstruction Authority was made a permanent part of government last year, making Queensland the only state that has a dedicated, stand-alone organisation to help communities prepare for, recover from and rebuild after natural disasters.

Of course, recovery can be made faster with greater resilience measures in place before disaster strikes, and resilience begins at home. In terms of safety, planning ahead with simple things such as having an emergency kit, a battery operated radio and an evacuation plan for the family could be crucial. Advice on making a plan as well as local activities can be found at the Get Ready Queensland website. I urge all Queenslanders to think ahead this summer and to be as prepared as possible for whatever Mother Nature may throw at us.

Social Benefit Bonds

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.42 am): I wish to update the House on one of the Palaszczuk government's innovative policy initiatives regarding the design and delivery of community and social services. The House would be aware that in my first budget I announced the Social Benefit Bonds pilot program. I can announce that there has been strong market interest in the program being administered by Queensland Treasury.

The Social Benefit Bonds pilot program has been established as an innovative way to address often longstanding and complex social issues. They involve investors, the social sector and partner agencies collaborating to use private sector funding to establish new services that complement the extensive work that is already undertaken by the government and the social services sector.

Social Benefit Bonds will provide a commercial return to investors only if agreed positive social outcomes and financial value for the state are achieved. To establish Social Benefit Bonds, we allocated \$2 million to implement this cross-agency initiative. These funds are being used to access a range of expert skills and advice, particularly in the areas of data management, procurement and contracting.

The pilot scheme involves three areas of focus: tackling homelessness, minimising reoffending and addressing issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. A total of 23 submissions were received at the close of the expressions of interest process in May. That was followed by a request for proposals phase in August. Three proponents have now been short-listed to move to the joint development phase. Today, I can announce that the proponents selected to progress to the final stages of the process are Churches of Christ in the area of homelessness, Life Without Barriers in the field of reoffending, and UnitingCare Community to address Indigenous issues.

It is now proposed to move forward to a period of joint development with short-listed proponents to ensure that all elements of the transaction and service design are suitable for contracting. Churches of Christ has proposed a program to address homelessness using an approach based on individualised case management and interventions tailored to young people aged 15 to 25 leaving out-of-home care. Life Without Barriers proposes a program to reduce the risk of young people being held on remand. The proposed participants are young people aged 10 to 14. UnitingCare Community proposes to

establish the New Parent Infant Network to increase the reunification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children currently in out-of-home care. The initiative is on track to contract Queensland's first pilot Social Benefit Bonds in the first half of 2017.

I would like to thank Queensland Treasury and other agencies and organisations that have been involved and in particular my cabinet colleagues and their agencies who have taken a keen interest in this innovative program to date. I would also like to congratulate the three short-listed proponents. Their willingness to participate in this process is to be commended.

Mental Health Services

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.45 am): This morning, I am pleased to join with the Premier in updating the House on progress towards implementing the government's response to the Barret commission of inquiry. As the Premier has said, the government is committed to implementing all of the commission's six recommendations. Yesterday, I had the opportunity to brief many families and consumers of the former Barrett Adolescent Centre on our progress in this area. As the Premier said, we are going to do what the LNP should have done. We are going to do what the LNP was told to do by experts, whom it ignored. We are going to do what the LNP was told to do by families and young people, who were also ignored. The Palaszczuk government will build a replacement for the Barrett Adolescent Centre. I look forward to making an announcement with the Premier later today and thank her for her outstanding leadership, both in opposition and in government, on this important issue.

The commission of inquiry made a number of recommendations. We are on our way to implementing all of the recommendations, overseen by a steering committee that involves families and patients of the former Barrett Adolescent Centre. We also are working closely with Health Consumers Queensland to develop specific strategies to ensure the comprehensive engagement with and involvement of consumers, carers and community members in the implementation of the government response.

I can advise the House that, to address recommendation 1, we have engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake a review of statewide services. This will be complete in 2017. To address recommendation 2, we will be engaging a specialist consultant to review contracts with non-government organisations that provide mental health services. This consultant will also report next year. To address recommendation 3, we will be working with the Queensland centre for mental health to look at extended treatment for adolescents and young people with severe and complex mental health issues. We have already committed to implementing recommendation 4, which is to build a replacement facility. In accordance with recommendation 5, we will be engaging an independent consultant to review the alignment and transition arrangements between adolescent and adult mental health services.

We will present the findings and recommendations to the Council of Australian Governments for consideration. We have undertaken preliminary consultations with experts in the area of intellectual disability and mental illness. We will be working with the department of communities to match services and review guidelines, particularly in relation to the rollout of the NDIS. I look forward to updating the House on our ongoing work in this area.

Tourism and Events

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (9.47 am): Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines! Later this month I will be joining James Warburton, the CEO of the Supercars team, and more than 200,000 racing fans at the Gold Coast 600. Mr Speaker, you can come too. We have secured another three-year deal with Supercars off the back of our record four-year tourism and events funding guarantee.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Ms JONES: The member for Hinchinbrook can come too. The Supercars are worth more than \$40 million to our economy and continue to drive more visitors to the Gold Coast, including my good friends from the Far North. It is one of our many major events achieving success for Queensland.

The Gold Coast Airport Marathon—maybe the member will do the Gold Coast Airport Marathon?—has proven a tourism winner, smashing records for economic impact, visitor nights and the highest number of international competitors in history. That has quietened him down. This year's GCAM delivered a record \$24 million for the Gold Coast economy, 80,000 visitor nights and close to 3,500 international entries—the highest number in the event's history.

We also saw great results in tropical North Queensland, with the Cairns Airport Adventure Festival. The nine-day festival included the Ironman Asia-Pacific Championship for the first time, which helped attract more visitors from interstate and overseas than ever before. This event hosted 1,500 interstate and 1,300 international competitors and spectators, injecting more than \$8 million into the Cairns economy.

The Big Red Bash was another success, with more than 7,000 people flocking to enjoy a truly unique Queensland experience in Birdsville in the electorate of the honourable member for Mount Isa and spending more than \$6 million in outback Queensland. I congratulate the event organisers of the Big Red Bash because it was named the country's favourite event at the Australian Event Awards. Blues on Broadbeach is another music event delivering record visitors—close to 100,000 visitor nights—and an economic boost of around \$20 million to the Gold Coast economy. The Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival in Winton brings Hollywood to the outback. Close to 700 visitors travelled to Winton to experience this great outback event.

These great results are helping to grow tourism right across the state and support thousands of tourism jobs. I congratulate Leanne Coddington and the team at Tourism and Events Queensland, event organisers, volunteers and the communities for their outstanding efforts in delivering these great events for Queensland.

Biofutures

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.50 am): The Palaszczuk government is looking beyond our current economic strengths in resources and agriculture to diversify our economy and create the knowledge based jobs of the future. A key element of our Advance Queensland agenda is a potential \$1 billion industrial biotechnology and bioproducts sector. We believe that Queensland's mix of raw materials, proximity to growing Asian markets, highly skilled workforce and integrated transport systems make our state the ideal location for investors in this sector. As a government, we are determined to develop a number of new or expanded biorefineries. That is why we are seeking international interest from biofutures players in doing business in Queensland.

Stage 1 of this biofutures acceleration effort is an awareness-raising campaign targeting companies within the entire biofutures supply chain, from the producers of biomass to those who manufacture the products. The campaign is now running in online trade media globally, focusing on the US and Asia, as well as domestically. Stage 2 is the release of an expression of interest in mid-November. It aims to draw industry leaders to Queensland. We want to identify serious project proposals and further strengthen our understanding of the market to determine the most effective form of support we can offer. We want to hear from companies in all parts of the industry, from potential suppliers of feedstock, technology providers, commercial operators, through to investors and end-users of bioproducts. I took the opportunity to promote this recruitment drive during my North American trade mission last month. I had the privilege of seeing the operations of Amyris and the Joint BioEnergy Institute, which are engineering solutions for the enhancement of biofuel and pharmaceutical products such as through industrial synthetic biology platforms, genetically modified micro-organisms and high-quality genome sequences to enhance and diversify products to be used in biofutures.

Undoubtedly, biofutures is key to supporting economic development, opening the door to new investment and growing jobs, especially and most importantly in regional Queensland. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to driving this industry forward and turning our vision of a \$1 billion biofutures sector into an absolute reality.

Credible Pathways Draft Report

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (9.53 am): Energy markets worldwide are experiencing rapid transformation as nations transition to cleaner energy sources in response to the impact of climate change on our economies and communities. Germany produces 32 per cent of its power from renewables and California has a 30 per cent renewable energy mix already. Germany's current growth rate is a healthy three per cent plus. However, energy markets by their very nature need stable policy settings, genuine commitment to managing the transition to clean energy and consistent government frameworks. Australian and Queensland energy markets have suffered over the last three years due to a lack of leadership by former prime minister Tony Abbott in refusing to set a renewable energy target for 18 months, seeing investment in renewable energy fall by 88 per cent, and then cutting the target considerably—down to 33,000 gigawatt hours from 41,000. Unfortunately for Queensland, the federal

Turnbull government has no renewable energy target after 2020, a mere three years away, creating uncertainty in Australian energy markets and widespread community concern that the Turnbull government will not meet its Paris agreement commitments at COP21 to act on climate change. This yawning federal void, started under former prime minister Abbott and continued by Malcolm Turnbull, has meant state governments like Queensland have stepped into this policy void at a national level by setting our own targets to reduce carbon emissions which accelerate climate change and the economic damage which increased incidences of extreme weather events cause.

Yesterday's Credible Pathways Draft Report brought down by Queensland's independent Renewable Energy Expert Panel is a major contribution to developing clean energy projects which act on climate change, identifying three credible pathways and creating thousands of regional Queensland jobs. The independent expert panel is chaired by Mr Colin Mugglestone, former Macquarie Group Energy and Utilities Head, with highly respected energy sector specialists such as Mr Paul Hyslop from ACIL Allen Consulting; Ms Allison Warburton of Minter Ellison; Professor of Physics, Mr Paul Meredith from the University of Queensland; and Ms Amanda McKenzie from the Climate Council. This substantial draft report, using extensive modelling, is a major contribution to providing leadership in the energy industry by a highly credentialed and widely respected group of energy experts in touch with their industry and with widespread consultation across the Queensland energy sector and communities. This high-calibre group of energy professionals and specialists do not deserve to be publicly labelled as 'dodgy' by the Leader of the Opposition in media yesterday in a shameful and grubby exercise to justify his ideological obsession against renewable energy and action against climate change and his latest anti-jobs crusade. Their corporate reputations do not in any way deserve to be besmirched by base political propaganda and the opposition leader should apologise for his disgraceful attacks on these very highly credentialed corporate identities.

The Turnbull government has confirmed it has no renewable energy target after 2020 and consequently we are providing the leadership here where the federal government has failed. The Palaszczuk government supports the integration of climate policy and energy policy, genuine action and commitment to act on climate change and we recommend that the Turnbull government consider the Credible Pathways Draft Report in its entirety and treat it seriously.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, member for Burleigh, you are warned under standing order 253A. Your interjections are repetitive and disorderly. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

Back to Work Regional Employment Package

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.56 am): The Palaszczuk government's two-year, \$100 million Back to Work jobs program is already supporting 350 jobs in regional Queensland, with hundreds more on the way. This dedicated regional jobs program is supporting new jobs in a wide range of industries in regional Queensland: health care, agriculture, automotive, building and construction, retail, hospitality and community services to name just a few. It is giving regional employers the confidence to hire with more than a third of jobs being supported going to long-term unemployed who have been out of work for more than 12 months. This is a fantastic outcome for a program still in its infancy. There are almost 200 additional applications in the system and once processed this will bring the total of jobs to well over 500. We are seeing more and more employers keen to access the support payments of up to \$15,000 that this program provides. It is particularly encouraging to see some employers hiring multiple workers, which is exactly what we hoped to see. Back to Work has safeguards to ensure that support payments only go to genuine employers hiring real and genuine workers. This marks an important cultural shift whereby workers are being directly employed by employers not third parties who are ineligible under the Back to Work program.

Last week when the Premier governed from Townsville I visited local employment services provider Experience Works North Queensland, which has hired young mum Chandell Derham under Back to Work. Chandell had been struggling to find a job since becoming a mum, but is now working part-time 20 hours a week. She joins her colleague Tanya Wright, who had been out of work for four months, as another Back to Work success story. Experience Works manager Sally Lawrence said Back to Work had been crucial in being able to expand her team—and what a happy team they are.

This is happening right across regional Queensland with workers being employed in every region where Back to Work operates. Far North Queensland is leading the way with 82 workers and North Queensland is closely behind with 80. There are 76 in Wide Bay and 50 in Central Queensland. Back to Work is supporting 39 jobs in the Mackay-Whitsunday area and it is gathering momentum in north

and south-west Queensland, with 23 jobseekers gaining work. We are seeing more and more applications every day and we expect those numbers to grow in coming weeks and months. Jobs now, jobs for the future: that is what Back to Work is all about.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: I hear those opposite complaining. It is unbelievable that one hears them interjecting and complaining about jobs happening in regional Queensland.

Redcliffe Peninsula Rail Line

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (10.00 am): I am delighted that Moreton Bay residents turned out in force on Monday, 3 October for a community open day to celebrate the opening of the new Redcliffe peninsula train line. It was over 100 years in the making and we have delivered it. I cannot discuss the Redcliffe peninsula line without thanking the decade-long advocacy of one person in particular, that is, the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General has been present for every piece of lobbying, every piece of progress and every up and down on this project. It was a pleasure to join her and all of our special guests to celebrate the line opening last Monday week.

Ms Trad: Including the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Indeed, including the Leader of the Opposition. I will mention him later. The community day was a chance to thank the people of Moreton Bay for their patience while this transformative piece of infrastructure was built. More than 5,000 people attended the community day and were able to experience the six new train stations and their facilities, and also ride along the 12.6 kilometre line.

I can report to the House that this project has been warmly embraced by the people of the Moreton Bay region. Further to the patronage numbers reported to the House on Tuesday by the Premier, I can inform the House that more than 40,000 passenger trips have been taken to and from the six new train stations in the first full week of service. Kippa-Ring and Mango Hill train stations have been the most popular, with about 14,000 and 7,000 passenger trips respectively last week. We expect that patronage will continue to grow in coming weeks as customers try out all the new rail services and become accustomed to the new bus network. Daily along the new line we have seen more than 800 customers transferring between local bus services and trains. The bus network has an additional 157 trips each weekday, with 17 bus services connecting to Kallangur, Murrumba Downs, Mango Hill, Rothwell and Kippa-Ring stations along the new Redcliffe peninsula line.

It is deeply gratifying that people have already embraced this new transport infrastructure and are using it daily. The Redcliffe peninsula line is a connection from the peninsula to the entire Queensland Rail network. In addition, the line itself will trigger economic development along the corridor, bringing more jobs and opportunities to the region. For the first time ever the people of Moreton Bay are now connected to a fast and reliable rail service, with a journey to the Brisbane CBD taking less than an hour. From next year, the rail trip will become even cheaper under our Fairer Fares reform package. The people of the Moreton Bay region have been waiting the longest for a rail service, but they will have the shortest wait for a fare cut.

The community day was a terrific chance for local residents to ride on and explore the new line and the new stations from Petrie through to Kippa-Ring. I congratulate the lucky ballot winners who had the chance to join community leaders and advocates on the first service out of Kippa-Ring. As the Premier said earlier this week, they were really excited about it. I thank the Premier, Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, the members for Kallangur, Pine Rivers, Murrumba and Pumicestone and, indeed, the Leader of the Opposition for attending the event. I thank Mayor Allan Sutherland and the federal government for their support of the project. It was wonderful to see all three levels of government coming together to make this project happen. It was very gratifying for those involved in initiating the project that the Prime Minister acknowledged the role that the then transport minister, Anthony Albanese, and the then treasurer, Wayne Swan, had in initiating and delivering the project. It was very gratifying for those people to be acknowledged by today's Prime Minister.

Finally, I place on *Hansard* my thanks to the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Rail and all of the staff involved for working together to deliver this more than once in a generation project. It is a fantastic achievement for the government, but it is an even greater achievement for the people of the Moreton Bay region. As the Premier said, this is their railway.

Advance Queensland

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.04 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting Queensland innovators, entrepreneurs and researchers to transform their great ideas into products and services with global market potential. Through our \$405 million whole-of-government Advance Queensland initiative, we are assisting innovative Queenslanders to remain in our state, develop their ideas, grow their business and employ. In just over 12 months, through Advance Queensland we have opened 20 funding programs that have attracted a massive oversubscription with some 1,326 applications, which demonstrates the huge appetite for the initiative's objectives. To date, we have approved 297 applications for a total funding commitment of more than \$60 million. Those are huge numbers and they reinforce our government's razor-sharp focus on supporting innovation in every sector of the economy.

Today I would like to highlight two programs in particular that are providing entrepreneurs and innovators with key access to expertise, global contacts and investment opportunities. The first of those programs is the Commercialisation Partnership Program, or CPP. It is a new initiative and I am delighted to announce that round 1 of the program is now open. Queensland researchers and entrepreneurs can apply to take part in a program that will enable successful applicants to access critical expertise and investment potential from China. The program is the result of the Queensland government's memorandum of understanding with China's Ministry of Science and Technology, known as MOST. We have committed \$480,000 over four years to the program, working with six of China's leading science and technology incubators. Each year the incubators will play host to eight Queensland based entrepreneurs and researchers for the duration of the program. Successful applicants will receive up to \$20,000 each for placements of up to three months. During their placements, successful applicants will gain access to world-class facilities, mentors and local business links. Ultimately, it could generate exciting new industries and lead to significant exports and, more importantly, jobs for Queenslanders.

The second program is the hugely popular Hot DesQ initiative. As a result of the Premier's vision to make Queensland the start-up state, we received 114 applications from companies that want to move to Queensland and create jobs for Queenslanders. As innovation minister, I have approved \$2.25 million in funding for the first 26 companies to set up in locations across Queensland. That group contains 17 international startups from eight countries, including the UK, Israel and Brazil and five from the global start-up capital, Silicon Valley. Over the next few months, these start-up businesses will start arriving in host locations around Queensland, including Cairns, Townsville and Mackay. Many of the successful companies are connected to some of the world's most notable universities and a number have been part of global accelerators such as Y Combinator and 500 Startups.

Queensland is cementing its reputation as the start-up state. We are providing opportunities for Queensland entrepreneurs to learn and grow, both here and overseas, and ultimately create jobs and new businesses in industries that will position our state well and truly for the future.

Great Barrier Reef, Water Quality

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.08 am): Soil loss from gully erosion is one of the biggest threats to the water quality of the Great Barrier Reef. That is why the Palaszczuk government has boosted the state's efforts to protect the reef, including by purchasing Springvale Station in Cape York. Areas of badly degraded grazing land on the 56,000 hectare property are responsible for 40 per cent of the sediment from gully erosion in the Normanby Basin, which is the cape's largest reef catchment. Run-off carries sediment onto the outer reef, where it blocks light, smothers marine life and reduces the growth of coral and seagrass. The Palaszczuk government is actively working to identify, implement and evaluate ways to reduce soil loss and improve the reef's resilience.

The Burdekin Water Quality Improvement Plan 2016 shows that gully erosion is the most significant source of fine sediment and that significant remediation of gullies within specific priority subcatchments will need to be undertaken to reach the Reef 2050 Plan target. The environment department's Reef Water Quality Science Program has provided financial support to NQ Dry Tropics to address sediment, nutrient and pesticide run-off in the Burdekin region.

The Fitzroy catchment is also a major contributor of soil loss from gully erosion. Taken together, the Fitzroy and Burdekin catchments are estimated to deliver at least 70 per cent to the modelled total suspended solids load reaching the reef lagoon from human activity. EHP has invested almost \$600,000 to address the erodible soils in the Fitzroy to identify the most vulnerable areas of soil loss to waterways.

These are just the first steps in ensuring a targeted approach to preventing gully erosion. We will also continue to support the grazing industry best management practice program and support continued science investment and extension to ensure sustainable management of sediment on grazing lands for productivity and reef water quality outcomes.

Wild Dogs, Cluster Fencing

 **Hon. LE DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries) (10.10 am): This morning I can announce the rollout plan for \$5 million of wild dog cluster fencing with the specific aim of reinvigorating Queensland's sheep industry.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: If I identify members who are making inappropriate interjections I will be referring them to the standing orders.

Ms DONALDSON: After extensive consultation with the wild dog fencing commissioners, key stakeholders, QDOG and others I am pleased to announce phase 2 of the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative. I have listened to a wide variety of opinions about the best way to allocate this additional \$5 million to maximise its impact. My focus has been on ensuring that the funding is spent wisely to ensure the best bang for the buck.

I understand the merit in establishing a loan scheme and I am able to announce today that \$500,000 of the \$5 million will be set aside to investigate a contingent loan scheme to assist producers to construct cluster fences on more marginal land that is suitable for sheep production. The oversight group will consider applications for grants and will give the tick to those clusters that can demonstrate effectiveness, value for money and enable the sheep industry to thrive. Priority will be given to applications from the central west and south-west.

After visiting cluster fencing projects and consulting with QDOG and the commissioners, there is no doubt cluster fencing is the best way to protect livestock from feral pests. Effectively, today's announcement comprises phase 2 of the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative. This new phase is a \$10 million plus plan to support drought affected Queensland landholders with pest management. The \$3.7 million announced in this year's budget for wild dog control will be invested over three years through additional employment opportunities in regional areas to support training and improved management of wild dogs and other pests.

The budget also earmarked \$1.84 million under our Rural Assistance Package for weed management and that will be invested to fight particularly invasive weeds. This investment will be further bolstered with \$2 million that the federal government announced to support pest animal and weed projects throughout drought affected areas.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister for Housing and Public Works, I refer the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to standing order 253A. That is your first warning. Your interjections are repetitive and disorderly. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

Homelessness

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (10.13 am): The Palaszczuk government is determined to build a prosperous state where Queenslanders enjoy the benefits of that growth. We are also determined to ensure that vulnerable Queenslanders are not forgotten. Homelessness is a complex problem with no simple solution. It is more than simply a lack of shelter. It is why this government recognises our responsibility to do everything we can to build a sophisticated system to support those in need. It is an issue that is often amplified by isolation, by a lack of human connection.

Last month I joined with the Salvation Army to support their Couch Project, which brought people together to raise awareness of homelessness. We heard the story of Rebecca, a victim of family violence, who shifted between hostels and her friends' couches. Her homelessness was often not visible to those around her, even to those close to her, but it impacted all parts of her life, including her ability to work.

Rebecca's story drove home that homelessness manifests in a number of different ways. It can be a few nights couch surfing with friends, a few weeks moving between temporary accommodation or time on the streets. This government supports and funds a sophisticated suite of responses targeted at all the different manifestations of homelessness. Earlier we heard from the Treasurer about social benefit bond enabled programs being added to this suite.

Last year we funded 127 organisations to provide 218 specialist homelessness services across the state. This year we are investing \$152.6 million in specialist services, providing support and shelter for people in crisis. The new \$2 million Dignity First Fund adds to this suite of responses, funding programs and projects that promote the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness.

I am pleased to inform the House that the applications for the Dignity First Fund have now closed, and the interest has been overwhelming. Some 66 organisations have submitted 78 proposals for the fund, which will support social entrepreneurs and other community organisations and initiatives outside the traditional way of thinking. There have been 31 applications for innovation funding for existing organisations, 26 applications for small funds for organisations to upgrade facilities, eight applications for start-up funds proposing new projects and 13 applications across the three categories.

Organisations across the state are finding sophisticated ways to support people through homelessness by providing for the immediate needs of people living on the streets, in cars or couch surfing. The Dignity First Fund will back in the work of the Palaszczuk government in this space and support new ideas and allow existing programs to expand.

I am advised that the inaugural recipients of Dignity First funding will be announced over the coming months. I look forward to keeping the House updated on the innovative new projects that will be added to our suite of measures to support vulnerable Queenslanders to live with dignity.

NOTICE OF MOTION

West Village Project

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (10.16 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House condemns the Premier and the Deputy Premier for their failure to appoint a substitute decision-maker to resolve the widely perceived conflict of interest inherent in the Deputy Premier's call-in of the West Village Project.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Business Confidence

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (10.16 am): Another day and more surveys showing confidence in Queensland is the pits under Labor. Today's ANZ Property Council Survey—

Government members interjected.

Mr EMERSON: It is more of that. Today's ANZ Property Council Survey confirms the Palaszczuk-Pitt government is taking Queensland backwards. Queensland had the biggest fall in confidence of any state in Australia last year—it was down 12 points. The result in Queensland was six times as bad as the next worst performing state—New South Wales. Will the Premier be giving the Treasurer another pat on the back, like she did earlier this week when she congratulated him on such poor business conditions? Well done, Treasurer; you are exceeding expectations again!

Mr Nicholls: It could have been worse.

Mr EMERSON: It could have been worse. I take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. He is very good at this.

The bad news for Queensland does not end there. Not only are there negative expectations for the state economy over the coming year, the Palaszczuk government is seen as the worst performing government in Australia. I am happy to table this graph where Queensland stands compared with the rest of the states.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'State Government performance index, December QTR 2016' [[1854](#)].

Not once since the election in 2015 has there been a positive view of the Palaszczuk government amongst property industry professionals. Is it any wonder they do not have confidence in this government or this Treasurer? This is a repeat of the Anna Bligh-Andrew Fraser Labor government. It could not tell the truth. It would say and do anything to win office.

This is a Treasurer who promised no new taxes and then broke that promise and brought in new taxes, just like Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser broke their election promises. They could not be trusted. This government and this Treasurer cannot be trusted either. This is a Treasurer who previously warned that such attacks would destroy jobs and business confidence. Finally, this Treasurer gets something right. His prediction that it would destroy jobs and destroy confidence has come true. This Premier will again be ready to congratulate him. The Treasurer could not even get his numbers right when he underestimated the impact by 3,000 per cent. He labelled the exemption regime of his own tax as clear as mud.

Clearly, this industry is being let down by the failed policies of the Palaszczuk government and this 'captain risky' Treasurer. We saw also the Sensis Business Index today rating the state government a negative 18. This is what we see from this government, a government that is anti jobs, anti investment and anti business and is doing damage to this state's economy.

Business Confidence

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (10.19 am): I am very pleased to follow on from the member for Indooroopilly—certainly someone who has never been guilty of exceeding expectations. There has been a lot of talk about the backpacker tax and the impact that might have on the fruit-picking industry. There is one person who is not affected by the backpacker tax, and that is the member for Indooroopilly, who is the nation's greatest cherrypicker. He is the No. 1 cherrypicker who can find a positive statistic and turn it sour. He always finds the cloud in the silver lining. He is able to do anything to be so negative. He has never said a good word about the Queensland economy. One thing I know is that, in 19 months, they have had no policies and no plans.

To specific points, he talked about the Property Council Survey. The Property Council Survey follows more widely based surveys that show—

Mr Emerson: Shoot the messenger again.

Mr PITT: No. I will come back to that. The National Australia Bank Monthly Business Survey shows that again we are equal top in terms of business confidence in the nation.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr PITT: I take that interjection. We are the only state that achieved an increase in business conditions in the last month. It follows the Westpac-Melbourne Institute Consumer Sentiment Index. Queensland is leading the nation in terms of consumer sentiment. It is the highest level since November 2013. It is well above the national level. This is the fourth month in a row that we have seen an increase in consumer confidence in Queensland. The latest Sensis small business survey shows confidence is up in Queensland. We have seen an increase in growth in state final demand for the last two quarters following eight consecutive quarters of negativity under their government which commenced in the December quarter 2013. It is very sad, but we know that at least under this government the economy has turned the corner. The economy is on the right track as opposed to what they would have done if they had continued to be in office.

Getting back to the Property Council survey, the Property Council itself has said the survey results are outdated. Why is that the case? They are outdated because they do not take into consideration the wonderful announcement that this government has made in terms of providing details around Advancing our cities and regions. This has been welcomed by the Property Council. We know that that is the case. To quote them, they said that this is the 'shot in the arm' that is needed. There is no denying that the Property Council has concerns about the foreign property buyers surcharge. They have also said that, whilst they continue to express their opposition, the Property Council has welcomed the consultation. True to our word, we said we would do it. We have developed a set of guidelines which will help grow the economy and particularly so in regional Queensland. I do not think the member for Indooroopilly has ever been to regional Queensland. If he has, he was not very welcome.

Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (10.22 am): Haven't we seen the hypocrisy this week! If I worked for the Oxford Dictionary and Wikipedia, I would have been up all night changing the definitions of 'assets' because we have seen in the last 48 hours about 10 different definitions of 'assets'. If it is not income producing, it is not an asset. If it saves lives, it is not an asset. If it was an LNP asset, it is not an asset under the Labor Party. I was so confused about all of this I thought I would go to the Labor

Party bible—their policy document, but not the 2015 election policy document. I thought I would go to the updated, tracked and changed version to be debated at their convention this weekend. I thought I would see if it gives a definition of what an asset is, and it does—but, again, nothing like what the Premier said an asset is this week.

It says in this document, 'We believe the public, through their government, should own and control vital assets and services.' Now it is 'vital'—they are debating vital assets. Then a couple of pages on in this document it says, '... rejects privatisation of essential services.' This is about the sixth definition of what an asset is. We are all confused. We know Anna Bligh said, 'Assets not for sale.' We know this Premier said, 'Assets not for sale', but now they are for sale depending on which definition they use, whether it is the dictionary or the Labor policy document. Let us look at the other policies in this document. Let us look at the other issues.

The Premier stood here a few months ago and said, 'My government will not introduce a carbon tax.' That is what she said. Yet the policy document, tracked and changed—inserted for this weekend's conference—says, '... environmentally sustainable development into economic decision making, including pricing carbon and climate.' It has just been put in their document.

What do they say about the Public Service? They have cut out 'growing the Public Service in areas of health and education'. They cut out doctors and nurses and educators. In the document here it says, 'Labor will partner with the private and community sectors to develop innovative housing solutions aimed at increasing housing across the state'—not in Logan. Perhaps the Minister for Housing should read his own policy document.

Let us look at what the member for Bundamba said back in 2014 about their convention—this is about Labor members having a say. She said, 'I've got to tell you I was sick in the guts when we had a leader of our parliamentary caucus who was there when they brought in privatisation.' Then the member for Bundamba said in 2014, 'I bet that will never happen again if the unions have a say in it.' Member for Bundamba, it is happening under this Premier, just as it did under Anna Bligh. This is Anna 2.0—make no doubt about that.

Liberal National Party, One Nation Preferences

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (10.25 am): It is interesting hearing from the member for Kawana on assets, because if you look up the word 'asset' in the Oxford Dictionary you will not see a picture of the member for Kawana because we know that he is a liability for them. I must say I have given a lot of credit for my return to parliament to the former member for Ashgrove, but I really must thank the member for Kawana. He was the first person who people stopped to talk about and complain about when I was walking the streets of Ashgrove, keeping it tidy.

What I am most concerned about here this morning is the future of Queensland. That is what we saw at the ballot box. The people of Queensland said they were very concerned about the leadership of those such as the member for Kawana and the member for Clayfield and why they had a change of government after only two years. What is very concerning to me is that we have seen very little change.

We all know that the member for Clayfield likes to have his cake and eat it too, but that cannot be the case when it comes to One Nation—and that is exactly what is happening right now. We see in a shameful ducking and weaving of leadership, which has become his trademark, that he will not own up and stand up to the fact that he has already done a deal with One Nation. We are starting to see that come out of the shadows. When asked, a man who has dedicated his life to public office will not even come clean on where he stands about a political party that has been around since I was in year 12.

I call on the member for Clayfield once and for all to stand up and declare to the people of Queensland where he stands on preferences with One Nation. The member for Clayfield can choose not to look me in the eye, but one day he will have to look Queenslanders in the eye and come clean on where the member for Clayfield stands on One Nation. He thinks he can get away with telling the people of Queensland, like he did when he said selling an asset was leasing, 'Oh, it is a matter for the party. It is a matter for the administration of the LNP.' The honourable member for Clayfield either knows or is in denial that the president of the LNP has said—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I do not mind giving a fair go but, member for Gaven, you are actually shouting over there. You do not have the call. You have been shouting all morning. You are warned under standing order 253A. I do not believe your interjections are reasonable or relevant. If you continue, I will take the appropriate action.

Ms JONES: What we have here is the member for Clayfield, the so-called Leader of the Opposition, saying that it is a matter for the party. The president of the LNP has said, 'Put Labor last. Put the Greens last'—which means they are doing a deal with One Nation. That is what that means. That means the LNP are very comfortable with getting into this place on the back of One Nation preferences. That is what that means.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I am having difficulty hearing the minister.

Ms JONES: I call on the Leader of the Opposition to be a leader and use this moment now to say what he is doing with One Nation preferences.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.29 am): What have we learnt this week from the display and the performance of those opposite? What we have learnt is that there is no difference between this Premier and her Labor predecessors Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser—the man whom Queenslanders came to know as Australia's worst treasurer. They went to the 2009 state election promising not to sell assets. It did not matter what they were saying. It did not matter whether they were viable assets, essential assets, weed covered assets, undeclared assets, or part of a market-led asset disposal scheme. They said they would not sell assets, and what did they do? They sold assets. Once ensconced in power, they went about increasing taxes, fees and charges and turning Queensland into a basket case—the least ranked state in Australia according to CommSec—as they went through. They took Queenslanders for fools. They thought they could say one thing and went and did another.

This desperate Premier and the man Queenslanders have come to know as 'Captain Risky'—the raider of superannuation funds, the stealer of long service leave, the stopper of making contributions—are now back following exactly the same path. We have a sagging economy, and we have seen today just how bad it is. There is Queensland right down at the very bottom of the list—four months of it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Do you want to table it, Leader of the Opposition?

Mr NICHOLLS: It has been tabled, Mr Speaker. We have had four quarters of gradual decline, the worst in Australia, and yet this Treasurer—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There may be another document which another member has tabled, but that particular document to which the member is referring has not been tabled. If he is going to parade it and refer to it, it would be appropriate for him to table the document.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr NICHOLLS: I am happy to table it, Mr Speaker. There will be plenty more of them, I am sure.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'State Government performance index, December QTR 2016' [[1855](#)].

Our state, our assets, abandoned afterwards. Do you want me to table that, or have you not read it recently? We know that they had difficulty reading reports when we provided them in government. What we have here is a government that cravenly goes down the same path, and now we see them following the same path with their unrealistic, incredible pathways to solar energy which we all know will end up as the same diabolical disaster that Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser left Queenslanders with with their Solar Bonus Scheme, which sees Queenslanders paying \$3 billion more. They are going down the same path, they are making the same bad decisions, they have almost the same ministers in that cabinet who sat around that same table and who made those same decisions. There is no credible economic plan from this government. It is exactly the same as the Bligh-Fraser government.

(Time expired)

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will finish at 11.33 am.

Foreign Investors, Transfer Duty Surcharge

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (10.33 am): My first question is to the Premier. Today's ANZ Property Council report shows the Queensland government as the worst performing government in Australia. Chris Mountford of the Property Council also said, 'The introduction of a new tax on foreign investors in

residential property has clearly sent the wrong message and had a definite impact on industry attitudes to doing business in Queensland.' Premier, has this failure to honour Labor's pre-election commitment not shattered the confidence of the property industry and is yet another sign that this government cannot be trusted, just like the Bligh-Fraser government of the past?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. When there is good news for the economy, those opposite do not want to get behind Queensland. They do not want to back Queensland and they do not want to back Queenslanders. All we hear time and time again is doom and gloom from those opposite. When they were in government they talked down Queensland. When they were in opposition, they talked down Queensland. There is one thing that we will not do in government and that is talk down Queensland, because we will back Queenslanders all the time.

What we have seen is positive economic news. I have spoken very clearly about the need to diversify our economy. That is why we are building a new solar industry here in Queensland. That is why we are growing jobs in Queensland. When we talk about renewables, we have been able to partner with ARENA, and the private sector is contributing to building new solar farms across regional Queensland. What does that mean for regional Queensland? It means jobs.

