



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 1 March 2017

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WEDNESDAY, 1 MARCH 2017



The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable P.W. Wellington MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of assent: 27 February 2017

A Bill for An Act to amend the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 for particular purposes

A Bill for An Act to amend the Water Act 2000 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

27 February 2017

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 27 February 2017, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, advising of assent to certain bills on 27 February 2017 [\[297\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member



Hon. WS BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Economic Development) (2.01 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege arising from the introductory speech of the member for Clayfield yesterday. During his speech the member stated that they had offered millers and the Australian Sugar Milling Council mediation twice in the last two weeks and that the mediation was rejected twice in the past two weeks. I have received correspondence from Wilmar and the Australian Sugar Milling Council stating that those offers did not occur. I will be writing to you, Mr Speaker, to ask that you give consideration as to whether the member for Clayfield should be referred to the Ethics Committee for deliberately misleading the House.

PRIVILEGE

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



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 8 December 2016 the member for Bundaberg wrote to me alleging that the member for Burnett deliberately misled the House during his contribution to the debate on the Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill on 1 December 2016. On the information before me, I considered that the member for Burnett has made an adequate explanation and 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: Correspondence from the member for Bundaberg, Ms Leanne Donaldson MP, and the member for Burnett, Mr Stephen Bennett MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an allegation of deliberately misleading the House [\[298\]](#).

I seek leave to have the ruling incorporated in the parliamentary record.

Leave granted.

On 8 December 2016, the Member for Bundaberg wrote to me alleging that the Member for Burnett deliberately misled the House during his contribution to the debate on the Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill on 1 December 2016 when he stated:

I turn to a local issue about the local representation in the electorate of Bundaberg. I refer to a local meeting with the member for Bundaberg in regard to their desire to have local restitutions about this issue—whether it was the 30 operators who stood outside the office, seeking a meeting that was ignored. We have been advised that they posed three questions to the local member. Firstly, 'If you had a million dollars, would you buy a dairy farm?' They received no response to that. Secondly, 'If you had a million dollars, would you invest it in the fishing industry now that you have closed down the area where our local fisherman cast their nets?' That industry is effectively destroyed. She said that she probably would. Really? Thirdly, 'If you had a million dollars, would you invest it in the taxi industry, now that you have sold us out to ridesharing and indirectly deregulated our industry without satisfactory compensation?' The response was that she really did not understand the taxi industry.

In her letter to me, the Member for Bundaberg stated that the Member for Burnett had misled the House by indicating that she had been invited to, but ignored a meeting held by taxi operators, when the event was more accurately described as a rally across the street from her office to which she hadn't been invited.

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

The Member for Burnett disputed the allegation made against him, and advised that his statement was based on information provided by the taxi operators and his observations of the event, that is, that the Member for Bundaberg knew the taxi operators were there and their reason for being there, but did not meet or talk to the group.

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 Burnett has made an adequate explanation and 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.

PRIVILEGE

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



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 19 December 2016 the member for Aspley wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Education, Minister for Tourism and Major Events and member for Ashgrove deliberately misled the parliament in her response to a question without notice. On balance, on the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the matter as raised is technical in nature and that the minister's statement, as it was qualified and based on her understanding of the situation and legislation at the time, was not factually incorrect. 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: Correspondence from the member for Aspley, Ms Tracy Davis MP, and the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Hon. Kate Jones, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an allegation of deliberately misleading the House [\[299\]](#).

I seek leave to have the ruling incorporated in the parliamentary record.

Leave granted.

On 19 December 2016, the Member for Aspley wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Education, Minister for Tourism and Major Events and Member for Ashgrove deliberately misled the Parliament in her response to a Question Without Notice when she stated:

My understanding is that the audits were undertaken by the department of education and that they were released to the ABC under the right to information legislation.

In her letter to me, the Member for Aspley contended that the evidence indicates the report was not released under the RTI Act, but instead informally released, and therefore the Minister's statement was made deliberately to mislead the Assembly.

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

The Minister disputed the allegation made against her, and contended that the Right to Information Act 2009 refers to and considers administrative access as a means to providing information, and that it is the intention of the RTI Act for documents to be proactively released as often as possible.

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, on the one hand, the RTI Act appears to support administrative access to government information by referring to and considering administrative access as a means of providing information, and considering an RTI application as a last resort.

On the other hand, it appears that the administrative access scheme is not a part of the RTI application process, which is evidenced by the fact that the RTI application had to be withdrawn before the information could be provided administratively, and that the report was not listed on the Department of Education and Training's RTI disclosure log.

Critically, the Minister has qualified her statement by stating that it was her understanding at the time that the audits had been released to the ABC under the right to information legislation. There is no evidence to suggest that this was not the Minister's understanding at the relevant time.

On balance, on the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the matter as raised is technical in nature and that as the Minister's statement was qualified as based on her understanding of the situation and legislation at the time, was not factually incorrect.

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.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I am pleased to acknowledge today in our gallery the Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture in the Papua New Guinea government, the Hon. Tobias Kulang MP.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

PETITIONS

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

Bribie Island Road, Bus Stops

Mr Williams, from 81 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently approve the construction of bus stops on both sides of Bribie Island Road, near the Shell service station [\[300\]](#).

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

Twin Waters West, Maroochy River Floodplain

From 2,061 petitioners, requesting the House to refuse a proposed major amendment to the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014 and to remove the Twin Waters West land from the urban footprint during the SEQ Regional Plan to prevent future facilitation of a development on this important part of the Maroochy River floodplain [\[301\]](#) [\[302\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

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

[303](#) Office of the Public Advocate—Annual Report 2015-16

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Economic Development (Hon. Byrne)—

[304](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 34, 55th Parliament—Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016 and Rural and Regional Adjustment (Development Assistance) Amendment Bill 2016, interim government response

MEMBER'S PAPER

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Chatsworth (Mr Minnikin)—

[305](#) Overseas travel report: Report on a visit to London by the member for Chatsworth, Mr Steve Minnikin, to attend the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 11-17 December 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

North Queensland Stadium

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.05 pm): I am pleased to advise the House that the North Queensland stadium project is powering ahead and that North Queensland businesses are lining up enthusiastically to be part of it. Almost 180 North Queensland companies have registered their expressions of interest to work on the stadium. I want to congratulate North Queensland for stepping up for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Northerners now make up 41.6 per cent of the 430 companies registered—a proportion that has slowly but steadily been creeping up. The message is getting through loud and clear: stand up and be part of this project, because my government is committed to providing jobs for Townsville and North Queensland.

In other progress, the three companies for the managing contractor's role now have their tender documents. CPB Contractors, Lendlease Building and Watpac Construction all have offices in Townsville and impressive local industry participation strategies. Tenders close at the end of this month, the successful managing contractor will be appointed by April, and early works are still right on schedule to start in the second half of this year.

This project will eventually create up to 800 jobs, but it is already having an impact on the ground in Townsville. The principal consultant, Cox Architecture, has already brought on board seven businesses with local Townsville offices to help shape the design of this iconic stadium. The design team is working closely with key stakeholders in Townsville including Townsville City Council, the NRL and the North Queensland Cowboys during the concept design stage. This stadium will be a game-changer for the north, and that is why my government has stepped up with \$140 million to make it happen.

Safe Sleeping for Infants

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.07 pm): Today I announced that hundreds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander newborns will be tucked safely into bed, with funding for more safe co-sleeping spaces. I was pleased to join the Minister for Health, Cameron Dick, and the Minister for Child Safety, Shannon Fentiman, along with Professor Jeanine Young from the University of the Sunshine Coast and mums and bubs who have used Pepi-Pods in their homes, to announce funding for this important program. Mothers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will be provided with a Pepi-Pod for their babies to sleep safely in as well as access to a safe sleeping education program in a bid to cut infant deaths.

My government is proud to provide \$100,000 to continue the rollout of a safe sleeping program in Indigenous communities including 600 Pepi-Pods for young mothers aged 15 to 25 years. Safe sleeping arrangements are absolutely vital and provide a starting point to keep babies and young children safe at home. Sudden unexpected death in infancy is one of the leading causes of death amongst infants and in some cases may be preventable with the right education and support.

I am pleased that hundreds of young Indigenous mothers right here in Queensland will be able to use Pepi-Pods in conjunction with education and health support. We know that co-sleeping can increase the risk of SIDS and fatal sleep accidents, especially for babies less than 12 weeks of age. The rates of sudden unexpected death are around four times higher in Indigenous infants than non-Indigenous infants and we know that co-sleeping can be a risk factor associated with sudden unexpected deaths in some circumstances, which is why we are focusing this trial on the delivery of education and support for young women.

An education and awareness program, including antenatal workshops, will be rolled out in conjunction with this program through local community controlled health networks. My government together with Family Matters are working to develop an action plan that lays the platform for our efforts to improve the lives of Indigenous people and ensure that their children are safe, healthy and have the same opportunities as other Queensland children.

New Generation Rollingstock

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (2.09 pm): The \$4.4 billion New Generation Rollingstock project is the largest single investment in trains in Queensland and involves 75 new passenger trains for South-East

Queensland. There are currently 13 NGR trains in Queensland with two more to arrive in March 2017, this month. Three of these trains are currently undergoing on-track testing, which is the final stage of testing before they are commissioned and able to safely carry passengers on our network.

This is a project that we need to get right. These new trains are a critical part of the future of our public transport network, and I am not convinced that this project is on track. There are delays that should not be there and there are defects that should not be there. That is why more than two weeks ago one of my first meetings upon returning to the transport portfolio was with the NGR supplier, Qtectic, and its key contractor, Bombardier. At that meeting, I raised my issues with these companies and expressed the government's concerns about the progress of the project.

To date, the state has only made one \$60 million payment to Qtectic for the completion of the Wulkuraka maintenance centre. Importantly, the government has ensured that no payments are to be made for any of the NGR trains until we are confident they meet all requirements and our standards. I have also written to the consortium to place on hold the delivery of any future NGR trains from India to Queensland. To be clear, we will not pay for the trains or accept the delivery of more trains until our concerns are addressed.

Queenslanders should be very clear about the genesis of this project. This is a project that was delivered by the LNP. The detailed design was undertaken on their watch, under their stewardship. The contract to build these trains was awarded under their watch. In January 2014 it was the member for Clayfield and the member for Indooroopilly who went out crowing about getting these trains for half price from India. They got half-price trains from India. By going overseas, they said they could deliver these trains for less. By going overseas, they said they could get them for half price, but everyone knows that you get what you pay for, and we are now seeing the consequences of the LNP's decision to send work offshore. In contrast—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We have been here for quarter of an hour.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. I can hear you. You will have ample opportunity to question the minister about that later today.

Ms TRAD: In contrast, the Palaszczuk government has shown our confidence in Queensland manufacturing. In Maryborough, Downer EDI have been awarded a share in a \$400 million contract for maintenance work which will support 200 local jobs. This government is determined to fix the trains and I am determined to get the job done. Queenslanders can have confidence that these trains, when they enter service, will be safe and will meet Queensland's high standards. I expect the best and Queenslanders deserve nothing less.

Trade and Investment

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.15 pm): Today we have seen more hard data showing the positive results of the government's economic plan. National account figures released by the ABS show a continuing upturn in Queensland's domestic economy. Growth in state final demand—a key measure of our state's domestic economy—for the December quarter was 0.5 per cent on a trend basis. State final demand does not take into account our trade performance. The figures released today mean we have seen positive growth in state final demand for four consecutive quarters following eight negative quarters. Let me state that again: four consecutive positive quarters following eight negative quarters.

The figures also show that growth in our domestic economy was supported by our major investments in infrastructure—a key part of our economic plan. While state final demand does not take into account our exports and imports, Queensland's economic success and Queensland jobs are linked to our performance in global markets and our ability to attract foreign investment. In fact, one in five Queensland jobs is supported by exports, and boosting trade and investment is a key part of the Palaszczuk government's economic plan.

That is why Trade & Investment Queensland—our global business attraction and export agency—has developed a whole-of-government trade and investment strategy to make Queensland the most innovative and dynamic trading economy in Australia. I thank the Deputy Premier for her

contribution. This is why we have recently opened two new offices for Trade & Investment Queensland in growing markets—in Chengdu in China and in Singapore. That is why we have committed \$25.3 million over five years to support one of our most promising export sectors—international education and training. The most recent export data shows Queensland is performing well, with a record \$52 billion in exports in 2016. That is \$1 billion a week, and it is an increase of 7.9 per cent on 2015.

In addition to developing our own strategy, we need to work with the Australian government to ensure we have the most favourable trade and investment policies in the national interest. Promoting global trade and investment has never been more important than now—with some disappointing commentary about foreign investment and in a time of growing anti-trade sentiment, with some countries retreating into protectionism.

For these reasons, last Friday in Darwin, Commonwealth, state and territory trade ministers met to discuss how we can improve coordination across Australia's trade and investment policy and programs. We discussed a range of topics including: the progress of free trade agreements and the latest global trade outlook; development of a national communications strategy to promote trade and investment; and enabling business to operate in a global environment while maintaining national security. Ministers from the Northern Territory, Western Australia and the Commonwealth joined with me in underlining the importance of developing Northern Australia. I welcomed the decision to hold the next Developing Northern Australia Conference in Cairns later this year.

I reiterated the value of aligning the objectives of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility with other policy imperatives in our regions—like Indigenous employment and enterprise development. We also need to take advantage of opportunities related to defence procurement projects. The Minister for State Development has already provided an update on our prospects with LAND 400. Queensland will work with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to make sure Australia is presenting a consistent and convincing trade message to the world. We will also continue to work hard to attract investment to Queensland and to make sure Queensland exporters, and potential exporters, get the best possible chance to take their products to the global marketplace. That means more jobs and more secure jobs for Queenslanders.

Medicinal Cannabis

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.18 pm): The people of Queensland wanted access to medicinal cannabis for those it might help, and the Palaszczuk government has responded with nation-leading legislation. The Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis) Act 2016 was unanimously supported in this House and is now in effect. These new laws mean a more streamlined approach for medical specialists to prescribe medicinal cannabis. What this means for everyday Queenslanders is that, for those who think they or their children may benefit from medicinal cannabis, there is now a clear, legal pathway to seek access.

Under the new laws, there are now three ways to access medicinal cannabis in Queensland. First, any doctor is able to apply for a medicinal cannabis approval to treat their patient. Second, certain medical specialists—such as neurologists, palliative care specialists and oncologists—can become a patient class prescriber. This means that specialists can fast-track the treatment of patients with certain medical conditions. Third, access can be obtained as part of an approved clinical trial.

Approval through the TGA is still required by the Commonwealth government. However, these new state laws are designed to minimise duplication during the application process. The Palaszczuk government has listened to Queenslanders and has provided a legal pathway for patients to use safe medicinal cannabis. The affordable supply of medicinal cannabis is the Commonwealth government's responsibility. Last week the federal government announced it would allow the bulk importation of certain medicinal cannabis products. While this move by the Commonwealth government goes some way towards addressing supply issues, affordability of the product still remains an issue for many patients.

It has never been the responsibility of state governments to subsidise medicines. The Commonwealth manages and regulates the cost of medicines across Australia. Last week I wrote to federal health minister Greg Hunt asking the Commonwealth to accelerate steps to make sure the product is affordable by placing it on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. The Queensland government is determined to provide safe, effective, efficient health care for all Queenslanders.

Child Protection, Mandatory Reporting

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Commonwealth Games) (2.20 pm): I am pleased to update the House on our efforts to expand child safety mandatory reporting to the early childhood education and care sector. Our new laws require childcare professionals to report to Child Safety if they reasonably suspect a child may be in need of protection. We are strongly committed to supporting early childhood education and care professionals in their role as mandatory reporters and we want to ensure that they are informed and ready. That is why we are working with our over 2,900 approved early childhood education and care services to help them prepare for the 1 July start of mandatory reporting.

We are holding statewide face-to-face information sessions for all staff, we are providing all approved ECEC services with a resources pack to assist them with implementation and we are rolling out online training sessions that will be available from the end of this month. We have had such a big response to information sessions we have had to increase the number of places available. I want to thank the early childhood education and care sector for their commitment to preventing child abuse and neglect and for their overwhelming support throughout the sector.