Mr Nicholls: It is all federal government funding.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take the interjection. Yes, it is all federal government funding that the Leader of the Opposition is knocking. I want to know today whether they are going to support the Oakey solar farm, which will deliver 50 regional jobs in the member for Condamine's electorate? Are they going to support that? In the electorate of Whitsunday there is going to be a Whitsunday solar farm creating 116 jobs and a Collinsville solar farm creating 84 jobs. Will the member for Whitsunday support those much needed jobs in regional Queensland? In the electorate of Gregory there will be 30 jobs created in regional Queensland. Is the member for Gregory going to support 30 people getting into work in his electorate? That is the question for those opposite.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition asked a question about the introduction of a new tax on foreign investors investing in residential property in Queensland. I cannot see that the Premier has gone anywhere near answering the question. She is asking a series of questions of her own. Surely that is out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the Premier to come back to answering the question, which I thought was in relation to a comparison between the previous Labor government and this government.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. In relation to the foreign investor surcharge, that is consistent with what is happening in other states—in New South Wales and in Victoria. In fact, the Queensland rate is higher. It is not on Queenslanders.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, do they want the answer or not? Why did we do that? Because we also wanted to increase the First Home Owners' Grant of \$15,000 to get people into housing. That is what we wanted to do.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana and member for Gaven, if you want to ask a question to the Premier you are entitled to during question time.

Foreign Investors, Transfer Duty Surcharge

Mr NICHOLLS: My second question is also to the Premier. On 16 January 2015, before the last election, the Treasurer promised not to introduce any new taxes. The Treasurer then failed to honour Labor's pre-election commitment and introduced a new tax on property. Given today's Property Council report, does the Premier accept that Labor has broken its promise on property taxes and has damaged confidence in the industry, just like the failed Bligh-Fraser government did?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. He obviously was not listening to my answer, because it is not a tax on Queenslanders. It is a foreign investors surcharge. We increased the First Home Owners' Grant from \$15,000 to \$20,000. What we have seen already is that, since its introduction on 1 July, almost 1,250 applications have been received for the First Home Owners' Grant for Queensland families. That is what we are doing. We are driving this economy forward and we are standing up for Queensland families, unlike those opposite.

I find it absolutely ironic that they would come into this House when we can always recall their contract with Queensland. I love getting out the contract with Queensland that they made. What we saw from them was broken promise after broken promise after broken promise. The list is so long—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I know you might want to talk about that but I do not think that is the question. Do you have anything further you want to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have lots more to add.

Mr SPEAKER: No, that is relevant to the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No.

Regional Queensland, Jobs

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier please outline to the House what the Palaszczuk government is doing for jobseekers in regional Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mirani very much for that question. What my government is doing is focusing on getting people back into work—something that the former government failed to do. One of these signature projects—the Back to Work project—is working extremely well in regional Queensland. In the member's own electorate in Central Queensland, in that region alone, we already have over 50 employees who are now back into work. This program has only been operating for a couple of months but, as the Minister for Employment said this morning, over 350 people are now in work and we have almost \$1.5 million out the door. I want all that money out the door because I want to see Queenslanders in work, unlike those opposite. If we want to talk about records, I can say that the Leader of the Opposition's first budget was about slashing jobs. He had no interest in work in this state—no interest whatsoever. He cut front-line services—that was their record.

While I am on my feet talking about Back to Work, I can also add that it appears there is someone else who might be thinking about getting back into work. We are hearing very clearly that Senator George Brandis is thinking about leaving Queensland as a senator and going over to London to work in a position over there. We wish him luck if that is his decision, but the rumour mill is starting and who do we hear might be thinking about returning to work as a senator for Queensland? Campbell Newman.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is what we are hearing.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, do you want to table that paper you are holding, or can you pop it down?

Ms Trad: Is he meeting with Pauline Hanson too?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do not know. Obviously, whatever nominee the LNP puts up, we would have to affirm in this House. Will the LNP support senator Campbell Newman? Will they support him?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I think you have finished, Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, no, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: As long as it is relevant to the question please, Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is about people getting back to work. In all seriousness—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They do not like it. In conclusion, there are 350 people back into work. We are focused on jobs. We will focus on backing Queensland. Those opposite will not.

(Time expired)

Foreign Investors, Transfer Duty Surcharge

Mr EMERSON: My question is directed to the Premier. Before the election the Treasurer promised no new taxes. On 6 May 2015, the Treasurer said, 'We are ruling out any stamp duty surcharges for foreign investors.' Premier, why is this government failing to deliver on its pre-election commitments, just like the failed Bligh-Fraser government, of which she was also a member?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said previously when I answered the Leader of the Opposition's question, and now I am answering the member for Indooroopilly's question, when it comes to this issue of the foreign investment surcharge, it is on foreign investors. It is all about using their money to get people into their own homes with jobs for Queenslanders. I am very pleased the member for Indooroopilly asked me that question because there is another rumour going around about the member for Indooroopilly. That rumour is that he may want to go federally if Senator George Brandis goes overseas. There are a lot of rumours going around. We would like to have a firm commitment today because we want him to stay here, don't we, members? We want him to stay here.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Premier, I think we need to come back to the question that was asked in relation to a comparison with previous governments. Do you have anything further you would like to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I just want to reaffirm that Queensland in this regard is acting no different from other states, like New South Wales and Victoria. New South Wales and Victoria are doing exactly the same thing but Queensland's rate is lower. We want to encourage as much investment as possible. We will continue to grow our economy, seek overseas investment and also ensure that our first home owners, our young families, can get a foot into the property market. I have spoken to property developers and they have said to me that they are seeing a rapid uptake of interest in our government's increase of the First Home Owners' Grant. They are saying to me that that means new housing construction and more jobs. There will be more jobs in construction and more jobs for tradies. That is exactly what we are doing.

Renewable Energy

Mr KING: My question is also directed to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the government's plan to expand renewable energy across the state and the creation of new jobs in regional Queensland. Will the Premier advise the House of any alternative approaches?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I want to thank the member for Kallangur for his interest in this very important initiative. As I said, we are very determined to develop a large-scale renewable energy industry in this state. It was the previous Labor government that also set the foundations for the LNG industry, which was a new industry in this state which received bipartisan support.

A government member: Diversifying our energy mix.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, diversifying our energy mix. Would it not be great to see those opposite support a new industry in this state? This is a new industry that has the capacity to see in the future, according to the report, some \$6 billion of investment and thousands and thousands of jobs. Where are most of these jobs going to be located? In regional Queensland. Let us look at the simple economics. Who is doing it tough? Regional Queensland, and our initiatives will grow the economy.

It is important today to find out from the LNP members where they stand in relation to these really important issues. What we would see is the expansion of large-scale renewable energy—whether it is solar, wind or hydro—focusing on regional Queensland. We would see over 6,000 jobs. Imagine what that would do; it would be a huge boost for our economy. We also know that, unfortunately, the Turnbull government is happy to support ARENA in growing these jobs through their funding, but we are seeing an attack by those opposite when it comes to solar and solar users. Let us go back to when those opposite were in government and the Leader of the Opposition told them that they were champagne sippers and the latte set. I find that absolutely disgraceful because so many Queenslanders have solar on their roofs. In this state, we are going to back regional jobs in regional Queensland. As I said before, we want to see the views of the member for Gregory, the member for Whitsunday and the member for Condamine—

Mr Costigan interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There you are. You are interjecting. I am very pleased that we will be up in the Whitsunday region for a community cabinet. We are looking forward to going there. We will be looking at where the solar farms are going to be and what jobs they are going to create. We are going to put it to the Whitsunday region and ask them whether they support these regional jobs.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will also be asking them what they think about the member. That is right. We look forward to going to the Whitsunday region for a community cabinet in the not-too-distant future—in fact, next weekend.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, before I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for her question I am informed that we have students from Padua College, Kedron in the electorate of Stafford observing our proceedings. Welcome.

Energy Industry, Jobs

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the fact that the Minister for Energy said on 7 May 2015—

I regard all of our staff in the public sector as front-line staff. We will defend them.

Given the Premier's commitment that no jobs will be lost in government businesses, can the Premier explain why she is again failing to honour Labor's pre-election commitments considering that Stanwell Corporation has commenced the first round of redundancies across power stations in Rockhampton and in my electorate of Nanango?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. Let me be very frank here. We value our staff who work in the industry, unlike those opposite. They have—

An honourable member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. They have no credibility when it comes to talking about jobs. The biggest risk to the Queensland economy is the Leader of the Opposition, because when they were in government they put out their plan to sell \$37 billion of electricity generation and our ports, and what did they call it? The 'no asset sales' document. The biggest risk to the Queensland economy is those opposite because they still will not state for the people of Queensland whether or not they will keep the electricity assets—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I am keen that you do not debate—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am just finishing—on whether or not they will—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I do not need your assistance, member for Hinchinbrook. One moment, Premier. I am keen that you do not debate the question with the Leader of the Opposition and that your answer is relevant to the question as asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Who could forget the Leader of the Opposition when in government saying that he wanted to 'right size' the Public Service? We all know what 'right sizing the Public Service' means. That means sacking people. Today members opposite have the prime opportunity to back in the government's renewable energy targets because that means jobs for regional Queensland. They are anti Queensland and anti jobs.

Renewable Energy

Mr MADDEN: My question is of the Minister for Energy. I note the government's release of the Renewable Energy Expert Panel final report yesterday, and I ask: will the minister advise the House of the report's findings regarding the target of 50 per cent renewables by 2030?

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not need your assistance, member for Everton. You are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for his question. What we saw yesterday was a substantial piece of policy work by the independent expert panel that produced a draft report for our consideration and for the Queensland public's consideration that shows not just one pathway to 50 per cent by 2030 but three pathways. It is a substantial piece of policy work. It outlined that each of those pathways is cost neutral to electricity consumers. We are looking at it over a 14-year time frame. It is highly responsible. It includes no coal power generator closures under two of the three pathways over the next 14 years. That will be very welcome news for a lot of people—up to 6,400 jobs, most of them across regional Queensland.

What we saw was a disgraceful effort from the opposition leader to besmirch qualified professionals in the energy field as being dodgy. He should be ashamed of himself. That is not leadership; that is absolute irresponsibility. What else did we see from the opposition leader in response to this important report? We saw him trying to suggest that the 50 per cent target would impact on energy security. He obviously did not read the report because it is very clear about working closely with the energy market operator. The report is very clear that there is no issue of energy security in Queensland.

In fact, my doubts about him reading the report were confirmed when I read a transcript of the opposition leader yesterday afternoon on 4BC in which he said, 'It is a 163-page report, Ben, so I haven't—pause—I've been through a fair bit of it, mate.' That was the opposition leader's contribution. He has been through 'a fair bit of it, mate'. Here he is commenting on a report that he clearly has not read and that he clearly does not understand. He would understand that with the youngest and most efficient generation fleet in this country there is no issue of energy security. He is being the solar

scaremonger that he is. He has form on this in terms of abusing solar users for being 'latte sippers and champagne drinkers'. We have the same old 'Neanderthal Nicholls' when it comes to renewables. What we have also seen—

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, pause the clock. Minister, those words are unparliamentary. Can you please withdraw?

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw. What we also saw was the federal government also taking an irresponsible attitude and inaction on climate change. The federal Minister for Energy, Minister Frydenberg—and I say that advisedly; he is trying to frighten people into saying renewables are somehow a threat to energy security—said that he could not see any evidence. There are 131 pages of evidence for him to consider. He could not see any evidence of closures. I refer him to the report, a very important document.

(Time expired)

Renewable Energy

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Premier. The Renewable Energy Expert Panel draft report states—

... renewable energy in South Australia was a contributor to the closure of local coal-fired power station and higher electricity prices ...

Can the Premier guarantee that prices will not rise, that power stations will not close and that the Premier will not fail to honour any more of Labor's pre-election commitments by introducing new taxes to pay for Labor's very expensive scheme?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. There was a series of questions in that attempt at a question and I would like to clarify which one is the question.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. There is only one question. The question is: can the Premier give the guarantees that the member is asking for? It is a very simple question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I will consider it.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. There were multiple issues to which that question related, so each needs to be treated separately.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I will consider it. Can I ask the member for Burleigh to repeat the one question you have asked, please?

Mr HART: Mr Speaker, do you want me to repeat the whole question?

Mr SPEAKER: I am asking you to repeat your question—one question. You choose your question. It is your question; one question.

Mr HART: Can the Premier guarantee that prices will not rise, that power stations will not close and that the Premier will not fail to honour any more of Labor's pre-election commitments by introducing new taxes to pay for Labor's very expensive scheme?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Burleigh for the question. What I will guarantee under my government is that we will not see the 40 per cent increases in electricity prices that we saw under the LNP.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. We might have a member for Glass House mark I, too in a moment.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not need your assistance either, member for Toowoomba North.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I refer back to the opposition policy document about lowering the cost of living. What we saw through the former treasurer, now Leader of the Opposition—

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Premier. I apologise for interrupting. I want to make it very clear. Due to the way the member for Burleigh asked that question my ruling will be that the Premier has a great deal of liberty to answer that question in the way that she chooses. I call the Premier to answer the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Obviously those opposite did not listen to the Minister for Energy when he said that setting targets and trying to achieve those targets is nothing new: Germany has a 30 per cent target and California has a 30 per cent target. People are setting targets right across the world, and it is very unfortunate that the federal government does not want to set targets—

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under standing order 253A. Member for Kawana, you are also warned under standing order 253A. It is not going to become the common practice that a question is asked and members continue to ask further questions. I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: What the expert panel report clearly sets out is a pathway to achieve these goals. I would urge members of this House to look at that report very closely and then perhaps make a submission about whether or not you agree with what they are recommending. It clearly says that Queensland has security of supply, unlike what we have seen in other states. In fact, we are able to export our surplus electricity into the national electricity market. We have a golden opportunity here to grow jobs in regional Queensland and diversify our economy.

The energy mix over many years to come is going to change. We are going to see the introduction of battery technology. As I have said in this House previously, I have been overseas to the US. I have been to the Tesla factory, and I have seen the technology that is coming. We have also seen that Queensland has a very strong gas industry. We have coal-fired power that is going to serve us for many years to come, and when we are setting renewable energy targets we are following what is happening in the rest of the world. We are saying that Queensland can lead the nation when it comes to pursuing a renewable energy future.

Mr Nicholls: What about prices and closures?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will take the Leader of the Opposition's interjection, because under my government we will not have the 40 per cent increases in electricity prices that we saw under the broken contract that they had with Queenslanders. Under my government there has only been 1.2 per cent—
(*Time expired*)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, I note that you are on the list for a question, so I would urge you to keep it until that timeslot. I call the member for Keppel for your question.

Construction Industry

Mrs LAUGA: My question is for the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on how the government's growth management policies are benefiting the Queensland property sector?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Keppel for her question. I know that she is deeply interested in how planning can lead to prosperity and livability right across the state of Queensland. Today those opposite want to talk about sentiment surveys, but what they will not want to talk about is the data that was released by the ABS yesterday in terms of building work currently underway in Queensland, because that data paints a picture of strong confidence in Queensland in relation to residential property construction.

The data released yesterday shows that in Queensland we have more than 48,300 new commencements underway. How does that compare to the last time the member for Clayfield occupied the treasury benches on this side of the House, when it was some 39,800? That is a 21 per cent higher rate of construction in the first 12 months of the Palaszczuk Labor government compared to those opposite. There is more building activity happening in Queensland which means more jobs, and at the end of the day that is the vote of confidence that matters in this state.

As well as dwelling commencements, according to the ABS data released yesterday the value of building work was 24 per cent lower under the LNP when the member for Clayfield was treasurer. \$12.4 billion worth of work is currently underway and in the pipeline in Queensland compared to \$10 billion under the previous government.

Ms Jones: We do twice the job they did!

Ms TRAD: We do twice the job. I take that interjection from the education minister.

Ms Grace interjected.

Ms TRAD: That is right. In relation to the pipeline of residential work, it has peaked at \$8.2 billion in the pipeline currently compared to just \$5.3 billion under those opposite. That is a 57 per cent increase under the Palaszczuk Labor government compared to when those opposite were in charge of the treasury benches. In fact, it is the highest recorded value of pipeline work since records began.

Confidence is a very interesting thing. We know that all members say they have confidence in their leader in the LNP, but that does not occasionally stop one of them inviting the One Nation party into their electorate to help them—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education, you are joining the list for a warning under standing order 253A for your interjections. If you persist I will take the appropriate action. I call the member for Burdekin for your question.

Jobs

Mr LAST: My question is to the Minister for Energy. How does the minister reconcile his statement in this House on 7 May 2015 where he stated, 'I regard all of our staff in the public sector as front-line staff. We will defend them,' with Ergon's annual report for 2015-16, which shows a target to slash 310 jobs under his direction?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. The answer is very simple: that was my opinion at the time and it remains my opinion that I have respect for the staff that work in our public sector, unlike those opposite who sacked 14,000 of them. There has never been an apology for the way they treated the Public Service. It was absolutely and utterly appalling. What I say to the member for Burdekin is that when it comes to front-line staff this government has an exemplary record. We have said there will be no forced redundancies, and that is exactly what we have stuck to. We took that to the election. We stick to our election promises, unlike those opposite. If the member for Burdekin is suggesting that some way of measuring front-line staff is to keep the numbers exactly as they are year in and year out, he is having us all on. It is an absurd proposition that he is putting forward here today. Of course staff levels adjust over time as people come and go through natural attrition and all sorts of things.

I also note that in previous parliamentary sessions the attack on us has been because we have been adding too many people to the Public Service, so here we have the other arm suggesting that somehow we are doing the opposite thing. The opposition really has to get its story straight because we are getting different lines of attack. It is a lot like renewable energy over the last two days where we have had different things being said by different people. Firstly, the Leader of the Opposition said that we will be sending the generators out of business, and then in his press release the shadow minister for energy suggested that it would only happen after 2030. We have the shadow minister for energy contradicting the opposition leader, and we have the member for Burdekin contradicting a previous question from the opposition. There is no consistency at all. It is an absolute dog's breakfast over there.

The opposition is making things up as they go along and pretending that they care about front-line staff. I can say that the Public Service and staff members in our government owned corporations remember how they were treated by the member for Clayfield. They were told on camera by Campbell Newman that they would be safe, and they were sacked mercilessly in the first budget by the member for Clayfield—

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

Mr BAILEY: They do not and they will not—

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, I think you have answered it. I am informed that we have a former minister and member for Nudgee, Neil Roberts, in our gallery observing our proceedings. Welcome.

Queensland Economy

Mr RUSSO: My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer advise of any recent commentary on the economic indicators relevant to the Queensland economy?

Mr PITT: I thank the member for Sunnybank for his question. As I mentioned earlier today, some great figures have come through. The NAB Monthly Business Survey shows that we are still equal top in the nation. The Westpac-Melbourne Institute Survey of Consumer Sentiment shows that we are leading the nation and well above the national level.

Let us look at a few other areas. The results in terms of dwelling approvals stand in stark contrast to the shadow Treasurer's claims last week that ABS data shows the housing sector is going badly. Data actually shows that the number of residential dwellings across the state has increased. In the 12 months to August 2016 there was a 9.2 per cent rise, and total value is up by \$2 billion to reach \$13.7 billion. The LNP is too lazy to read these figures. It is a shame, because if they did they might find some good news they would want to talk about.

Part of this story is about the First Home Owners' Grant boost. We have increased it from \$15,000 to \$20,000 for a time limited period of 12 months for newly constructed dwellings up to \$750,000. There has been some positive commentary about this. Stockland has said that the time limited nature of the increase focuses buyers' attention on making sure they get into the market and get in quick. I have here a clipping from a *Quest* newspaper. It has Colliers International talking about the grant boost dramatically increasing interest among first home buyers. Colliers cite a 74 per cent rise in interest and a 23 per cent increase in sales since the grant started. That is across the 20 residential developments Colliers is involved in marketing in South-East Queensland. This may be of even more benefit to those in regional Queensland, where we know that \$20,000 goes a long way. It goes a long way towards getting that 10 per cent deposit, because of the average house price in regional Queensland.

Tabled paper: Article from *Quest Community Newspapers* online, dated 28 September 2016, titled 'First-home buyers back in market to take advantage of Queensland's \$20,000 boost to grant' [1856].

That is something those opposite just will not recognise. They also will not recognise the impact on construction and engineering. They had a crack when the Queensland Major Contractors Association report came out. They said that major construction was tailing off and it was all the government's fault. Of course, they did not get to the part where the association clearly said that the decline in activity 'commenced following the 2012-13 peak of the resources and engineering construction boom'. Of course it did, because we on this side of the House when we were last in government pushed forward with \$60 billion worth of investment in the liquefied natural gas industry. That is the construction that is now tapering off because the industry is going into production.

Those opposite should look at the Deloitte Access Economics Investment Monitor for June, which shows that there is \$183.5 billion in current and planned projects—ahead of New South Wales at \$129.5 billion and Victoria at \$78 billion. We have a \$40 billion infrastructure plan being rolled out. That 15-year plan delivered by the Deputy Premier—the first plan of its kind in four years—is giving confidence to the construction sector that it never had under those opposite.

(Time expired)

Carbon Tax

Mr CRIPPS: My question sort of without notice is to the Premier.

Dr Lynham interjected.

Mr CRIPPS: Why would I ask you a question? You are not in charge of anything.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, as a former minister you would be aware of the need to address your comments through the chair.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I want to clarify whether that was the member's question.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, on the point of order, there is a longstanding accepted rule in this place that any member is able to respond to an interjection and that any member who interjects does so at his own risk. I think the member for Stafford has learned that this morning.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Callide. I realise it is Thursday. Member for Hinchinbrook, can you please ask your question.

Mr CRIPPS: On 11 May this year the Premier said in this House—

I state from the outset that under the government that I lead it is very clear that there is no state based carbon tax—full stop.

Buried deep in the draft report released yesterday are three pathways which all rely on a carbon price of between \$25 and \$40 per tonne of carbon. Why is the Premier failing to honour Labor's public commitments and supporting a carbon tax on Queenslanders, just like her predecessor Anna Bligh?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. If he reads the report he will see that it rules that out. In fact, page 10 states—

The Panel recommends the Queensland Government should not pursue the implementation of broader state-based economic policy mechanisms, such as carbon pricing, for the purpose of meeting the 50% renewable energy target.

It is on page 10. The member should have a read. It is all there in black and white.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you have asked your questions. Before I call the member for Logan, I am informed that we have in the gallery observing our proceedings more students from Padua College, Kedron.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are already under a warning. I am speaking and you are speaking as well. That is not appropriate and you should know that by now.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is the second occasion this week on which the member for Nanango has effectively been given a second warning. I do think it is something that the House needs to potentially take action on.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, I do not need your assistance. I think everyone understands where I am coming from.

Health Services

Mr POWER: My question is for the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister advise the House of the progress on the government's strategy to tackle the backlog for patients waiting for an ENT specialist appointment? Is the minister aware of any examples of how this investment is assisting the people of Logan?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Logan for his question. I pay tribute to his continuing advocacy for quality health care, not only for the electorate of Logan but also for the City of Logan.

The government's investment in initiatives to tackle outpatient long-waits is delivering better outcomes for Queenslanders wherever they live in the state. A couple of weeks ago I was at Logan Hospital with the member for Logan to visit the new integrated ear, nose and throat specialist service. That new integrated service has slashed the ear, nose and throat outpatient long-wait—the long waiting list—by 90 per cent in just eight months. It is an Australian first. This new integrated model is another healthcare service delivered for the first time in Australia.

This service is one of many clinician-led initiatives we are funding out of our \$361 million specialist outpatient strategy and our 10-year vision for Health, *My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026*. When the Premier and I announced the funding for this initiative in May 2015 as part of the \$30 million strategic investment to tackle statewide ENT waiting lists, Logan Hospital was receiving three times the number of category 2 and category 3 ENT referrals than it could see each year. Many patients could not access appointments within the clinically recommended time. Some patients had waited several years. In fact, when we came to government we found that the LNP had left a category 3 patient waiting 7½ years for an appointment at Logan Hospital—not 7½ months but 7½ years. What does that demonstrate? It demonstrates that they did nothing for three years. They completely ignored the long-waits. In eight months we have reduced it 90 per cent.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: Well may the member for Southern Downs, who left 114,000 people waiting longer than clinically recommended, call out, because he should be ashamed. When the service commenced in January this year there were 5,085 Logan Hospital ENT long-wait patients. At the end of August that number was down to 451.

I am pleased to report to the House that there is no child waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist ENT appointment in Logan. That is the legacy of Labor investment. When you fund the front line you lose the long wait. That is what we have done. We are dedicated to and focused on supporting our clinicians, putting the money where it matters in the front line and reducing the long wait—something that no government in Queensland has ever had the courage to do.

Flinders River Catchment, Water Allocations

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Is the minister satisfied that the legislation the government is responsible for administering and the government's approach to allocating water in the Flinders River catchment prioritises access to the economic potential of that resource to the communities along the system over larger and corporate interests?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Mount Isa for his question. He is well aware that in November 2015 we first called for tenders to share in water from the five gulf river catchments, including the Flinders River which he mentioned in his question. We had a series of community meetings and lots of consultation sessions as per normal protocol with water resource plans—in Hughenden, Julia Creek, Richmond—and we developed a terms of sale to reflect the community interests that we had.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. I move—

That the minister table the document.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment. The question is that the minister table the document when he is finished.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: No, he has not. The member moved the motion. The motion—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of Opposition Business did not request that the document be tabled. He moved that the document be tabled and I presume that you would want to ask him to seek leave in order to do that if he is going to be moving a motion.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. Under our standing orders and rules, a document read or cited by a member may be ordered to be tabled pursuant to a motion moved without notice, amendment or debate by another member. My recollection is that the member for Callide actually moved that the minister table the document.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, but I do not need your assistance, member for Callide. Therefore the question is that the minister table the document.

Division: Question put—That the minister table the document.

AYES, 45:

LNP, 42—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Pyne.

NOES, 42:

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr SPEAKER: I remind members that question time is scheduled to finish at 11.33 and the minister still has the call.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. During the division the minister handed a document to the Deputy Premier. The Premier also received a document from outside the House. The motion was passed in the affirmative in terms of the minister tabling the document. I want to ensure that the document the minister will table is not the one he has now passed around to ministers, including the Deputy Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. The member will table the document. Minister, do you have anything further you wish to add in relation to your answer to the question? Do you remember the question? What was the question? Can we repeat the question please? Who had the call?

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. The House has just carried a motion that the minister table the document. Before I moved that motion the minister had the call. I would suggest the minister now continues to have the call and has responsibility to table the document.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Callide. I am in charge.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: No, resume your seat, member for Callide. Members, I want the person who asked the question to repeat the question so I am familiar with the question that was asked so that I can then make a ruling in relation to any points of order in relation to relevance that may be raised while the minister is answering the question. Member for Mount Isa, will you please repeat your question for my benefit? Thank you.

Mr KATTER: Is the minister satisfied that the legislation the government is responsible for administering and the government's approach to allocating water in the Flinders River catchment prioritises access to the economic potential of that resource to the communities along the system over larger corporate interests?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I ask you to answer the question and I also call you to table the document, but I am happy for you to refer to the document.

Dr LYNHAM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am quite happy to table the document as per the parliament's wishes.

Mr Seenev interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, member for Callide. I have made a ruling. I have called the minister to answer the question. When he has finished he will table the document.

Mr SEENEV: I rise to a point of order. That was not the motion that was carried by the House. The purpose of moving a motion such as the House just carried is so that the rest of the House has access to the document while the minister is answering the question. That is the whole purpose of it. If he were smart, he would have done that first, but he is not smart.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, member for Callide. That is a reflection. Member for Callide, will you withdraw those comments. They are unparliamentary.

Mr SEENEV: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Unequivocally.

Mr SEENEV: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Members, the purpose of the motion moved by the member for Callide was so that the document was tabled in the House. There is nothing to prevent the minister referring to that document and then tabling the document when he has finished his answer. That is the ruling I have made. I call the minister.

Dr LYNHAM: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the member for Mount Isa for his question. It is a very considered question, a matter of utmost importance for the member for Mount Isa. The contempt that those opposite have shown the member for Mount Isa is absolutely deplorable.

As those opposite should know, water resource allocation is vital to many of our regional communities. It is a difficult matter for any local member. I have met with local members from both sides of the House regarding water allocations. I understand the difficulty that the member for Mount Isa and other local members have in trying to juggle limited water resources within their own electorates to make sure that different parties are happy and satisfied. I have tried my hardest to assist members on this side, Independent members and members of the opposition to guide their local people into what is the best use for these limited water resources.

The member for Mount Isa has his heart in looking after his community and looking after the limited water resources that are in his area. I know where he is coming from. He wants community ownership of some of these resources and I am out there trying to assist the best way I possibly can for him to achieve his goal. As I said before, I understand the difficulty.

We have gone through a very detailed tender process. Successful applicants not only just apply; they invest considerable resources in making the application for these limited resources. I am pleased to announce that we will be making announcements regarding successful applications in the Flinders River system shortly.

Unfortunately, the community ownership scheme that the member for Mount Isa is talking about has come a little late in the tender system. I assure the member for Mount Isa that I will work with him to try to assist to the best of my ability a form of tenure with the water resources that are available in his area to enable as many members of the community to participate in this scheme.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Flinders Water Release' [1857].

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. The time for question time has expired.

Mr LANGBROEK: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I would respectfully ask that you seek an assurance from the minister that the document that has been tabled is the one that he was speaking from, because I have had a message from the gallery that the document was switched.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Surfers Paradise and members, I urge you to understand the significance and importance of motions moved by the House. When a motion is moved, that is effectively an order of the House that something will happen. An order of the House has been made that a document is to be tabled. For anyone to ignore that, or not comply, is effectively in contempt of the parliament. The document will be tabled and we will now move on to the next item of business. I will have no further discussion about this matter.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question; Energy Industry, Jobs

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (11.37 am), by leave: The member for Nanango asked me about Stanwell employees in Rockhampton and South Burnett. Ironically, her comments came on the third anniversary of revelations that an estimated 135 jobs were lost from Tarong Power Station under the Newman-Nicholls government in which she served. The best the member for Nanango could offer those workers were her comments to the *South Burnett Times* on 11 October 2012—

I made it abundantly clear just how disappointed I am by Stanwell's decision to reduce its workforce.

Unlike the member for Nanango, my government respects the role of government workers. Unlike the member for Nanango, my government will keep the electricity generators in government ownership. My government has restored front-line services across Queensland for Queenslanders.

I am advised that Stanwell made a decision to relocate its employees from a Rockhampton office to Stanwell Power Station. I am advised that there is no loss of jobs related to this move. There are certainly no forced redundancies as a result of the move.

SUSTAINABLE QUEENSLAND DAIRY PRODUCTION (FAIR MILK PRICE LOGOS) BILL

Introduction

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.37 am): I present a bill for an act to provide for the establishment of logos for containers of fresh milk produced in particular regions and for which a fair price has been paid to dairy farmers, a mechanism for setting fair prices, and an offence for particular conduct in relation to the logos. I nominate the Agriculture and Environment Committee to consider the bill. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Sustainable Queensland Dairy Production (Fair Milk Price Logos) Bill 2016 [[1858](#)].

Tabled paper: Sustainable Queensland Dairy Production (Fair Milk Price Logos) Bill 2016, explanatory notes [[1859](#)].

It is my great honour to present a bill for an act to enable consumers to clearly identify milk for which a dairy farmer has been paid a fair price. Queensland dairy farmers are in a crippling financial crisis. The deteriorating climate of the dairy industry is making it crucial to pass legislation that will help keep dairy farmers afloat.

Deregulation, natural disasters, the \$1 a litre milk supermarket price wars and unsustainable farm gate prices have slashed the number of Queensland dairy farmers from 1,500 to just 430 in 15 years— a phenomenal drop. Alarming, figures reveal that an average 70 farmers exit the industry each year. If this trend continues, fresh milk production in Queensland will cease completely by 2028.

It could mean that if there are no substantial changes soon, fresh milk may not be produced in this state. The economy of milk production is becoming unsustainable and the relentless cost-cutting by big supermarket chains has largely contributed to the decline in the dairy industry. This bill is giving consumers more control and transparency with the fair milk price logo. This logo informs consumers where their milk is produced, farmers are paid a sustainable price for the cost of a litre of milk and that it is Queensland fresh milk.

The policy objectives of this bill are to establish the eligibility criteria and legal protection for voluntary logos to be placed on containers of milk. The logo will inform Queensland consumers that a price which achieves a sustainable gross margin for producing that milk has been paid to the dairy farmer who produced the milk. The logo is a voluntary market mechanism which processors can choose to incorporate into existing milk labels for milk that meets the eligibility criteria for use.

This bill requires that a fair milk price logo identifies the region in which the milk was produced as the costs of production vary from region to region. A region-specific logo also enables consumers to support their local dairy industry. The regions are North Queensland, Central Queensland and South-East Queensland. The design and wording of each fair milk price logo must be decided by the minister in consultation with the dairy industry and set out in a gazette notice. This bill provides for the setting of a minimum price to be paid to dairy farmers for the production of milk carrying a fair milk price logo. The fair milk price logo will signify that the farmer who produced that milk has made a sustainable gross margin.

To ensure the validity of a fair milk price logo, this bill provides a process for determining a fair price to be paid for the production of milk. While the bill does not suggest what this price should be, the bill does utilise the Queensland government's Queensland Dairy Accounting Scheme report to identify the costs of producing milk for a dairy farmer in each Queensland region and uses the QDAS data to determine a sustainable gross margin for milk produced in a particular region. In addition to this data, the minister must consult with dairy farmers and industry representatives to determine a gross sustainable margin. This will then be published in the *Government Gazette* twice a year and within 14 sitting days after 1 January and 1 July each year and a report tabled in the Legislative Assembly about the consultation. Without a legislated criteria, eligibility for a fair milk price carries an inherent bias that continues to drive milk prices down below the cost of production. The minister must consult with each relevant minister in other states and territories about establishing a corresponding fair milk price logo.

The bill will boost consumer confidence when purchasing milk with a fair milk price logo. These logos will be backed by legislation and directly support sustainable Queensland dairy production. The bill legislates offences relating to particular conduct in order to protect the integrity of a fair milk price logo. In early 2011, the big two supermarkets slashed the prices of their home brand milk to \$1 per litre, which quickly became known as the milk wars. Since then Australia's dairy industry has repeatedly slammed these prices as unsustainable and revealed that many farmers have exited the industry as a result. Research shows that the last time milk was valued at \$1 a litre was in 1992. No one can live on the same wage they did in 1992. However, dairy farmers are being forced to and they simply cannot survive.

This year consumers have taken a renewed interest in the plight of dairy farmers as stories have emerged of those struggling to make ends meet in the face of plummeting farm gate milk prices. This crisis has attracted widespread media attention, triggering damning comments and pledges of support from the country's leaders. Research has identified consumers would pay more for dairy products if they knew the extra cost would result in a sustainable dairy industry. Most consumers are aware of the Fairtrade label on food and beverages, especially on chocolate and coffee. It indicates that the coffee or cocoa bean producer uses ethical forms of labour.

The bill responds to consumer demands for purchasing choices that support a sustainable Queensland dairy industry. Producers and processors would not be penalised if they chose to not adopt the logo. However, a processor, small or large, who adopts the fair milk price logo would experience consumer demand and this would benefit the whole supply chain from producer, processor, retailer to consumer.

To all the scaremongers, this bill does not enable regulation of the Queensland dairy industry. It is in line with national competition policies enacted through the federal Competition and Consumer Act 2010. Nor does it force anyone in the supply chain to use the logo. The Sustainable Queensland Dairy Production (Fair Milk Price Logos) Bill 2016 does not provide full rectification of the losses and disadvantages of the Queensland dairy industry, nor does it interfere with the supply chain of fresh milk to Queensland consumers.

Fundamentally, it aims to increase consumer engagement in the economy of dairy production in Queensland by establishing an eligibility criteria for a market based mechanism for a legally protected, easily identifiable logo. By supporting this bill it shows that we are listening to our communities to help desperate dairy farmers stay afloat and continue to provide fresh, local, Queensland milk. This bill sets a national precedent, with Queensland spearheading a policy platform for a sustainable Australian dairy industry. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.46 am): 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 Agriculture and Environment Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (11.46 am): I move—

That the House take note of report No. 30, *Inquiry into a possible Human Rights Act for Queensland*.

The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee was tasked to consider the effectiveness of current laws and mechanisms for protecting human rights and possible improvements in these mechanisms, the operation and effectiveness of human rights legislation in Victoria and the ACT and by ordinary statute internationally, the costs involved in adopting a HR act and previous and current reviews and inquiries, in Australia and internationally, on the issue of human rights legislation. I will not go into any of the other matters in respect to the reference, but I would like to refer to some of those issues that the committee identified.

The committee travelled to all parts of the state and also heard evidence via a video link from members of parliament from New Zealand and also Victoria that have human rights legislation in place. The committee at the time was comprised of members who were new to the committee and, unfortunately, the new deputy chair, the member for Coomera, was hospitalised and was unfortunately unable to attend but was ably substituted by the member for Lockyer. The member for Beaudesert was in attendance most of the trip. After our public hearings in Brisbane, the committee travelled to Lockhart River, Thursday Island, New Mapoon, Townsville, Cairns and then followed up with a further hearing in Brisbane on 11 April to hear from other stakeholders.

I indicate that it has been my privilege—and I hate to disappoint the member for Kawana and refer to my time in the Senate—to be a member of the Senate Select Committee on Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities which travelled to all parts of the country to listen to matters concerning Indigenous affairs, one of the fundamental issues that this committee examined in respect to those Indigenous communities in the far north of our state.

It is my view that many of our people in Indigenous communities are among the most disadvantaged people in the country and, most likely, the world. That is why the committee needed to undertake this inquiry, to consider whether there is a need to establish a human rights act in Queensland. Government members passed recommendations, the first of which is—

Government Committee Members recommend the Queensland Parliament move to legislate for a human rights act in Queensland.

Notwithstanding that recommendation and unlike the inquiry we conducted, at some stage in the future there should be an inquiry based on a bill that is given adequate time to adequately examine all people who are affected by the possibility of the need for a human rights act.

I was quite astounded by the comments made on the record by the member for Beaudesert in New Mapoon, when he indicated that he was personally against the proposal of a human rights act. I acknowledge that that is a personal view, but I believe all members of a committee should hold their opinions before all the evidence is gathered and then form a view as a member of that committee, rather than express a personal opinion, particularly on the record. That was a concern for me and other government members when hearing that evidence and the views expressed by a committee member.

The second recommendation states—

Government Committee Members recommend that where a human rights act is legislated that all Bills proposed by parliament be accompanied with a “statement of compatibility”.

Following evidence gathered in both New Zealand and Victoria, a theme that the committee explored was whether any bill coming into parliament should have a statement of compatibility so that a portfolio committee could adequately examine and understand the possible impacts on human rights as a result of proposed legislation. The committee felt that recommendation was warranted.

Government committee members also recommended that the judiciary not have any part of the complaint process where a person is perceived to have suffered a human rights matter. I have run out of time.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (11.51 am): I rise to speak to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee’s report into an inquiry into a possible human rights act for Queensland. I am sure the chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee would share my disappointment that I was unable to participate fully in the inquiry, as I changed parliamentary

committees part way through the process. However, I wanted to speak today because I am fundamentally opposed to any attempt to introduce a bill of rights or a human rights act into the Queensland parliament and into law in Queensland.

At the age of 16 I joined the Young Liberals because I believe in the inalienable rights and freedoms of the individual and the inalienable rights and freedoms that are associated with the ownership of property. One of the things that I fundamentally believe is that the moment you start prescribing rights and the moment that the parliament makes a decision about what right is to be respected and what right is to be prescribed is the moment you start restricting them. As soon as you put down on a piece of paper a right, the right that is not put down is no longer valued, is no longer respected and is no longer appreciated either by the parliament, the judiciary or the people. I think that is a great shame.

In my view, it is not the right of the parliament or the courts to be an arbiter of any individual's rights or freedoms in this state, because it is society and the community that will judge people. There will be things done and said that people will find objectionable, that I will find objectionable and that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, will find objectionable. However, the solution to that is not censorship; it is not to say that someone cannot do something. The solution is to respond better; it is to have a better argument.

In a free and open democracy, that is how we should respond, rather than by seeking to restrict the freedoms of those we oppose. I am incredibly proud of the freedoms that we have in this country. We often talk about freedom of political expression. For the most part—probably 99.9 per cent of the time—I am fundamentally opposed to what organisations such as GetUp! might say, but I also fundamentally agree with their right to say what they have to say. It is incumbent on anyone who agrees or disagrees with something to set out their argument. A human rights act or a bill of rights does not help that; a free and open society is what helps that.

When considering this inquiry, the committee noted the parliament has already had an inquiry and has already considered whether or not we should have a human rights act and the parliament rejected it. The people of Queensland are not in their masses calling out for a human rights act, because every three years and after the next election every four years the people of Queensland have an opportunity to be an arbiter of what this parliament is doing. It is not the role of this parliament to prescribe a set of rights that it thinks society should live by. It is the role of society to set those boundaries and that is what society has done and will continue to do.

There are fundamental rights and freedoms that we hold dear in 2016 that were not held dear in 1966 and were not held dear in 1916. Rights, liberties and freedoms evolve with time, but if we prescribe them and put them down on paper, not only do we restrict them but also we make it harder for society to evolve and change, because we are setting in stone what we think a right, a freedom and a liberty is, which is not how a parliament should be.

We should encourage discussion. We should have a free open democracy. A bill of rights and a human rights act can only infringe and restrict those things that we hold dear. I fundamentally disagree with and will always oppose the introduction of a bill of rights or a human rights act in this state or in this country, because all it seeks to do is restrict the rights, freedoms and liberties that we all hold dear and that our service men and women have fought to protect for generations.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Before I call the next speaker, I inform the House that in the gallery we have another group of students from Padua College at Kedron, in the electorate of Stafford.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (11.57 am): Today I rise to speak to report No. 30 titled *Inquiry into a possible human rights act for Queensland*. I begin where I plan to end, with a comment made by Aimee McVeigh at one of our hearings. She stated—

The purpose of human rights is to make sure that everyone in our community has the opportunity to live a life characterised by freedom, respect, equality and dignity, so when we are thinking about the evidence that should be given the greatest weight my view is that we should be looking to the people who do not have lives characterised by freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

I thank Mr Mark Furner, the chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and member for Ferny Grove, and my parliamentary colleagues: Mr Michael Crandon, the deputy chair and member for Coomera; Mr Jon Krause, the member for Beaudesert; Miss Verity Barton, the member for Broadwater; Mr Don Brown, the member for Capalaba; Mrs Tarnya Smith, the member for Mount Ommaney; and Mrs Jann Stuckey, the member for Currumbin. I also acknowledge the member for Lockyer, Mr Ian Ruckus, who substituted on our trips.

Miss Barton: It's 'Rickuss'.

Ms PEASE: I am sorry; I thought I said 'Rickuss'. I acknowledge the great work of the secretariat staff who organised our public hearings and put together the fine documentation. I thank research director Steve Finimore, Bernice Watson and other members of the secretariat.

The Legislative Assembly directed the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to inquire into whether it is appropriate and desirable to legislate for a human rights act in Queensland other than through a constitutionally entrenched model. Other terms of reference included that the committee consider—

The effectiveness of current laws and mechanisms for protecting human rights in Queensland and possible improvements to these mechanisms;

The operation and effectiveness of human rights legislation in Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and by ordinary statute internationally;

The costs and benefits of adopting a HR Act (including financial, legal, social and otherwise); and

Previous and current reviews and inquiries (in Australia and internationally) on the issue of human rights legislation.

The committee undertook its inquiry over several months. We received over 500 submissions. The committee invited consultation with stakeholders in jurisdictions with statutory human rights legislation, including the ACT, Victoria and New Zealand. The committee also conducted public consultation with community and Indigenous groups in North Queensland. I would like to acknowledge the people from Lockhart River, Thursday Island, Townsville, Cairns and New Mapoon who attended our hearings. Along with the trip away we also had select representatives and stakeholders appear in Brisbane.

During the inquiry we identified key issues which were raised by those who made submissions and considered features of human rights legislation in other jurisdictions. Unfortunately, the committee was unable to agree on whether it was appropriate and desirable to introduce human rights legislation. However, the government members of the committee made five recommendations.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Ms PEASE: Certainly. Government committee members recommended, firstly, that the Queensland parliament move to legislate for a human rights act in Queensland. Secondly, we recommended that where a human rights act is legislated that all bills proposed by parliament be accompanied with a statement of compatibility. Thirdly, we recommended that where it is deemed by a parliamentary portfolio committee that a bill be inconsistent with a statement of compatibility this in itself does not limit the bill being passed by parliament. Fourthly, government committee members recommended that the judiciary have no part in any complaint process where a person is perceived to have suffered a human rights matter. Fifthly, government committee members recommended that the objectives of a human rights act, if it be legislated, contain as a minimum a right to recognition and equality, a right to life, a right to freedom of movement, a right to privacy and reputation, a right to religion and belief, a right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association, cultural rights, a right to enjoy culture, declare and practise religion and use their language—

(Time expired)

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (12.02 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the committee report on the inquiry into a possible human rights act for Queensland. I thank all those involved in the inquiry, in particular the member for Lockyer who substituted for me for the trip to North Queensland where I understand he caused a ruckus.

The legal affairs committee conducted an inquiry into a possible human rights act for Queensland. In his submission to the committee, James Allen stated—

The core problem with any bill of rights is how it enervates democracy. That, in fact, is the very point of these instruments. If you buy a bill of rights you are, in some form or other, simply buying the views of a coterie of unelected judges or committees of ex-lawyers.

Non-government members agree with this view. Furthermore, the evidence does not point to a need for a human rights act at all. For example, many witnesses put views forward that were not borne out by the facts. It was what people believed.

During our hearings I challenged witnesses. For example, a witness brought up the issue of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders being overrepresented in our prison system in Queensland. I brought to the attention of the committee and the witness the fact that in New Zealand, which has a bill of rights act—and has had one since the early 1990s—15 per cent of the broader population identify as

Maori and yet 51 per cent of the prison population in New Zealand identifies as Maori. There was no answer to my question of the witness because there is no answer. New Zealand has a bill of rights. Maori people are overrepresented in the New Zealand prison system.

Let us look at Victoria which has a charter of human rights and responsibilities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are represented in the Victorian prison population as eight per cent of that population. That sounds very good compared to Queensland where it is around 25 per cent except that in 2009 the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in prisons in Victoria was 5.8 per cent. That is a 38 per cent increase since 2009 in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the Victorian prison system under a charter of human rights.

In support of this, Nicholas Aroney provided his experience of the operation of the charter in Victoria in terms of the protection of rights. He said in a recent study of the relationship between rights and the balancing of rights under the Victorian charter that, Professor Paul Babie, Dr Joel Harrison and he found that religious freedom, for example, which is what they were asked to study, was better protected before the charter than under it. More generally—and this is the most important point he was making—they found that, at best, the charter did not make a difference in cases and at worst it supported decisions in which one right was given priority over another.

The human rights legislation in Victoria and the ACT provide explicit protection of a select group of human rights drawn from international human rights treaties. The Victorian charter specifies 20 rights drawn from the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The charter states—

- (2) Aboriginal persons hold distinct cultural rights and must not be denied the right, with other members of their community—
- a) to enjoy their identity and culture
 - b) to maintain and use their language
 - c) to maintain their kinship ties ...

None of these are protections solely under a civil rights act. Non-government members acknowledge the evidence provided to the committee concerning discrimination on race and other grounds and inadequacies of government service provision, especially in regard to disability services. Those gaps can be addressed either by specific legislative amendment or by new government-led policy, enhanced government services or increased government spending in targeted areas.

In conclusion, the European Union Committee of the House of Lords recently completed an inquiry into the potential impact of repealing the UK HRA in regard to the European Union law. In February 2016 the secretary of state for justice gave evidence to the committee. He stated—

Human rights have become associated with unmeritorious individuals pursuing through the courts claims that do not command public support or sympathy. More troublingly, human rights are seen as something that are done to British courts and the British people as a result of foreign intervention, rather than something that we originally championed and created and seek to uphold.

He questions whether or not they should have a bill of rights. Those comments are from the home of our Westminster system.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Before I call member for Capalaba, I welcome in the gallery the Cambodian ambassador and delegation including members from the Cambodian government ministry.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (12.07 pm): I rise to speak to the report on the inquiry into a possible human rights act for Queensland. This is an issue of great importance to me, as it should be for many of us in this place. During the time of the previous government I personally stood outside this place, along with many of my colleagues, to protest the legislative overreach of the previous government.

We have an almost unique system in Queensland when it comes to Westminster parliaments as we have a unicameral parliament. We also have a traditionally powerful executive alongside that. For many of us during the last term of government we had few options available to appeal decisions of the previous government. Some sought to appeal to the High Court and others chose to negotiate a path of least resistance through the bureaucracy. If justice could not be found in the courts or the parliament people took to the streets outside this parliament.

I took part in many of these protests outside. As a campaigner throughout my working life as a union official, I stood with the powerless and with the voiceless. I instinctively understand the thirst for human rights and that any rights that are given generously by the parliament can be withdrawn by the parliament unexpectedly also.

All people in this place, I am sure, want what is best for the people of Queensland. All understand the basic impulse to protect against overpowered government. If a human rights act is a way to codify what we all feel and the way we all commit to act going forward, whoever is in power, then there is value in pursuing the project.

Many of my colleagues have talked and will talk very well about the committee's recommendation that the parliament legislate a human rights act. While a human rights act is not the panacea some presented it as—

Mr CRANDON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would hate to think that the member for Capalaba is misleading the House. He indicated that the committee recommended that the House support an act for a bill of rights. They were his words.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Member for Coomera, under the normal process, feel free to write to the Speaker. Member for Capalaba, continue.

Mr BROWN: I will clarify that it is the government's recommendation. I thank the member for his point of order. Having spent a lot of time with human rights act advocates and opponents of the various models, I believe that the concept of a statement of accountability accompanying legislation, as set out in government recommendation 2, is the most feasible and realistic way to enshrine the workings of a human rights act while recognising the traditional role of the parliamentarian as the embodiment of judgement in the primary role as a community advocate.

I wish to spend some time talking about the remaining government recommendation. Government recommendation 3 is clear that the statement of compatibility which might accompany proposed legislation should not in and of itself limit the parliament's ability to legislate. Each of the jurisdictions we considered in the inquiry—New Zealand, Victoria, the ACT and the UK—have as a feature of their human rights legislation a compatibility statement that is either incorporated into the legislative process or sits alongside the legislation itself. The remedy mechanisms vary in each jurisdiction, and I note the many submissions which recommended the Victorian model which provides an override provision.

Some have lobbied me in relation to a role for the judiciary in relation to a complaint process for perceived injuries caused by a human rights matter. I would like to take the opportunity to say that this issue needs to be canvassed further. I look forward to the day that a human rights act is actually introduced into this House and reviewed further in a committee process. Hopefully I can be part of that committee process.

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.12 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution. As it has been stated, I was on the trip to Cairns, Townsville, New Mapoon, Thursday Island and Lockhart River. As the member for Capalaba has stated, there was nowhere near enough consultation done with a lot of the people in some of those areas in North Queensland if they wanted to get some sort of result. There was quite a lot of misunderstanding in some of those communities. Michael Bond of the Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council submitted—

First and foremost, I think our people and community need to be given recognition about what and who we are, where we come from and what we want to achieve for our people.

This was about recognition in the Constitution, and I fully support that recognition in the Constitution. It was a long way down the priority list for a lot of people in those Indigenous communities. There was mention of the fact that their rights to hunt dugongs and other animals were taken away previously. These were the sorts of things that were raised. There was quite an amount of misunderstanding.

Defining a right can restrict rights, as the government moves and as the people move. From my understanding, Russia does have a bill of rights.

Miss Barton: I am sure that is working well for them.

Mr RICKUSS: Yes. I do not think you would like to be a lesbian in Russia at the moment. James Allan said that 'bills of rights cost significant amounts of money that could be spent elsewhere and deliver little, save to lawyers, judges, criminals, and some articulate, well-educated members of the professional class'. We have looked at this numerous times. As Don said, unfortunately the way this report was presented in terms of government recommendations—I think it was poorly put together in the end. That probably falls a little bit on the committee not thinking their way through it. Then the member for Capalaba did make the mistake of saying that it was a recommendation, which it was not.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (12.15 pm): I rise in the House to speak about the inquiry into a human rights act for Queensland and whether there is a need for such legislation in Queensland. Rob Hulls, a former deputy premier of Victoria and a previous member of this place, was responsible for the introduction of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities in the state of Victoria. He has presented at a seminar in the Premier's Hall. When you speak to Rob Hulls, he often says words to the effect that it is a 'no-brainer' and that this is a great opportunity for Queensland to show that we are a progressive state and that we will be better legislators by adopting a charter of rights and responsibilities.

I have always considered the recognition and protection of human rights to be a strong platform for good, progressive policy. Following the election of the Palaszczuk Labor government, we have been investigating ways of embedding safeguards into our legal and political structure. Last year we focused on getting the ball rolling on a human rights act by directing the government to conduct a public inquiry. The process kickstarted a statewide discussion on human rights and how best to keep governments accountable.

Miss BARTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like to give the member an opportunity to correct the record. I understand that the person he is referring to, Rob Hulls, was never a member of the Queensland parliament. He was a member of the federal parliament representing a Queensland division. The member has clearly misled the House.

Mr RUSSO: I withdraw. I did make a mistake. He was a member of the federal parliament and I said state.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Very well, continue.

Mr RUSSO: I want to quickly dispel a few fallacies that arose throughout the public inquiry. To be clear, a human rights act would not have the same effect as the American Bill of Rights. It will not take legislative power off our elected officials, and it certainly will not protect hate speech or encourage ownership of firearms. It will also not give undue power to judges to determine the scope of our rights.

What a human rights act will do is ensure that our basic rights are considered specifically with every new piece of legislation that is passed. If a minister proposes legislation that is likely to infringe on the basic rights of any person or group of people, they must specifically acknowledge this in parliament and present justification for doing so.

It was clear during the inquiry that an act of this kind will benefit minority groups in our society whose interests are not often considered in the mainstream political process. I consider the benefit as extending to all Queenslanders. I would argue that our society is enriched when we make an effort to understand the lives and needs of everybody, both as individuals and as members of our community.

It is also a fallacy to suggest that human rights legislation would essentially drive our legal system into the unknown. There are functioning legal instruments for human rights in the UK, New Zealand, Canada and Victoria, and also the ACT. These are Commonwealth jurisdictions with similar legal systems to our own. There is a vast database of legal reasoning and precedent to direct our judiciary in interpreting the application of a charter of rights. An act of this kind will simply ensure that our human rights remain part of the discussion. It will result in more considered meaningful legislation and ultimately better governance for everybody.

The human rights legislation in Victoria, for example, provides explicit protection of a select group of human rights drawn from international human rights treaties. The Victorian charter specifically lists 20 rights drawn from international human rights treaties. Adopting such an approach in any proposed legislation will allow other states to follow suit and ultimately put pressure on the federal government to introduce legislation nationally.

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (12.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on report No. 30 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and inquiry into a possible human rights act for Queensland. From the outset, I acknowledge the work of the committee in preparing this report and in conducting the inquiry. It is a very important issue to a lot of people. I particularly acknowledge the work of the member for Sunnybank in his advocacy of this subject matter. I know that the member for Sunnybank holds this issue very dear to his heart, and I know his advocacy, along with the advocacy of many members on this side of the House, will continue in respect of this subject matter.

I also acknowledge all the community members who have been fighting for so long to have progress on this issue. I would like to particularly acknowledge—among other people; there are a lot of people to acknowledge—Aimee McVeigh for her strong advocacy in this space, Scott McDougall from

the Caxton Legal Centre and James Farrell from CLC Queensland. They have been doing a lot of work working with other stakeholders as well as members of parliament to ensure that this subject matter not only is debated in this House but also is an important issue for all Queenslanders to debate.

In his contribution earlier the member for Sunnybank referred to Rob Hulls, a former Victorian attorney-general and former federal member. He was the federal member for Kennedy from 1990 to 1993. He is a great supporter of progressive reform not only in the Victorian parliament but also throughout Australia. I note that he is a bit of a hero for the Barcaldine members of the ALP. His corflute still hangs in their ALP meeting room in Barcaldine, which the member for Gregory will be aware of.

The reason I raise Rob Hulls is that he was the attorney-general of Victoria when it introduced its human rights act. He is probably one of the best authorities to say what impact a human rights act, or a human rights charter, has on people's lives. We heard some contributions from those opposite about how it does not have an impact on lives. What did Rob Hulls say that the Victorian human rights act has delivered? He said that it has meant better access for people to public transport. It has given older same-sex couples access to superannuation benefits.

Mr Crandon: That's nonsense. That's a federal issue. You are misleading the House: that's a federal issue.

Miss Barton interjected.

Mr RYAN: No, I am quoting Rob Hulls.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Order! Member for Coomera!

Mr RYAN: I am quoting Rob Hulls. This is what he has said.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Coomera, you are warned under standing order 253A.

Mr RYAN: Rob Hulls also says it means that the right to a fair hearing has been better enforced.

Miss Barton interjected.

Mr RYAN: He says that it also saved single mothers, elderly people and people with disability from eviction. It has meant something as simple as a man living with disability in shared supported accommodation was finally allowed access to his own mail and a woman in residential care had her right to privacy when showering better protected. That is what Rob Hulls, the former Victorian AG, said human rights legislation in Victoria has delivered.

Jon Stanhope, who was the ACT chief minister when the Human Rights Act in the ACT was introduced, also said that it has had an impact in the ACT. He said that human rights legislation delivers these outcomes—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, you have warned the member for Coomera and he continues to ignore your warning.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Thank you, member for Morayfield. You can continue.

Mr RYAN: Mr Stanhope said—

We had to show them that we were interested in human rights, a just society, freedom from discrimination, equality of opportunity—

Miss Barton interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Broadwater, that is about the fourth interjection you have made. You are also warned under standing order 253A.

Mr RYAN: Mr Stanhope said—

We had to show them that we were interested in human rights, a just society, freedom from discrimination, equality of opportunity, the rule of law and that we would show those who required support to be able to participate in the life of the community.

The reflection of Mr Stanhope is that a human rights act does two things: it improves how government operates and it provides people with recourse when their rights are violated.

This is an important subject matter for all members of this House to consider, but it is also an important issue for those people in our community who are most vulnerable, most disadvantaged and most marginalised. A human rights act will ensure that we provide a strong framework so that those people are best protected by their government.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr BUTCHER (Gladstone—ALP) (12.26 pm): I move—

That the House take note of report No. 22, *Consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 20: 2014-15—Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments*.

This report presents the findings from our consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 20 of 2014-15, *Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments*. The Auditor-General's report presented the findings of a performance audit by the Queensland Audit Office which examined whether the adverse impact of broadscale land use on the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef is declining. The QAO report highlighted the significant pressures on reef catchments and the challenges ahead for government and agricultural industries seeking to work together to reduce sediment, nutrient and pesticide run-off into reef waters.

In the course of our inquiry, the committee was briefed by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection on the finding of the latest reef report card. Overall, the results were consistent with the findings of the QAO audit. The Auditor-General made five recommendations, all of which have been implemented by the government or are the subject of substantial ongoing work. In addition, the Queensland government has committed to a substantial increase in funding for programs to improve reef water quality and is working with stakeholders including agricultural industries to reduce run-off that negatively impacts on our water quality. This is very welcome news.

As noted by the committee in our report, improving water quality in reef catchments is crucial to ensuring the future health and survival of the iconic Great Barrier Reef and protecting those coastal communities and industries that depend on it. The reforms implemented since the audit was released reflect strong commitments by the government in partnership with grazing, sugarcane and other agricultural industries and stakeholders to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus run-off and sediment run-off that are urgently required.

The committee noted the good progress being made by agricultural industries in the adoption of the BMP programs, with nearly 10.6 million hectares of grazing land in the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett-Mary catchments now covered by the grazing BMP. Over 240,000 hectares, which is over 50 per cent, of cane-growing areas in reef catchments are now covered by the Smartcane BMP, and 6,200 hectares, or 55 per cent, of land under banana cultivation in the Wet Tropics is now covered by the banana BMP program as well. These achievements are very encouraging.

The establishment of the dedicated Office of the Great Barrier Reef is a positive step forward for ensuring that programs across government are working effectively and that any funds invested will help achieve water quality improvement for the reef catchment areas. The report of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce, established in relation to recommendation 2 from the audit, has provided further frank advice to the government towards achieving its ambitious 2025 water quality improvement targets. The committee welcomed the task force's findings, particularly its call for a more collaborative approach by all industries and recommendations for enhanced communication, increased levels of agricultural extension and innovation, expanded water quality monitoring, greater financial and other incentives, and staged and targeted regulations. Having a mix of incentives in place that recognises the achievements of farmers and graziers who adopt best management practices, as well as regulations, promises to be a better approach to achieving the water quality improvements that are crucial to the future health of our Great Barrier Reef. I commend the committee's report to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Before I call the next speaker, I want to inform the House that we have in the gallery a further group of students from Padua College in Kedron in the electorate of Stafford.



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (12.31 pm): I rise to address the Agriculture and Environment Committee's consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 20 of 2014-15: *Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments*. I noted the Agriculture and Environment Committee's comments and absolutely agree that improving water quality in reef catchments is crucial to ensuring the health and survival of the Great Barrier Reef and protecting coastal communities and industries that depend on it. The Auditor-General's report No. 20 of 2014-15 undertook a strategic audit of the management of water quality in the reef's catchments and highlighted pressures on reef catchments and the challenges for government and agricultural industries seeking to reduce sediment, nutrient and pesticide run-off into reef waters. The reef report card 2014 released in 2015 highlighted the scale and extent of water quality improvements required to meet agreed targets and the scope for improvements in farming and land use practices in reef catchments.

The Auditor-General's audit made a number of recommendations to government. All have been implemented or are the subject of substantial ongoing work. The Agriculture and Environment Committee also noted a substantial increase in funding by the government for programs to improve reef water quality. The Agriculture and Environment Committee noted good progress by agricultural industries in adopting best management practice programs, with nearly 10.6 million hectares of grazing land in the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett-Mary catchments now covered by grazing best management practice programs. Certainly, congratulations go to rural landholders and farmers on achieving this outcome. Over 240,000 hectares, or nearly 50 per cent, of cane growing areas in reef catchments are covered by the Smartcane best management practice program, and 6,200 hectares, or 55 per cent of land, under banana cultivation in the wet tropics are now covered by the banana best management practice program.

The report of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce, established in relation to recommendation 2 from the audit, has provided further frank advice to the current government to achieve some ambitious 2025 water quality improvement targets. I also noted that having a mix of incentives and regulations that recognise farmers who adopt best management practices promises to be a better approach for farmers and graziers, on whom the achievement of water quality improvements for the reef largely depends. This is one of the critical elements for implementing evidence based best practice and achieving good outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (12.34 pm): I would like to thank the Agriculture and Environment Committee for their report on the QAO audit on managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments. I would also like to thank them for taking the time to talk with officers of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to understand progress since the audit was completed and also meeting with AgForce and Canegrowers to understand their views.

Since the QAO report, we have taken a number of steps to address its recommendations. We have established the Office of the Great Barrier Reef to oversee and coordinate reef matters across agencies. We have also established a Great Barrier Reef interdepartmental committee, chaired by my department, to improve coordination and governance, which has met eight times since July last year. We have reviewed the suite of programs to improve reef water quality to ensure they are effective and efficient as recommended. We established a water science task force to provide advice on the best approach to meeting the targets and priorities for investing an additional \$90 million over five years to accelerate progress towards water quality targets. The government has agreed with all 10 of the task force's recommendations and is well underway with implementing them.

We have also improved the transparency of Queensland's existing \$35 million per year investment into reef water quality programs by publishing an annual investment plan to identify where we intend to spend that money. As part of this, we have committed to tabling a report in parliament annually on our reef water quality investments, which I am pleased to do today.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government Annual Investment Report 2015-16: Reef Water Quality Protection Plan [\[1860\]](#).

This is the first time that the suite of activities across government has been reported formally and is part of our approach to improving the accountability of government investment and ensuring that cost-effective outcomes are delivered. The next annual investment plan is being finalised and will combine the ongoing \$35 million per year spend with the first year's funding from our additional \$90 million investment, taking our total annual commitment in 2016 to more than \$56 million.

A number of QAO recommendations related to monitoring and modelling have also been delivered upon. As recommended, we are increasing our catchment monitoring to improve the validation of models, and we are being clearer about the uncertainty in those models when reporting on modelled outputs in the reef report card. I am pleased to inform the House that since the QAO report was released a bit over a year ago we have made real and lasting changes. I would like to thank the QAO for their advice and recommendations which have helped contribute to a more effective and transparent approach to our reef water quality programs.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (12.37 pm): In addressing the Agriculture and Environment Committee's report No. 22, I want to talk more about the Auditor-General's report No. 20 of 2014-15: *Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments*, which was tabled on 10 June 2015. There are still unanswered questions around the dates of tabling and review being stalled to suit the government's agenda from 2 June 2015. There were several briefings from the Queensland Audit Office and the department, but I still have concerns with many aspects of the report and the tone of the statements that were enclosed.

On 12 June 2015, the independent science panel, under the Department of the Environment in the Australian government, issued a statement about the report, emphasising the need for state-of-the-art models to predict improvements in water quality reaching the Great Barrier Reef and highlighting and supporting the call for additional monitoring to refine and calibrate model processes to allow the uncertainty in model estimates to be better known. This further supports my concerns with the Auditor-General's report. Without accurate data or consistent information, how can you compile a report on assumption and opinion?

Under the headings 'Summary' and 'Background' on page 1 and with reference to water quality and the reef, the audit made assumptions immediately regarding farming practices without acknowledging urban run-off and sediment from natural events, including the significant storms and cyclones that had occurred. Under 'Summary' and 'Conclusions', these statements are concerning. It shows that the author appeared to have little understanding of the breadth of the NRM programs being delivered, either in the reef catchment or across Queensland, either funded by the state or the Commonwealth. The arguments provided to support the conclusions in the report appear to essentially be obtained from stakeholder groups with only self-interests. The Auditor-General could have easily located the expenditure and what was being delivered to contribute to better reef water quality outcomes if they had looked.

On page 2, we see the first of many references to vegetation management, particularly the inference that recent land-clearing relaxation has had adverse consequences. What was not included was the advances made in the reef management plan. The main concern was the assumptions and comments made in the report, when clearly the lack of water quality monitoring sites to collect data, to verify information, must call into question the general and selective information reported. I again highlight that, if you cannot collect data, how can you report with confidence on managing water quality in the Great Barrier Reef catchments? This issue was even reported on page 2.

Page 3 is also of concern, when on 7 May 2015, the day before the report was to be again tabled, we had a convenient announcement from the minister for the Great Barrier Reef regarding the functions of the reef secretariat being expanded and transferred into the department as the new Office of the Great Barrier Reef. We then had the Auditor-General claiming the governance issues that had been addressed were now going to be dealt with, although the task force had only just been announced. Is an opinion and conjecture a fair inclusion in an audit summary? No, it is not. We clearly have a lack of data and evidence but we still have opinions being published.

It was also curious that the responsibility for the reporting and management of the many efforts and programs to protect the water quality under successive governments was with the reef secretariat in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. This was dismissed instead, referencing the creation of another bureaucracy that has given us no tangible credentials to measure. However, the report references the credentials of the new entity.

In 1.2.1, it is commented that in 2012 the Queensland government rightly decided not to enforce regulations while the industry developed best management practice programs. We have concerns that the report left the door open as we have seen attempts to force the reef police and the onus-of-proof regulations back on to the BMP process. This is exactly the style of political activity that prevents the results sought under reef rescue being considered and promoted.

On page 29, again we see the author making assumptions like, 'BMP do not result in direct water improvements'. I am not sure if we should be insulted or disturbed. Half the modules from the Smartcane BMP and Grazing BMP are targeted at reef protection. I also highlight that, on page 33 of report No. 20, the conclusions fail to acknowledge that successive governments have been focused on triple bottom line outcomes, including the environment, not as reported only looking at profitability and productivity. This again allows the author to demonise farmers across Queensland.

On Page 66 the author fails to acknowledge important parts—crucial parts—of the director-general's response to address advances in land management practices, which would challenge what appears to be obsessive references on vegetation management. At 1.6 the audit's objectives, method and cost were discussed, with the leading statement being the adverse impact of broadscale land use on the water quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef, costing nearly \$500,000.

The opportunistic nature of the WWF seized on this report. I table a copy of the WWF using the Auditor-General's report, even using selective quotes in another campaign, which has been routinely accepted by the Auditor General's Report.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'The regular public reporting fails in this regard, lacking transparency at best, and being misleading at worst' [\[1861\]](#).

They claimed—

The solution is to implement new farm practices which cut pollution. These practices also benefit the farm business—keeping soil and chemicals on-farm boosting production rather than in the Reef polluting.

They did selectively use the report to demonise farmers and I think that is why we had so many problems with the Auditor-General's report and subsequently the Agriculture and Environment Committee report No. 22.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (12.41 pm): I rise to support the Agriculture and Environment Committee's report No. 22 titled *Consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 20: 2014-15—Managing water quality in the Great Barrier Reef catchments*. The Auditor-General's report No. 20 of 2014-15 titled *Managing water quality in the Great Barrier Reef catchments* was tabled and referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee by the parliament on 16 July 2015 for consideration and report. The report presented findings of a performance audit by the Queensland Audit Office which examined whether the adverse impact of broadscale land use on the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef is declining. The report also highlighted the significant pressures on reef catchments and the challenges ahead for the government and agricultural industries seeking to reduce high levels of sediment, nutrient and pesticide run-off into reef waters.

The Auditor-General's report made five recommendations: firstly, that the newly formed Office of the Great Barrier Reef be provided with sufficient and appropriate management and administrative authority so that it can be properly made responsible and held accountable for Queensland's reef management strategies and programs; secondly, that the design and implementation of a suite of programs attributed to the Reef Plan is reviewed to establish they are the most effective and efficient; thirdly, that the catchment monitoring is expanded to aid in determining the effectiveness of practice management change and enhance the confidence in modelled outcomes; fourthly, that a rigorous verification process is applied to data on land management practice change and deficiencies in model inputs; and, fifthly and finally, that unambiguous references be included in the tier 1 reef report card which disclosed the degree of uncertainty and levels of potential variability in the reported results.

The Agriculture and Environment Committee received a wide range of briefings. They included a private briefing by AgForce and Canegrowers Queensland on 15 July 2015 as to their grazing and Smartcane best management practice programs—BMPs—which are designed to improve farming and grazing practices to reduce run-off into reef catchments. They also received briefings from the Queensland Audit Office and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection on 11 September 2015 concerning the audit findings and work by departments to implement recommendations, with the government accepting all five recommendations of the audit. They also received a briefing from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection on 28 October 2015 reviewing the Great Barrier Reef report card 2014.

The committee noted that improving water quality in reef catchments is crucial to ensuring the future health and survival of our Great Barrier Reef. All five recommendations are being implemented by the government or are subject to substantial ongoing work. The Palaszczuk government is committed to a substantial increase in funding programs to improve reef water quality and is working with stakeholders, including agricultural industries, to reduce run-off that negatively impacts on water quality. Reforms implemented since the audit was released reflect strong commitments by the government in partnership with grazing, sugarcane and other agricultural industries and stakeholders to reduce run-off. Good progress is being made by agricultural industries in the adoption of BMP programs.

The establishment of the dedicated Office of the Great Barrier Reef is a positive step forward for ensuring that programs across government are working effectively and the funds invested will help water quality improvement for reef catchments. The Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce, established in relation to recommendation 2 of the audit, has further provided frank advice to the government towards achieving its ambitious 2014 water quality targets.