We want to see serious child protection concerns reported, and early childhood education and care professionals, who play a hands-on role in the day-to-day lives of young children, are well placed to do this and well supported. We will continue to work alongside Child Safety and peak bodies to ensure that the early childhood education and care sector is prepared for the 1 July implementation.

Building Our Regions

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.22 pm): Once again, we have seen councils from Thursday Island to Paroo, from Mount Isa to the Lockyer Valley lining up to partner with the Palaszczuk government to generate jobs and deliver vital community infrastructure through our \$375 million Building our Regions program. This is reinvesting our royalties into regional Queensland in a fair and transparent program. A total of 63 councils have submitted 133 expressions of interest for the \$70 million available under round 3. I will announce the short-listed projects from this round in the next few days and councils will then have to present strong, detailed business cases.

Mr Cripps: There is still money from round 1 that you didn't allocate.

Dr LYNHAM: Building our Regions has so far allocated—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Thank you, members.

Dr LYNHAM: It has allocated money at twice the rate those opposite were throwing it out. Building our Regions has so far allocated \$150 million to 93 critical infrastructure projects supporting 1,300 jobs in regional Queensland. We have deliberately brought forward round 3 by six months to continue to support local jobs, grow local economies and return royalties to regional areas for vital and important community infrastructure.

Mr Seeney: You almost said it. There is still money from round 1.

Dr LYNHAM: They still hate the Auditor-General. The Tambo Sawmill project in the central west is a great example of how Building our Regions is supporting jobs and local economies. Blackhall-Tambo Regional Council bought the disused sawmill, secured a timber allocation and sought expressions of interest for experienced mill operators so it could restart operations and boost the local economy. With more than \$260,000 from Building our Regions, council is upgrading the machinery and equipment and will recommission the mill. The council estimates that the reopened sawmill will support 13 valuable jobs. Honourable members should consider that the community has a population of only 360. One person who has already benefited is an electrical contractor from Mitchell fittingly named Anthony. He won the tender to upgrade the electrical work on the Tambo Sawmill. That gave him three weeks of valuable work for which he drove three hours from Mitchell to Tambo to undertake. Just as importantly, council estimates that the reopened mill has the potential to inject \$1 million a year into that local economy.

I look forward to announcing the next round of successful projects midyear. Building our Regions is all part of this government's commitment to boost jobs and liveability for locals right across our state. We will continue to work hard to deliver upon this commitment for the people of regional Queensland.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.24 pm): In Toowoomba they have helped restore a heritage building; in Townsville they are learning to dream, believe and achieve through a hospitality training program run by the Cowboys football club; and in Ayr they were shown how to build paths, picnic shelters and barbeque areas at Juru Walk Plantation Park. Who are these people? They are our Skilling Queenslanders for Work participants. These are just some of the thousands of people across this vast state who have jumped at the chance to learn new skills and find jobs through the Palaszczuk government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative.

A total of 8,921 Queenslanders have now exited the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative. Of those, 5,700 now have jobs. Let me repeat that: 5,700 now have jobs. Another 1,391 have taken on further training and I am proud to say that 177 young people have returned to school. This means that the lives of 6,268 people who have gone through this program already have changed forever because of this government's commitment to skills, training and jobs. That means more than 70 per cent have already achieved a positive outcome of a job, further training or re-engaging in education. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is building momentum as well as addressing long-term unemployment. The program has direct benefits for towns and cities across this state because participants build their skills on the job with hands-on projects fixing, restoring or building facilities in our local communities. Maybe those on the other side should stop complaining and support their community organisations.

I am pleased to announce that the Palaszczuk government has now opened the next round of applications for Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with applications closing on 6 April. I am calling on community organisations across Queensland to apply. Notifying these community groups to let them know they have been successful is one of the most enjoyable parts of being a member of parliament. Their enthusiasm and commitment to jobseekers is inspiring. Some of these programs provide basic numeracy and literacy skills for people who have fallen through the cracks. Others provide nationally recognised certificates in areas ranging from childhood education to conservation and land management to business administration. All offer opportunities and second chances.

I would like to thank the hundreds of organisations delivering these SQW programs, the employers who see the potential of our graduates and, most importantly, the jobseekers themselves for deciding to venture through the doors this government opens for them.

Child Protection

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.28 pm): Today I attended police headquarters to make an important announcement about protecting our kids right across Queensland. Last year the Palaszczuk government announced \$3.2 million to enhance the capabilities of investigators working tirelessly to target those who commit heinous sexual based crimes against children.

Today with the Queensland Police commissioner I welcomed two internationally regarded investigators to the Queensland Police Service as members of Taskforce Orion: Scott Anderson, a digital multimedia forensic analyst who has been working with government agencies across the globe including the US Department of Homeland Security, has joined the team to help fight child exploitation; and Adele Desirs, who has gained an international reputation working with Interpol's Crimes against Children unit following secondment from her role as a captain in the French police.

Quite often we focus on the arrest of the offender; however, in every depraved act portrayed in these images is a child victim. As the police minister, I will provide the police with whatever resources they need to identify these young kids and get them to safety. Both Adele and Scott's role with the Queensland Police Service will be focused on the analysis of images and videos seized by police with the aim of identifying child victims within child exploitation material. With the addition of these two skilled investigators I am proud to say that Queensland now has one of the strongest victim identification units in the country, if not the world. It cannot be said enough how excruciatingly difficult a job these officers have, but their meticulous work is something that not only I but all Queenslanders thank them for. There is no doubt that police right across Queensland are working tirelessly to investigate crimes committed against children and they are achieving significant results. This announcement is one more example of how the Palaszczuk government is ensuring that police are appropriately resourced to tackle this issue. I commend the work of Taskforce Orion, and I wish Scott and Adele all the best in their new roles.

Ipswich Motorway, Upgrade

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.31 pm): One of South-East Queensland's most significant road projects is the \$400 million Ipswich Motorway upgrade from Rocklea to Darra stage 1. It is on track, with a tender for design and construction to be awarded within months. Early works have been underway since late last year and two shortlisted tenderers are vying for the contract: BMD Constructions Pty Ltd and John Holland Queensland Pty Ltd Joint Venture; and Bielby Hull Albem Joint Venture. Major construction is due to start later this year.

This is a significant joint state and federal government initiative; each have committed \$200 million. The project will provide 470 jobs for Queenslanders during construction. It is the Palaszczuk government who has delivered the overdue funding upgrade that Ipswich motorists have needed after three years of inaction by the previous majority government. Those opposite did nothing for Ipswich. This project will deliver a value-for-money solution, upgrading three kilometres of motorway between Granard Road and Oxley Road from four to six lanes. This is the next most critical section of the remaining seven kilometres of the Ipswich Motorway still to be upgraded.

The works will involve: raising the motorway bridges across Oxley Creek to improve flood immunity; a new southern service connection road from the Rocklea industrial precinct to the Oxley commercial retail areas; a new northern service road connection over the Oxley Creek flood plain; and new traffic signals at Suscatand Street. On completion the upgrade will provide safer, quicker and more reliable journeys for motorists and, importantly, will improve freight productivity. In short, it will combat congestion for 85,000 road users, including 12,000 freight vehicles.

I would like to thank the local MPs who have advocated for, and delivered, this project. The Premier, the members for Ipswich, Ipswich West, Bundamba and Sunnybank have all strongly advocated and delivered something that the previous government ignored for three years. This was acknowledged this morning, and I will quote from an article in the business section of the *Courier-Mail* which states—

Queensland's road infrastructure sector is reviving quicker than expected, according to construction and engineer outfit Seymour Whyte.

...

He cited tenders for projects such as a merge of the M1-M3-Gateway in Queensland's southeast, an upgrade to the Ipswich Motorway between Rocklea and Darra, and the Mackay ring road. His comments come as engineering industry sources say Queensland is recovering from its mining-bust slump.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I hear the interjections from the member for Indooroopilly, who cut \$600 million from roads in Queensland over three years. What a disgrace you are—the Andrew Peacock of Queensland politics. We are getting on with it. We are creating jobs. We are getting freight moving. The member for Indooroopilly, the Andrew Peacock of Queensland politics, can interject all he likes—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, will you withdraw that comment, please.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Seniors Week, Subsidies

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (2.34 pm): Today I am pleased to announce that the 2017 Seniors Week grants are now open. From today, community organisations and councils can apply for subsidies of up to \$1,000 to help them fund local events during Seniors Week, which this year will be held from 19-27 August. These grants are a great way to help organisations show their appreciation for seniors while encouraging them to get involved in the community. Last year, thanks to the tremendous efforts of many groups, we hosted more than 850 events across the state, which was a huge achievement. This year's theme, A Queensland for All Ages, aims to bring people together to celebrate the many contributions that older people make to our communities.

As the Minister for Seniors I am constantly blown away by our older generation. Earlier this year I had the pleasure of meeting Marjorie Fleming, Townsville's very own skydiving nanna. To celebrate her 90th birthday Marj decided to jump from a plane to raise money for the Townsville Hospital Foundation, where she has volunteered for the last 15 years. I can only imagine how many lives she has changed for the better through her volunteering. I met another group of inspirational seniors during a recent trip to Rockhampton. After spending only 10 minutes with the Rockhampton 60 and Better

group, their incredible life stories, achievements and connections with the community left me speechless. The wisdom of those who have lived longer than us is invaluable to any community, whether in formal volunteering roles or in a social setting. For this reason our government has made a strong commitment to ensure that older Queenslanders are able to lead healthy and productive lives.

We want to create age-friendly communities that allow people, regardless of their age, to stay active and connected just like Marj and the Rockhampton 60 and Better group. To achieve this we are rolling out our new Queensland: an age-friendly community strategy. This whole-of-government strategy looks at liveability through an older person's lens and covers areas such as public transport, housing and opportunities for work and education, to civil participation, engagement and access to services and public spaces.

We know that the cost of living is a key issue for seniors, and I am pleased to say that since the media stories ran on Friday night about the Seniors Card on offer more than 2,000 applications have come through. That is close to what we usually receive in a month, so it is great that so many more seniors will soon have access to the great discounts on offer. I look forward to updating the House on the progress of our age-friendly vision as we work towards a Queensland for all ages.

Industrial Relations Act 2016

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.38 pm): I am pleased to inform the House that the Industrial Relations Act 2016, which this parliament passed late last year, will take effect as of today, 1 March 2017.

Opposition members: Shame!

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection from those opposite who are calling out 'Shame!' The proclamation today of the Industrial Relations Act 2016 delivers a key election commitment to restore fairness to Queensland's industrial relations system and industrial laws.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Minister. Member for Kawana, I find that your comments are designed to disrupt the minister in her ministerial statement. If you persist I will take the appropriate action, and it may be under standing order 252. I call the minister.

Ms GRACE: Queenslanders want fairness and balance in their industrial relations laws, and that is what they will get under the Palaszczuk government. The new Industrial Relations Act gives effect to the recommendations of an independent tripartite reference group established by the government to review the state's industrial relations laws and tribunals. It was the first such review in nearly 20 years.

The new act establishes the key defining features of a state industrial relations system that is now confined to the state and local government sectors. They include: a set of minimum employment conditions and standards; collective bargaining as a cornerstone for setting wages and conditions; requirements for genuine consultation between employers and employees; a set of individual rights to fair treatment; effective, transparent and accountable governance and reporting obligations on all registered industrial organisations and employer associations; and a strong and effective independent umpire.

I am particularly proud that the act delivers on the government's commitment to provide 10 days paid leave for victims of domestic and family violence. Queensland is leading the way by being the first state to put this entitlement into law. In addition, we have delivered other commitments and restored common law rights for those injured in the workplace and their families as well as made changes to workplace health and safety to keep workers safe.

This new act wipes away the last vestiges of the Newman government's unfair and unbalanced industrial relations laws in Queensland. Queenslanders want fairness and balance in their industrial relations laws, and from today that is what the Palaszczuk government's new Industrial Relations Act will deliver.

Women in Local Government Strategy

 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.40 pm): The Palaszczuk government is a strong supporter of equal representation by women across government and industry. One important initiative to achieve this is the Women in Local Government Strategy. This strategy is designed to promote greater diversity and inclusion for women in local government across the state. The strategy provides a range of mentoring and professional development opportunities for female councillors and council officers.

Women currently make up around 33 per cent of councillors and 20 per cent of mayors, and only 16 per cent of all CEOs across Queensland's 77 councils are women. We are fortunate that more and more outstanding women are stepping up to take on significant local government roles. In Central and North Queensland alone we have six newly elected female mayors: Lyn McLaughlin for Burdekin, Liz Schmidt for Charters Towers, Jane McNamara for Flinders, Joyce McCulloch for Mount Isa, Vonda Malone for Torres shire and Aileen Addo in Mapoon. We also have our re-elected mayors in the north such as Margaret Strelow in Rockhampton, with whom I recently met—she is an inspiration to her fellow women in local government and of course to her community; and Jenny Hill in Townsville, who continually delivers results while still finding the time and energy to lead and mentor others.

The Palaszczuk government believes that we can, however, still do much better to promote greater opportunities for women in local government. My department is working collaboratively with Local Government Managers Australia, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the Australian Local Government Women's Association. Through the Women in Local Government Strategy, a \$200,000 professional development fund is promoting diversity by assisting women to access learning and development opportunities. This includes sponsoring places for women in professional development programs. Importantly, preference is given to female participants from predominantly rural and remote councils who face the challenge of distance and cost.

As Minister for Local Government I can say that I am passionate about this issue. I will be doing all I can to work with our councils and with local government organisations to encourage more women to be involved.

Financial Counselling Services

 **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) (2.42 pm): It is with great pleasure that I report to the House that today is the first day of work for 27 new financial counsellors right across Queensland. These counsellors are part of our \$25 million Better Budgeting program, which will make Queenslanders, particularly vulnerable Queenslanders, more financially resilient and independent. From Cairns to Coolangatta, counsellors have been rolled out to help families struggling to get back on track and to embed financial literacy in communities across our state.

We know from the statistics that this investment is sorely needed. More than three million adults are excluded from financial institutions and products in Australia, 32 per cent of Australian households are currently experiencing financial stress and hardship, and 15 per cent of Queenslanders are currently at risk of poverty. We also know that vulnerable families are more likely to reach out to and be trapped in dangerous payday lending schemes. Since 2005 there has been a 110 per cent growth in women accessing payday loans, with many of these women being single mums or women fleeing domestic and family violence. Payday loans may be a short-term fix, but they trap people who are already struggling in more debt and depression, with large fees and interest rates often hidden in very small print. Vulnerable families in this state deserve greater protection.

This month also marks 12 months since the recommendations of the federal government's small amount credit contracts law review were handed down. That review recommended that greater protections were needed for families who are struggling. I am proud to say that our two new Good Money shops—one on the Gold Coast and one in Cairns—will already be making sure that Queenslanders have alternatives to payday loans, with no-interest and low-interest loans available.

While the Palaszczuk government is fighting to make sure ordinary Queenslanders have access to responsible and fair lending advice, those in Canberra—the LNP—are dragging their heels, giving the likes of Cash Converters more opportunity to lock people into spiralling debt. Our Better Budgeting plan will help combat this predatory lending and offer Queenslanders better, fairer alternatives. We need a government in Canberra fighting with us, not against us, on this. I would call on those opposite to lobby their federal counterparts as a matter of priority to implement the recommendations to make sure Queenslanders who are struggling get access to fair financial products.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Queensland Rail, Timetable; Order for Production of Documents

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.45 pm): I give notice that I shall move—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport to produce to the House within 72 hours a report from Queensland Rail on the outcome of the chair's 'stress test' of the Citytrain timetable.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Queensland Rail, Rolling Stock

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.45 pm): Not only can this government not run the trains; we get another reminder that it cannot even deliver the trains. This is from the mob that brought us such classics as trains without seats and trains that could not even fit in tunnels. It has all fallen to pieces under the Premier's own nose, and she knows it is all Labor's own doing.

In 2015 the Deputy Premier was trumpeting Labor's role in the New Generation Rollingstock project. In a press release she states—

These projects were initiated under a Labor Government, and we are proud to be delivering for commuters.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I know it is always a bit willing during private members' statements, but I need to be able to hear the member, as does Hansard.