The committee welcomed the task force's findings, particularly its call for a more collaborative approach by all industries and recommendations for enhancing communication, increased levels of agricultural extension and innovation, expanded water quality monitoring, greater financial and other incentives, and staged and targeted recommendations. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (12.46 pm): I rise to speak briefly on the consideration of the Auditor-General's report No. 20 of 2014-15 titled *Managing water quality in the Great Barrier Reef catchments*. Last year the committee investigated this report which a lay observer would assume would be about what the title says, that is, managing water quality in the reef catchments. Instead, the

Auditor-General's report largely focussed on determining whether the adverse impact of broadscale land use on the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef is declining. This is a limited and narrow focus on only one area of activity which impacts the water quality of the reef. In fact, in some ways it presupposes the guilt of those who undertake broadscale land use, such as graziers and canefarmers, without balancing it with other factors. The glaringly obvious—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Member for Gympie, we have just hit 12.47 pm, which is one hour. I ask you to adjourn the debate.

Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (12.47 pm): by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in the standing and sessional orders, the debate on committee reports continue until one o'clock.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr PERRETT: The glaringly obvious is the omission of any reference to natural disasters in a region which is renowned for significant and extreme weather events. All of us want the water quality of the Great Barrier Reef to be as pristine as possible. Proposals to increase regulation, change management practice, lock up land and remove humans from agricultural industries are looking at the problem through a narrow lens. Cyclones and floods can have a devastating effect on the reef regardless of any programs and management practices demanded by government or implemented by industries.

The Auditor-General's report focuses on two reports: the Reef Plan and the Great Barrier Reef report card. The Reef Plan is a coordinated response of actions by both the Queensland and Australian governments in conjunction with the natural resource management bodies of agricultural industries and landholders. Over time the goals of the Reef Plan have altered from halting the decline in water quality to ensuring that by 2020 the quality of the water from broadscale land use has no detrimental impact on the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

The report card released in June 2014 advised that its goal to halt and reverse the decline in water quality entering the reef had been achieved, yet the Auditor-General's report disputes the claims of the report card, preferring to draw its own conclusions. The report card assessed the combined result of all Reef Plan actions up to June 2014 as well as changes in the extent of riparian vegetation and wetlands between 2009 and 2013.

During that period the reef would have been adversely impacted by some severe weather events. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority advises that large volumes of floodwater have the greatest potential to cause lasting damage; that cyclones often cause severe and widespread damage which takes decades, if not centuries, to recover from; and that flood plumes from the intense rainfall that accompanies cyclones expose large areas of the reef to changes in water quality. Who can forget the floods of 2011 and 2013? Floods not only flush chemicals and pesticides into the system but also other debris. They reduce salinity and increase turbidity, which also affects water quality. Fourteen cyclones hit Queensland's east coast between 2009 and 2014, and another two travelled from the gulf to the east coast and the reef. Cyclone Yasi was one of the most powerful cyclones to affect the Great Barrier Reef since records commenced. Rainfall was 300 to 400 per cent higher than normal.

Those who are honestly interested in improving water quality know that we must get the balance right. Of the period under review, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's *Outlook Report 2014* concluded that over the past decade the region experienced a series of extreme weather events, including floods and six category 3 or above cyclones. The report states—

While improved land management practices are beginning to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediments leaving the catchment, there is likely to be a long lag time between these improvements and reductions in pollutants flowing into the Region, and again between that and improvements in related marine processes.

A thorough and candid investigation into managing water quality in the Great Barrier Reef must consider all factors which impact the reef, not just the effects of broadscale land use. It must reflect on all causes and not use this as yet another excuse to demonise primary industries. We must get the balance right.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.52 pm): I rise to speak on the Auditor-General's Report 20: 2014-15 *Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments*. Improving water quality in reef catchments is crucial to ensure the future health and survival of the iconic Great Barrier Reef and protect

those coastal communities and industries which depend on it. The Auditor-General made five recommendations to the government, and all five have been implemented or are the subject of substantial ongoing work. The committee also notes a substantial increase in funding by the government for programs to improve water quality.

There is a lot of work to be done by all sectors to keep improving the quality of water run-off into the Great Barrier Reef. There has been progress made by agricultural industries. Over 240,000 hectares—or 50 per cent—of the cane growing area in the reef catchment is covered by Smart Cane Best Practice Management. In relation to recommendation 2 of the audit, the report of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce has provided further frank advice to the government towards achieving its ambitious 2025 water quality improvement targets. The committee welcomes the findings of the task force, particularly its call to all industries for a more collaborative approach and its recommendation for enhanced communication, increased levels of agriculture extension and innovation, expanded water quality monitoring, greater financial and other incentives and staged, targeted regulations.

There is a need for every sector to collaborate and contribute to water quality improvements including farmers, graziers, developers, the resource sector, community members and tourism. I would like to congratulate the sugar industry in the wider Mackay region. They are committed to best practice. I would like to share with the House an example of the sugar industry's best practice. Mr Paul Schrembri, a canefarmer for 41 years, is an example of a progressive farmer who is working towards improving farm practice to improve water quality on the reef together with local farmers. He and his brother operate three farms, and they are working towards best practice management accreditation. Mr Schrembri is a leader in the sugar industry, a director of Canegrowers Mackay and a member of the Canegrowers Queensland policy council. Mr Schrembri knows that best practice increases productivity while at the same time deriving sustainable benefits that protect the Great Barrier Reef. Smartcane BMP helps canegrowers with modules specifically tailored to improve soil health, nutrient management, irrigation and drainage management and weed, pest and disease management. Meeting the practices in the modules helps canefarmers enhance their profitability and productivity and meet legislative requirements. Mr Schrembri uses printed maps of his farm on top of which he records fertiliser and chemical applications. After harvesting he can compare the harvest results from each block with fertilisers and chemical application rates. This helps determine the most cost-effective application of fertilisers and chemicals for their farm while minimising run-off.

Mr Schrembri, like a lot of other farmers in my region, is working hard to improve the water quality of the Great Barrier Reef. They also know that it is improving the productivity of their farms. The state government has allocated \$5.85 million for Smartcane BMP for 2014-17. I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their work in putting this report together. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (12.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Auditor-General's Report 20: 2014-15 *Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments*. I would like to talk about water quality and the agricultural side of it. The report states—

In 2008 a multi-disciplinary science group assessment concluded that sugarcane and grazing were the two agricultural industries contributing the most to poor water quality. In 2013, the group noted significant increases compared to pre-European settlement conditions in mean annual sediment loads—

had risen over that time. The report continues—

... from 100 years of farming and land clearing in reef catchments.

The noted historian Geoffrey Blainey in his book *Triumph of the Nomads* recorded that without Aboriginal fires the grassy woodlands that occupied much of fertile south-eastern Australia would have been scrubland or forest at the time of European occupation. There have been many other expert case studies across the continent since then which have reached the same conclusion. As early as 1911 the distinguished geographer Karl Domain concluded that in all parts of Queensland the open forests developed through the influence of Aborigines, mostly by means of bushfires. MR Jacobs, the guru of eucalypt ecologists, concluded that if fires were controlled—that is, stopped—the eucalypts would make a much closer forest in the far north of Queensland. Blainey concluded that a period of 50 years was sufficient to change the character of the savannah country when fires were suppressed by Europeans and their livestock. If we look at it over 100 years or more, I will let you draw your own conclusions.

Debate, on motion of Mr Sorensen, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Maranoa Regional Council, Land Valuations

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.30 pm): I rise to speak on the issue of unfair land tax assessments and outdated valuations and the devastating effect this is having on jobs in communities like Roma. I have written a number of letters on behalf of constituents to the Minister for Natural Resources and the Treasurer seeking advice on the valuations and the excessive land tax assessments. I am yet to receive a response to all of this correspondence. It is disappointing and it shows this Labor government's affront for small business, jobs and regional communities. I call on the minister and the Treasurer to answer the questions in my correspondence forthwith as they are genuine constituent hardship cases due to circumstances that are beyond their control.

Last year the Maranoa Regional Council area was not included for a statutory revaluation when the neighbouring Western Downs Regional Council area was, despite both areas experiencing a sharp downturn in the resources industry. The former local government did not request a revaluation last year, despite paying for the valuation service regardless of whether the area is revalued or not. The state government does have an ability under section 74(3) to include in the market survey report details of sales of land, including sales of land outside of the area, since the last annual valuation was made. The legislation permits the use of data in the Western Downs Regional Council to help inform the market survey report for the Maranoa Regional Council. Unfortunately, this was not done.

The valuations advisory committee in Roma is inadequate. There is no representative landholder from the commercial or industrial land areas on that particular committee, despite there being significant issues with the valuation relativities on these particular land types. A registered valuer has advised me of some of the industrial land comparisons which were sourced from the Queensland Globe and publicly available information: Roma industrial land with a site value of \$144 to \$136 per square metre compared with similar premises in Dalby at \$50 to \$60 per square metre, Chinchilla at \$60 to \$80 per square metre, Miles at \$70 to \$80 per square metre, Biloela at \$40 to \$60 per square metre and Emerald at \$50 to \$60 per square metre. The cost of Roma's industrial land is at least double other comparable major centres as a direct result of the Maranoa Regional Council not being revalued. This is having an unfair effect on businesses, which are paying excessive land tax assessments on inaccurate and inflated valuations.

I call on the state government to properly resource the valuation service so they can genuinely revalue the Maranoa Regional Council area, correct the relativities in the Roma industrial and commercial area and provide an interest-free repayment plan for those businesses that are suffering from excessive land tax assessments.

Sale of Public Assets

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (2.33 pm): I remind the House of a speech I delivered in the chamber during the adjournment debate on 11 May this year. I highlighted the situation of the asset known as the former Oxley secondary college in my electorate of Mount Ommaney. I spoke at length about the community consultation and surveys my office had held after many residents had approached me with concerns about the plight of that asset. During my adjournment speech regarding that asset I said—

I want to express the biggest concerns here in the House tonight. The first is that I think Labor will be breaking an election commitment, given that they have been very clear on their position on asset sales.

I also stated—

Another worry is the lack of genuine consultation. The community forums are only now being held after community pressure.

Lastly, I said—

I am also concerned that this is a foregone conclusion and the government has already made a decision. We will be watching this very closely and I will be pleased to report back to the House.

As we all know—the *Courier-Mail* reported it mid last week—the government backflipped and will be breaking the promise of no asset sales. The former Oxley secondary college asset is on the priority list. I am not a psychic: in May I simply recognised that Labor has form when it comes to saying one thing and doing another.

Since the delivery of that adjournment speech I have engaged with two community forums about the site. The member for Mansfield conducted one forum with me. There was follow-up, with extensive community surveys and consultations. There was great attendance at both of those forums.

Those meetings were held after my office had prepared a submission to the Deputy Premier and EDQ highlighting the strong feelings of the people of Oxley regarding this particular asset. Prior to me receiving a response from the Deputy Premier, EDQ decided to hold its own consultation meetings. Interestingly, it specifically excluded anyone from a political party, including the local member.

The crux of the matter with regard to the former Oxley secondary college site is that the community has been told one thing—they were not going to sell assets—but now this is happening.

(Time expired)

Electricity Supply

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (2.36 pm): I know that all in this place join with me in sympathy around the recent supercell storms which ravaged South Australia and ultimately caused the electricity grid to shut down. What I think we will not all agree on, however, is the condemnation of those who chose to play politics and blame renewable wind energy for the collapse of the grid. When our Prime Minister implies to the nation that renewable energy was the cause of such a catastrophic failure which affected so many lives, I call shame on him and the LNP. In my first speech in this place I said—

When your lights and power go out, things are tough. It is frightening, for some people it is life threatening and it can be extremely difficult to cope with.

...

I understand how important it is to the lives of every Queenslander who needs to turn on lights in the dark to keep safe, to have the fridge and stove work to feed their families and to be able to keep cool in the Queensland summer. After a storm, having your electricity back on quickly and the street safe from fallen powerlines are not just matters of convenience but also critical issues of public safety. I understand the importance of a safe and secure workplace for power workers because I have been one most of my life.

It saddens me that residents in this situation are fed false information about outages, particularly ones of this magnitude. Even the federal energy minister, Josh Frydenberg, has said—

Early inquiries into South Australia's blackout say it was not caused or exacerbated by the state's dependency on renewable energy.

The facts are that supercell storms with cyclonic winds ripped 22 transmission towers in South Australia's mid north out of the ground, bringing down three major transmission lines, which is believed to have caused the frequency of the grid to drop to a point where automatic shutdown of the entire system was triggered. You cannot transmit power from any source of generation—be it wind, solar, coal or gas—when the transmission towers are on the ground.

We have had similar events in Queensland with towers falling. Who does not remember Cyclone Larry in Far North Queensland in 2006? Nearer to us all, at Harland, not far from Esk, there have been two freak storms which smashed 275,000-volt transmission lines. I was a workplace health and safety officer and high-voltage access permit recipient the second time and witnessed the damage firsthand. Thankfully, our HV grid in Queensland has not collapsed like South Australia's did—in part due to a redundancy we have had built into our network called N-1. N-1 allows for backup feeders, sometimes of differing voltages, to bolster the system and avoid catastrophes like South Australia recently suffered. That is to say, we used to have the redundancy N-1.

During the last term of government the LNP chose to abolish this backup system, calling it gold plating. I hope—I really do hope—we are never sitting in the dark wishing we still had N-1. Once again to the LNP I say shame.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Electricity; Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (2.39 pm): It really shows the mindlessness of some members opposite when we hear contributions like the one we just heard on electricity from the member for Kallangur. I have a lot of concerns about the energy policies being promulgated by this government. Not only will they potentially destroy power security and electricity security for Queensland; they will also destroy the job security of the members of the union that the member for Kallangur represented. The renewable energy policies being promulgated by the government are definitely going to be of great concern to many people in my electorate, especially primary producers. They remember another premier in this place called Premier Beattie who, around 10 years ago, declared that through his

deregulation of the retail energy market electricity would become cheaper. I can tell members: electricity has not become cheaper for our farmers. In fact, it has become a massive issue in terms of maintaining competitiveness for our primary producers in the Beaudesert electorate and the Fassifern Valley.

All they have seen from this government and the people who were in office before this government in the Labor Party are increasing costs placed on the electricity sector by those members opposite through the letter written by Andrew Fraser, when he was treasurer, to the Australian Energy Regulator asking for network charges to go through the roof. We know who paid for that: every person in Queensland and every farmer in Queensland, many of whom cannot afford some days now to irrigate their crops because of the network charges placed on them by Andrew Fraser, Anna Bligh and half of the members sitting opposite who were in cabinet at that time. I am worried about the renewable energy policies being put out at the moment, because we have seen this all before and our farmers have seen this all before. The only thing we have ever seen from Labor is increased electricity charges through every policy it makes in relation to that sector.

In the last couple of weeks we have also had the government break its promise about selling assets. I am especially concerned that some of the land held by the government in my electorate will be sold off as part of that program. There is land set aside at Jimboomba for a new state school. Jimboomba State School is a very large school and eventually it may be that that land will need to be utilised. Who knows whether that land will be on the chopping block now for disposal by this government, which has raided every hollow log it can and now it is going after state owned land? Despite its promise to the people of Queensland at the last election that it was not going to sell assets, now it is selling school land. People in my electorate will be very worried about that. Who knows what is next? Will it proceed with more outsourcing of services at places like Beaudesert—

(Time expired)

National Firearms Agreement

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (2.42 pm): I rise in the House to support licensed firearm owners in Queensland and to ask why this government is setting down a pathway to punish them. The National Firearms Agreement is staring us down the barrel. It is the first time it has been reviewed in many years—a huge undertaking for a state to do. There has been very little input from industry and representatives to this point to give a response. We are staring down the barrel of some very significant changes, some of which are not evidence based or data based but are easy to pick on. It is easy to send out the message in Queensland for everyone to pick on them. All we want is some fair representation. If it is based on data and evidence, fine; we will take the umpire's decision. However, we do not want an emotive response. Minister Keenan in Canberra said that there was going to be an emotive reaction to these things and they plucked out the incident in Martin Place and associated that with it. That would have otherwise been a really constructive exercise between all levels of government to strengthen security around licensed firearm ownership and helping police do their job. The whole thing got sidetracked.

Justice Minister Keenan is now rallying the troops to persecute all firearm owners around Queensland to try and reclassify lever action shotguns based on a YouTube video that was seen on TV—not evidence based—and the federal government wants Queensland to dance to its tune. It should not happen. It is a travesty and it is unfair on people. Fair enough if it is evidence based and there is data to support it, but if there is not it should not be supported. There is no reason to say that it will not be supported now because we know that it is high on its agenda and there has been no information coming back.

At this point in principle we are bound to the agreement and it is very possible that that is part of the agreement. If that goes through, again it is an emotive response. It is irresponsible and immature for government to respond to any issue like that. I know that there are many people who get scared and demonise anything to do with firearms, and that is fair enough if you do not understand it. However, do not demonise it and do things as an emotive response. We need to be responsible and base things on evidence and data. That is how good government decisions should be made. We are happy to take the umpire's call if that is made, but if not we should not make emotive decisions, and that is what is happening at the moment. It is the same thing with category H firearms. That has not come into the House for debate. There is no opportunity to give input beforehand, but no primary producer is able to get category H firearms. It is unfair for the government to keep persecuting this one industry. It is discriminatory and unfair.

(Time expired)

MIT Global Entrepreneurship Bootcamp

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (2.45 pm): One of the key platforms of the Advance Queensland initiative is to provide Queensland entrepreneurs with access to global expertise. To help achieve this, the Palaszczuk government has thrown its support behind a QUT initiative which will see one of the world's top universities, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or MIT, come to Brisbane in March next year to run a boot camp for up-and-coming entrepreneurs. The MIT Global Entrepreneurship Bootcamp will be held at the QUT Gardens Point campus from 26 to 31 March and will draw budding entrepreneurs from around the world. The boot camp has only once before been held outside the United States, so it is quite a coup and a powerful demonstration of Queensland's growing reputation as a hotbed for entrepreneurship and the nation's start-up state. The selection process to participate is run by MIT and by all accounts is very arduous. Those who get through the selection process will be involved in one of the top business training programs in the world. MIT is rightly regarded as a leader in entrepreneurship education. According to a 2014 report, MIT alumni launched more than 30,000 active companies, creating 4.6 million jobs and generating US\$1.9 trillion in annual revenue.

The boot camp condenses a one-year MIT course into an interactive one-week learning experience. The week includes classes led by senior MIT business lecturers such as Bill Aulet, author of the book *Disciplined Entrepreneurship*, and Elaine Chen, senior lecturer at the MIT Sloan School of Management. During the week participants will have to solve a problem, find customers, start a company and then present it to an international panel of venture capitalists from Brisbane, San Francisco and Boston. The boot camp aligns perfectly with our Advance Queensland initiative as it underlines our increasing commitment to generate a vibrant business culture in Queensland—one that prizes entrepreneurship as integral to building a successful knowledge economy and high-quality sustainable jobs. The Palaszczuk government has provided seed funding to assist QUT in attracting the boot camp here. As part of our agreement with QUT, the university will offer three scholarships for Queenslanders to attend the boot camp, including at least one dedicated for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander entrepreneur. Applications will open soon and I am sure we are going to see huge interest from entrepreneurs right around the world. Attracting the MIT Global Entrepreneurship Bootcamp to Queensland is testament to our growing reputation as a global centre of innovation. This is really and truly a massive coup not just for QUT but for all of Queensland.

Fraser Island, Dingoes

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (2.48 pm): I rise to discuss the Fraser Island dingoes and the crocodile sighting in my electorate. The dingo story has finally got into the *Courier-Mail*. The headline was 'Fraser dingo on last legs: islanders fear extinction imminent'. Fraser Island locals believe that the area's famous dingoes will vanish within five years. The dingo has been put on nearly every brochure. When advertising Fraser Island, it is always about seeing the dingoes. At the moment there are not too many dingoes around there to see. Some of the tourist operators on Fraser Island are upset because they cannot show the tourists the dingoes strolling up from the beach. The trouble is that if a dingo looks at a human being, the dingo is usually put down. It is quite a different situation when a crocodile is sighted. The Parks and Wildlife officers run around trying to catch the crocodile to put it somewhere else, yet the poor old dingoes just get put down. Hervey Bay is not crocodile territory and it should never be allowed to be crocodile territory. Where do we draw the line? When crocodiles get down to the Brisbane River? I wonder what will be done with them then.

The departmental officers on Fraser Island want to catch crocodiles, cage them and transport them to somewhere else. I hope that this government does not do what Desley Boyle did a few years ago when the former Bligh government was in power. She organised for a crocodile to be placed on one of our tourist islands and said that it was a good tourist attraction. I do not want to see that happen.

Researchers have found that the poor management of dingoes on Fraser Island has resulted in inbreeding and a dramatic fall in numbers. The government issues reports on the number of dingoes on Fraser Island, but most people believe that there are only about 100 to 120 dingoes left on Fraser Island. As a result of inbreeding, the dingoes are getting smaller and smaller. It is terrible to go to Fraser Island and see a starving dingo hanging around your truck wanting to hop in to find a feed. That is what happened to me at Dilli Village once. This poor little dingo was just wilting. She was looking so pathetic. It is hard to allow that to happen.

(Time expired)

Bulimba Electorate, School Maintenance Funding

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (2.51 pm): In this year's Palaszczuk Labor government budget, more than \$9.1 billion was delivered to improve education in Queensland. That allocation in the budget for Education was to continue to drive reforms and to invest in school infrastructure to cater for enrolment growth. That record investment in school capital works across the state is to ensure that state school students have the best possible learning environment to make the most of their education. This government will continue to plan for growth and ensure that it provides quality state education facilities for all students across Queensland.

The 2016-17 budget delivered \$667 million for school infrastructure, including \$475 million for capital works and \$192 million for school maintenance. The infrastructure investment funding includes \$73 million for the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program to deliver modern and functional learning environments through maintenance and renewal initiatives.

Every year, principals and condition assessors work together to prioritise school maintenance projects for our local schools. The school maintenance program is about not only building better schools but also providing valuable jobs for tradies and training opportunities for apprentices. At least 10 per cent of all maintenance work carried out on state schools will be done by apprentices, ensuring that we continue to deliver skills locally.

I am very pleased to say that schools in the Bulimba electorate were very grateful recipients of both the capital works funding and the maintenance funding. Cannon Hill State School received \$200,000 to refurbish classrooms. I know that the principal of that school is working with her school community right now to prioritise that project. Murarrie State School received \$550,000 to resurface multipurpose areas, classrooms and the outdoor learning area. Balmoral State High School received \$600,000 to refurbish classrooms and to address the school's long-held goal of renovating its very precious indoor sports hall, which is used by a number of state schools in the local area.

Bulimba State School received \$6.9 million to build new classrooms. I want to especially acknowledge the efforts of Bulimba State School, the Tugulawa childcare centre and the Bulimba kindy communities as they work around what is a fairly difficult project in a landlocked school where there is growing density. I thank them for their patience and their vision in developing those classrooms in a new and innovative way.

South Australia, Electricity Supply; Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.54 pm): I would like to make a brief statement about the contribution made by the member for Kallangur. I do not know whether he unintentionally misled the House, but the blackouts in South Australia occurred before the towers went down. It says so in this report. I encourage the member for Kallangur to read the report so that he can understand what happened. I will table that report as well.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 5 October 2016, by the Australian Energy Market Operator titled 'Preliminary Report—Black System Event in South Australia on 28 September 2016' [[1862](#)].

I would also like to raise a few issues about the Nexus Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, which members on this side of the House long campaigned for. It is a \$1.6 billion crossing. The member for Toowoomba North, the previous members for Toowoomba South, Mike Horan and John McVeigh, the member for Condamine, Pat Weir and I all worked extremely hard to ensure that we got funding for that project to get it up and running. It is well underway now. I have been to openings where the local Indigenous groups have been involved. Apparently, they have signed off on some cultural heritage sites.

Unfortunately, the Wakka Wakka group has lodged a complaint about what is happening at Charlton in relation to a bora ring and a lookout at Murphys Creek. I am rather disappointed that neither I nor any of the other members of parliament have had any visitations from any of these Indigenous groups who believe that they have some claim on this area. I feel that is a bit unfair. We are representatives of the people, but they have not come to us to discuss any of the problems that they are having with this project.

I table a map that I have received from the Parliamentary Library.

Tabled paper: Bundle of maps relating to native title applications and determinations in Queensland [[1863](#)].

This map highlights some of the areas where the Jagera, the Barunggam and the Wakka Wakka people lived. I have been reliably informed—and I have asked the library to check this out—that apparently the western Wakka Wakka people have already lost a land claim that they made previously

in the Toowoomba region. These groups have taken this matter to court. The matter will be heard in court early next week. I hope that is not just a vexatious claim to slow down this project, because it is needed urgently. I fully support the project. If anyone has any problems with the area, I ask them to come to see me as the member who represents probably about half of the area covered by the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. I am sure other members of parliament would be more than willing to help.

Corrective Services

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.57 pm): I would like to begin by encouraging those opposite to listen to the member for Kallangur, who has a lifetime of experience in the power industry.

Recently, I had the honour of representing the Minister for Corrective Services at the Queensland Corrective Services custodial officer entry program graduation ceremony at the Queensland Corrective Services Academy at Wacol. The academy, under the direction of Mr Alan Butler, is a world-class custodial training facility. Since I have been elected to parliament, I have attended a number of the graduation ceremonies held at the academy.

While I was at the academy, I had the opportunity to speak to the general manager of the Brisbane Correctional Centre, Mr Bernie Kruhse, about work camps operated by Queensland Corrective Services at the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre, which is located in my electorate of Ipswich West.

In April 2006, the Palaszczuk government recommissioned the former Borallon correctional centre as a contemporary earning and learning centre. The centre has since been renamed the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre, as it now offers employment, training and reintegration programs for prisoners aged from 18 to 35 years of age. The aim of the centre is to provide prisoners with Queensland TAFE training and qualifications that will assist them in their transition into society following their release, including workforce participation.

The Borallon Training and Correctional Centre is the first Queensland correctional centre to have a TAFE facility on site. Since late 2015, TAFE has been working with Queensland Corrective Services to establish a training facility and training model.

The model developed by TAFE sees prisoners in smaller classes—averaging 16 students—with training structured around developing skills for job outcomes. The program incorporates life skills integration components at the beginning and end of the training cycle, alongside language, literacy, numeracy and on-the-job training.

To support the service delivery model of Borallon, Palen Creek Correctional Centre was realigned to Borallon. Both Palen Creek and Borallon share the same operational philosophy that focuses on providing prisoners with the maximum opportunity for positive change, with training, employment and industry activities aimed at reducing re-offending. The Queensland Corrective Services work program, of which Palen Creek is a part, is one of the most successful rehabilitation schemes in Australia and injects around \$2.5 million worth of labour each year into regional Queensland through community service.

The recommissioning of Borallon Training and Correctional Centre is just another example of the Palaszczuk government delivering much needed jobs to my electorate of Ipswich West. The 2015 budget made provision for \$28.8 million for refurbishment of the prison which was mothballed in 2012 and this has provided much needed work for tradies and businesses. The Borallon Training and Correctional Centre and TAFE partnership is a great initiative—

(Time expired)

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.00 pm), by leave: I table report No. 170 titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Transport and Utilities Committee on 31 August 2016 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings*. I commend the report and the committee's recommendations to the House.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 170—Matter of privilege referred by the Transportation and Utilities Committee on 31 August 2016 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings [[1864](#)].

GENE TECHNOLOGY (QUEENSLAND) BILL

Resumed from 16 August (see p. 2764).

Second Reading

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerst—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (3.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its careful consideration of the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 and its report tabled on 27 September 2016 recommending this bill be passed without amendment. I also acknowledge the work done under the previous government on this issue. This bill will ensure consistency of regulation around gene technology activities. If enacted, it will provide certainty for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders in relation to the regulation of gene technology activities. Gene technology is the term used for the development and use of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. Gene technology allows researchers to modify an organism by directly inserting or removing one or more genes so that the organism gains, loses or changes a specific characteristic or set of characteristics. Examples of gene technology include incorporating resistance to pests and diseases in agricultural crops and modifying micro-organisms to produce therapeutic products such as insulin and vaccines.

Currently, gene technology is regulated through an integrated national legislative scheme under the intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001. The Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulator administers and enforces the regulatory scheme. Australia's gene technology regulatory scheme is recognised internationally for its rigorous, science based risk assessments and open and transparent approach. The scheme focuses on protecting the environment and the health and safety of people while still enabling the development, testing and commercial release of highly productive new crops and life-saving therapeutic products.

Both state and Commonwealth legislation are required for full regulatory coverage of gene technology. Corporations and federal bodies such as the CSIRO are regulated under Commonwealth legislation. State government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders are regulated under state legislation. Under the intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001 Queensland has committed to keeping our legislation consistent with the Commonwealth legislation. Presently, Queensland's legislation, the Gene Technology Act 2001 and the Gene Technology Regulation 2002, operates as mirror legislation. In practice, this means that whenever the Commonwealth gene technology legislation is amended, Queensland's legislation must also be amended to ensure that all gene technology activities in Queensland are regulated consistently and that state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders are covered.

Queensland's legislation has been amended four times since 2007 to mirror the Commonwealth legislation. This manual amendment process is and can be cumbersome and, of course, can take time and effort. It also usually results in a period of misalignment between the Queensland and Commonwealth legislation which creates uncertainty and potential disadvantages for Queensland entities covered by state legislation. For example, when GMO risk assessments are updated and tightened to require more stringent safety procedures, Queensland researchers who continue operating under earlier unamended legislation may be put at unnecessary risk. Conversely, when regulatory requirements are reduced in response to knowledge and experience gained over long periods of safe use of a GMO, Queensland research programs and organisations that continue operating under unamended more stringent legislation may be disadvantaged and viewed as less appealing for investment.

The Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 establishes a lock-step opt-out approach for future amendment of Queensland gene technology legislation whereby the Commonwealth gene technology laws are automatically applied as laws of Queensland. To put it simply, the bill expedites the mirroring of Commonwealth amendments by having them applied in Queensland automatically without the need to bring forward a bill every time there is a change to the Commonwealth legislation. The lock-step component of the bill eradicates inconsistencies in gene technology regulation in relation to Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders by providing efficiency as any changes to Commonwealth legislation would be automatically adopted by Queensland at precisely the same time as those changes come into force at a national level. It would provide certainty that the

level of regulatory oversight reflects the very latest risk assessments conducted by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and that Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders can ensure they have measures in place to comply with regulatory requirements. It will also provide consistency between the regulatory conditions applied to organisations based in Queensland irrespective of whether they are covered by Commonwealth or Queensland legislation and it would provide confidence to allow for planning and investment in genetics research and innovation in our state.

Through our Advance Queensland initiative, the Palaszczuk government is creating an environment in which researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs can attract key investment to take their ideas and turn them into viable commercial and social outcomes. The certainty this bill will provide will allow Queensland research institutions and companies working in the gene technology field to remain competitive both nationally and globally. The bill provides for a copy of any amendments to the Commonwealth legislation to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within 10 sitting days of commencement to keep the Queensland parliament informed of changes to the gene technology legislation.

The bill applies the Commonwealth Acts Interpretation Act 1901 and Commonwealth criminal and administrative laws. To operate effectively as national scheme legislation, interpretation provisions need to be consistent with the Commonwealth. The application of Commonwealth criminal and administrative laws is a practical necessity of taking part in national scheme legislation to achieve uniformity. The bill also applies officer functions and powers under the Commonwealth gene technology laws in Queensland. The bill provides safeguards for Queensland's autonomy through a provision to opt out of particular amendments by regulation in instances where it is not in Queensland's interests to adopt Commonwealth amendments. It is expected that this opt-out provision would be used very, very rarely. This is mainly due to the fact that changes are made to the Commonwealth legislation only after detailed consultation with the states and territories. Any proposed change to the Commonwealth legislation must be approved by the Legislative and Governance Forum on Gene Technology, of which I am a member, by special majority. Changes are also placed before the Gene Technology Standing Committee prior to consideration by the forum. The Director-General of the Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation is the Queensland representative on the standing committee.

Therefore, there is considerable opportunity for Queensland to raise issues and seek to resolve any matters of concern regarding proposed Commonwealth amendments prior to any legislative change coming into effect. The bill provides that any opt-out regulation be tabled, which would be subject to disallowance by the Legislative Assembly. Comprehensive transitional provisions have also been included to ensure a smooth changeover from the existing Queensland gene technology legislation to the new legislation. As part of its inquiry, the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee examined the application of fundamental legislative principles to the bill. In relation to the rights and liberties of individuals, clauses 8 to 12, 15 and 16 of the bill allow for the application of Commonwealth laws over state laws, which the committee considers to be appropriate.

In relation to national scheme legislation, the committee notes that the former Scrutiny of Legislation Committee considered the use of Henry VIII clauses is appropriate to facilitate the application of national scheme legislation, which is the approach of clause 7 of the bill. The committee considers that sufficient regard has been given to the institution of parliament in relation to clauses 7, 21 and 22 of the bill, which along with clause 6 provide for the application of a lock-step opt-out approach to gene technology legislation in Queensland.

As the bill will automatically adopt Commonwealth amendments, the bill will effectively introduce the latest Commonwealth amendments, which came into force on 11 March 2016. Those minor and technical amendments were recommended in the 2011 review of the Commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000 and were agreed by all governments in 2013. Specifically, the amendments included: one, removing a restriction on licence variations to broaden the circumstances in which the Gene Technology Regulator can vary licences, rather than require new licence applications, giving greater flexibility to the Gene Technology Regulator and licence holders, but not at the risk of public health and safety; two, updating the matters the Gene Technology Regulator must consider before a GMO dealing can be declared a notifiable low-risk dealing in the Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulations 2001; three, discontinuing quarterly reporting to the Commonwealth minister on activities under the Commonwealth act, however, annual reporting will continue; four, clarifying activities allowed under an inadvertent dealings licence to ensure reasonable activities are explicitly authorised; five, changing newspaper advertising requirements for notifying the public of consultations on licence application assessments, giving greater flexibility for the Gene Technology Regulator to select publications that are most likely to

reach people in the area where a release is proposed to occur; six, removing the requirement for the Gene Technology Regulator to include genetically modified products authorised by other agencies on the public record of GMO approvals, essentially removing duplicate information with the information held by the relevant agency; and seven, improving alignment with other Commonwealth legislation through minor administrative changes.

The Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 will improve clarity, consistency and certainty for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders, which will allow them to operate and invest with confidence and to benefit, in a timely way, from the latest nationally developed risk assessments and regulatory improvements. It will also result in administrative efficiencies for the Queensland government and parliament, whilst providing safeguards for Queensland's autonomy. Queensland has been strongly supportive of the national scheme since its introduction to ensure gene technology takes place within a robust ethical and scientific regulatory framework that is focused on the protection of human health, safety and the environment. This bill is about ensuring that the arrangements regulating Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders align with the Commonwealth arrangements in the most efficient manner possible, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged compared to corporations and federal bodies operating under the Commonwealth gene technology legislation.

The McKinsey Global Institute has identified next-generation genomics as one of the 12 technologies with the greatest potential to drive economic change and disruption by 2015. Its report suggests that advances in genetic science, coupled with advanced computing, could have profound impacts on medicine, agriculture and the production of high-value substances such as biofuels. Needless to say, those are sectors that will be at the heart of Queensland's future prosperity and quality of life. If we want Queensland to grow exports and jobs and be an innovation leader in the Asia-Pacific region, we need an environment that provides certainty and enables investment. This bill provides the certainty needed by our researchers, businesses and potential investors. This is essential if we are to build on our potential as a research and development powerhouse and will be a significant boost in our journey to be a global hub for agriculture, life sciences and industrial biotechnology. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (3.15 pm): I rise to speak to the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. From the outset I should state that the LNP opposition will not be opposing this bill because we support the need for and use of gene technology and biotechnology in Queensland, particularly through the agriculture sector. We are also very happy as this bill finalises the review that was undertaken by the member for Mansfield when he was the science minister in 2013-14. Some members may have wondered what this bill was all about when they saw it on the Notice Paper this morning. This industry does not receive regular media coverage, but the need to support a national scheme that regulates and promotes the use of biotechnology in Queensland is essential to developing new markets and trade opportunities and creating new jobs in Queensland.