Mr POWELL: Now we see that she is trying to run a mile. Do not worry: the commuters of South-East Queensland can see right through her. In November last year the Premier's hand-picked acting CEO of Queensland Rail, Neil Scales, said—

... as far as the new generation rollingstock trains are concerned, all the issues in the cabs ... have been ironed out.

'Oh yeah, I fixed them,' he said. Back in June of last year the Deputy Premier said that she had confidence 'without doubt' in Neil Scales. What has changed? Commuters certainly do not have confidence in this transport minister in a hurry to be the Premier. The Premier's hand-picked director-general, Dave Stewart, headed Projects Queensland while the NGR deal was put together. Today, will the Premier order Dave to investigate Dave?

This morning and again in the House this afternoon, 'Bollywood Jackie' made some very pointed comments about the new trains being built in India. 'You get what you pay for,' 'Bollywood Jackie' said. Let me remind the Deputy Premier—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It has been very clearly ruled on a number of occasions, including during yesterday's preliminary proceedings and question time, that members should refer to other members by the appropriate titles.

Mr SPEAKER: I would ask the member for Glass House to withdraw that comment and refer to members by the appropriate title.

Mr POWELL: I withdraw, but let me remind the Deputy Premier that Labor had no problems buying the Gold Coast trams from overseas—indeed, from the same company! I hope the Premier keeps that in the back of her mind as she heads off to India next week on her trade mission. On the one hand, we have the Premier calling for investment from India in Queensland, calling for Indian money to be spent in this state, but back home the real Premier—Jackie Trad, the member for South Brisbane—is trashing India's ability to deliver on projects. That is surely why the Premier dumped her from the Trade portfolio. We know they did not have enough drivers for the NGR stock. We know they are recreating cubbyholes for guards because the Premier has told them to. We know that there is nothing—

(Time expired)

Honourable members interjected.

Maryborough Electorate, Manufacturing

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.50 pm): The peanut gallery is very active today. I wonder what was in the Kool-Aid they drank today. I am proud to be the member for Maryborough and proud to be in the Palaszczuk government because we are delivering local manufacturing jobs in regional Queensland. I am happy to stand on the record for my electorate, and the Palaszczuk government is delivering. We are delivering day in and day out in manufacturing in regional Queensland, especially with Downer rail. Members of the previous government should hang their heads in shame for the \$4.4 billion worth of new generation rolling stock from India. They exported the jobs from Maryborough in Queensland to India. How do they feel about that? They are the greatest exporters in Queensland! They have exported all of our industries and exported jobs—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, but I am on my feet, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SAUNDERS: In 2014 the member for Clayfield and the member for Indooroopilly were trumpeting this, and I remember it quite well because I was in business in Maryborough when they were trumpeting the half-price trains and that they were saving the taxpayers. I remember standing in my shop in Maryborough and seeing that people were very disappointed. One of the quotes that will always stay in my memory to the day I die was when the former LNP member for Maryborough said that Ipswich needs jobs too. Shame! She said that Ipswich need jobs when they were talking about the rolling stock going to Ipswich.

Judging by the number of issues that the Palaszczuk government has had to work through to get the LNP trains on the tracks, it is very clear—and I back the words that the Deputy Premier said—that you get what you pay for. Building these trains in India hurt people in our community and certainly hurt people in Maryborough. Downer and Maryborough have a very proud history of building trains for Queenslanders. In fact, 299 was the first train ever built—it was called Walkers in those days—for Queensland Rail. That train, 299, is still in Maryborough and it is being restored at the moment.

Downer is one of the great companies and the management, the unions and the workers get on so well and they build fantastic trains that are world class—so much so that the Western Australian government gets it to build its trains, but the LNP government in Queensland could not. They think they are good enough in Western Australia, but they were not good enough for this LNP government. Those opposite are the traitors of Maryborough. They sold the great city of Maryborough out and we will never, ever let them forget it. We will never let them forget it.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.54 pm): This Premier and this government talk about themselves more than they talk about Queenslanders. A few weeks ago I said that we have a vice-regal Premier. Little did I know we were on the verge of the Premier now going to London! She did not want to get the bouquets in Western Queensland. She wants to get them in London!

Today sees the anniversary of the Health payroll disaster. The Premier and the Minister for Health were in cabinet when the Health payroll disaster occurred. Earlier today I was with Krysten, the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow health minister. Krysten has been contacted by debt collectors eight years after the Health payroll disaster. Queensland Health cannot prove that she actually owes money. I table all of the documents in relation to poor Krysten with regard to the health minister sending debt collectors after her. It is cruel.

Tabled paper: Correspondence, various dates, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services, Hon. Cameron Dick, regarding Queensland Health payroll [\[306\]](#).

They talk about themselves. Let us take the embattled 'member for Yahoo!' over there—the mangocube from Miller and a cover-up hiding dodgy emails with his union mates. We know the member over there idolises Hilary Clinton. Little did I know he was going to copy her email policy! Little did I know that we would have #emailgate on the Queensland border. Then of course we have 'Miles from home' cutting and running, but not before tapping constituents on the shoulder for some money in his new electorate.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. You gave direction to a member earlier about referring to members by their correct title.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the member for Kawana to refer to members properly and withdraw whatever was inappropriate.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. While we are talking about the member for Mount Coot-tha, let me table a copy of a letter he has just sent out to constituents where he says—

While there was a mix of opinion, most people thought I should take up the offer made by the ALP to nominate me in a safer seat.

He then goes on—

I believe Labor can win Maiwar ...

But he does not think he can win it! I table that.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, statement from the Minister for the Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, Hon. Steven Miles, regarding his decision to contest the electorate of Murrumba [\[307\]](#).

Then of course this gentleman has put up a website where he is asking for donations to help him set up an office in his new electorate of Murrumba some miles away. Honourable member, these are your current constituents actually giving money to make sure you are not in Mount Coot-tha! They are voting with money to get rid of you—\$2,000! I table that.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, of website seeking donations for the member for Mount Coot-tha, Hon. Steven Miles, to lease a campaign office in the seat of Murrumba [308].

They are paying \$2,000 to get rid of you; \$2,000 to say, 'See ya later, mate.' That is what they are doing. I wonder if that falls under Anastacia Palaszczuk's new electoral disclosure laws. Yesterday in here we had the Deputy Premier talking about awards. I would say that there is only one award going around and one person is an honorary for this award, and that is the 'always looking into but doing nothing' award and I award that to the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk. I table a copy of that.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 1 March 2017, titled 'Always looking into but doing nothing' award—Awarded to Anastacia Palaszczuk' [309].

We know the CFMEU shreds documents, Shannon Fentiman washes data and the ETU? Well, it just deletes!

Liberal National Party, Pauline Hanson's One Nation

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.57 pm): As the end of summer approaches, it makes us reflect on the romances that sizzled and fizzled.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We do have people in the gallery observing our proceedings.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, no! I think we all get the point. I will suspend the House if you cannot behave yourselves.

Mr DICK: As the end of summer approaches, it allows us to reflect on the romances that fizzled and sizzled and particularly upon Queensland's most awkward romance—the pursuit of One Nation by the LNP. The early signs were so promising—the languid afternoon at Government House that they spent chatting to each other, the hours spent chatting about the future, the shy nervous dance around preferences and then this from Pauline, 'Good government requires good opposition, and this state has not had good opposition for some time.' She calls him ineffective. He calls her selfish. She calls him lazy. He calls her loopy. It is like a bad episode of *Married at First Sight* with a runaway bride. All the Leader of the Opposition can do is go to the dark corner, lick his wounds, give himself his own pain rating and try to move on to save what is left of his own party.

The drift is on. The member for Buderim, the former LNP member for Lytton, the former LNP member for Thuringowa and the former LNP member for Logan have all gone to One Nation. To lose one member may be regarded as unfortunate; to lose four looks like utter hopelessness.

This morning, we heard that that great reform—the merger of the LNP—is on the brink of collapse. It is the definition of political chaos. The Leader of the Opposition comes into the House, fiddling while Nero burns. What does he do as the leader? He comes in and trashes everything that he needs to for the sake of political expediency. What did he do yesterday? He came in and trashed the mental health system, which is the same mental health system that the opposition had supported on three separate occasions in this House. The Leader of the Opposition was happy to expose doctors and nurses to unknown legal liability. He was happy to prolong legal uncertainty for mentally ill people, their families and their victims in a pointless display of opportunism.

Today, they seek to trash the payroll system that they operated—the payroll system that they implemented and they operated. It is exactly the same system that we had and they seek to trash that now. As every single day goes on, the people of Queensland know one thing: the Leader of the Opposition is unfit to lead Queensland and so is the LNP.

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (3.02 pm): Talk about living in a parallel universe! Blaming us for the Health payroll!

What is the member for Yeerongpilly trying to hide? He is not interested in being open and accountable to the people of Queensland about his dodgy backroom dealings with the union bosses. He wants to keep them in the dark. He wants to use every excuse under the sun to try to claim that there is nothing to his email scandal, but his explanations do not stack up.

Yesterday, the energy minister told the parliament that he treated this Yahoo! account as a private email account. If this were simply a private email account, why did the minister use it to contact his ministerial staff to discuss cabinet matters? We know through documents released under RTI that the minister was actively discussing cabinet matters from the Yahoo! account. We know that he used it for parliamentary matters. We know that these actions alone show that this is more than a private account. The minister knows it and the Premier knows it.

From the moment this scandal broke, the member for Yeerongpilly has sought to conceal and disguise his actions—or, as the ABC's Steve Austin described it this morning, he has tried to 'knowingly sabotage' any inquiries. When the *Australian* first published the story about the energy minister being contacted through private channels by the ETU boss Peter Simpson about a \$13 billion super fund merger, the minister's office refused to provide a response. They hoped that this story would disappear. At every turn the minister's office has tried to run interference, hoping that the journalists would back off.

What did the energy minister do when the *Australian* made an RTI application to get access to these documents? He deleted the email account. If the minister has nothing to hide and this account was used for only private correspondence, then why delete the account? Why will the minister not stand up today, reactivate that account and provide those emails so that we know that everything has been done properly and aboveboard? The answer is clear. The member for Yeerongpilly is covering something up.

If the minister will not do the right thing, then it is up to the Premier to finally show some leadership and not hide behind a review by her own hand-picked director-general. The Premier should order the minister to reactivate the account and release the emails.

This is indicative of the power that the union bosses have over this government and this Premier. The Premier bleats about her commitment to openness and accountability, but it is now very clear that she has no credibility. In light of the new allegations and additional information available, after question time we will be referring the deletion of the relevant private email account to the CCC for investigation.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will finish at five minutes past four. Leader of the Opposition, are you ready for your first question?

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, I am. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education, you are warned under standing order 253A. The member is on his feet asking a question.

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (3.05 pm): My question is to the Minister for Energy. Was the minister or his staff aware of the right to information application made by the *Australian* newspaper seeking access to the emails before the minister deleted his personal Yahoo! email account containing official government documents?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the opposition leader for his question. I can say that I was not aware of the right to information application by the *Australian* when that occurred. Let me be very clear about that. I was not aware of it. I am very happy to put that on the record.

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

Mr NICHOLLS: My second question is to the Premier. Yesterday, the Premier said in response to a question in this place asking her to direct the Minister for Energy to reactivate his email account—

I expect the minister involved to abide by the law. If the law says that he must retrieve those emails, he must retrieve those emails—pure and simple.

However, the Premier later told the media that she did not want 'to get involved' and would not order Minister Bailey to reactivate his email account. Premier: yes or no? Will the Premier direct Minister Bailey to reactivate his Yahoo! email account containing official government documents and, if not, why not?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. There are many elements to that question, so let me go through it. In relation to the matters that the Leader of the Opposition raised yesterday in relation to emails by the Minister for Energy, I have asked the director-general to carry out an independent investigation. That will be an independent investigation and I will not be involved in that investigation. That is the right course of action.

I now have a confirmation letter from Mr Dave Stewart that I would like to read out. He says—

Dear Premier

I am writing to advise you that I have commenced my review of the use of the private email account of the Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply.

I am working closely with Ministerial Services, have involved Crown Law and I intend to consult with relevant statutory entities (eg. the State Archivist and the Integrity Commissioner) as appropriate.

I will provide you with a report detailing the outcomes once the review is completed.

I table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 March 2017, from the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Mr Dave Stewart, to the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, regarding the commencement of the review into the use of the private email account of the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey [310].

That is the right course of action to take. As I said very clearly, I uphold very high standards in government but, when there is an independent investigation, it will remain independent. It will remain independent of me—

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order. The question was pretty simple and the Premier has gone all around the world in order to avoid answering it. Premier: yes or no? Will the Premier direct Minister Bailey to reactivate his account containing official government documents and, if not, why not?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, the director-general is carrying out that investigation and he will continue to carry that out, because it is independent—something that those opposite have never, ever—

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier. I think you have answered the question. I do not want you debating it with the Leader of the Opposition.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

Mrs LAUGA: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the House on policy initiatives undertaken by the Palaszczuk government during this year and any alternative strategies?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Keppel very much for her question. Over the past couple of months what we have seen is more than 12,000 jobs committed in this state. Let me go through some of those for the benefit of the House so members know what is happening right across this state. For example, we had the \$200 million announcement of the works for Queensland by the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer—700 local council projects across regional Queensland generating some 6,000 jobs. This is about getting people into work. This is about jobs. This is what Queenslanders want to hear about. They want to hear about the government's plans for jobs and that is what we are delivering.

We have a very clear plan, unlike those opposite who continue to talk about themselves. We have our \$100 million Back to Work program. Already 1,800 new jobs have been announced as part of that. We have applications in place for almost 700 more. We have also seen the Kidston solar farm in North Queensland—part of a \$2 billion private investment—that is due to deliver some 1,900 jobs. Of course we also welcome the \$1 billion expansion of the Olive Downs mine which will generate more than 500 jobs. In Townsville we have Tigerair—and I thank the minister for tourism—introducing direct flights from Melbourne to Townsville. People in Melbourne will love going to Townsville. That means more tourism dollars being spent regionally. We have the \$200 million expansion of the Capricornia Correctional Centre with 100 jobs in construction. We want to see that up and running. It will be started at the end of this year, with 70 operational jobs in the long term.

When it comes to those opposite what do we see? They have a history when it comes to jobs and that is cutting jobs, pure and simple. Their record is very clear. We know what the opposition leader did when he was treasurer of this state. He axed some 14,000 jobs in his first budget alone. In his first

budget the member for Clayfield said, 'Today I can confirm the total number of FTEs to be lost in 2012-13 will be 14,000 jobs.' We know how caring he is; he decided to cut the jobs even sooner. The opposition leader says he is sorry, but what is he sorry for? Has he said sorry to the 14,000 people he sacked? Has he said sorry to the community organisations that had their funding slashed? Has he said sorry for the maladministration that we saw in terms of 1 William Street—the waste of taxpayers money? Have we heard a sorry for that? No, because he is not sorry, he does not mean it.

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Premier. This morning journalist Michael McKenna said of the Stewart review into the government's private email scandal—

Dave Stewart is a handpicked bureaucrat. He is the head of the Public Service, handpicked by the Premier so he is hardly independent and we just have to wait and see.

My question is how can Queenslanders have confidence in the accountability and transparency of this government when official government documents on private email accounts have been deleted and the Premier's only response is to have her DG look into it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the question. Let me say a couple of things about that. First of all, I admire Mr Dave Stewart as the director-general of Premier and Cabinet. He is a very well respected man. I am not going to see those opposite come in here and attack the independence of a man who is leading the Public Service in this state. This is a man who worked for the Baird government and has worked for us. He is well respected. He has worked across governments of both political persuasions. Do I believe that he has the independence to carry it out? Yes, I do. How was he appointed? He was appointed after a merit based selection process—something that none of those opposite can say happened under their tenure. Let us go back: for Transport who did they pick? The long-term friend of the LNP, a former councillor, Michael Caltabiano, who earned a lot of money for a short period of time.