There are 27 organisations currently accredited by the national regulator, many of them universities and medical research institutes. A quick perusal of some of the current applications being evaluated by the national regulator makes for interesting reading. Those applications include the limited and controlled release of potato genetically modified for disease resistance; the limited and controlled release of Indian mustard genetically modified for altered oil content; the limited and controlled release of cotton genetically modified for insect resistance and herbicide tolerance; and—in good news for banana growers—the limited and controlled release of banana genetically modified for disease resistance. As members can see, commercial opportunities are created through the use of biotechnology, which can help our markets overcome issues of climate, weather, pest and disease, which in turn increases our productivity capacity, particularly in the agriculture sector.

It is important to note that in 2001 an agreement was established for a national regulation scheme for gene technology in Australia, that is, the use of molecular techniques that alter the genetic composition of a living organism, that is, plant, animal, bacteria or virus. In 2013, the former LNP government's department of science, innovation technology, innovation and the arts commissioned an independent review of the Queensland act. The purpose of that review was to investigate whether the Queensland act was operating as an efficient and effective component of the nationally consistent Gene Technology Regulatory Scheme and to investigate particular aspects that were specified in the terms of reference.

While that review found that the Queensland act was achieving its objectives, it concluded that potential efficiencies could be achieved by adopting a lock-step approach to the Commonwealth legislation. However, the review recommended that this should only proceed if there are legislated provisions accompanying the change to the lock step that provide adequate safeguards for

Queensland, that is, the opt-out approach, as the minister mentioned. The LNP government's response to the review was publicly released in 2014 and outlined in an in-principle agreement to the review's recommendation No. 3 that Queensland invest in and adopt a lock-step approach that provides adequate safeguards for Queensland's autonomy. That is reflected in the bill.

The explanatory notes describe the objectives of the bill as: to meet the Queensland government's commitment to a nationally consistent scheme for gene technology regulation under the intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001; and provide certainty and consistency for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders in regard to the gene technology regulatory scheme and clarity around compliance.

For the benefit of members of the House, I note that five submissions were received. They were from the Department of Health, AusBiotech, the Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulator, Friends of the Earth Australia and Gene Ethics. We note the consultation in the preparation of the bill with state and Commonwealth agencies and the fact that there was a draft bill released for public consultation in April this year.

The lock-step approach proposed in the bill will remove the need to prepare new Queensland legislation every time Commonwealth gene technology legislation is amended. There were submitters who did not support the lock-step approach based on the fact that they saw that it encroached on the role of the Queensland government and the Queensland parliament when changes are made at a national level. The counterargument is that it provides national consistency. AusBiotech also supported the lock-step approach because it will give Queensland companies greater certainty in developing and implementing new gene technologies.

The bill adopts a lock-step opt-out approach by providing Queensland with the ability to opt out of the Commonwealth amendments by regulation if the amendments are not in Queensland's interest. The minister mentioned that it would be on rare occasions that that provision would need to be used. That raises my curiosity. Could the minister in her summing-up give an example of where the state would consider using that opt-out approach? I think it would be good when putting this in context to have an example of when it would not be in our benefit and we would use that safeguard provision.

I thank the minister for the opportunity to have a briefing on the bill. I did not take that up, but nonetheless I appreciated the opportunity. It is important to thank the committee members for their consideration of this bill and for the thoroughness of their report to the House.

As I said from the outset, the LNP will not be opposing this bill because it is essentially as a result of the LNP initiated review in 2013 which we responded to in 2014, led by the then science minister, the member for Mansfield. I think it is a piece of legislation that is essential in reforming our regulatory responsibilities as a state but also in recognition of the national scheme.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (3.23 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise to support the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 as chair of the Education, Innovation and Small Business Committee whose responsibility it was to examine the bill in detail. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the many groups and organisations for their submissions and for those who spoke to the committee at the various public hearings over the duration of the inquiry. I too would also like to thank the members of both sides of the House who were members of the committee and the secretariat staff for their involvement in the examination of the bill.

Queensland has been very strongly supportive of the national gene technology regulatory scheme since its introduction in 2000 to ensure gene technology takes place within a robust, ethical and scientific regulatory framework that is focused on the protection of human health, safety and the environment. Whilst it is recognised that some members of the community may hold concerns about gene technology and genetically modified organisms, GMOs, this bill is not about whether or not gene technology activities should be conducted in Queensland; rather, it is about ensuring that the arrangements regulating Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders align with the Commonwealth arrangements in the most efficient manner possible.

Recent advances in biotechnology provide ways of introducing very precise changes to genetic material—the sets of instructions in cells of all living creatures, which can include genes, parts of genes, groups of genes and so on. This allows, for the first time, researchers to transfer the properties instructed by a single gene from one organism to another.

Using these new techniques, commonly called gene technology, researchers can modify organisms by directly inserting or removing one or more parts of the gene so that an organism gains, loses or changes a specific characteristic or set of characteristics. The organisms changed or created using gene technology techniques are usually called genetically modified organisms or, in short, GMOs.

Gene technology does not include sexual reproduction, homologous recombination or any other technique specified as not gene technology in the Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulations 2001. The Commonwealth Gene Technology Act states that GMOs do not include human beings or organisms declared by regulation not to be GMOs. Gene technology is an important part of the genomics revolution which is the study of genes, their functions and interrelationships as being translated into benefits for agriculture, the environment, human health and other applications that we have not yet envisaged.

GMOs and products derived from GMOs have been benefitting Queenslanders for many years and many more are in the pipeline. We have already heard the shadow minister, the member for Mount Ommaney, highlight that genetically modified crops have been widely grown around the world and in Australia for the last 20 years. 1996 was the first year in which a significant area of crops containing GM traits were planted both on a global basis, 1.6 million hectares, and in Australia, 40,000 hectares. In 2014, 181.5 million hectares of GM crops were grown around the world.

The first GMO approval for commercial release in Australia was insect resistant cotton. This allowed Queensland farmers to grow GM cotton from 1996 onwards. GM cotton, either insect resistant, herbicide tolerate or both, accounts for over 99 per cent of production in Australia. Some other examples include the production of insulin which has been produced through genetic modification for over 30 years. Using gene technology researchers have also been able to modify existing cattle vaccines to deal with a wider range of cattle diseases. One of these is bovine respiratory disease which is the No. 1 disease affecting feedlot cattle in Queensland.

Gene technology has been used to develop new drought-resistant chickpeas. Chickpeas are now a major export crop in Queensland, but, importantly, they are also valuable to improving soil health in what were previously monocultural cropping areas. Herbicide-tolerate sugar cane is currently being trialled by Sugar Research Australia in the Burdekin, Mackay, Bundaberg, Moreton Bay and Hinchinbrook. The Queensland University of Technology is leading the multimillion dollar research project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to produce a genetically modified banana with greatly increased levels of betacarotene which the human body converts to vitamin A. This product has the potential to ease the suffering of millions of people in Africa and Asia for whom vitamin A deficiency can cause blindness or death. These examples are at the leading edge of a discipline that is continually growing and developing as scientists improve their methods of introducing genetic modifications. The long-term potential of these technologies is enormous, but there are also risks to be managed. That is why it is critical that we have the best regulatory system in place, which is exactly the aim of this bill.

Queensland's Gene Technology Act 2001 and the Gene Technology Regulation 2002 are part of an integrated national legislative scheme. By regulating and managing risks associated with gene technology and genetically modified organisms—this is not a test, but they are GMOs—the scheme focuses on protecting the environment and the health and safety of people while still enabling the development, testing and commercial release of highly productive new crops and lifesaving vaccines. State legislation is therefore necessary to ensure a regulatory coverage of state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders.

Under the intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001, Queensland has committed to keeping our legislation consistent with the Commonwealth legislation which covers the majority of organisations conducting dealings with GMOs. Queensland's legislation has been amended, as we have already heard, four times since 2007 to mirror the Commonwealth legislation which means there is great scope for development.

A further set of minor and technical amendments to the Commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000 commenced on 11 March 2016 and, as such, the Queensland and Commonwealth legislation are once again out of alignment. Submitters to the bill expressed concern regarding the lock-step opt-out approach in the bill, citing that this approach will provide 'minimal opportunity for the Queensland minister or parliament to review or debate legislation that would affect Queensland agriculture'.

The bill adopts a lock-step opt-out approach by providing Queensland the ability to opt out of Commonwealth amendments by regulation if the amendments are not in Queensland's interests. Clause 7 allows for the modification of Commonwealth gene technology laws by regulation enabling Queensland to apply the Commonwealth legislation as if the amendment had not taken effect. The explanatory notes state that a regulation under clause 7 can be made to specify that an amendment to Commonwealth gene technology laws will not come into force in Queensland.

Both clauses 7 and 22 provide the power to make regulations under the new act. Any regulation made to opt out of a Commonwealth amendment would be subject to the possibility of disallowance by the Legislative Assembly under section 50 of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992. The explanatory notes

state that the opt-out provision in the bill is a safeguard for Queensland but one that would be used rarely. Advice from the department illustrates their confidence in the consultation and approval process for any proposed changes to Commonwealth gene technology legislation. According to the explanatory notes, there is 'considerable opportunity for a jurisdiction to raise issues and seek to resolve any matters of concern'.

The final aspect of the bill is the ability to vary applications to GMOs, genetically modified organisms. The bill reflects amendments to Commonwealth gene technology laws in March this year about application to vary a licence. Clause 31 provides that undecided applications to vary existing GMO licences made under the current act will be dealt with under section 71 of the repeal act but would exclude section 71(2B). Section 71(2B) provides that the regulator must not vary a licence if the original application for the licence does not cover the risks posed by the new dealings raised by the variation.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Thank you, member for Lockyer. I do not think the member for Townsville is accepting your interjections.

Mr STEWART: The explanatory notes state that by excluding section 71(2B) the regulator will be able to approve licence variations by taking into account the risk assessment and risk management plans already prepared for licence applications, for which licences have been issued, other than the original licence.

The department advised the committee that the most common requests made to the regulator to vary licences include variation of field trial licences when poor weather conditions impact on research and trial sites; extension of time when further funding has been received; addition of local government areas to locate enough growers for plant trials; and changing the configuration and number of trial sites if experimental plans have changed. Requests to vary licences for contained laboratories include adding or removing facilities, extending the period of a licence; and growing new organisms, genes or vectors to the licence but only when proposed dealings have been assessed in the risk assessment and risk management plans for that licence or any other licence.

The Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 will effectively introduce the latest Commonwealth amendments. This bill will establish a lock-step opt-out approach so that consistency with the Commonwealth legislation is automatically maintained, while the Queensland parliament's ability to block any Commonwealth amendments that are not in Queensland's interest are still preserved. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (3.35 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. At the outset, I acknowledge my colleagues on the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee and thank the secretariat for the work that they have done in assisting the committee in its inquiry. I would also like to acknowledge officials from the department who took the opportunity to brief our committee on this bill and, of course, those five who took the opportunity to make written submissions.

I would also like to take the opportunity to put on the record my appreciation for the work that the former minister for science, information technology and innovation, the member for Mansfield, did when he was the minister. I acknowledge that the current minister has acknowledged the contribution that he made. It is lovely to see, in a bipartisan fashion today, that we can continue the work that the former minister did before the proroguing of the last parliament.

Gene technology, as has been outlined by many members already in this debate, is the development and use of genetically modified organisms. Gene technology is, in Australia, regulated through an integrated national legislative scheme that protects the environment as well as the health and safety of people, and of course there is also a national regulator.

The purpose of the legislation that we have before us today will ensure the expedition of changes where legislation has been changed at a Commonwealth level. What that will mean is certainty for Queensland government agencies, for higher education institutions, as well as for sole traders. I do not necessarily mean to be repetitive, but it is important to note that these are the organisations that will see the benefits of this legislative change.

When we were going through the committee process and the departmental briefing, we wanted to understand why it was that Queensland was going down the opt-out path. Ultimately what this means is that Queensland has an opportunity to protect Queensland's interests where we need to. For the most part, as has been acknowledged by both the minister and the shadow minister, given the consultation period that has been gone through, there is unlikely to be a need for Queensland to

exercise its opt-out provisions, but I think it is important that we retain that opportunity and retain that option for Queensland. I note that the shadow minister has put some questions to the minister, and I too look forward to hearing those responses when the minister responds to the second reading debate. I think it is also important to note that the other jurisdictions in Australia have a range of frameworks that they use with respect to how they mirror the Commonwealth legislation with the exception of WA, which has a moratorium on genetically modified organisms.

Queensland has for many, many years been doing some fantastic work in the space of gene technology. Particularly, in Queensland we see that not only in the agricultural sector but also in medical research. My learned colleague, the member for Lockyer, Ian Rickuss, when he is not causing a ruckus, was just telling me that—

Mr Perrett: That's not fair.

Miss BARTON: Member for Gympie, I think he himself would acknowledge that he sometimes causes a ruckus. The honourable member for Lockyer was telling me that, in particular, in Queensland in the agricultural space cotton producers have been able to take advantage of the significant work that we have seen in terms of the GMO space. I think he was saying that something like 17 different insecticides—

Mr Rickuss: No—reducing the amount of insecticide sprays.

Miss BARTON: Reducing the amount of insecticide sprays from 17 to two. As well, we see the great work that has been done in Queensland with respect to vaccines in the space of medical research. It is worth acknowledging the fantastic work that is being done at the moment at the Institute for Glycomics at Griffith University on the Gold Coast. It is doing some really fantastic work in the space of vaccine development. I would like to acknowledge the work that it does. I am very proud to be a member of the glycomics circle, which is a group of dynamic women who support innovation and medical research. In particular, we look to support female scientists who are doing some really fantastic work.

The chair of the committee, the member for Townsville, and the shadow minister, the member for Mount Ommaney, touched on the five submissions that were received by the committee. As has been acknowledged, the majority of submissions were supportive of the bill with the exception of Friends of the Earth and Gene Ethics. Gene Ethics' motto is that they are working for a GM-free future. Given that that is their tag line, I am sure it comes as no surprise to the House that Gene Ethics was perhaps going to have some issues with some elements of the bill.

Friends of the Earth highlighted, in particular, some concerns around parliamentary sovereignty lest Queensland give up its sovereignty with respect to legislative changes. Given that Queensland retains the opportunity to opt out of certain provisions, and I understand that any legislative change at a Commonwealth level will be made available to the parliament through the tabling of regulations and other provisions, I am sure that any concerns about the sovereignty of the parliament have been ameliorated by the way in which the parliament will have an opportunity to look at these provisions. As I said, there is not a great amount that seems to be of any difficulty to any of the submitters, and I join with the shadow minister in not opposing the bill.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (3.41 pm): I rise today to support the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill. I would like to thank everyone on the committee including the chair, the deputy chair and members of the opposition. I reflect on the words of the member for Buderim as we started this debate when he said that gene technology really excites him. I did make a comment that day during the committee hearing that it is too late to help him with genes now. It is a very interesting subject. Gene technology has a wide range of applications including agriculture, incorporating resistance to pests and disease, and we just heard the learned member for Lockyer talking about cotton. I suppose we have just learnt something from the learned member for Lockyer.

This is a good bill. I am glad that we have an opt-out provision, as that is looking after Queensland's interests. It is important that we have that because, although we mirror the federal legislation, as we all know, sometimes the federal government can get it wrong. It is important that we have that provision. I was very grateful that the minister and the department agreed that we keep that clause and look after Queensland's interests.

When we talk about gene technology, it is confusing to a lot of people because they do not understand it. As a committee we delved into it to find out what is happening. For example, QUT's Distinguished Professor James Dale's banana research sets out to increase the nutritional value of East African cooking bananas. His research project will have profound implications for improving the health and wellbeing of millions of Ugandans and other East Africans where the banana is a staple food. You are looking at improving people's lifestyle and their diet.

Mr Rickuss: It is good science.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the member for Lockyer: it is good science. This will help countries that really need this sort of help, and it is great to see that happening.

Gene technology R & D in Australia occurs under a regulatory framework consisting of Commonwealth and state laws. The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing certainty and consistency for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders in relation to the regulation of gene technology activities. The Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulator administers and enforces the national regulatory scheme. I am quite sure everyone knows that from the previous speakers.

The scheme aims to protect the health and safety of people and the environment by identifying and managing risks associated with gene technology. We have to make sure when we are trialling genetically modified plants that we have the necessary safeguards in place to ensure we do not have a situation where GM plants escape into the natural environment until they are assessed and are not posing an environmental risk. That was a big worry of mine and the committee.

We must also ensure that genetically modified organisms created in the development of new therapeutic products which are really important in the fight against disease are developed and handled safely and securely to minimise risks to human beings. That is another factor that I was worried about—when you read the data, see movies of the future and when people talk about gene technology and what can happen and what has happened in the past. That was a bit of a worry, but that was covered quite well in the committee.

I turn to the issues with the previous Queensland legislation. The Gene Technology Act 2001 and the Gene Technology Regulation 2002 covered Queensland government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders. The issue was that, although this legislation mirrored the Commonwealth legislation, every time the Commonwealth legislation was amended the legislation in Queensland had to change too. This is an important point. Gene technology is advancing very rapidly and we know how the world is changing. Legislation needs to keep up with what is happening in the world with this technology. I learnt a lot of interesting facts during the committee hearings.

Mrs Gilbert interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the member for Mackay. It is very interesting what the future holds, how gene technology will eventually help us grow crops in the future and to see where we are heading with gene technology. Queensland is a leader in gene technology, and I believe this bill will keep us at the forefront of gene technology in Australia.

I would like to thank the minister for her input, the departmental representatives and the people who spoke to us at the committee hearings and the other members of the committee whom we shared ideas with. As I said yesterday in my speech on the Grammar Schools Bill, we do have a great committee. There is a lot of talk between committee members. We do thrash things out. Sometimes we disagree, but a lot of times we agree and come to a conclusion. This time the committee came to the conclusion that this bill should be passed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (3.47 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. I would like to thank my fellow committee members and committee staff for their efforts.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I cannot hear the member for Lockyer. He seems to be mumbling over there. Genetically modified foods are not new in our society. Recently I spoke to quite a few of my residents, in particular Betty and Lauren, about genetically modified foods. I will discuss that further soon. They highlighted their concerns about the technology and the information supplied by the government and departments to ensure that these foods are safe. That was a question that I asked during the committee process.

As I said to these residents, modified food and plant products are certainly not new. They have been in our society for quite some time. It is not a new technology; it is an evolving technology. As CSIRO states on its website in explaining the different types of genetically modified products, gene technology has a range of applications which include research—for example, in biology and medicine with GM micro-organisms, animals and plants; agriculture, incorporating resistance to pests or diseases, herbicide tolerance, altering the timing and duration of flower production or improving nutrition; and therapeutic goods, modifying micro-organisms to produce therapeutic products such as insulin and vaccines.

With the information that is out there in our community, a lot of people think we are playing God with these plants and organisms. Unfortunately, this misnomer has been created and a lot of residents are concerned. During the committee process, the member for Buderim asked some very good and very valid questions to the research scientist. The member for Buderim expressed his concerns, and his concerns are very valid. I want to refer to an article that appeared last year on news.com.au under the heading 'The truth about genetically modified food'. I found the article to be extremely interesting. It stated—

Genetically modified food is a source of great controversy, yet most of us are eating it every day. If you cook with canola oil, snack on biscuits and chocolates, drink soy milk or eat tofu—

You name it and it is out there in our society. In the article, Professor Stephen Leeder from the University of Sydney said—

A lot of GM crops are engineered to tolerate 10 times the normal level of herbicides. Those herbicides have been demonstrated to be carcinogenic.

When there is information like this out there, it does breed concerns in our general population. Lauren asked me how she can put her trust in a system that she felt was not open and transparent, and that is something I say to the minister. This information needs to get out there; the testing needs to get out there so that people know that it is safe and that it is not going to cause these genetic dispositions or cancer et cetera. We need to ensure that all the right information is out there in the public to stop the misnomers.

Betty highlighted to me an issue with genetically modified food. She comes from a farming background and she said that when they were growing crops which were genetically modified they did not need to turn the soil over anywhere near as much so that saved the water content in the soil and it potentially saved any run-off. She used to live up near the Burdekin and it saved soil run-off into the Great Barrier Reef. This genetically modified technology is actually helping in terms of the nutrients flowing on to the reef so that is certainly another bonus with this. I found it interesting that this information which explains these added benefits is not out there in the community. That is why I say to the minister today that we need to get this information out there to explain to our constituents that GM is not a bad thing, that it is a good thing in the long run because we can produce more food.

I will now turn to the bill. The creation of a lock-step approach with the federal government certainly does remove uncertainty and red tape when it comes to the providers in Queensland. I do appreciate that there is an opt-out option because certain things may not be in Queensland's best interests, as I explained to Lauren. It is good that this bill does have that opt-out option, and she did feel a degree of comfort knowing that.

Overall, I see no fundamental problems with the bill and I do support it. When it comes down to it, we are a small planet and we are trying to produce enough food to feed all of the hungry mouths. As we all know, the population on the planet is growing and we need to ensure that we can feed those mouths. We need to have efficiencies in the way we grow our foods. If gene technology is a way of doing that, then that is a path we need to prudently follow.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (3.55 pm): On 16 August 2016, the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and the Minister for Small Business introduced the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 into the Queensland parliament. The bill was referred to the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for detailed consideration. The explanatory notes describe the objectives of this bill very clearly. The objectives of the bill are to—

1. meet the Queensland Government commitment to a nationally consistent scheme for gene technology regulation under the intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001 (GTA)
2. provide certainty and consistency for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders in regard to the gene technology regulatory scheme and clarity around regulatory compliance.

Gene technology is the term given to molecular techniques that alter the genetic material of a living organism. This can be a plant, animal, bacteria or virus. These advanced techniques involve the insertion or removal of one or more genes in order for an organism to change, gain or lose a particular characteristic or set of characteristics. Organisms that have been modified or created using these techniques are referred to as genetically modified organisms, or GMOs.

The CSIRO is an example of an organisation which is utilising gene technology as a tool to develop crops that have higher yield with fewer inputs, are more resistant to diseases, spoil less during storage and transport, contain more useful nutrients and can grow in agricultural land that has been degraded. It is important to recognise with this type of research that, while gene technology promises benefits such as increased yields and reduced dependence on pesticides, there are also potential risks

and there is a genuine concern in segments of society about tampering with nature. This is why we must ensure that we proceed carefully and why it is important that government safeguards are in place—risks and benefits have to be carefully examined and appropriately managed.

The Commonwealth and all states and territories committed to a nationally consistent regulatory system for gene technology under the intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001. As such, the Queensland government committed to keep state legislation consistent with the Commonwealth legislation covering the majority of organisations dealing with genetically modified organisms. Whenever the Commonwealth gene technology legislation is amended, Queensland's legislation must also be amended to ensure consistency. The bill adopts a lock-step opt-out approach and provides Queensland with the ability to opt out of Commonwealth amendments by regulation, if the amendments are not in Queensland's interests.

The explanatory notes state that the opt-out provision in the bill is a safeguard for Queensland but it is one that would be used rarely, as there would be considerable opportunity for a jurisdiction to raise issues and seek to resolve any matters of concern within the state. The lock-step approach proposed in the bill will remove the need to prepare new Queensland legislation every time the Commonwealth gene technology is amended. I note that there were supporters who did not support the lock-step approach—as there were submitters who did not support the opt-out clauses—and raised concerns about limitations on parliamentary scrutiny of the legislation. A 2013 independent review commissioned by the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts under the then LNP government found that potential efficiencies could be achieved by adopting a lock-step approach to the Commonwealth legislation. The review further recommended that—

... this should only proceed if there are legislated provisions accompanying the change to lock-step which provide adequate safeguards for Queensland.

I believe this bill has achieved the balance called for by the independent review. As such, I commend this bill to the House.



Mr WILLIAMS (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.59 pm): I rise today to make a contribution to the debate on the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. I serve on the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee. I wish to thank the minister and the minister's staff, the secretariat and the other members of the committee for their diligence and deliberation on this bill.

This bill deals predominantly with the lock-step arrangement between the state of Queensland and the Commonwealth in providing the state with the right to disengage from the arrangement at any time if the state of Queensland believes it is not in the best interests of the state to continue with the lock-step arrangement on a particular issue. The committee called for submissions from stakeholders and 900 subscribers and issued 150 invitations for submissions from stakeholders. After due deliberation of the submissions, the unanimous decision of the committee was that the bill should be passed.

On a lighter note, there is considerable confusion in the greater community about the terminology 'gene technology'. I have heard comments in the community from members referencing gene technology. One was that people should not be able to pick the sex of their child. Another was that jean companies should upgrade the stitching on their jeans and stretch material should become mandatory, all referring to 'gene technology'. There is a deal of confusion in the community.

Gene technology is a term given to molecular techniques that alter genetic material of a living organism, be it plant, animal, bacteria or virus. These techniques involve the insertion or removal of one or more genes in order that an organism is changed to either gain or lose a particular characteristic or set of characteristics. Organisms that have been modified using these techniques are referred to as genetically modified organisms, or GMOs. Gene technology does not include sexual reproduction. The governance of this falls under the Commonwealth's Gene Technology Regulations 2001 and the Commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000, which states that genetically modified organisms, GMOs, do not include tests on human beings or organisms declared by regulation to not be GMOs.

Gene technology has a range of applications which include: research in biology and medicines with GMO micro-organisms in plants and animals; agriculture, incorporating resistance to diseases in plants, herbicide tolerance and altering the timing and the duration of flower production; therapeutic goods in terms of modifying micro-organisms to produce therapeutic goods such as insulin and vaccines; medicines for use in diagnosing and treating diseases; and industrial uses, such as enzyme production for food processing, paper pulp production and biological leaching of minerals. Practical

examples in Australia include research undertaken by the CSIRO to improve crop and animal productivity and sustainability. Specifically, genetic technology was used to expedite breeding in the black tiger prawn and to help cotton resist the helicoverpa larvae.

In Queensland we have 10 current licences including farming crop research into modified grain, sugar cane, cotton plants, canola and bananas with a focus on disease prevention and making crops pest resistant, reducing the need to spray crops. Using less pesticides is good for the environment. There are also three human therapeutic research projects underway. They are very commendable. One is to create a vaccine for cholera, the second is to find a cure for liver cancer and the third is to find a cure for influenza. This gene technology research is all conducted under the regulation of the Australian government through a national legislative scheme.

The Commonwealth act and the Commonwealth regulation, together with state and territory laws, provide a nationally consistent system that aims to ensure that all entities and individuals in Australia are similarly covered. An organism is a biological entity that is viable or capable of reproduction or capable of transferring genetic material. At a state level, the Department of State Development ensures that research remains consistent with the Biotechnology Code of Ethics 2006. Scientific advances in gene technology benefit the community, business, industry and the environment. However, there is a broad recognition that the risks and benefits have to be carefully examined and appropriately managed.

The lock-step approach removes a legislative difficulty in that every time the Commonwealth wishes to amend the gene technology legislation, the state must prepare new legislation. Notwithstanding that the state can still exercise the opt-out arrangement, this is a step in the right direction by the Palaszczuk Labor government. The Therapeutic Goods Administration and Safe Food Queensland provide an environment in which there has never been a research mishap or any form of crisis. This is a credit to the professionalism of those involved given that they are involved in genetically modifying organisms. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak on the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. The 21st century is not just about innovation in computers and electronics, in robotics and digital disruption; it is also the century when we will embrace the use of what is called gene technology, genetic engineering or genetic modification. That is why it is important that we have a nationally consistent approach to gene technology.

As a grazier and someone who has had close contact during my entire life with farmers of a range of crops, I am aware that the scientific advancement in DNA biotechnology studies is seen as a welcome development. It has the potential to provide us with the tools to help control innovative and noxious weeds. That is where I have a specific interest and on which I will make most of my comments in my speech today. I draw the minister's attention to that.

Weeds contaminate produce, affect the operation of farm machinery, reduce farm and forest productivity, invade crops, smother pastures and, in some cases, can harm livestock. They aggressively compete for water, nutrients and sunlight resulting in reduced crop yield and poor crop quality. This bill primarily seeks to ensure national consistency in gene technology activities through a national legislative scheme. It ensures that all entities, businesses and individuals engaged in gene technology are covered.

This bill is yet another bill before the parliament that had its genesis during the previous LNP government. In 2013 the previous government commissioned an independent review of the Queensland act to: investigate whether the Queensland act is operating as an efficient and effective component of the nationally consistent gene technology regulatory scheme and to investigate particular aspects as specified in the terms of reference. That review identified that potential efficiencies could be achieved by adopting a lock-step approach with the Commonwealth legislation.

Automatically applying Commonwealth laws will reduce future legislative costs, improve administrative efficiencies and create clarity, consistency and certainty for state agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders who have dealings with GMOs. The review also identified that the lock-step approach 'should only proceed if there are legislative provisions accompanying the change to lock step which provide adequate safeguards for Queensland', in other words, an opt-out provision to ensure that the interests of Queensland and Queenslanders will be protected. I welcome the fact that this safeguard is reflected in the bill.

Despite the concerns of some submitters, this approach provides national consistency and certainty. Queensland companies will have greater certainty in developing and implementing new technologies. Many of us will have read fiction or watched movies which use DNA and biotechnology advances as a great conspiracy, but nothing could be further from the truth.

As someone who has worked in the agricultural sector, I have welcomed and been excited by scientific advances which have enabled us to use gene technology. In fact, gene technology is a logical and more precise extension of what workers in the agriculture and food production sectors have done for years. It is an extension of practices which have been used for centuries such as crossbreeding different types of plants so that you only get the traits that you want, using yeast to make bread rise and using rennet to make cheese. Gene technology is not simply about improving productivity. It is also used to help control, limit and eradicate some diseases; control and alter the contents of plants; modify plants for insect and herbicide resistance; and develop disease resistance. It has the ability to enhance economic activity, particularly through food and agricultural products.

Controlling invasive and noxious weeds is a time-consuming financial burden for farmers. Aggressive giant rat's-tail grass can reduce pasture productivity and significantly degrade natural areas. It continues to spread and is an ongoing problem in the Gympie region, with almost every landowner afflicted. The spread of the weed and the cost to control it is now making some properties unviable. Rubber vine is poisonous to livestock and smothers vegetation, infests waterways, hillsides and pastures, decreases biodiversity and impedes stock and native animal movement. Prickly acacia is already widespread on several million hectares of Mitchell grass plains and encourages erosion, threatens biodiversity, decreases pastures and forms dense thorny thickets that interfere with stock movement. Parthenium weed costs Australia's beef industry \$16.5 million per year and the cropping industry several million dollars per year.

Queensland landowners fight the battle daily to control these weeds. They cost Queensland an estimated \$600 million annually and have significant impacts on primary industries, natural ecosystems and human and animal health. Just five weeds—parthenium weed, rubber vine, prickly acacia, mesquite and parkinsonia—cost Queensland more than \$50 million each year in lost production and the cost to control. The cost of reduced production in the mulga lands of south-west Queensland caused by the intrusion of woody weeds and ensuing erosion is estimated at over \$50 million each year. The estimated annual cost of weeds in winter crops in southern Queensland alone is \$40 million.

Weeds reduce the quantity and quality of Australia's agricultural, horticultural and forestry products, which in turn affects both industry and consumers. It is estimated that weeds cost Australian farmers around \$1.5 billion a year in weed control activities and a further \$2.5 billion a year in lost agricultural production. The real cost of weeds to the environment is difficult to calculate. However, it is expected that the cost would be similar to, if not greater than, that estimated for all agricultural industries. Any way that we can use gene technology to help control and eradicate noxious and invasive weeds would be welcome in the agricultural sector, as it would increase productivity and reduce the physical and financial burden. I urge this chamber to support the bill.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.14 pm): I have just listened with great interest to my colleague, the member for Gympie, who has outlined a number of the potential benefits of gene technology in the food and agricultural sector to deal with the impact of weeds. Parthenium weed, giant rat's-tail grass, rubber vine and prickly acacia are just some of the weeds which create very negative environmental and economic impacts in our agricultural sector. The cost of managing invasive weeds is felt through lost production as people look for chemical and physical means of trying to address this problem. This is why new technologies like gene technology are so important.

I support the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. We already have a legislative framework, but this is about trying to ensure there is a more efficient mechanism of keeping consistency across the nation. In this case the nationally consistent approach has mechanisms that allow it to be kept up to date in a more timely way whilst still maintaining protections and the recognition of Queensland's interests. The use of gene technology, which is regulated through a national scheme, has the ability to enhance economic activity and increase our trade opportunities, particularly through food and agricultural products.

The mechanism in this legislation has been called a lock-step approach, but essentially it is a process that goes beyond our existing mechanisms to allow the legislation to be updated in a more seamless way so that we do not have to come back to this House all the time to move new amendments. This will maintain the opportunity for Queensland to opt out if we believe it is not in our state's interests. The lock-step approach which is proposed in this bill would avoid any inconsistency between the state and national regulation, and that is important because gene technology is regulated through the Commonwealth's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

This bill is proceeding because a review was done. While in government the LNP participated in that review and in 2014 it recommended this legislation, so we see before us the outcome of the review and the in-principle agreement. Queensland has the ability to opt out of Commonwealth amendments

by regulation if the amendments are not in Queensland's interests. It is important to note that gene technology does not include sexual reproduction, homologous recombination or any other technique specified as not gene technology in the Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulations 2001. The Commonwealth Gene Technology Act 2000 states that GMOs do not include human beings or organisms declared by regulation not to be GMOs.

Practical examples of gene technology in Australia include research undertaken by CSIRO to improve crop and animal productivity and sustainability. This has been mentioned by other speakers but, to reiterate, there may be ways to expedite the conventional breeding of black tiger prawns and to help cotton resist helicoverpa larvae. Scientific advances through gene technology can benefit the community, business, industry and the environment. However, there is broad recognition that the risks and benefits have to be carefully examined and appropriately managed. This is no *carte blanche* for science to do whatever it feels capable of. There still needs to be appropriate oversights to ensure that it serves the public and environmental interests and that those oversights and protections are maintained. At the same time we also want to see technology serve our communities, our economy and our environment. I support the committee's recommendation that the bill be passed.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.18 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016. Gene technology is a term used for the development and use of genetically modified organisms. It allows scientists to directly transfer one or more genes from one organism to another so that the recipient organism gains, loses or changes a specific characteristic or set of characteristics. It can also be used to remove a gene. Gene technology can be used in agriculture—for example, to incorporate resistance to pests and diseases. It can be used in medicine—for example, to modify organisms to produce therapeutic drugs such as insulin and vaccines. It can be used in industrial applications—for example, to produce enzymes for use in food processing and bioremediation such as when we use micro-organisms to decompose toxic substances and clean up industrial sites or environmental accidents.

Research and development is critical to developing new cutting-edge innovations that are integral to the success of Queensland's biotechnology industry and, as such, our state's continued economic prosperity. For example, gene technology was used by Queensland University of Technology Professor James Dale's banana biofortification research that aims to increase the nutritional value of the East African cooking banana, otherwise called the plantain. His research project will have profound implications for improving the health and wellbeing of millions of Ugandans and others who live in East Africa, where the banana is a staple food but has low nutritional value.

Gene technology is well established. For example, GM soy, a genetically modified soybean developed in 1994 by Monsanto, was the first genetically modified soybean. GM soy has been genetically modified to be resistant to glyphosate, which is a broad spectrum herbicide used to kill weeds and grasses known to compete with commercial crops around the world. As GM soy is resistant, glyphosate becomes a selective herbicide that can be used with soybean production. The first glyphosate based product came on to the market in 1970 under the name of Roundup. Plants exposed to glyphosate are unable to produce amino acids and ultimately die. With GM soy, glyphosate can be used to control weeds without causing any damage to the GM soy plants. In 2014, 90.7 million hectares of GM soy were planted worldwide—a staggering 82 per cent of the total soy cultivation.

Monsanto also produces a genetically modified canola that is resistant to glyphosate. It is called Roundup Ready canola. Genetically modified crops undergo a significant amount of regulation around the world. Gene technology research and development in Australia occurs within a regulatory framework consisting of Commonwealth and state laws. In Australia, Roundup Ready canola was approved for commercial production in 2003 by the Gene Technology Regulator after undergoing approximately 400 tests and studies to determine if it was safe. In the same year, Food Standards Australia New Zealand also approved this product as being safe for human consumption. Other staple foods that have been genetically modified include tomatoes, potatoes, maize and rice.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing certainty and consistency for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders in relation to the regulation of gene technology activities. The Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 provides this certainty and consistency. In Australia, gene technology research and development mainly falls under Commonwealth legislation, the Gene Technology Act 2000. The Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulator administers and enforces the national regulatory scheme. Currently, gene technology is regulated in Queensland pursuant to the Gene Technology Act 2001 and the Gene Technology Regulation 2002. Although this legislation mirrored the Commonwealth legislation, every time the Commonwealth legislation was amended the legislation in Queensland had to change too.