What we put in place was a merit based, independent process. For the first time ever that has operated in this state. That process should remain in this state. Do not come in here and start lecturing me about independence.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In conclusion, Mr Stewart is a man of integrity. I respect the way in which he carries out his duties. He will complete that investigation independent of—

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Indooroopilly, I view your continual interjections as designed to disrupt the Premier answering the question. You are repetitive. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, once that investigation is completed I will report back to parliament, which is the right thing to do.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

Mr PEARCE: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the government's achievements this year across Queensland and whether the Premier is aware of any alternative strategies?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mirani very much for his question. As we have seen, there have been a number of issues that have been very important to Queenslanders across this state which we have been tackling as a government. In relation to ice, can I say that this is a very important issue that is having a huge impact across not just regional and rural communities, but right across Queensland. My government will be undertaking an ice strategy summit at the end of April to which, of course, I will also be inviting the opposition to attend.

My government also responded to the Walter Sofronoff review of Queensland's parole system which has seen the biggest shake up of parole in more than a century. What is fundamental to my government is that we listen and we deliver for Queenslanders.

Just last week the Attorney-General and I announced real-time political disclosure, the first of its kind not just in this state but within Australia, something that those opposite would never, ever be able to deliver because they do not believe in it. These are the people who had the secret donations for

three years when they changed the rules—they changed the goal posts. We have committed to transparency and openness. We will get on with the business of making sure that we are looking after and improving the lives of Queenslanders no matter where they live across the state.

However, unfortunately, on that side of the House there are different views. Those views are putting everything in Queensland at risk and that is, pure and simple, a deal that the Leader of the Opposition wants to do with One Nation. When the Leader of the Opposition is asked these questions we are not quite sure exactly where he stands because in one minute he says, 'I am not ruling anything in, I am not ruling anything out.' Then when he was asked more about preferences he said, 'No, that's a matter for Gary Spence.' He is outsourcing leadership, not able to make a decision at all. Then we had the member for Callide who came out very clearly and said, 'Of course we will preference them ahead of Labor.' The member of Callide was into it as well. Then of course we have the famous moment where the Leader of the Opposition is standing with his band of merry men and women from the LNP at a press conference and he is not quite sure what he is going to say and he talks about how—

An opposition member: Let's wait for the delivery. Come on, you can do it!

An opposition member: Have you practised it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: No. He talks about putting One Nation last. We know he then goes, 'Oops, sorry, that is not exactly—'

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier, time has expired. The member for Indooroopilly is keen to ask a question. I call the member for Indooroopilly.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Email Accounts

Mr EMERSON: My question is to the Premier. On 23 January 2017 when the Premier instructed cabinet to stop using private email accounts to conduct official government business, did she seek any advice beforehand on whether deleting those records could breach the Cabinet Handbook, the Ministerial Handbook or the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the shadow Treasurer and member for Indooroopilly, who wants to go federal. He does not quite know where he wants to go. He does not know whether he wants to stay or go.

Mr Watts: He's not going anywhere. It's Miles that's away.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know the member for Broadwater might be going very shortly or the member for Gaven.

Ms Trad: Not voluntarily.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, not voluntarily. We know that the little talks are happening.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know the talks are happening over there. The member for Broadwater and the member for Gaven are off the list. They are out of here.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I know you are responding to an interjection by the member for Toowoomba North, but I do not know that the interjection was relevant to the question. Can you come back to answering the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am talking about members of parliament, Mr Speaker, so of course it is relevant. However, I will go back to the substance of the question. In relation to my discussion with cabinet, at the time I made it very clear that matters dealing with stakeholders and ministerial business should be conducted through the work-provided email. Everyone is aware of their obligations. I made it abundantly clear at the time that I expect the highest standards and, of course, my ministers will adhere to those standards.

Mr EMERSON: I rise to point of order. The question was very clear, but the Premier has not at all referred to the substance of the question. I asked if she advised cabinet members that deleting those records could be in breach of the Cabinet Handbook, the Ministerial Handbook or the Public Sector Ethics Act.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. The member for Indooroopilly is taking a point of order in relation to his question to the Premier. The Premier has completed her answer and resumed her seat. The question was over, so there is no point of order in relation to the Premier's answer to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. Thank you member for Callide, member for Indooroopilly and the Leader of Government Business. The Premier has answered the question.

Works for Queensland

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the Works for Queensland program and how it is creating jobs for regional Queensland?

Ms TRAD: I thank the honourable member for the question. I know that he is passionate about jobs and he is passionate about infrastructure in his local community, such as the North Queensland stadium. To date, the Works for Queensland program has been an outstanding success. I am pleased to inform the House that on Monday last week, at the Rockhampton Regional Council, a worker who was due to finish work in June of this year started a new full-time job with the council as a senior contracts officer on a project that has been funded through the Works for Queensland program.

I know those opposite do not like jobs in the regions. They do not like jobs, generally. They like sacking people. They do not like employment programs, such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. There are a number of members whose actions are simply designed to disrupt the Deputy Premier when answering the question and I find them disorderly. If I can identify who those interjectors are, you will be named under the standing orders.

Ms TRAD: This \$200 million program is supporting more than 720 specific projects throughout regional Queensland. Sixty-five councils have submitted detailed works for those projects and they are progressing, as we speak. Yesterday in this House, we saw the show pony shadow Treasurer get up and trash the program—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. Pause the clock. Deputy Premier, I would ask you to refer to the member by his appropriate title.

Ms TRAD: The shadow Treasurer and member for Indooroopilly stood in this House and trashed regional jobs, trashed this program and, quite frankly, by doing so he was actually trashing regional councils. Let us be clear about the job estimates that have been provided around the Works for Queensland program. When this program was first announced, Treasury made conservative estimates based on a methodology. When councils and mayors did their detailed work and submitted those projects, they found that that money and those projects would sustain and support 6,000 jobs throughout regional Queensland. What did those mayors have to say? Members opposite should start by calling their former colleague and now mayor of Bundaberg, Jack Dempsey.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms TRAD: Perhaps they should stop interjecting and listen to what their former colleague said. He said—

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am sorry, Deputy Premier. Member for Indooroopilly, you are warned under standing order 253A for your continuous interjections. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action. Deputy Premier, please continue.

Ms TRAD: Their former colleague said—

The municipal band for Bundaberg must be playing today, because this announcement is music to our ears and it is music to our ears in relation to continuing the momentum of economic development right across the Bundaberg and Wide Bay region, but also creating those vital jobs that we need to be able to ensure that people can have a future and to be able to live in one of the best places in Queensland.

Mr Nicholls: Did Jack really say 'municipal'?

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, I would like to take that interjection so that Hansard can record it.

Mr SPEAKER: I think we will move on.

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

Mr HART: My question is to the Minister for Energy. I table advice from the Yahoo! website, which states that a deleted email account may be reopened if done so within 90 days of deletion. Yes or no: will the minister reopen his Yahoo! email account so all official government documents can be archived in accordance with Queensland law?

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Yahoo! website, regarding reactivating a deleted Yahoo! account [\[311\]](#).

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Burleigh for his question. I will cooperate fully with the investigation that has been announced. The Premier has already outlined that it will be a comprehensive investigation that involves a range of different relevant agencies. I will fully cooperate with that investigation. I am absolutely happy to cooperate with that investigation. I can say that I have always sought to do my duties as a minister in conformity with the law and I will continue to do so.

Mr HART: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I think the minister has answered the question.

Mr HART: It was a straightforward question. Yes or no: will the minister reopen his email account?

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. There is no point of order.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. This persistent pattern of taking points of order to get attention for the question a second time is getting a bit tiresome. Mr Speaker, I ask that you give direction to those members.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We will wait.

Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer please update the House on the progress of projects in Queensland being rolled out under the federal government's Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility?

Mr PITT: Before I get to the member for Mackay's question, I want to congratulate her on the hard work she has been doing over the last two years. I can say that her efforts have been paying off in terms of what has been happening in the Mackay region. We have the unemployment rate coming back to the statewide average. We have had the unlocking of new economic potential through really important projects, including road projects neglected by the LNP such as the Gregory Highway upgrade, the Sandy Gully bridge upgrade, the realignment of the highway at Eton Range and the replacement of timber bridges along the Peak Downs Highway. I know she is very much looking forward to the Vines Creek bridge upgrade. I congratulate the member because she has been a very hardworking member in that region.