Amendments had to be introduced and debated in the state parliament. It resulted in a period during which the Queensland and Commonwealth laws were out of sync, creating uncertainty and potential disadvantages for Queensland organisations covered by the state legislation. The Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 provides a lock-step opt-out approach. The new act automatically applies Commonwealth gene technology laws as the laws of Queensland while retaining the ability to opt out of particular amendments to the Commonwealth law in instances where it is not in Queensland's interests to adopt these amendments.

The benefits of the new act include greater certainty and consistency through providing a predictable regulatory environment and removing any period where the Commonwealth laws are out of sync with the Queensland laws. It is important to recognise that this bill will maintain consistency with the Commonwealth gene technology legislation in the most efficient manner possible—that is, an automatic adoption process. States and territories have the right to designate under state and territory law special areas that are either for genetically modified or non-GM crops for marketing purposes.

Queensland is the only state, along with the Northern Territory, not to impose a moratorium in relation to dealings involving genetic technology. The Palaszczuk government believes that if GM crops are approved for planting through the National Gene Technology Regulator scheme then farmers have the right to choose whether they grow these crops. Queensland has been strongly supportive of the national regulatory scheme since its introduction in 2000 and the Palaszczuk government also holds this position. The scheme ensures gene technology takes place within a robust ethical and scientific regulatory framework that is focused on the protection of human health, safety and the environment.

It is noteworthy that the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator has advised that to date it has not observed any adverse effects on human health and the environment from licensed dealings with genetically modified organisms. The Therapeutic Goods Administration is responsible for the quality, safety and efficacy of therapeutic products, including GM products. The TGA maintains a database of adverse event notifications which is an online database of information about adverse events that have been reported to the TGA. This database would capture any adverse events associated with GM therapeutics.

The Palaszczuk government is acting to ensure that gene technology activities are facilitated through legislation that balances innovation with environmental protection and the health and safety of people. In doing so, it is important that our laws keep pace with science. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.26 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 now before the Queensland parliament. This legislation addresses a Queensland state jurisdictional commitment to a nationally consistent scheme for gene technology regulation under the Intergovernmental Gene Technology Agreement 2001. It provides certainty and consistency for Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders in regard to a gene technology regulatory scheme and also clarity around regulatory compliance.

As a member of the Liberal National Party, I support the proposed legislation. It should be remembered that it originated from an LNP review of the act in 2013-14. In 2013, under the LNP, the Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation commissioned an independent review of the Queensland act. The purpose of the Commonwealth, states' and territories' gene technology legislation, which gives effect to the nationally consistent scheme, is to protect the health and safety of people and to protect the environment from any risk posed by or as a result of gene technology by identifying those risks and managing them through regulation of certain dealings with genetically modified organisms.

It is important to understand that the need for consistent legislation between the Commonwealth and the states and territories is to ensure that all individuals and entities in Australia are covered in the same way and by the same scheme. There have been great scientific advances through gene technology, and the benefits can include the production of genetically modified organisms for a specific purpose. This is much faster than selective breeding and involves transferring one or a few genes which can come from completely unrelated organisms, even from different kingdoms. The production of specific products—human insulin and human growth hormone—reduces the dependence on products from other less reliable sources.

The potential use of gene technology to treat genetic diseases such as cystic fibrosis and severe combined immune deficiency, as well as various malignancies, is one of the benefits. If we are to highlight the benefits we must also acknowledge the risks. These risks include that genes inserted into bacteria could be transferred into other bacterial species, potentially including antibiotic resistant genes

which could result in antibiotic resistance in pathogens or in bacteria that can produce toxic materials or break down useful materials—for example superweeds that are resistant to herbicides and spreading uncontrollably or their genes potentially transferring into other closely related wild species, forming a different kind of superweed.

The government's response to the recommendations of the review of the Gene Technology Act 2001 (Queensland) that was handed down in April 2014 outlined in-principle agreement to the review's recommendation that Queensland invest and adopt a lock-step approach that provides adequate safeguards for Queensland. The review found that the Queensland act was achieving its objectives. However, it also concluded that an approach that balances the administrative efficiencies resulting from lock step and provides adequate safeguards for Queensland's autonomy is just as important. Consistent with the principles for intergovernmental activities, it is important that any proposed changes to our legislation in Queensland must be carefully considered in terms of the extent to which they align with Queensland's policy priorities and the extent to which they are of benefit to businesses and the broader community in Queensland. Some of our gene technology research produces genetically modified products which provide innovative and unique opportunities for Australian agriculture and consumers.

To understand genetically modified products and what this has meant for Australia, we need to look no further than the cotton industry. Since the CSIRO began developing cotton varieties using genetically modified technologies, enormous improvements have been made. Australia now has the highest cotton yields in the world, exporting cotton worth \$2.5 billion each year. The CSIRO has reduced Australian growers' reliance on insecticides and concurrently has also improved their water use efficiency. Currently more than 95 per cent of Australia's cotton crop is grown from CSIRO bred varieties which have reduced pesticide use by up to 85 per cent and herbicide use by about 52 per cent. This is an important and terrific environmental outcome.

This is but one of many genetically modified products that I could use in my speech here today, but time does not permit me to name many others. Currently there are many applications being evaluated that will not only enhance economic activity but also increase our trade opportunities. One that comes to mind is the commercial supply of Dengvaxia, an attenuated genetically modified dengue vaccine. This application was received by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator on 14 September 2016. A third of the world's population is at risk of contracting dengue fever which, as a flavivirus, is a leading cause of illness and death in the tropics. The vaccine itself is a live virus. It is genetically engineered to include genes that encode for dengue proteins and coax the body's immune system into producing antibodies that fight all forms of dengue. This vaccine was developed by the French pharmaceutical company Sanofi Aventis. This is certainly a significant public health advancement.

I conclude by taking this opportunity to recognise a great leader with respect to supporting medical research here in Queensland. For the last 12 years Dr Luis Prado has been an integral part of fostering a culture of research, education and training as the Director of Medical Services at the Wesley Hospital. Since 2012 Dr Prado as the Chief Medical Officer for UnitingCare Health has had an oversight of clinical outcome data and contributed significantly to clinical service planning, medical education and training, health workforce planning, and the delivery of translational research through his board role initially with the Wesley Research Institute and now with the Wesley Medical Research Institute. I certainly wish Dr Prado all of the best given his recent appointment as Group Director of Medical Services with Epworth HealthCare in Melbourne. I thank him for his contribution to medical research in Queensland. In conclusion, I concur with the parliamentary committee's position that the bill be passed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.32 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill. Gene technology has a powerful capability, with wide potential and application. Government, industries and communities understand that this technology has the potential to bring benefits to the community and environment but requires the appropriate controls, checks and balances to reassure the community and our export markets that the risks and benefits are investigated and managed appropriately. Diligent regulation of gene technology application allows capabilities to be fully explored while protecting against potential harmful risks. Queensland legislation needs to keep in step with Commonwealth legislation. Queensland legislation has been amended four times since 2007 to mirror the Commonwealth legislation. The Gene Technology (Queensland) Bill 2016 is effectively introducing the latest Commonwealth amendments. This bill will establish a lock-step opt-out approach

so that consistency with the Commonwealth legislation is automatically maintained while the Queensland parliament's ability to block any Commonwealth amendments that are not in Queensland's interests is still preserved.

My electorate of Mackay is surrounded by agriculture. The wider Mackay region is home to sugar research at the BSES, the QUT sugar research laboratory at Racecourse Sugar Mill and the Sarina ethanol plant at Plane Creek Mill. Queensland's sugar industry is evolving rapidly. Application for cane products, once limited to raw and processed sugar and molasses, are expanding to include some of the world's most advanced and important technologies. Biofuel is becoming more commonly spoken than the words 'two sugars please'. Research and development is critical to developing new cutting-edge innovations that are integral to the success of Queensland's biotechnology industry and, as such, our state's continued economic prosperity.

Drawing upon growing expertise in genetics, molecular biology and management, research and industry groups are able to produce better sugarcane varieties. Sugar cane produces most of the world's sugar and is being increasingly used for renewable energy supply throughout the production of ethanol and electricity. Modern commercial sugarcane varieties are derived from two species: original sugar cane has brought the genes for high sugar content and the other, a wild relative of sugar cane, provides a hardiness to harsh environments and the ability to ratoon or to produce additional profitable crops from regrowth after harvest. Using cultivated and wild varieties, scientists are developing new sugarcane varieties with increased yield, sugar content and smut resistance. There are also many varieties of these two species and other related species that may be crossed with sugar cane that have not been used in breeding programs. These species are expected to provide a rich source of untapped genes for breeding programs that may provide beneficial traits to cultivated sugar cane.

Sugarcane researchers are now evaluating plant material produced in collaboration with Sugar Research Australia. The aim is to identify favourable traits in genes such as resistance to pests and disease, including sugarcane smut; biomass yield, offering potential for renewable energy production in the future; and more efficient water use, which is important for sustainable production of sugar cane. DNA markers can flag the presence and location of useful genes or detrimental genes and help breeders select the best combination of genes. Scientists have identified a number of DNA markers associated with smut resistance, high sugar content and cane yield. Along with the SRA, they are now testing the reliability of these markers for speeding up progress in the breeding program. The markers have also been used to produce a detailed map of the sugarcane genome that shows how genes are linked to each other. An international consortium is currently working to sequence the entire genome of sugar cane. This exciting initiative makes use of cutting-edge technologies that will eventually revolutionise sugarcane breeding.

Under natural conditions, sugar cane flowers once a year and only at some locations, which reduces opportunities for crossing. Using gene technology, scientists are studying the flowering of sugar cane to identify ways of controlling the process. By studying the unique features of the sugarcane stalk that allow it to store very high concentrations of sugar, scientists are able to identify ways of increasing the yield. A model for the pathways of sugarcane movement into the storage of tissue has been developed and is now being tested to identify the control points. Scientists have also discovered new ways of directing proteins into this storage tissue using experimental genetically modified sugarcane plants. As in many other crop species, genetically modified varieties of sugar cane are forecast to improve profitability by reducing input costs, increasing yield or introducing novel products. GM sugar cane is being developed by a number of Australian and international research organisations and companies. Studies are also being undertaken as to why wild canes are a weed problem in some parts of the world. This information will help Australia to safely manage GM sugar cane in the future.

The safeguard for the gene research industry is the Commonwealth Gene Technology Regulator. It administers and enforces the national regulatory scheme. The scheme aims to protect the health and safety of people and the environment by identifying and managing the risks associated with gene technology. We have to make sure that, if we are trialling genetically modified plants, we have the necessary safeguards in place to ensure that we do not have the situation where GM plants escape into the natural environment until they are assessed as not posing an environmental risk. We must also ensure that the genetically modified organisms created in the development of new therapeutics, which are really important in the fight against disease, are developed and handled safely and securely to minimise risk to human health.

Gene technology is developing at a rapid rate and the legislation needs to keep up. Gene technology is pivotal to the future of the Queensland sugar industry. That is why it is imperative to have legislation in place to ensure that the regulation and management of these processes is relevant, compliant with current standards and is ethical and safe. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.40 pm): I will make a brief contribution to the debate on the Gene Technology Bill 2016. Other members have spoken about the objectives of the bill. Ultimately, we are trying to achieve a good understanding, both federally and across state jurisdictions, of what people are doing in terms of genetic research.

In my local area, for many years the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has had an office at Tor Street, where this type of research has been carried out repeatedly, whether it is modifying genes or just selecting different species and cross-pollinating to get an outcome. Ultimately, this is the kind of research that Queensland needs. Agriculture is a really big industry for Queensland, particularly for us on the downs. There are some great agricultural industries there, particularly in the grains and cotton areas. It is very important to make sure that we have the very best genetic material so that our farmers and our primary producers are competitive internationally. If we are looking for a crop to be resistant to drought or pests, we have to make sure that we can investigate that fully and in a sensible way, pulling research from interstate and across jurisdictions, to make sure that we can get the very best outcome. Australia, and certainly Queensland, needs to have the species that suit our environment, is able to grow very productively in our environment and at the same time be resistant to pests or drought.

Nearly two years ago Barnaby Joyce came up to Toowoomba and, with the Grains Research and Development Corporation, announced a \$14 million research package for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Some of that funding is being spent in my electorate of Toowoomba North at the Tor Street facility. That funding led to the creation of jobs. That research package was aimed at encouraging young people to go into this very important industry. If we have a legislative framework that will allow the industry to develop in Queensland, hopefully, we can attract federal and private funding. If we have good arrangements that give people secure property rights and boundaries that mean that we are doing this research in a safe environment, we can ensure that Queensland, as it always has, is leading the way internationally in making sure that we have the species that give us the very best productive outcomes.

If we get good productive outcomes for our farmers, we can get a good price internationally. We can be very efficient because of the gene technology that is being applied to the development of the industry. The University of Southern Queensland, the research facility at Tor Street and the Grains Research and Development Corporation are all located in and around Toowoomba. I am very pleased to support this bill, as it will give assurance to people to invest in the industry in my footprint and provide jobs for young people and people who are doing tertiary studies in my footprint.

I note that this process was started under the former LNP government and it was continued by this government. I appreciate that the minister acknowledged that. Many people often see this place as a chamber where battles are held. It often can be, but this bill is good for Queensland. We agree with it. It provides opportunities for people in my electorate. I am very happy to support the bill.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (4.45 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members who spoke in support of the bill for their contribution. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the bipartisan support for this bill that ensures that Queensland researchers and businesses remain at the cutting edge of gene technology. I would like to note the range of positive benefits outlined by many speakers that gene technology presents for many sectors of Queensland's economy, particularly for agriculture. The member for Gympie emphasised the important role of gene technology in addressing invasive weeds. Other benefits for the agricultural sector include drought and pest resistance and increased yields.

It is important to recognise that this bill will maintain consistency with the Commonwealth gene technology legislation through the most efficient manner possible—that is, an automatic adoption process. This bill ensures that gene technology activities undertaken by Queensland state government agencies, higher education institutions and sole traders will take place within an up-to-date, robust, ethical and scientific regulatory framework that is focused on the protection of human health, safety and the environment.

This bill also provides safeguards for Queensland's autonomy through a provision to opt out of particular amendments by regulation in instances where it is not in Queensland's interests to adopt Commonwealth amendments. I know that this is something that the shadow minister is particularly interested in. In response to her question as to when the Queensland government might look to opt out of a Commonwealth amendment, let me outline hypothetical situations where this might occur.

Queensland could utilise the opt-out provision in the incredibly unlikely instance where a change to the legislation was not evidence based and, in Queensland's view, placed our researchers and businesses at unnecessary risk through reduced safeguards. The regulation of new technologies may also be another instance where Queensland could utilise the opt-out provision if proposed Commonwealth amendments presented significant ethical or commercial concerns for Queensland entities. It could put us at a disadvantage. We might opt out in those circumstances. As the shadow minister mentioned in her speech, the opt-out provision would be used rarely given the rigorous process in place for achieving agreement to legislative changes by the Commonwealth.

The opt-out provision in this bill essentially provides Queensland with a second line of insurance with this mechanism being triggered only as a last resort, as enacting this provision would mean that the Commonwealth would not have addressed satisfactorily Queensland's concerns through the Legislative and Governance Forum on Gene Technology and the Gene Technology Standing Committee. It should also be noted that, if Queensland were to opt out of a Commonwealth amendment, the Commonwealth amendment would still apply to constitutional corporations in Queensland that are covered under the Commonwealth legislation. As such, the decision to utilise the opt-out provision would not be taken lightly and would be informed by consultation with Queensland state government agencies and higher education institutions.

I would also like to address some of the concerns raised by the member for Albert in relation to the safety of GMO crops and food. The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator—the OGTR—has advised that, to date, it has not observed any adverse effects on human health and the environment arising from licensed dealings with GMOs. The OGTR has a post-release review framework that allows ongoing oversight of commercial releases of genetically modified crops in Australia.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration is responsible for the quality, safety and efficacy of therapeutic products, including GM products, while Food Standards Australia New Zealand is responsible for the safety of GM foods. It should be noted that all GMOs used in Australia are subject to rigorous scientific review and a comprehensive regulatory regime under the act. Of course, we would welcome the appropriate federal government agency undertaking a public awareness campaign on the positive impact of the use of GMOs and my department would be happy to provide input.

The Queensland government is acting to ensure that gene technology activities are facilitated through legislation that balances innovation with environmental protection and the health and safety of people. Having an up-to-date legislative framework for gene technology is important for Queensland's biotechnology industry and aligns with the government's Advance Queensland initiative to build an environment where collaboration between industry and research bodies successfully translates ideas and research into commercial outcomes.

I would again like to thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its consideration of the bill. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the community members, organisations and departmental representatives who provided submissions and information for the committee's inquiry into the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 54, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (4.52 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerger—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (4.52 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.

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 30 August (see p. 3124).

Second Reading

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (4.53 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Transportation and Utilities Committee for its report, tabled on 10 October 2016, regarding the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I would also like to thank those who made submissions to the committee about the bill and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. I am pleased to table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Transportation and Utilities Committee: Report No. 24—Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, government response [[1865](#)].

The committee's report contained two recommendations. Recommendation 1 was that the bill be passed. The government appreciates this recommendation. Recommendation 2 was that the bill be amended to provide safeguards against the inappropriate disclosure of criminal history information provided by a Stadiums Queensland board member during the term of their appointment. The government accepts this recommendation and I will move this amendment during consideration in detail.

This bill amends the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Keno Act 1996, the Land Act 1994, the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 and the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994. The bill will also make minor consequential amendments to other legislation. The bill proposes to make two gambling related amendments. The first amendment relates to the way gaming machine tax is assessed for clubs with additional premises under the Gaming Machine Act 1991. The metered win, which is a venue's profits, from gaming machines is subject to a monthly gaming machine tax. For clubs, the rate of tax is progressive, whereby a tax-free threshold of \$9,500 applies, above which the tax rate increases in brackets from 17.91 per cent to 35 per cent depending on the monthly metered win. Currently, when a club operates more than one premises, the monthly metered win from all of the club's premises is combined before the progressive tax rate is applied. This results in clubs with additional premises paying more tax than they would if the monthly metered win from each premises were taxed separately.

Clubs Queensland, which represents the interests of approximately 1,000 community clubs in the state, has long held the view that the current arrangement can discourage clubs from expanding their operations, to the detriment of local communities. In particular, the current arrangement can discourage larger clubs from amalgamating with smaller, struggling clubs and from establishing new premises in regional or greenfield areas. Clubs help build and strengthen communities through social inclusion, employment and volunteering opportunities and valuable sporting and recreation facilities. Sadly, however, 69 clubs have closed since 2011 according to Clubs Queensland, with few new clubs emerging to take their place. This means that somewhere a local community has missed out on the social and economic benefits that a community club provides.

In order to stimulate the provision of community clubs services across the state, the bill seeks to amend the Gaming Machine Act so that gaming machine tax is calculated on a per venue basis for clubs with additional premises. This amendment is not expected to significantly impact on tax revenue as there are only 20 clubs at present that operate additional premises. The amendment is unlikely to lead to the development of 'super clubs', as a club that operates multiple venues will still be limited to a cap on the number of gaming machines that may be operated across all its venues. Additionally, applications of significant community impact, which includes applications for additional club premises, must, unless waived by the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming, be accompanied by a community

impact statement. The purpose of the community impact statement is to help the commissioner assess the social and economic implications of the grant of the application. Finally, the legislatively prescribed statewide cap on gaming machines for clubs will remain unchanged.

The second gambling related amendment under the bill relates to the proposed introduction of multi-jurisdictional Keno jackpot pooling in Queensland. The bill seeks to amend the Keno Act 1996 to enable the Queensland Keno licensee to enter into an arrangement with interstate Keno licensees to pool Keno jackpot contributions for certain Keno games. The pooling arrangement requires that the Queensland Keno licensee be provided with the ability to conduct Keno draws during currently prohibited periods in Queensland on Good Friday, Anzac Day and Christmas Day in order to ensure that the jackpot draws can be synchronised with participating jurisdictions that do not prohibit the playing of Keno on these days. Although Keno draws will be conducted during the prohibited periods in Queensland, Keno tickets will not be sold and Keno draws will not be displayed in venues during these times.

The pooling arrangement also requires that the Queensland Keno licensee be able to remit Keno funds to pay a winner in another participating jurisdiction. From a Queensland Keno player's perspective, the key aspects of the conduct of Keno will remain unchanged following the introduction of multi-jurisdictional jackpot pooling in the state. In particular, each participating jurisdiction will continue to sell its own tickets and conduct its own separate Keno draws. Interstate pooling arrangements already exist for lotteries in Queensland. The introduction of multi-jurisdictional Keno jackpot pooling in Queensland is intended to reinvigorate Keno and deliver a more attractive and entertaining game for players through the offer of larger jackpot prizes. It will also enable the Queensland Keno licensee to provide Queenslanders with the same Keno offering already available to Keno players in New South Wales and Victoria. Although multi-jurisdictional Keno jackpot pooling is anticipated to enhance the Keno game, it is not envisaged that it will have a significantly adverse impact on problem gambling as Keno presents a relatively lower risk of harm compared to other forms of gambling products such as gaming machines.

The bill also amends the Land Act 1994 to enable the land adjoining a non-tidal watercourse or lake to be leased where infrastructure extends into the airspace above or at a depth below the functioning watercourse or lake forming a property boundary. Under the provisions in the bill, the state will be the holder of any lease and may sublease to a third party to undertake particular works or for occupation of a site for projects considered by the state as providing a benefit to the local community. The lease is also nontransferable. What these amendments will do is give legal tenure to the lessee or sublessee for projects requiring tenure over the part of the project site that extends over or below a watercourse or lake, which enables the land to be dealt with as ordinary land. This gives the tenure holder more security than occupancy rights and ensures the state can apply consistent lease management arrangements across an entire project site, as well as allowing public use of the site.

These amendments could be used for structures such as public or commercial viewing platforms or jetties, or other types of compatible infrastructure in a functioning non-tidal watercourse or lake that forms part of a physical property boundary. The amendments are not intended to capture jetties or any other infrastructure in tidal waterways, infrastructure built within an existing tenure or other private infrastructure built by an adjoining landowner in a watercourse or lake. The provisions in the bill do not override the ordinary rights of riparian landholders to access their land under the Land Act, nor will they impact on the ongoing functioning of a watercourse or lake under the Water Act 2000. Before any lease can be granted to the state, the chief executive responsible for the Water Act 2000 must consent to the lease, ensuring it will not interfere with the control or use of the non-tidal watercourse or lake for a purpose under the Water Act, or interfere with a right of the state or a person to take or use water under the act. Consent must also be sought from each person who is an adjacent owner of the land.

The bill will amend the Major Sports Facilities Act, primarily to improve the administration of the act in relation to protections against unauthorised advertising during major sporting events and support due diligence in the appointment of directors to the board of Stadiums Queensland. As a safeguard against ambush marketing, part 4B of the Major Sports Facilities Act provides for the regulation of advertising within the vicinity of the major sports facilities declared by the Major Sports Regulation 2014. Advertising restrictions protect the interests of event sponsors, who are critical contributors towards meeting the costs of events. The act's capacity to protect events from unauthorised advertising makes Stadiums Queensland venues more attractive to event organisers and supports Queensland's investment in these facilities.

The existing declaration process requires eight weeks lead time, comprising a statutory 28-day notification period, a Governor in Council process and departmental processing. This time frame does not suit the reality of event scheduling at these venues and has proven impractical when events are scheduled or rescheduled at short notice. The bill amends the act to provide an additional, alternative process for the regulation of events. The proposed process will allow certain categories of events to be declared by regulation and will result in the majority of major sports facilities events being declared in one single process. Event categories declared by regulation will be those that are held under the auspices of national sporting bodies such as the National Rugby League, Cricket Australia or the Australian Football League.

As well as providing greater certainty to event organisers, this new process should reduce the potential impact of advertising restrictions on local advertisers not associated with events by nearly two-thirds. This is because, under the current process, three-day event periods are declared to enable flexibility for minor rescheduling. The new alternative process will reduce the need for three-day event periods for those events declared by regulation, applying a standard event period from 6 am to midnight on event days.

The bill clarifies the departmental chief executive's power to request criminal history checks for people proposed for appointment to the Stadiums Queensland board. This supports section 14(b) of the Major Sports Facilities Act that outlines that a person is not qualified to be a director on the Stadiums Queensland board if the person has been convicted of an indictable offence. Privacy will be protected by a new offence provision for inappropriate disclosure of information and by a requirement for criminal history information to be destroyed as soon as practicable after it is no longer required. Natural justice will be provided by requiring that the chief executive disclose the contents of a criminal history report to the relevant person and by allowing reasonable time for the person to make written representations about the report.

It is also proposed that the act be amended to ensure that directors of the Stadiums Queensland board are required to inform the chief executive officer of the department if they are convicted of an indictable offence while in office. A new offence provision will apply where directors fail to comply with this requirement without a reasonable excuse. The Transportation and Utilities Committee has also recommended an additional amendment to ensure that the privacy provisions contained within the bill apply to the criminal history information provided by directors. This amendment is supported and will be moved during consideration in detail. The bill provides for minor administrative amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act and the removal of redundant provisions.

Finally, the bill will also amend the Transport Infrastructure Act to accommodate the proposed Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. Transurban Queensland proposes to fund the project through changes to existing tolling arrangements for the Logan and Gateway motorways, which are referred to in the act as the QML network. Proposed changes include an increase in tolls for heavy vehicles and the installation of new toll points for all vehicles on new south-facing ramps at Compton Road.

Tolling arrangements for toll roads are set by the Minister for Main Roads through a tolling declaration made under section 93 of the Transport Infrastructure Act. However, section 93AA(1) of the act prevents the minister from making a new tolling declaration for the Logan and Gateway motorways. The changes to the Transport Infrastructure Act include an amendment to section 93AA(1) allowing for a new tolling declaration to be made in relation to the Logan and Gateway motorways. The amendment limits the minister's ability to make a new declaration to the extent necessary and appropriate to facilitate the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. In all other respects, a declaration must remain consistent with the declaration currently in force. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (5.04 pm): I rise to speak on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. From the outset, I can let the Treasurer and members of the House know that we will not be opposing the bill. In a sporting sense, it is like the 2015 NRL Grand Final: an all-Queensland affair. I thank the Treasurer for giving me this opportunity to make my legislative debut as the shadow minister for sport.

The bill amends five acts: the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Keno Act 1996, the Land Act 1994 and the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 for particular purposes. One could argue that the amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act are not as significant as other amendments in the bill, such as the changes in taxation arrangements under the Gaming Machine Act 1991 and jackpot pooling arrangements under the Keno Act. No doubt the government spin machine kicked into overdrive because the majority of the bill has nothing to do with major sports facilities and is primarily about gaming laws and regulations. That is reflected in the fact that there were only three submitters to the committee: Clubs Queensland, the Queensland Hotels Association and Tabcorp.

I thank the committee for its thorough examination of the bill. I note that there were two recommendations to the bill, one that it be passed and the other suggesting the government look at adopting a minor amendment to provide safeguards to protect information provided under section 17C regarding a Stadium Queensland board member's conviction for an indictable offence. I thank the Treasurer for his indication that the committee's recommendation will be taken up.

I wish to address the various changes in the bill. The Gaming Machine Act is amended to vary the taxation arrangements that apply to community clubs in Queensland. That taxation relates to the monthly gaming tax generated through electronic gaming machines or pokies. For community clubs, the rate of taxation is progressive. A tax-free threshold of \$9,500 currently applies and, above that, the tax rate increases progressively from 17.91 per cent to 35 per cent. Current arrangements under the Gaming Machine Act require that, where community clubs operate additional premises, monthly gaming machine revenue is aggregated before the tax rate is applied.

The changes as proposed in the bill would remove this aggregation, thus letting clubs be taxed on a per premises instead of per licence basis. This move is supported by the peak body for community clubs, Clubs Queensland, which argues that the current system is a disincentive for club amalgamations as clubs with more than one venue are more likely to reach the higher monthly threshold. Clubs Queensland argues that changing that arrangement will increase the number of greenfield club developments. It argues that it will allow larger clubs to take over smaller clubs in communities where those clubs would usually be forced to close their doors. It would also allow amalgamated clubs to realise economies of scale. Those changes would result in foregone revenue to the Queensland Treasury of \$2.5 million in 2016-17, increasing to \$2.7 million by 2019, according to the explanatory notes.

Queensland has approximately 1,100 community clubs, which are community based non-profit organisations. Their sole purpose is to support the community and any income generated is returned to the local community. In its submission, Clubs Queensland notes that there has not been a new community club built in Queensland since 1997 and that, since that time, an average of 13 clubs are closing each year.

It is worth noting that the proposed amendments will not result in any more gaming machines being available to clubs. That statewide cap has existed in legislation since 2009 and will not change. There will also be no change to the gambling harm minimisation framework.

The bill amends the Keno Act to provide that a Keno licensee may enter into jackpot pooling arrangements with Keno licensees in other jurisdictions, likely New South Wales and/or Victoria. It encourages more Keno betting because the pool is larger and more appealing, as in the case of a lottery. That move is strongly supported by community clubs and hotels and would likely provide additional revenue to those venues, as well as to Queensland Treasury.

Under a jackpot pooling arrangement, a small percentage of ticket sales which would normally be set aside for each jurisdiction's individual jackpot growth will instead be added to a shared jackpot growth pool that will be available to be won by players from any of the participating jurisdictions. To ensure fairness under the arrangement, it is intended that the game odds for jackpot Keno games across all participating jurisdictions will be the same, that an equal percentage from sales in all participating jurisdictions will be contributed to the jackpot growth pool and that the cost per game entry in all participating jurisdictions will be the same. Both Clubs Queensland and the Queensland Hotels Association obviously support the changes in the bill that amend the Keno Act, as does Tabcorp, which is the exclusive Keno licensee in Queensland.

In their submission, the QHA highlighted that the proposed amendments have no impact on the integrity of the product or the game, there is equity across the proposed participating jurisdiction, there is an equitable opportunity to win across each jurisdiction per entry and the proposed amendments are considered consistent with the harm minimisation principles and practices of the Queensland responsible gambling code of practice and the Queensland responsible gambling strategy.

Tabcorp advised the committee that Leno is a low-impact lottery game that is currently offered in 1,120 venues in Queensland, generating \$45 million in commissions for venues in 2015. Tabcorp has operated Queensland's non-exclusive Keno licence since 2003. In 2013, it made an up-front payment of \$20 million to Queensland in order to extend its current Keno licence to 2047.

I turn to the amendments in relation to the Land Act. The bill also seeks to amend the Land Act to enable land within a functioning non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake to be leased by the state. Currently, the Land Act prevents the state from granting a lease over land that is part of a functioning non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake. The Land Act provides only for the allocation of tenure over or dealings in a non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake if that watercourse or lake has been declared as no longer being a functioning watercourse.

The Water Act 2000 provides the right to use and occupy part of the bed and banks of a non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake to the extent that that occupation relates to the carrying out of operational works for the taking of water authorised under a development permit. However, this does not create a registerable estate or interest in the land that constitutes part of the watercourse or lake. The amendments to the Land Act in the bill, therefore, provide for the issue of a lease. Under the proposed provisions, the land subject to the lease must be managed in a way that does not interfere with the use of the watercourse or the lake under the Water Act.

In relation to the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, the bill seeks to amend that act to accommodate the proposed Logan Motorway Enhancement Project which is currently being assessed by the government under its market-led proposals process.

Finally, there are amendments made to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. This act currently establishes Stadiums Queensland as the statutory authority responsible for operating facilities declared by regulation to be major sports facilities and hired out by national sporting organisations such as the NRL and the clubs associated with the NRL such as the Brisbane Broncos, the Gold Coast Titans and the North Queensland Cowboys.

Mr Costigan: A great club that one.

Mr KRAUSE: Which one is a great club—the Brisbane Broncos?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr KRAUSE: The Australian Football League is associated with the major sporting facilities through the Brisbane Lions and the Gold Coast Suns and Cricket Australia through the Queensland Bulls, the Brisbane Heat and the Australian cricket team. The Major Sports Facilities Act currently protects event sponsors who advertise as part of a specific event—an NRL match, for example—to be protected from unauthorised advertising by rival businesses which have not contributed to the event. This is obviously an important consideration for event organisers who are wanting to hire a venue.

The current Major Sports Facilities Act provides a process for the declaration of events and event periods for the purposes of regulating advertising near venues during these periods. This requires a lead-in time of over eight weeks, comprising a statutory 28-day notification period and requires the event to be published in the *Queensland Government Gazette* at least 28 days prior to its commencement. This can be impractical on occasions when late scheduling or rescheduling of events is unavoidable due to weather or other unforeseeable events. Previously, three-day event periods have been gazetted to allow for minor rescheduling within those three days.

The bill provides an additional, alternate process for the declaration of events and event periods and streamlines the existing process. It does this by prescribing the actual event as an option for the organisers as well as a time period. If an event is rescheduled there is greater flexibility around any considerations that relate to the advertising associated with that event. This bill inserts the new definitions of 'prescribed event', 'restricted advertising event' and 'restricted advertising period' to reflect these changes and provides greater flexibility for event organisers.

Other minor amendments are made to the act as well, including providing explicit power for the chief executive of the administering department to seek criminal history checks on Stadiums Queensland board members and candidates being considered for appointment to the board, where the relevant person has given written consent for these checks to be undertaken; removing redundant provisions, in particular provisions in relation to the act; and making further minor amendments, including referring to Suncorp Stadium as the Brisbane Stadium.

On that note, I foreshadow that I will be moving amendments in consideration in detail to alter the name of Suncorp Stadium in the act to Lang Park rather than Brisbane Stadium. I think most Queenslanders would return a favourable response when asked about Lang Park being the name for the spiritual home of Rugby League in Queensland. I know that most members in this House who have grown up knowing this stadium as Lang Park and enjoying Rugby League there over the last decades would support this amendment being moved in consideration in detail. If we took a straw poll of Queenslanders I dare say most people would agree with that.

This bill should reflect the common name for the stadium that we all know and love as Lang Park. It is a Queensland icon. 'King Wally' would approve, I am sure, of the stadium outside of which he reigns being renamed the traditional name it has been known by for so many years. That said, I look forward to the remainder of the debate. As I said from the outset, the LNP will not be opposing the bill.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (5.15 pm): I rise today to also make a contribution to the debate on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The objectives of this bill seek to amend the Gaming Machine Act 1991 to adjust the tax methodology to the benefit of clubs that operate more than one premises in order to balance the existing controlled approach to club expansion; the Keno Act 1996 to introduce a new Keno pooling agreement to allow larger interstate pooled jackpots to enable Queensland's solo Keno licensee Keno Queensland to combine, under a pooling agreement, our jackpot growth component with a jackpot growth component offered in other jurisdiction so as to allow a bigger jackpot pool; the Land Act 1994 to provide for the leasing of a functioning non-tidal boundary watercourse to the state under the Land Act; the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to provide an additional alternative process for the declaration of events and event periods at major sports facilities to ensure that all events, despite late scheduling, can be protected from unauthorised advertising by rival businesses that have not contributed to the event; and the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 to facilitate a change in the tolling arrangements for the Logan Motorway and Gateway Motorway to fund the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project.

The amendment would allow the minister to make a tolling declaration solely to facilitate the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. The government had announced that this project, if approved, would be funded through tolling increases for heavy vehicles and a toll point for all vehicles on new south-facing ramps at Compton Road.

I will go into a bit of detail on a few of the proposed amendments. I turn to the amendments to the Gaming Machine Act. As at the end of July 2016 there were 456 clubs in Queensland and 771 hotels licensed for gaming machine activities. Under the Gaming Machine Act Queensland clubs, unlike hotels, are limited to holding a single gaming machine licence. Currently only a very small number of clubs operate from more than one premises.

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General advised that the Gaming Machine Act only allows clubs a limited ability to expand within or beyond their locality. Section 312 of the act currently requires that, where clubs operate additional premises, monthly gaming machine revenue from all the club's premises is aggregated before a progressive gaming machine tax is applied.

The bill proposes that section 312 of the Gaming Machine Act be amended to adjust the tax methodology to the benefit of clubs that operate more than one premises in order to address the decline in the number of licensed club venues in Queensland. The amendments would remove the aggregation of the gaming machine revenue, thus requiring clubs to be taxed on a per premises rather than a per licence basis. This is intended to remove the current tax disincentives to the controlled expansion of clubs. Our committee received one submission—a submission from Clubs Queensland—on the proposed amendments to the Gaming Machine Act. This submission made on behalf of 1,100 community clubs was in support of the amendments.

I turn now to the proposed amendments to the Keno Act. As I said before, these amendments will simply allow us to pool our jackpots with other jurisdictions to allow for a bigger jackpot pool. The explanatory notes advised that the odds for jackpot Keno games across all participating jurisdictions will be the same, that equal percentage from all sales in all participating jurisdictions will be contributed to the pool and that the cost of game entry will be the same for all jurisdictions. The committee received three submissions on these proposed amendments, those being from Clubs Queensland, the Queensland Hotels Association and Tabcorp. All three submissions supported the proposed amendments.

I turn now to the proposed amendments to the Land Act. This was the only area where we had some not contention but a great deal of interest during our public briefing. As I stated before, the bill proposes that chapter 1 of the Land Act be amended to enable the state to grant tenure over non-tidal watercourses and lakes. The explanatory notes advised that, under the amendments, the state would apply for a lease over a functioning non-tidal boundary watercourse or lake where occupation and use of the watercourse or lake cannot be authorised under the Water Act; that a lease will be sought where it is proposed to build infrastructure over or under the beds and banks of the watercourse or lake; that the occupation and use of the lease will 'benefit the local community'; and that the state may sublease the lease to another party to give effect to the purpose of the lease.

During our public briefing we spent a considerable amount of time trying to find out why this amendment would be necessary and asked for any examples. The department took our questions on notice and provided us with the following response. The Department of Natural Resources and Mines advised—

It is a fairly limited set of circumstances where a party would require tenure over a part of a watercourse or lake that forms their property boundary. We do not envisage these provisions will be applied all that frequently ... the Land Act has been in place since 1994, so some 22 years, and this circumstance has not arisen with any great degree of frequency. It does address an anomaly where the state is not currently able to give a party tenure over part of that watercourse and that may well be required if they were to seek to build some structure over part of a watercourse.

We still at that stage had no idea what they were referring to. Then they gave us some examples that made it all make sense. Examples of where infrastructure has been built in the airspace over roads and railway lines include the viaduct over Burnett Lane in Brisbane City, the Brisbane Cricket Ground and, as mentioned before, the establishment of a new training field by the Brisbane Broncos on government owned land at Fulcher Road, Red Hill. Due to the size and configuration of the site, a small portion of the playing field will project above the boundary of Ithaca Creek. A lease over the portion of the training field to be constructed within the bed and banks of Ithaca Creek will ensure the Broncos have legal tenure over the infrastructure it delivers and to provide consistent lease management arrangements for the state across the entire site—no-one could deny them that. The committee received no submissions relating to the amendments proposed to the Land Act.

I will leave the other two amendments. However, I will touch on clause 18 of the bill which proposes to insert new sections 17A, 17B and 17C into part 3, division 3 of the Major Sports Facilities Act which relate to the Stadiums Queensland board members and candidates being considered for appointment to the board. Proposed section 17C(1) applies to a person who is already a director and who is convicted of an indictable offence during the term of the member's appointment. By way of proposed section 17C(2), the person must immediately give notice of the conviction to the chief executive unless the person has a reasonable excuse. There was an anomaly there where they were not able to have the protection and safeguards, so the committee recommended that the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 be amended to provide safeguards to protect information provided under proposed section 17C regarding a board member's conviction for an indictable offence.

The other recommendation of the committee was that the bill be passed. I would like to thank the members for Logan, Murrumba, Southport, Redlands and Whitsunday for their work on this report and, as always, I would also like to thank our hardworking secretariat staff—Kate, Rachele, Julie and Lisa—for skilfully assisting us through this process. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (5.23 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 and I wish to direct my comments to the amendment to the Gaming Machine Act 1991, which will provide a form of tax relief for some, not all, community clubs who make an important contribution to our community. As has already been highlighted, the LNP will be supporting this bill and this particular aspect of the bill.

Currently, arrangements under the Gaming Machine Act require that, where clubs operate additional premises, monthly gaming revenue is aggregated, or combined, before the progressive tax rate is applied. The way the system operates is that there is a tax-free threshold of \$9,500—and, above that, the tax rate increases in brackets progressively from 17.91 per cent to 35 per cent. The more gaming machine revenue the higher the tax bracket. The changes before the House will mean that these venues are taxed on a per premises basis, instead of a per licence basis. The current aggregation that applies would be removed.

Of course, in considering whether to support this bill there were a few factors that needed to be properly considered. What impact would this have on the amount of revenue the state receives from gaming taxes? There will be an impact. This point was explored during the Transportation and Utilities Committee's consideration of this bill. According to Queensland Treasury estimates, these changes will result in foregone revenue to the government of \$2.5 million, increasing to \$2.9 million in future years—so there is a small loss of revenue. That loss of revenue has to be weighed up against the more than \$700 million in gaming machine taxes the state will receive in 2016-17, according to the state budget projections. It represents less than half a per cent of total gaming machine revenue.

We also have to consider the benefits of such a change. Clearly, when looking at the evidence from Clubs Queensland, this change will provide two positive changes for the clubs industry. Firstly, it will make it more attractive for other clubs to assist smaller clubs at risk of closing their doors. This may allow clubs who might otherwise have to close their doors to remain open. Secondly, it will promote the

future development of community clubs in greenfield sites, creating further jobs. I know that these points have been made by other members before me and will be made by those who follow. It is important that we do what we can to support community clubs, because community clubs do make significant investments back into their community. That is why the LNP will be supporting this particular change, because we recognise the important contribution community clubs make to Queensland.

Of course we do not want these changes to allow for the creation of super clubs, whereby larger clubs swoop in on smaller clubs and use a change like this offset gaming machine revenue taxes through so-called income splitting. However, that danger is offset by maintaining the maximum number of gaming machines that can be operated through a single licence. The proposed amendments will also not result in any more gaming machines being available to clubs. The statewide cap will remain. There will also be no change to the gambling harm minimisation framework, including other existing controls on club expansion.

After careful consideration of these particular changes, the LNP opposition has formed the view that this particular amendment is a positive one that enables our community clubs to thrive and prosper into the future. I am sure the vast majority of members in this place have community clubs in their electorate. The LNP is a supporter of community clubs. That is why we will be supporting this change.

The other thing I note in conclusion is the sensible and welcome amendment proposed by the member for Beaudesert in his inaugural legislation as shadow minister—a move to resurrect the name 'Lang Park'. We all grew up in Queensland hearing that name. To see it brought back at least in legislation before the Queensland parliament I think is a fine move by the shadow minister, a welcome move.

Opposition member: Inspired.

Mr EMERSON: An inspired move. I know that it will be a team effort inspired by many on our side to make this change. While we accept and understand that the name of Lang Park may be different in terms of the stadium, at least we will see Lang Park brought back into legislation before the Queensland parliament by this amendment. I do urge the Labor members here to back this sensible amendment bill by the member for Beaudesert to resurrect the name 'Lang Park'.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (5.29 pm): I also rise to speak in favour of the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. There are many parts of this bill, but there are three specific parts that I want to address. We have heard a bit about the first part of the bill that I want to talk about, and that is the amendment to chapter 1 of the Land Act to enable the state to grant tenure over non-tidal watercourses and lakes—water bodies where the cadastral boundary is the banks.

Under this bill, a lot can be created and leased over a non-tidal watercourse or non-tidal lake. This means that, if a local authority wants to put a jetty or a landing over a lake or a creek perhaps as part of a park redevelopment or a structure that could be used as part of a restaurant or a wedding venue, they can do that. The state would hold that lease and then they can sublease it to another party. This is about making it easier for communities to provide community infrastructure, to provide something over a lake or creek, something that helps build local tourism, making local communities more attractive to locals and visitors. It is something that allows local communities to really enjoy their local water bodies. This provision can be used if the local project does not involve tidal waters, does not interfere with the watercourse or involve the taking of water, and has consent from neighbouring properties. This is a small part of the bill, but it can have a really beneficial impact on Queensland communities which want to use the full potential of their natural environment as they build up visitors and tourists.

Another part of this bill I want to talk about is that which will help us deliver the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. As we have heard, Transurban Queensland is preparing a market-led proposal, the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. If approved, this project will improve sections of the Logan Motorway and Gateway Motorway extension, the Mount Lindesay Highway and Wembley Road interchange. I am sure the member for Logan will talk about this, but this is a project that will support about 1,300 jobs and have more than \$1.2 billion in economic benefit.

To get the funds for this project, we need to amend the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994. The Minister for Main Roads needs to be able to declare a toll on a section of the Gateway and Logan motorways. There would be an increase in tolls for heavy vehicles and new tolls on south-facing ramps at Compton Road. The toll declaration would be limited to the scope of this project. As we can see by the papers attached to this, the RACQ and the Queensland Trucking Association are on board with this.

This is about providing the infrastructure we need in our most rapidly growing urban areas. We need this bill to get up a project that will ease traffic, ease congestion and improve the lifestyles for Queenslanders who reside in the outer urban areas beyond Brisbane—people such as those in my electorate. It is making sure that freight shipped by road has an easier flow between the producer and the market. This is a big and crucial piece of infrastructure, and we need this bill passed to make sure it can happen.

The third and last part of the bill I want to touch on—one of the most welcome parts of this bill—is how it helps community clubs in Queensland. We heard some disturbing facts in the hearings on this bill; namely, 69 community clubs have closed in Queensland since 2011. Two of those were in my home community: the Deception Bay Bowls Club and the Deception Bay Sports Club. We heard the member for Indooroopilly mention that there was some concern initially that this may allow superclubs to come in. From working with the Deception Bay Sports Club and Deception Bay Bowls Club, I can say that they really wanted the assistance of those large clubs. They wanted someone to come in who could handle their payroll, who could handle all the HR issues and who could help with stock management. Once a club gets gaming machines, it is a whole different ball game and they do need assistance. Some members of the sports club were very dear people to me, but they need assistance to manage what is a multimillion dollar organisation, and that is where those large clubs can come in and help out. If this amendment was passed earlier, perhaps it would have been able to help save those two local clubs in my area.

There are very few new clubs opening up in Queensland, especially in outer urban areas of Brisbane where land is really expensive. This bill will give clubs a better financial capacity to help look after those smaller clubs which are struggling and establish new clubs in those expanding areas. This bill removes the taxation disincentive for clubs with multiple premises. Currently, clubs operating multiple premises under a single gaming licence have their wins aggregated before the relevant tax is applied. Essentially they are paying more tax because their machines are treated as being in one premise or one group, but a major hospitality company has the ability to have all of its different premises treated as separate venues. For example, it might have 100 machines, but if they have five venues they could be taxed at the rate for only 20 machines for each of those venues. Clubs with more than one premises cannot do that.

What this very welcome bill does is even up the field. I want to pay tribute to the member for Morayfield, because he has been a fierce advocate of this initiative. I think it will be a great feather in the cap of his community and ours when it is passed. This initiative will not have a big impact on the state. There are only 21 clubs with additional gaming machine premises. That is only 4.8 per cent of clubs licensed under the Gaming Machine Act, but it will have a big impact in my community. It will allow the Caboolture Sports Club to better finance its new project, the North Lakes Sports Club, which I have talked about in this chamber before. This is a \$25 million project providing hundreds of local jobs and it is opening early next year. Without it, this major regional hub of North Lakes would not have a major community owned venue which the community can call its own.

While we see that the state will lose \$2.5 million to \$2.9 million a year, there will be an increasing amount of payroll tax generated by the hundreds of new jobs generated by this new initiative. This bill will have a beneficial impact in Queensland and in Murrumba, and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.36 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I want to start my contribution by focusing on the objectives of the bill which amend the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994. My understanding, as the explanatory notes outline, is that this amendment is to facilitate a change to the tolling arrangements for the Logan Motorway and Gateway Motorway to fund the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. The amendment will allow the minister to make a tolling declaration solely to facilitate the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. As has been announced by the government, if approved, this project would be funded through toll increases for heavy vehicles and a new toll point for all vehicles on south-facing ramps at Compton Road. As other speakers have already mentioned, there is significant support primarily from the RACQ but also from the various trucking associations for this proposed work. The amendment is largely an administrative change that reflects the scope of when a road is allowed to be considered a toll road. For that reason, I, as the shadow minister in the LNP, will be supporting the change.

I want to briefly touch on two other amendments. As the speaker before me has mentioned, the changes to the Gaming Machine Act will adjust the tax methodology to the benefit of clubs that operate more than one premises in order to balance the existing controlled approach to club expansions. I am no fan of gambling. I am certainly no fan of poker machines. I, like many families, have personally

experienced the devastating impact they can have on the social fabric and on the financial wellbeing of family members. However, I also get to witness firsthand, as the local member for the seat of Glass House, the incredible work that clubs like the Caboolture Sports Club does in our community.

It was not that long ago that I stood alongside the Caboolture Sports Club at the Dances Road softball diamond switching on the new lights for that diamond. I know the Caboolture Sports Club has done any number of investments in our various sporting and community groups throughout that region. Having had discussions with the management of the Caboolture Sports Club, I certainly see the benefits that this will allow. There are a number of other struggling clubs around the area which potentially the Caboolture Sports Club could step in and assist given this change. As long as the effects of dealing with the problem gambling aspects that I mentioned continue to be addressed partly by the clubs themselves and partly by the government, then I can see a benefit in supporting this amendment this evening.

My last comment is simply to support the amendment to be moved by the member for Beaudesert, the shadow minister. I have to confess to my colleagues—and I would like to say ‘for my sins’, but it really had nothing to do with me—that I had the misfortune of spending my childhood and much of my early teenage years growing up just north of Parramatta in Sydney.

Mr Costigan: And you’re still getting counselling.

Mr POWELL: I am still getting counselling; I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. I do recall as a young child and a very impressionable teenager the fear that the term ‘Lang Park’ instilled in the many Cockroach supporters down there in Sydney at the time. It still does. I think we should take any opportunity we have here in Queensland to ram that down any supporter of the New South Wales Rugby League team or any other sporting code that uses that facility. My family and I are keen fans of the round ball game and we are big fans of Brisbane Roar, and I also want a similar fear to be instilled in any visiting team that comes to Lang Park. I want them to fear those two words—‘Lang Park’. I therefore put my wholehearted support behind the amendment to be moved by the shadow minister. With those comments, I support the bill.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.41 pm): I too rise to support the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I would like to echo many of the sentiments that have been expressed already in what is generally a very non-contentious bill before the House this evening. From the get-go, I would like to particularly warmly welcome the Lang Park amendment, as foreshadowed by my good friend the member for Beaudesert and shadow minister. I congratulate him in particular for what is, from a personal point of view, a significant milestone here in the chamber tonight.

Mr Cripps: Very sensible.

Mr COSTIGAN: It is a very sensible amendment, and I take the interjection from my fellow North Queenslanders the member for Hinchinbrook and I will come to some of the reasons behind that.

I want to particularly acknowledge Tabcorp, Clubs Queensland and the QHA for providing submissions. It has been noted that we were very light on submissions. As a member of the Transportation and Utilities Committee, I can say, as I am sure my colleagues around the table would agree, that the fact we only had those submissions says a lot about what we are debating here tonight. I am not going to hold court for too long because I think these reforms are sensible.

I want to acknowledge the work of our clubs right across the length and breadth of Queensland and certainly in my own electorate of Whitsunday, including the Magpies Sporting Club in Glenella. I am a proud member of the Magpies Sporting Club. In fact we have the Magpie of the Year awards coming up later this month, involving former Origin greats Billy Moore, Robbie O’Davis and Gary Larson. They are three great legends. Gary Larson was a record-breaking player back in his day. He is from Miram Vale, where he has a field named after him. He is part of a select group of Origin greats who have a field named after them. I see the member for Hinchinbrook nodding, and he will straight away point to Billy ‘The Kid’ Slater, another player who has a field named after him.

Magpies is a great club in my electorate. It is certainly the biggest and, I dare say, the best club in my electorate. It has been CQ club of the year four times in seven years. It has an annual wages bill of \$4 million. The taxes are \$4 million, putting \$1.1 million into the community and local businesses to the tune of \$1.5 million. There are 12,000 members. I am so proud to be one of those members, and clearly I am not alone. It has been a great success story. It is back under community ownership now, with 2,500 sports participants. It gave me great pleasure not so long ago to be alongside former Origin great and Magpies hometown hero Steve Jackson to present some of the awards to our junior Rugby League players. It has been a great nursery. I salute Jacko on taking his juniors down to the NRL grand

final earlier this month. I caught up with the kids at Mackay Airport when they arrived back in the north. They had a great time catching up with the Melbourne Storm at a closed training session. The media were shut out but not the Magpies juniors. I salute Lee Skerman and the Magpies club for what they have achieved in doing great things for our community. I also look forward to the Magpie of the Year celebration coming up later this month.

I also salute Doug Dalley and the team at the Northern Beaches Bowls Club and the crew at the Whitsunday Sailing Club who always put on a great event. If members are ever in Airlie Beach during Race Week, make sure to go to the Whitsunday Sailing Club because it is a hive of activity, as it was this year. It is an event that has come a long way since Don Algie of Hog's Breath Cafe fame fired it up many, many moons ago.

However, it has not always been a great story for the clubs in my electorate. I want to draw the attention of members to the amendments to the Gaming Machine Act 1991. The bill amends the Gaming Machine Act to remove taxation disincentives to the controlled expansion of community clubs. These changes are intended to assist clubs in establishing new premises in greenfield areas—as we have already heard—that might otherwise go without sporting, social and other facilities. The changes are also intended to assist clubs—and this is important—in helping smaller struggling clubs that may otherwise fail, thus risking the loss of their facilities to the community.

Since I have been in this place, sadly we have lost a couple of clubs. A couple of years ago, we lost the Proserpine Ex-Services Club. There are a number of members in this place who can relate to that story of their local RSL closing their doors. That is a sad state of affairs. I know it was a sad day for the great sugar milling town of Proserpine the day they closed the doors just up the street from my office. I can still see people like Ian Lade, who served his country, and many others in the veteran community and the wider community shedding a tear the day the Proserpine Ex-Services Club closed its doors for the final time. I remember being in the bar that night. I drove for 1½ hours because I wanted to be back there at the club for that last night of trade. It was a sad occasion.

I would also like to bring to the attention of members of the House that in only the last couple of days we have seen the Northern Suburbs Leagues Club in Beaconsfield in my electorate close their doors. I do not want to be inflaming the government, but in my part of the world we are crying out for economic development and we are crying out for jobs, and people are doing it tough. There are businesses closing their doors, there are kids being ripped out of school and there are clubs like Norths shutting their doors. This is a club that was a great vision of people like Ken Weir, an iconic Mackay plumber from many years ago when the club was Carltons before they changed their name to Norths. They had great success on the field with that name change. Former test prop Royce Ayliffe, who was formerly with Eastern Suburbs, came to the tropics and they delivered success on the field and they got a licensed club up and running in Beaconsfield in my electorate. I might add that that club has been particularly well supported by the Australian South Sea Islander community, and proudly so. I mention the Bobongies, the Tasses, the Penolas, the Sutherlands, the Bickeys and on it goes.

This has been a sad week for those who bleed the red and white of Norths. I say that as a Magpies man—as cross-town rivals. The leagues club is no more. Perhaps this has come a little bit too late for Norths, or the Mackay Devils as they have recently been rebadged. I happen to be the club patron there, so I particularly feel the loss on behalf of club members in what have been difficult times economically in our region and our city.

I have to make the point that Norths is in those high-growth northern suburbs of Mackay in the electorate of Whitsunday. We talk about greenfield sites. They were greenfield; they were old cane paddocks. We do not see the choo-choo trains, the cane trains, crossing the arterial roads in those northern suburbs like we used to when Norths sprung up. Unfortunately, we have seen so many people move out of our northern suburbs. It pains me to see some of the empty homes out at Blacks Beach. I see the member for Mermaid Beach nodding because he has family and loved ones not too far away from there. There are probably members on both sides of the House who know exactly what I mean by this. As I say, this bill will not save Norths, but hopefully in time it will help those struggling smaller clubs that are under pressure and that are feeling the heat.

Before I sign off on this debate tonight I want to come back to what the member for Beaudesert has foreshadowed. This should warm the hearts of Queenslanders from Coolangatta to the cape. It is not a Brisbane stadium; it is a Queensland stadium. There are people here who, regardless of their political persuasion, could join me tonight in waxing lyrical about their first time at the 'cauldron'. I remember mine—14 hours on a bus. I was not someone to wag school, but I had a couple of days off back in 1987 when there were no Brisbane Broncos. It was a scoreless second half and we won 10 points to eight. Hip, hip hooray!

Like many members here, I have had the privilege of going there over the years in the eighties, the nineties and the noughties, if you like. I have had the opportunity and the privilege to call football there—big time football—such as the Winfield state league final from years ago, which was a curtain raiser to the Origin. I remember vacating the box and I think ‘Rabbsy’ came in next. What an honour! ‘All yours, Ray.’ Then in 2008 I called the World Cup final between Australia and New Zealand. We spoke about Billy Slater—perhaps not his finest moment.

Queenslanders from far and wide, from the big smoke to the bush, love the old Lang Park, so I support warmly the Lang Park amendment, particularly on a day like today. For the benefit of members tonight, I say that today a man who won two premierships at Lang Park as it was called—not Suncorp Stadium, and I say that with the greatest respect to the naming rights sponsor. Today in Townsville at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church the North Queensland Rugby League community came to farewell the late Terry Butler. At 58 years of age, a former Origin great, FOG No. 39, won two premierships at the ‘cauldron’ with Wynnum Manly and was laid to rest today. He was farewelled by the likes of fellow former Origin greats Gene Miles and Colin Scott. It was a sad day for the Rugby League community. I am sure if Terry Butler was looking down on us tonight, along with other former Origin greats who have passed on such as the late Peter Jackson; the ‘angry ant’, Ross Henrick; and of course we could look no further than the legendary Arthur Beetson, they would be expecting us in this chamber tonight to say, ‘You know what? That bloke from Beaudesert has got it right.’ I support his amendment and I support the bill.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (5.52 pm): I am pleased to support this bill, which has particular relevance to the community I represent. Suncorp Stadium in my electorate is Queensland’s best sport and entertainment venue. It may even be the world’s best venue. Last year, 1.3 million people attended more than 50 events hosted at Suncorp, contributing valuable dollars to the Queensland economy. On average, 1,400 people, from security to catering, work to deliver an event. Last year, 1.3 million beers were drunk at Suncorp Stadium at these events.

Embedded in the stadium is the Lang Park PCYC, which has a long and proud history of serving young people in our community. They run an awesome program for preschool kids. I should know as it is well loved by my three children, Sam, Aidan and now Bridie. Let me take this chance to thank the PCYC committee for their hard work and ongoing efforts.

The community I am proud to represent is pleased to host the Brisbane Roar, Queensland Reds, Brisbane Broncos, the mighty Queensland Maroons, the Wallabies and the Kangaroos every year, as well as an increasing number of international music acts like Taylor Swift, Coldplay and Justin Bieber. While some events can be scheduled months in advance, others need to be organised quickly. For example, at the end of the NRL season if the Broncos make the finals, Alan, Greg, Jessica and the team at Suncorp could have less than a week to organise an event. The only thing better than watching the Broncos play a final is watching them do it at Suncorp Stadium. I am sure even those opposite could agree with me on that.

The bill we are discussing today amends the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to ensure its provisions can apply even when events are organised at short notice. Of course, tens of thousands of people surging into a suburb has an unavoidable community impact. While we discuss this bill, I want to acknowledge the efforts of the Stadium Management Advisory Committee who work hard to make sure those impacts are minimised. Since being elected I have worked with the Paddington traders and local residents to address their concerns. Many of those relate to the parking restrictions administered by the Brisbane City Council, and I continue to support local businesses in seeking changes to the parking arrangements to ensure their business continuity. I want to thank Bill Concannon from Mary Ryan’s Bookshop, Lynne Brown from the Inner West Chamber of Commerce, Anne Boccabella, Liza Devlin, Sarosh Mehta and the Petrie Terrace Residents Association for working with me to ensure that council addresses those concerns.

Today we welcome another fantastic business to Caxton Street, the GreenHill Bar. Unfortunately, the parliamentary schedule has precluded me from attending the opening tonight. However, I would like to congratulate and welcome Geordie and the GreenHill Bar team. In keeping with the historic nature of Caxton Street, the GreenHill Bar takes its name from the infamous Green Hills jail that housed Brisbane’s most wanted in the 1800s. I would encourage all members to stop in there or at one of our other great bars and restaurants next time they head to an event at Suncorp.

As I mentioned, one of the regular hirers of the stadium is a local footy club in my electorate, the Brisbane Broncos. This bill also makes amendments to the Land Act 1994, which will support the development of the new Broncos training and community facility at Red Hill. The Broncos do so much in our local community and throughout Queensland. I am pleased they have recommitted to Red Hill as their home. Last week at the end-of-season presentation ball I, along with the education minister, was pleased to recognise the team's achievements this year. While our premiership hopes fell heartbreakingly short, the Broncos's community work is really second to none. Every year, the Broncos team saves lives and changes lives. This year they coached 50,000 children in clinics and in the 20 competitions they organised. They also mentored 700 Indigenous students—young boys and girls—using the power of Rugby League to motivate them to commit to their education.

The Palaszczuk government is especially pleased to partner with the Broncos on their Deadly Choices campaign, a program for which I know the health minister is a strong advocate. Together, we can and will bridge the gap in life expectancy in Indigenous communities, inspiring Indigenous Queenslanders to eat healthier and make healthier lifestyle choices. The partnership between the Broncos and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health is incredibly valuable. Their work with Indigenous Queenslanders made them a finalist for the Premier's Reconciliation Award this year, an award they won last year.

Honourable members can see that the Broncos make a very valuable contribution to our local community. On behalf of our local community I congratulate Paul White, Dennis Watt and the players and staff on their achievements. I am sure I am joined by everyone in the House in wishing outgoing captain Corey Parker all the best in his post-football career.

We are all excited that this time next year the Broncos will have not only the premiership trophy but also a new headquarters to keep it in. This bill facilitates the development of this new headquarters in the heart of Red Hill. While I think the decision of the Newman government to close the Ithaca TAFE was deplorable, I am pleased that this government has ensured that my community will have access to the new training field and many of the facilities of the new headquarters. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.58 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The act has a variety of positive objectives that are for the betterment of Queensland. Firstly, it seeks to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act, which regulates stadiums in Queensland, as we heard so passionately from the member for Mount Coot-tha when speaking about Lang Park, or Suncorp Stadium. Firstly, as I said, this bill will amend that act. We recognise that putting on major sporting events and major entertainment events requires the involvement of sponsors, whether they be naming rights sponsors that provide the bedrock of backing for a particular team or a venue, or smaller sponsors. Naturally, the sponsors want to ensure that their product is presented in the best possible light. They further want to ensure that competitors do not use the occasion of a particular major sporting event to advertise their products or services without undertaking to sponsor the team, the stadium or the event.

The act streamlines the process and ensures that sponsors can invest with confidence in Queensland. One question is whether any motion to attack the naming rights of a particular sponsor in this place would give the same kind of confidence to those who wish to sponsor our major sporting and cultural events and that maybe they will question whether it is a good deal to continue to have those naming rights sponsors. The act streamlines this process and ensures that sponsors can invest with confidence in Queensland.

Debate, on motion of Mr Power, adjourned.

MOTION

West Village Development

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the Premier and the Deputy Premier for their failure to appoint a substitute decision-maker to resolve the widely perceived conflict of interest inherent in the Deputy Premier's call-in of the West Village project.

At a time when the property sector's confidence in the Palaszczuk Labor government has fallen off a cliff, one would have thought that something as simple as appointing an acting minister to oversee a controversial ministerial call-in for a development in South Brisbane to avoid any conflict of interest

issue would be a fairly straightforward and common-sense approach to the issue, but we know who really rules the roost in this government and it is not the member for Inala. The Deputy Premier is calling the shots on this development and on this call-in, and the big question is whether in doing so she is acting for all Queenslanders or in the interests of her electorate.

The easy way out of that dilemma for the Deputy Premier was to take up our suggestion and appoint someone else to make this significant and final determination. The government has completely failed the integrity test when it comes to the development industry, and kowtowing to vested interests and the whole saga around the West Village development reeks of nothing more than a desperate bit of political self-interest by the Deputy Premier. Make no mistake: this call-in is all about the job security of the Deputy Premier in her own backyard and the increasing threat of the Greens from the likes of Councillor Sri. I am just checking the gallery to see if he is here tonight. He was here the other day to make sure that everything went well. I do not think he is here tonight.

It is interesting to see that an event is being hosted this Saturday by the West End Community Association. It is called 'Coffee with Jackie', 9.30 to 10.30 this Saturday at the West End Park Cafe.

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member has been notified that WECA is not the host of that function and he should not mislead parliament.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not a point of order. I call the member for Mansfield.

Ms TRAD: I find it offensive and I ask him to withdraw because it is untrue.

Mr SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has found the comments about her offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

Mr WALKER: Mr Speaker, I do not believe that I have made any comments that relate to her.

Mr SPEAKER: No, the standing orders are that, if a member finds comments which refer to them offensive, they are to be withdrawn.

Mr WALKER: My comments were about the association. They were in no way about the Deputy Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: I think you mentioned the word 'Jackie'. Was that referring to the Deputy Premier?

Mr WALKER: That is correct, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has found those words offensive and asks that they be withdrawn. This is not an opportunity for debate. Member for Mansfield, will you withdraw?

Mr WALKER: I withdraw. I will table this Facebook page screenshot from the West End Development Association which says, 'Coffee with Jackie Trad MP, hosted by the West End Community Association'. This is how it appeared this morning. After some Twitter conversation that Facebook page was changed to, 'Coffee with Jackie Trad MP not officially hosted by WECA'. There seems to have been a change of approach in the meantime, and I will table both of those Facebook pages.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, of an event advertised on Facebook, titled 'Coffee with Jackie Trad MP—Hosted by West End Community Association' [[1866](#)].

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, of an event advertised on Facebook, titled 'Coffee with Jackie Trad MP (not officially hosted by WECA)' [[1867](#)].

It is irrelevant who is hosting it. The point of the matter is that this weekend the Deputy Premier will meet with her constituents to discuss this at a very sensitive stage of the decision-making. Having called this in she is in the decision-making stage, and she is having coffee with WECA which was one of the parties to the court case about which this very decision applies. It speaks volumes of the conflict position in which the Deputy Premier has placed herself, and the community cannot have—cannot have—confidence in her decision-making when these sorts of things are going on. Is she meeting them in her role as local member? Is she meeting them in her role as minister? Will she have coffee with the proponents of the application? Will she have coffee with representatives of the Brisbane City Council and discuss their views? It is simply not acceptable.

There have been interesting comments from the Deputy Premier about a sudden interest in urban renewable in the past few days as the Labor government moves to sell off some of Queensland's assets. It seems that she has come down with a case of urban renewal nimbyism. Urban renewal is apparently a great economic stimulus as long as it is not in the Deputy Premier's backyard. Symptoms of this disease include feeling green with nervous tension over possible election opponents and running

around in a mad panic doing everything you can to pander to extreme left-wing social and economic policy. We know it is all about ideology over and above doing what is right for the people of Queensland. She may have caught the disease from the Minister for Housing and Public Works, who suffered a similar bout over a different project in his own backyard: the Logan Housing Renewal Initiative. The cure for the Deputy Premier's case of urban renewal nimbyism would be to approve this development and let economic development and urban redevelopment occur in West End. Let us see if the Deputy Premier is prepared to take her medicine and do the right thing by the people of her electorate and the broader community by supporting jobs, opportunities and urban renewal in West End. That is what she is claiming to do in other parts of the state, yet in her own backyard she fails to deliver.

The recent comments from the Deputy Premier in relation to land sales in Carseldine, Oxley and other sites as part of Labor's new 'don't call it an asset sale but that's exactly what it is' policy—called Advancing our cities and regions strategy—would be comical if it were not such an important issue. There they talk about incorporating medium- to high-density developments 'where seniors, and knowledge and key workers can live close to transport, health and community services, and higher-value jobs', which is just what the West Village development does. The government's failure to address this conflict is continuing to undermine confidence in the business community in this government, particularly in the property sector, and the Premier and Deputy Premier should be censured accordingly.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (6.07 pm): I stand to oppose the motion put forward today in this House by the member for Mansfield. The claims by those opposite that the Deputy Premier has a conflict of interest in exercising her ministerial powers are completely baseless. As always, the LNP never let the facts get in the way of a good story, and that is all they are after in this instance. The Deputy Premier is the planning minister for the state of Queensland and has both mine and this government's full support in exercising her ministerial call-in powers to reassess and redecide this significant project. Any accusations to the contrary from the member for Mansfield or any member opposite are a disgraceful act of political opportunism and expose a fundamental lack of understanding of the need to get urban renewal projects right for the future of our growing city.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I was able to hear the member for Mansfield. I am having difficulty hearing the member for Bulimba. I call the member for Bulimba.

Ms FARMER: The audacity of the LNP to think that they can speak on behalf of people in the inner city is almost beyond belief. I have sat here night after night listening to those on the other side debate legislation like the vegetation management bill and the nature conservation bill. Those people played to their constituents, the farmers and the graziers—all of whom I am sure are perfectly reasonable people. I am sure they are good people in themselves—at the same time maligning the motives of inner-city people and the right of inner-city people to have views on matters like national parks, tree clearing and the Great Barrier Reef. They called them 'loony lefties' and 'those coffee drinkers from West End'. You cannot tell me that suddenly the LNP is the champion of the inner city and that they really care about what happens in the inner city. I think not! The audacity and arrogance of them to think that people in the inner city are fooled by the crocodile tears the LNP is feigning on their behalf. Let's not even go there—

Mr SPEAKER: I apologise, member for Bulimba. I know you are on a roll, but I again cannot hear you because of the combined noise from the chamber. If members want to make an interjection so that I can hear it and it can be relevant, I would urge you to not all speak at the same time. I call the member for Bulimba.

Ms FARMER: Let us not even think about what they were going to do with planning legislation. The planning legislation that Queenslanders were faced with before this government came to power in 2015 was so skewed that it would have given developers the ability to put a development application over someone's property without their knowledge. That is how much people in the inner city, or anywhere in Queensland, care about planning of any kind whatsoever.

I care deeply about the inner city because that is where I come from, and inner-city people are the people I represent. That is why I am strongly supporting what the Deputy Premier is doing. We all know that the West Village development is a significant urban renewal project for Brisbane. It is imperative that we get planning and urban design for this important site right.

As the member for Bulimba I understand all too well how critical good urban design is in underpinning the sorts of cities people want to live, work and play in. That is why we are undertaking really important projects like the South East Queensland Regional Plan, which will go to the community for consultation before the end of the year. The fact is that by 2041 the population of South-East

Queensland is expected to grow by two million people. We must make sure that developments such as the proposed West Village project benefit the local community as well as deliver the housing and jobs we need to support this population growth.

As the member for an inner-city Brisbane electorate that is experiencing its own changes in accommodating growth, I know that it is crucial that we get applications like the proposed West Village development and the Bulimba Barracks urban renewal site, in the middle of my electorate, right for our future generations. Our inner-city suburbs are in a period of transition, and we must ensure we are doing everything in our power to create welcoming, livable and connected places.

It is clear that the Deputy Premier has called in this development because of its significance as an urban renewal project for Brisbane and because it involves matters of state interest relating to our environment, our economy and the provision of livable communities. She is well within her ministerial rights to utilise her call-in powers to assess the development based on its planning merit. As such, it is clear that there is no conflict of interest in this decision. Good planning is in all of our interests. I am proud to be a member of this government in delivering on that.

(Time expired)

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (6.12 pm): I am very pleased to rise in the chamber to speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Mansfield. The decision to call in the West Village project has hurt confidence and sent the wrong signal to a vital industry that employs hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders. The Deputy Premier, who wants to be Premier, likes to make mention of evidence based research. Let us do just that and look at some material evidence from industry third parties. Housing Industry Association of Queensland Executive Director Warwick Temby said that the combination of policy changes from the state government was hurting the industry at a time when it was 'plateauing'. He said—

It has to be putting jobs and investment at risk.

The UDIA Queensland has also commented on the impact of calling in developments such as the West Village project. The UDIA believes that decisions made to call in the development, including West Village, must ensure any wider impacts to certainty, confidence and investment in Queensland are minimised. It recently stated—

While we have a long standing policy of not advocating for individual developments or developers—in this instance we feel it is important to bring the potential wider consequences of calling in a development to the Queensland Government's ... attention.

I table the document.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 18 August 2016, from the Urban Development Institute of Australia (Queensland), titled 'Impact of calling in development: West Village submission' [[1868](#)].

Another leading industry peak body, the Property Council, also has major concerns with what the Deputy Premier has done. In response to the West Village call-in decision the Queensland Executive Director of the Property Council, Chris Mountford, tellingly said that call-in powers need to be used extremely judiciously by the relevant minister. He said—

From the industry's perspective, they should be considered an avenue of last resort, to be used when a stalemate or roadblock is preventing a council and developer reaching agreement. This is not the case in this instance.

Small business is also being spooked by changes. The Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland believes that a string of antibusiness decisions from the state government is hurting investment and jobs. Recently the CCIQ director of advocacy, Nick Behrens, said that the government could not ignore this mounting concern from the business community. Recent examples cited by the CCIQ include the calling in of Cedar Woods, Mount Emerald Wind Farm, Clare Solar Farm and Pacific View Estate.

As we have already heard today, the recent Property Council survey shows that confidence in the property and construction industry has been in decline since the election of the Palaszczuk government. Today's ANZ-Property Council survey serves as a stark warning to government. Its decisions are undermining industry confidence. The Property Council of Queensland Executive Director, Chris Mountford, said—

To continue to attract investment in job-creating Queensland projects, the local property industry needs confidence.

The latest ANZ-Property Council survey confirms that the Palaszczuk Labor government is taking Queensland backwards. The survey also shows that there is a negative expectation of economic growth for the coming quarter. This is further proof of the Palaszczuk Labor government's short-sighted decisions, which are sapping confidence in Queensland.

Sovereign risk is also a very real issue in this debate. Under Anna 1.0, former premier Anna Bligh, the Fraser Institute Survey of Mining Companies highlighted Queensland's sovereign risk back in the lead-up to the 2012 election. Now under the Premier, Anna 2.0, and her extremely loyal Deputy Premier, the member for South Brisbane, we have the perception of sovereign risk in another sector. Queensland is increasingly being seen as a risky investment decision.

The Labor government has broken an election promise and slapped a new investment tax on the property industry. The Deputy Premier says that she is in favour of urban renewal—as long as it is not in her own backyard, as she desperately needs to appease the Greens. This decision was not made in the best interests of Queensland; it was made in the best interests of the Deputy Premier's election prospects, in a bid to court Greens preferences. At the 2015 election the member for South Brisbane attracted a primary vote of 42.7 per cent but received 91 per cent of Greens preferences from—guess who?—the new Brisbane City Council Greens councillor Jonathan Sri, who, as has been said earlier, recently popped into the gallery to observe the watermelon alliance with the member for South Brisbane. This is all about Greens preferences. This is not transparent. The Deputy Premier has a material interest. She should remove herself.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (6.17 pm): I think it is so hypocritical that those opposite are happy to use call-in powers when they are in government but now that we are in government apparently it is not okay. The member for Chatsworth talked about jobs, investment and confidence in the construction industry, but the member for Chatsworth was obviously not listening this morning when the Deputy Premier spoke about the increase in building approvals in Queensland and the cost of building works in Queensland. That is evidence that the job creation and building investment policies of the Palaszczuk government are working.

There is no question of a conflict of interest here. It is very important to understand the legislative framework we are operating within. Let us be clear: the Deputy Premier is the Minister for Planning and is well within her rights to utilise longstanding ministerial powers that are established by Queensland's planning system. The call-in power is a reserve power that is limited to matters of state interest as defined by the Sustainable Planning Act 2009.

There is no doubt that this 2.6-hectare inner-city site is a significant urban renewal opportunity for the city of Brisbane and that the scale of the proposed development gives rise to a clear state interest. In making this decision the Deputy Premier has acted on clear departmental advice. These state interests are outlined in the call-in notice issued on 14 September 2016 and they relate to our economy, the environment, the South East Queensland Regional Plan, the provision of livable communities and housing supply and diversity.

As a town-planner, I am fortunate to have an understanding of how the planning system actually works. In this context I want to make clear that it is by no means unusual for the call-in power to be contemplated in relation to proposals of this nature. The Deputy Premier has only called in three applications to date, with a current consideration also underway of a proposed call-in regarding flood mitigation works in Roma. In contrast, the member for Callide called in eight applications during his time as planning minister and the sky did not fall in from those call-ins. In particular, let us not forget that the member for Callide called in the Jewel development on the Gold Coast. If we compare West Village to Jewel, we can see many similarities, including both being mixed-use developments that had been approved by the council and subject to a submitter appeal in the courts. Given their demonstrated history in relation to call-ins, their assertion that the Deputy Premier's decision to call in the West Village development is based on political motivation and not due to the significant state interests at play is baseless and goes against their very own practice when in government.

Contrary to their claims, what we know here is that there are significant state interests involved in the proposed West Village development and, as a planner, it is clear to me that the Deputy Premier's decisions relating to past call-ins have been based on planning merit and not on any political motivations, as those opposite are attempting to portray. If we want to talk about conflicts of interest, we should talk about the member for Surfers Paradise when he was education minister bargaining with local constituents on critical local education infrastructure just to shore up votes in the lead-up to the election. As the Premier has previously said, the legal advice received by the government is clear.

There is no conflict of interest and I support this view. To entertain the LNP's unfounded claims about any conflict of interest here is to waste the time of this parliament. It is time for the agency to get on with its technical review of the development to make sure we get the best outcome for this important urban renewal site for the city of Brisbane. I oppose the motion moved and reiterate my continued support for the Deputy Premier in her important role as the Minister for Planning.

Mr SPEAKER: I now call the—

Ms Trad: 'Senator' Emerson!



Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (6.21 pm): Thank you. I can tell members: I am not leaving here. I am having so much fun with Curtis, why would I want to leave here? I am enjoying my time with Curtis at the moment. It is fun every day.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members! You will have your chance soon, Deputy Premier.

Mr EMERSON: Why would I want to go anywhere when I can keep playing with Curtis? It is fun every day, but this is a concern. Is it any wonder why confidence in Queensland is in the 'pitts' under Labor? Is it any wonder that this is seen as the worst government in Australia? This negative view continues to worsen with every passing day, and the member for Sandgate understands this because the Leader of Government Business used to work in the property sector. He knows what it is telling him—that it has no confidence in this government. He knows what his old colleagues say about Labor. He knows.

This is a government that changes its position from day to day. It says one thing in Brisbane—where seats like South Brisbane and Mount Coot-tha are aligned on Greens preferences—and it says exactly the opposite in regional Queensland. In Brisbane it says it is against the resources industry while in places like Townsville it tries to position itself as the industry's biggest champion. Before the election it said it would not sell assets. It gave a solemn promise to the people of Queensland and it shattered that promise. The Deputy Premier says that she is in favour of urban renewal—just as long as it is not in her electorate. As long as it is not in her electorate she is a great supporter. How could anyone trust the member for South Brisbane with an important decision like this? I wonder if the Deputy Premier will allow supporters of this project the same opportunity to come and have coffee with her at the weekend. I am sure the invitation has already gone out and we will see the tweets and the social media this weekend—her having meetings with the Brisbane City Council and with the developers just like she did with the opponents of this project. That is what we will see. If she was so willing to go with the opponents, why is she not going with the proponents?

As has been previously highlighted, the Deputy Premier is conflicted. The decision to call this project in was an entirely political one. That is why the final decision should be taken out of her hands. It was extraordinary to see that the only defence from the member for Bulimba was to claim that this is some sort of urban versus regional debate. That is what she claimed. That is the only thing she could talk about, but the reality is that this is an issue of whether it is right or it is wrong—not whether it is urban or regional but whether this is a right or wrong move. We think it is the wrong thing to have the Deputy Premier overseeing this decision. It is the wrong decision.

This decision is hurting the Queensland economy. Earlier today we saw the Deputy Premier doing her best to spin some figures, and we heard the member for Keppel mention those figures. Earlier this morning she spoke about building activity in Queensland, so let us highlight some of the figures to illustrate the point that the member for Keppel talked about today in terms of how wonderful they were and how Queensland is doing it so well under this Labor government—the worst government in Australia according to the Property Council. In the last quarter the value of residential building work commenced a decline of 15.5 per cent worth more than half a billion dollars. That is going down, to explain it to those opposite—going down, declined 15.5 per cent. These are the figures that the Deputy Premier said were sensational! These are great figures! In the last quarter the value of building work commenced declined 21.2 per cent equal to \$1.2 billion. These are the figures that she applauded. The number of dwelling units commenced went down 15.2 per cent seasonally adjusted.

This morning the Treasurer bragged about an increase in building approvals. What he failed to mention is that last month's increase comes after six consecutive months where building approvals fell. We know that this government is destroying business confidence. We know that this government has damaged the property industry. Today the ANZ Property Council report confirmed that—the biggest fall

of any state across Australia and, in the opinion of the Property Council and in the opinion of the property industry, the worst government in Australia. This Deputy Premier should move away from this decision and give it to someone else. It is the right thing to do.

Hon. JA TRAD (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.26 pm): On 14 September this year I stood in this place and reported to the House my decision to call in the West Village development at West End. The call-in notice, based on rigorous independent and departmental legal advice, is publicly available and clearly articulates that my decision is based on planning grounds, not political grounds. The suggestion by those opposite that being a local MP is a conflict of interest is spurious. Local members vote in this parliament on issues that affect their communities and their electorates, and that is the very essence of the foundation of the Westminster system. It is also normal for ministers to make decisions that impact on their local electorates as long as they are made in line with proper rules and processes, and that is exactly what I have done and what I will continue to do in this case.

I am very pleased to be following the member for Indooroopilly who, when minister for transport and main roads, exercised his powers and made the decision to build a \$10 million cycle bridge on Moggill Road within his own electorate. This was a notoriously dangerous intersection and a case where the member for Indooroopilly should not have to recuse himself from following advice from his department and deciding funding.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms TRAD: I will take that interjection: he may not have stopped this, but he stopped a lot of other projects and he sacked a lot of workers. If those opposite want to talk about what the member for Indooroopilly did—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, that is not an invitation for a shouting match. I cannot even hear interjections.

Ms TRAD: Let us be clear about what is okay and what is not okay and what constitutes a conflict of interest. Let me give members an example. The former deputy premier and member for Callide upgraded three airports within his electorate through the Royalties for the Regions program—a program slammed by the Auditor-General for its lax processes and bias towards LNP electorates. The same deputy premier came into this place in the middle of the night and amended legislation before this House to protect an LNP donor mate. Every single one of those opposite, including the member for Mansfield, voted to change Queensland laws to protect a major LNP donor from prosecution for illegal quarrying. That is a conflict of interest.

What I am doing as planning minister could not be more different. As has been explained before in this House, there are key state interests affected by this proposed development relating to our economy, the environment, the South East Queensland Regional Plan, the provision of liveable communities and housing supply and diversity. In acknowledging the importance of this project and the state interests involved, I received more than 700 representations on the proposed call-in notice. The majority of those representations supported a call-in and believed that the development involved a state interest. I inform those opposite that many from my electorate submitted their support for this project. For those opposite to insinuate that the people in my electorate do not support this project in a homogenous way is incorrect.

I will let the technical agency now do its work, as I should. In forming my decision, I will consider the technical agency's expert, independent advice, as I should. This is in stark contrast to the cowboy politics of those opposite. They made political decisions instead of proper planning decisions when they promised new infrastructure before the last election, but only if the electorates returned LNP state members. Who could forget that? At the time of the election the now Leader of the Opposition, who was then treasurer under Campbell Newman—his right-hand man—said—

What we are planning for here and what we've provided for here is on the basis of those MPs being elected and the government being returned on January 31.

'Whatever we promise to your electorate will be delivered only if you vote for your LNP candidate.' Queenslanders saw through that. The members opposite were not elected. Queenslanders are going to see through this political stunt as well.

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

AYES, 41:

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

NOES, 41:

ALP, 41—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

Pair: Jones, Frecklington.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.

Resolved in the negative.

MINISTERIAL PAPER

Parliamentary Sitting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.37 pm): I table for the information of the House the parliamentary sitting dates for 2017.

Tabled paper: Memorandum, dated 13 October 2016, from the Leader of the House, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, to members of the Queensland parliament, regarding parliamentary sitting dates for 2017 [\[1869\]](#).

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.38 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 1 November 2016.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.38 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Walker, Ms C

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (6.38 pm): Today, I want to pay tribute to an icon in the Indooroopilly electorate—Cecily Walker, who, after 20 years as president of the Indooroopilly Senior Citizens Club, has decided to retire at the wonderful age of 95. Cecily, who was born near Gympie and then moved with her parents to Toowong in the year of the great crash of 1929, made the decision to shift to Indooroopilly in 1971. How lucky Indooroopilly has been that she made that decision. Cecily still lives in Witton Road, fiercely independent, in a house that has seen two floods—in 1974 when the waters got almost to the ceiling and robbed her of almost everything—and in 2011, when the waters lapped at the floor, but she was able to stay there while the bottom level was replaced.

After leaving school at 14 years of age, Cecily became a photographer's colour artist, for all photos back then were hand coloured with oils. When colour film ended that trade, Cecily eventually joined the government education department in administration at the secondary correspondence school before retiring at the age of 65.

After a short rest, Cecily enrolled as a volunteer for the Wesley Hospital Ancillary, keeping very active for many years and even now still attends the meetings and fundraising events. Importantly for the people of my electorate, in 1985 Cecily joined the Indooroopilly Senior Citizens Club and, not being able to sit still, soon became the entertainment director. Cecily still holds that position 28 years later. Cecily also became the bus trip director and, when elected president in 1996, she also become the pianist and birthdays convenor.

Cecily was supposed to be president for only 12 months, but a year later committee members changed the constitution from a maximum of three years as president to unlimited so that Cecily could stay on indefinitely. Cecily organised fancy dress events, bus trips every month and Christmas galas. At Anzac Day events Cecily would play war era songs on the piano and arrange damper for the veterans. For many years before declining health and eyesight, Cecily also played Australian songs for the Australia Day ceremonies to swear in new Australian citizens.

Cecily has had a varied and interesting life and still has a wonderful sense of humour. She has had some hard knocks but has a strong faith and has bounced back and carried on the best she could. Cecily has been on stage all her life—in amateur theatricals, musical productions, numerous choirs—and has been an entertainer at nursing homes and retirement villages.

Cecily says that she has decided to retire as president of the Indooroopilly Senior Citizens because of her failing eyesight. After all, she is 95 and thinks that 20 years as president is a good innings. There is no doubt that Cecily has touched so many people in her life. On behalf of the people of the Indooroopilly electorate, I want to say to Cecily: thank you.

Turnbull Federal Government, Road Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (6.42 pm): I rise to speak at a time when jobs and employment are much needed in North Queensland and Central Queensland, yet we see the Turnbull government dithering and disregarding job opportunities through its inaction. Yet again, I call on the Turnbull federal government to free up funding for vital roads projects in North and Central Queensland. Successful projects under the Northern Australian Roads Program and the entire funded Beef Roads Program are stuck in limbo waiting for the federal government to announce them, deferring much needed jobs in regional Queensland.

Both programs were announced in the Northern Australia White Paper released by the Abbott government on 18 June 2015—16 months ago. In November 2015 the Palaszczuk government provided its submission for the \$600 million NARP program to the federal government. It included 25 initiatives totalling \$590 million requiring federal funding in the order of \$470 million. The Turnbull government made a notional allocation to Queensland in the 2016-17 federal budget for NARP of around \$375 million. That is a lot of money! The Turnbull government has since decided to split the program into two tranches. In announcing the first tranche, the Turnbull government has committed to six of the NARP projects worth \$141 million. These NARP commitments require a state matching contribution of \$35 million, which the Palaszczuk government has committed to. This means approximately \$220 million of federal investment in Queensland Northern Australia roads projects are yet to be announced, holding off a lot of jobs in regional Queensland.

I wrote to the federal minister on 2 August 2016 seeking clarification on when the federal government will announce the remaining successful projects, and I am yet to receive advice back more than two months later. There were three beef roads round tables held between October 2015 and March this year, one each in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The Queensland round table was facilitated by Transport and Main Roads. On 12 April 2016 the federal minister called for NARP submissions by 6 May 2016, allowing some three weeks to complete in the required format in consultation with regional roads and transport groups and industry. On 6 May I wrote back providing the Palaszczuk government's beef roads submission comprising 18 submissions, 27 packages totalling \$123 million. Again the Turnbull made a notional allocation to Queensland in the 2016-17 federal budget for the Beef Roads Program of \$62.5 million, and in my letter to the federal minister on 2 August this year I also asked the federal government for the likely timing of announcing the successful projects under this program. I am yet to receive advice back.

The federal government needs to get on with these roads projects. They are holding up about \$282 million in funding in regional Queensland. We need these jobs now. They ought to stop dithering and get on with it.

Hannah's Chance Butterfly Ball

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (6.44 pm): I recently had the honour of attending the Hannah's Chance Butterfly Ball in support of sarcoma cancer research. Sarcoma is a cancer of the connective or supportive tissue, including bone, cartilage, fat, muscle, blood vessels, and soft tissue. More than 1,000 people in Australia are diagnosed with sarcoma every year. Since October 2007, Hannah's Chance has been a passionate voice in the fight against sarcoma. The charity has been busy ever since,

planning various events like the Butterfly Ball and surfing competitions to give funds to the Australian Sarcoma Study Group, the ASSG. The ASSG is a clinical research cooperative group established to improve outcomes for sarcoma and related tumours in Australia. On the evening, I spoke with Dr Denise Caruso from the ASSG about the importance of funding to continue research. However, astoundingly, 100 per cent of their funding is raised through groups such as Hannah's Chance as they do not receive any money at all from government funding.

I had the privilege to listen to three amazing young sarcoma survivors, Amy Levings, Jackson Hersee and Renee Downman—three young Queenslanders who, with the world at their feet, took on the fight of their lives and survived. Their stories were absolutely inspiring and without doubt moved everyone at the ball. Surprisingly, almost everyone I spoke with at the ball knew someone who had either lost a battle against sarcoma or had survived it. In Gaven I have also met a number of survivors. I spoke with the 2014 Pride of Australia Medal for Community Spirit recipient, Leigh Webb, whose dedication to raising awareness for sarcoma began in 2002 when her husband, Tony, was diagnosed. Sadly, Tony lost his battle with sarcoma in 2012. In 2010 their son Corey was also diagnosed. However, I am very happy to advise the chamber that Corey triumphed in his battle and that he and his twin brother, Blake, will celebrate their 21st birthday this weekend.

The establishment of Hannah's Chance was the dream of Hannah Ciobo-O'Driscoll, daughter of Australian swimming great Tracey Wickham and Robert Ciobo, and Hannah's husband, Tom O'Driscoll. Hannah fought very bravely against the rare synovial sarcoma for three years until she lost her battle on 2 October 2007 at the young age of 19. I would like to finish by congratulating the event committee, Donika Mehmet, Irene Ciobo, Donnie Ciobo, Leigh Webb and Amanda Williams for their efforts on what was a fantastic night which raised over \$15,000 for the ASSG.

Aunty Mulinjarlie

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.47 pm): I rise today to commemorate the life of Aunty Mulinjarlie, a true local icon of my electorate of South Brisbane. Aunty Mulinjarlie passed away on Saturday morning surrounded by family and loved ones. Aunty Mulinjarlie was a respected elder, friend, mentor and activist in my home of West End. She had a deep-seated commitment to her local community and to her responsibilities as a cultural elder and custodian of the land. Many West End events and meetings began by a moving welcome to country by Aunty and she continued to be involved in these duties right to the end of her life. Just last week she presided over the opening of a new local park on the corner of Thomas Street in West End. A familiar figure on Boundary Street, Aunty was always ready to share a laugh or a story.

Aunty Mulinjarlie was born in Beaudesert, the traditional lands of the Mununjali people. Her mother was a Mununjali and Koomamerri woman and her father a Wongaburra man from Tambourine Mountain. In a short autobiography she recounts an idyllic childhood growing up in Redland Bay and going to school at Victoria Point. Finishing school at 12 years old, she moved to Dutton Park to clean houses for five shillings a week. While she moved around after this, living in Wacol and travelling out to Western Queensland, she loved returning to her family's home in Beaudesert. Later in her life Aunty Mulinjarlie moved to West End where she became an integral part of the local community. Most famously she is credited as the founder of the Kurilpa Derby, a fantastic local event of all things quirky and colourful about West End. The story goes that Aunty Mulinjarlie was sitting in Atomica, one of her favourite cafes in Boundary St, and noticed how many people were going past in wheelchairs or on scooters. The idea for a festival celebrating a life on wheels was born. Over the years the derby has gone from strength to strength, but one thing was always the same: the familiar sight of Aunty Mulinjarlie leading the parade down Boundary Street on her mobility scooter. At the end of this month West End will celebrate its ninth annual Kurilpa Derby day, which I am sure will be a fitting tribute to Aunty Mulinjarlie's legacy.

Aunty Mulinjarlie embodied the spirit and soul of our West End community and she will be dearly missed by all who knew her. I would like to place on the record my sincere condolences to her family and loved ones and wish them well as they undertake their sorry business.

Carseldine, Proposed Development

 **Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (6.50 pm): Last Thursday, we learned that Aspley electorate residents are second-class citizens compared to residents in the Deputy Premier's electorate of South Brisbane. While the Deputy Premier called in a development in her own electorate, Carseldine residents have been presented with a state sanctioned fait accompli proposing an additional 900 dwellings for 3,500

residents and a loss of green space, without any genuine consultation or objection rights whatsoever. Not only has this Labor government committed breathtaking hypocrisy in claiming to be opposed to such asset sales before the last election; locals have been stripped of their normal right of input into development approvals.

Labor governments have form in treating Carseldine residents shoddily with respect to any proposed development on the former QUT campus. The Bligh Labor government sneakily added the site to the Fitzgibbon Urban Development Plan without consulting with local residents. Any proposed development needs community input.

The site has been important to locals for a long time. It was originally a deed of trust for education purposes and, when QUT moved out of the local area, the Labor government moved in to renovate the buildings as a service centre for the Public Service. Locals were lulled into believing that doing so would preserve green space and local amenity.

However, now residents have been told that the site will be flogged off without consultation by a government that simply cannot manage its finances. That is despite an assurance, as recently as December last year, that there were no plans to develop the playing fields in the ensuing two years. This government's renewal plan states that construction will commence in early 2017. Therefore, that assurance in the parliament was not worth the paper it was written on, just as what Annastacia Palaszczuk said about asset sales cannot be trusted. We now know that this government will keep the Public Service government precinct, but from early 2017 construction will commence, adding commercial and retail space along with 900 dwellings for 3,500 people.

What is really disappointing is that the member for Sandgate, whose electorate is metres from this precinct, knows how important the playing fields are to our local sporting groups and how important the green space is not only to residents in Carseldine but also to his own residents in Fitzgibbon. He also knows there will be an impact on local streets that are already impacted by overflow from the Carseldine station park-and-ride and from the government precinct.

Carseldine residents are reasonable people, but what is not reasonable is that they were not consulted on traffic management and other issues before this new decision was made. If the mood in the broader community aligns with the mood of local residents to whom I spoke on Saturday at the Carseldine markets, the community is not happy with the way that they are being treated.

On Wednesday I asked the Premier about selling the Carseldine assets. It appears that she and her government think that they know better than the local community what is best for them. Whatever they are, the views of locals with regard to development should be heard and not dismissed by this unconsultative Labor government.

Positive Mindset Creative Arts Festival; Thorne, Master S; Logan ENT

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (6.53 pm): Yesterday, hundreds of students from 16 schools across Brisbane's south-east, particularly from the cities of Logan and Redlands, descended on the Logan Entertainment Centre, in the electorate of Woodridge, for the second annual Positive Mindset Creative Arts Festival Grand Final. Held during Mental Health Week, the festival focussed on connecting young people and raising awareness about mental health and addiction issues through performance and artwork. The event was hugely successful in showcasing young talent and in opening up a dialogue between young people and their community about mental health and addiction issues. The day was a great success, with students showcasing the best of their creative talents to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

Participating schools included Carmel College, Browns Plains State School, Carinity College, Groves College, Marsden State High School, Mount Warren State Primary School, Ormiston State School, Springwood State High School, Loganlea State High School, Flagstone State Community College, Rochedale State High School, Loganlea State High School, Canterbury College, Chisholm Catholic College and Runcorn State High School. Thanks go to Metro South Hospital and Health Service for organising another fantastic festival.

I would also like to speak about the courage of a young man and his family. Samuel Thorne was a perfectly healthy nine-year-old boy who was struck down by acute myelitis. His immune system effectively attacked his nervous system and has left him a quadriplegic. Sam has been at the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital since late last year. By his side every day have been his mum and dad, Jane and Craig, and his sister, Amelia, who live in Meadowbrook in the City of Logan. Their dedication to and love for their son and brother has kept them going through the past incredibly tough year.

Through it all, Sam has kept his sense of humour, enthusiasm, intellect and cheeky smile. He loves the Brisbane Broncos and his friends and family. Recently, Sam and his dad, Craig, visited me at my ministerial office. It was great to learn that soon Sam will return home. I wish him and his family all the best. I pay tribute to the outstanding care provided to Sam by the Logan Hospital and Lady Cilento Children's Hospital.

Finally, I pay tribute to the staff at the Logan ENT integrated specialist clinic, which is the first of its kind in Australia. This remarkable clinic, led by Dr Bernie Whitfield, has cut ENT long-wait times at Logan Hospital by 90 per cent in just eight months. Some of the outstanding staff who worked to achieve that result are Dr Bernard Whitfield, the director of ENT; Anne Coccetti, the director of speech pathology and audiology, and deputy director of allied health; Marnie Seabrook, advanced speech pathologist; and Sally Shilt, advanced audiologist. I thank all staff at the clinic and at the Logan Hospital for their outstanding work.

Midge Point

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.56 pm): Cyclone season in North Queensland is now less than three weeks away. Tonight I rise to express the frustration, anxiety and concern of residents of Midge Point in my electorate of Whitsunday. In March 2010, Cyclone Ului, a category 3 storm, came through and left a trail of destruction including a lot of erosion on the beach at Midge Point.

What have we seen recently from the Palaszczuk government? We do not tolerate it in our schools, we do not tolerate it in the workplace and we do not tolerate it in the wider community, but it seems that the Palaszczuk Labor government has a free-for-all when it comes to bullying communities. I am talking about the Midge Point Progress Association, its members and other members of the wider community.

What we have seen from the tree-hugging Labor Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection is nothing but disgraceful. His department is threatening senior citizens. Those people have been working their guts out in our community. They are retirees, pensioners and even World War II hero Arthur Dobe, who is in his 90s. The department threatened them with a fine of \$1.7 million unless they rip up the artificial matting that was installed to save their beach and stop local assets and property slipping onto the shores of Repulse Bay. It is disgraceful.

Also disgraceful is the misleading comments by union hack Dolph Lossberg, who told the *Whitsunday Coast Guardian* that credit for the minister coming to see the beach for himself should go to the failed Labor candidate for Dawson, who later became the failed Labor candidate for Whitsunday. Last month I wrote to the minister. This has been a team effort involving political pressure, community pressure and media pressure to get the minister to see sense.

Local people are worried, sick and anxious. Navio Zeglio is a great example of that. It is no secret that Navio has been battling ill health of late. Last week he was in hospital for three days. I have no doubt that the stress from the situation has contributed to him not being so well. Mike Leyland and Colleen Bertwhistle of the progress association have been treated with utter contempt in relation to these matters. This is typical of the green movement, which has the government by the Jatz crackers and people have had a gutful of it.

I can tell members that the Palaszczuk Labor government's cabinet is coming to my electorate in about two weeks time. They can bring in the red army. Bring it on, as I said to the Premier and the Labor frontbench today. I will fight them in the streets. I will fight them in the cane fields. I will fight them everywhere. What will they do? They will promise the world, as they did in Townsville last week. They camped there for a week and came up with more hot air than you see when the balloons are flying over Canberra. It is disgraceful.

If the cabinet comes to town and promises jobs, flood proofing the Bruce Highway across Goorganga, opening up the Urannah Dam and maybe the Galilee Basin, I will be the first to congratulate them. However, I will not be holding my breath, otherwise I will end up in the hyperbaric unit at Townsville Hospital. The Minister for Tourism has made one visit in 20 months. It is a disgrace.

Redcliffe Peninsula Railway Line; Pine Rivers Electorate, University

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.59 pm): Recently I was lucky enough to get a ticket and a ride on the first trip of the new Redcliffe peninsula railway line. It is a testament to the work of people like our Moreton Bay mayor, Allan Sutherland, the Attorney-General and member for Redcliffe—in her current role and previous role as the federal member for Petrie—and successive governments over the

last decade. It is no surprise to hear in this place today just how successful this train corridor is. Our community has been crying out for it for decades. It is a government project that will continue to see communities thrive into the future. My trip terminated at Petrie station.

I would like to advise the House of a great proposal for the next big thing in my community. Petrie was once the home to an Amcor paper mill—a large local employer; in fact, the largest local employer in my electorate. It was a thriving blue-collar manufacturing precinct. This vacant site has been earmarked for a new university—a visionary proposal from our mayor. As I go around my community people are excited about the potential a large infrastructure project such as this will bring. However, after the failure of the QUT Carseldine campus they are sceptical about the viability of an outer suburban university on the north side. What they do have faith in is trade training. My community's high school has a very large participation in trade training through its school years. I myself am a proud recipient of trade training. My community wants to make this project the best it can be. It is my job as their representative to fight for that.

In the lead-up to the federal election, both parties committed to the university project. The federal government committed \$35 million to support a modest Sunshine Coast university campus. Labor, on the other hand, committed just shy of \$100 million which would facilitate both a university campus and a significant vocational education centre for trade and job training. I wish to advise the House that in response to concerns from my community I have commenced a petition campaign on this issue.

I call on the federal government to step up and fully fund the new Petrie campus to ensure that it is a comprehensive education facility for people in my electorate. My community needs it and already thousands have signed on to the campaign to get it. State, local and federal governments are working together to make this project a reality. All levels are bringing funding to the table. A proper commitment from our federal government is vital to the long-term viability of this project in my community. It took over 100 years to get a Redcliffe rail link. I hope that it will not take that long to get a viable education campus on the outer north side.

Broadwater Electorate, Crime Forum

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (7.02 pm): I rise this evening to inform the House of a very successful local crime forum that I held last week with the shadow Attorney-General, the member for Mansfield, Ian Walker. I put on the record my thanks and appreciation to those who took the opportunity to come and share their experiences, their thoughts and their concerns. In particular, I thank Kay, who is a volunteer in policing at Runaway Bay Police Station; Garry, Jean and Colin, who represented the various neighbourhood watch groups in the Broadwater electorate; Ed, who came representing Crime Stoppers; Councillor Cameron Caldwell of division 3 of the Gold Coast City Council; and local police officers Senior Sergeant Murray Underwood, who is the officer in charge of Runaway Bay Police Station, and Inspector Owen Hartz.

It was fantastic for people to have an opportunity to really talk about what it is that concerns them. What we saw is that there were two big issues on the Gold Coast that were raised by my community at this forum. The first issue that was raised was the scourge of ice. This is something that many across Queensland are talking about. Many across Queensland are trying to work out what it is that we can do to stop this scourge in our community because we know that it devastates lives. The people of my electorate were very heartened to hear the shadow Attorney-General speak about the LNP's plan to tackle the scourge of ice so that we can make sure that we get it off the streets, so that we can make sure that we can do in a dealer and, importantly, so that we can make sure that we support those in our community who need our assistance to beat the scourge and beat the battle that is addiction to ice.

The other important issue that was raised by members of my community was the concern about organised crime on the Gold Coast. The message I heard loud and clear from my community is that they are very concerned about criminal motorcycle gangs on the Gold Coast and they are very concerned about any attempt to weaken the regime that we have in this state.

Mrs D'ATH: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. This issue goes directly to a bill that is currently before the House.

Mr SPEAKER: I think it does, member for Broadwater. Can you speak on something else, please.

Miss BARTON: Mr Speaker, I take note of the Attorney-General's point of order. Without going into the content of the bill, I think it is very appropriate in this House that I take this opportunity, as all members do, to put on the record the concerns of my community. I have no doubt that I will continue to do so on a range of issues.

Lastly, I would also like to very much thank The Deli at Paradise Point for hosting us. They put on a fantastic spread. The coffee was fantastic. The sandwiches were fantastic. The cakes were fantastic. It was a pleasure to be able to give the leftovers to Senior Sergeant Murray Underwood to take back to our hardworking men and women in blue at the Runaway Bay Police Station.

Relay for Life

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (7.05 pm): This year marks my 10th year of involvement in Cancer Council research and raising funds for the Cancer Council Queensland through Relay for Life. Not only I but also many of my team members have participated in this event. Many members on this side of the chamber have raised funds for the Cancer Council—the member for Redcliffe, the member for Kallangur and the member for Stretton. I think the member for Pine Rivers has had some involvement in this as well. It shows the dedication of our members to raise money to find a cure for this insidious disease.

This year I was asked to be patron of the Brisbane north Relay for Life team. Unfortunately, the event was postponed as a result of inclement weather. The team comprising Ali and Cam Gibbs, Christine Doolan, Clair Parsons, Laurence, Judi and Will Brown, Ross and Linda Williams, Petrina Zaphir and Simone Fleming were called the Ferry Groovers and they raised in excess of \$6,720. To date, my 10th year, my teams have raised in excess of \$136,000 for Cancer Council research.

One of the processes involved in this no doubt is online donations. I would like to read into the *Hansard* some of those donors: Aaron Harper, member for Thuringowa; Chris Whiting, member for Murrumba; Joe Kelly, member for Greenslopes; Senator Bilyk from Tasmania; Senator Moore from Queensland; Plumbers Union Queensland; Super Retail Group, also known as Supercheap Auto; Terri Irwin from Australia Zoo; Abby and Bill Senior; Alana Williams; Amanda Ronan-Hearn; Arana Tender Cut Meats; Aura Parsons; Bob and Susan McIntosh; Brian Devlin; Bruce and Mel; Bruce Kimball; Dee Thomson; Doug Flockhart; Gillian Mitchell; Hanne Worsoe; Helen Hampton; Kathryn Lewis; Kay Jenner; Kurt Sundholm; Mal Hayden; Patrick Bulman; Renee Williams; Ronni Grevell; and Trevor Walsh. All of those were online donations.

In addition to that, the team went further and conducted an event at the Ferry Grove bowls club and raised \$1,139. I want to put on record my appreciation of Judi Brown for organising that event and collecting the donations. There are too many to cover in the remaining 30 seconds I have tonight, but I will table that document.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Ferry Groovers Fundraiser' [[1870](#)].

I would like to show my appreciation to all of those donors like the Ferry Grove Newsagency, Brisbane Broncos, Taylor's Seafood Ferry Grove, Stefan, Samford Valley Meats, Samford IGA, Sandgate Road Discount Flowers and particularly Noel Stallard, the poet who provided entertainment, and Stan Carr, a local who provided the musical entertainment.

This year I dedicated my contribution in support of a good friend I lost in April, and that was Nabil Karam—a good friend, lost by cancer.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.09 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, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, 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