In terms of her question, I regret to inform her, however, that we are seeing the LNP playing politics when it comes to Northern Australia. What we know, as the Premier correctly said yesterday, is that it has been more than 600 days since the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility was announced and yet we have no money coming to Queensland. In fact, we have seen no money go anywhere. There has been no money going out the door under this agreement.

My question is: why does the LNP not want to see this investment going out into Northern Australia? There have been other examples. It is three months since I wrote to—

An opposition member interjected.

Mr PITT: I am giving a straightforward answer to this question. It has been three months since we actually wrote to Matt Canavan, the minister responsible, saying that Queensland is ready to sign the master facilities agreement which is, of course, integral to ensuring that money actually gets out the door as part of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility.

I have repeatedly raised this with the federal government. I was very pleased to have a conversation with Steven Ciobo last week in Darwin. I think he has a genuine interest in trying to see projects happen in Northern Australia. This should be an issue beyond politics. It should be about getting money out the door. As we know, this is a critical and untapped part of our nation that can really deliver great outcomes for Queensland and Australia. We are very keen to ensure that this money actually gets out there. As the Premier said, there is a \$5 billion concessional loan fund. Imagine how many—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Hinchinbrook, you are warned under standing order 253A. Those interjections are not relevant and I find them designed to simply disrupt the minister answering the question.

Mr PITT: We have a \$5 billion concessional loan fund. We want to see money going out the door and it is not happening. The federal government will have all the cooperation they need from the Palaszczuk state government to ensure that we get money out.

My question to the opposition today is: where have they been and why are they not banging the drum? It is not their job to just sit there and yell and scream at us. It is not their job to sit there and come up with no policy ideas, although they are getting very good at it. It is their job, just like it is for those on this side of the House, to fight for Queensland and they are not doing it.

We know that we have 70 per cent of the population of Northern Australia in Queensland. We expect around 70 per cent of projects under the NAIF to go to North Queensland projects. The opposition leader is happy to give gratuitous advice to his colleagues in Canberra today about what they should be doing. How about he actually gets off his backside and fights for Queensland.

(Time expired)

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

Mrs SMITH: My question is to the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy. As the minister responsible for administering the Public Records Act 2002, what action has the minister taken to ensure that the official government records contained in Minister Bailey's deleted Yahoo! email account have been preserved in accordance with the law?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for her question. As has already been conveyed by the Premier, there is a review underway which is being conducted by the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has ensured that he is working with a number of authorities, including the State Archives. Today I spoke with the State Archivist to ensure that he is working with the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as is the correct thing to do. We want to ensure that that review is independent and at arm's length. We have ensured that the State Archivist is working with the DG in terms of the review that he is doing into this matter.

Sunshine Coast, Tourism

Ms BOYD: My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Commonwealth Games. The Sunshine Coast is one of Queensland's iconic tourism destinations. Will the minister update the House on the success of tourism in that region?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question and for her advocacy of the tourism industry in Queensland. The member for Pine Rivers knows, as does everybody on this side of the House, that tourism and tourism investment means jobs for Queenslanders. We know that the Sunshine Coast is one of the fastest growing areas in Queensland when it comes to the tourism sector. In fact, it is worth more than \$2.4 billion for the people of the Sunshine Coast and supports more than 30,000 jobs in that local regional economy. That is why we have been working very closely with industry on the ground. That is why we came to the table with a four-year funding guarantee to support the tourism industry and support regional tourism organisations.

In the last 12 months we have seen 13 per cent growth in the number of Australians and international visitors going to the Sunshine Coast. This growth in tourism numbers is actually leading to more investment in tourism infrastructure. We are seeing a new wave of investor confidence. We have the \$900 million hotel and residential development proposed near Coolumb and Sanad Capital's \$130 million water park proposal for Steve Irwin Way. I had the privilege of meeting with them recently. One iconic project that I think every Queenslanders is happy to see is the plans to redevelop the Big Pineapple.

The question on everyone's lips is: when it comes to the pineapple, what end has Pauline Hanson given to Tim Nicholls? We know that the deal is done between One Nation and the LNP. We want to know what end of the pineapple the LNP opposition took? What did they take when they did the dirty deal with One Nation behind the scenes?

Mr Seeney: What did Evan Moorhead say when he rang her up? What did Evan say when he rang up and asked about preferences?

Ms JONES: I will take that interjection. When he rang up and asked for her preferences. That was the interjection from the member for Callide. Thank you, Jeffrey. I can always rely on you.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Do you have a point of order, member for Callide?

Mr SEENEY: Absolutely. I love it when the member for Ashgrove—

Mr SPEAKER: You do not need to make a speech.

Mr SEENEY: I do. I love it when she takes my interjections.

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr SEENEY: I do not want her to quote me wrongly. My interjection—

Mr SPEAKER: You find her comments offensive and you ask that they be withdrawn?

Mr SEENEY: I ask that she correct it. It was Evan Moorhead who rang Pauline Hanson.

Mr SPEAKER: I want to clarify, do you find the minister's comments offensive and ask that they be withdrawn?

Mr SEENEY: Yes, I find them offensive and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Callide finds the comments that you made with regard to him offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

Ms JONES: I withdraw, but the cat is out of the bag. We know that there is a deal between One Nation and the LNP.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister—

Ms JONES: I withdraw. What is very clear, however, is that there are no candidates willing to put their hands up for the LNP on the Sunshine Coast. In actual fact, I had the great joy of listening to ABC Sunshine Coast recently where anonymous LNP people were saying, 'Tim Nicholls is so Brisbane-centric and such a poor leader we cannot find a candidate to run in Buderim.' They would like us to believe that that is the case, but we know from the member for Callide's comments, maybe not today but in his local press, that he said, 'Of course we have taken their preferences.'

We know that they are not running a candidate in Buderim because the deal is done. One Nation and the LNP are as one. As the tourism minister I agree wholeheartedly with Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate who warned about the dire consequences of doing deals with mugs like them.

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

Mr WALKER: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday in response to the member for Nanango's question the Premier said she would have her director-general review the issue of government members and staff using private email accounts to conduct official government business. Today we discover the Stewart review is limited only to the member for Yeerongpilly. I table a letter to that effect.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 March 2017, from the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Mr Dave Stewart, to the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, regarding the commencement of the review into the use of the private email account of the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey [\[312\]](#).

Why has the Premier reduced the scope of the review and will the Premier guarantee that no other ministers have used private email accounts to conduct official government business?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. I believe that he is selectively quoting because I, too, have a direct copy of the quote and what I said. It was in relation to this issue—this issue being the issue pertaining to Minister Bailey.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, it is. It is very clear. I have it in print. I read it and I read it very clearly. As I said very clearly, the director-general is investigating this issue. I am not getting involved in it. He is doing it independently of government. He will report back to me, and I said I would come back to the parliament. That is what is expected and that is what I have said that I would undertake to do.

Queen's Wharf

Ms DONALDSON: My question is to the Minister for State Development. Will the minister update the House on how the Queen's Wharf project in Brisbane will benefit businesses right across regional Queensland?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Bundaberg for the question because the member for Bundaberg knows just how well Bundaberg does under a Labor government. Works for Queensland, as the Deputy Premier said, Building our Regions—Bundaberg always does better under Labor.

I am pleased to advise the House that the \$3 billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane project is already creating scores of jobs and business opportunities—and not just in Brisbane. Over the past 12 months my Department of State Development has led a series of 10 regional Queen's Wharf workshops, including one in Bundaberg just a few weeks ago. Bundy's famous spirit will be advanced even further when its region's finest zucchinis, chillies, macadamias, strawberries and, of course, rum grace the tables of Queen's Wharf's 50 restaurants and bars. That Bundy forum now means nearly 2,000 people have attended regional Queen's Wharf forums and heard exactly how they can be involved.

One great example from that forum is emerging Bundaberg Indigenous artist Chern'ee Sutton, the young woman who designed the NRL All Stars jerseys. She is being linked to the consortium to consider her work, as is Cherbourg council's Fresh Produce. Cherbourg Fresh Produce sells the likes of lettuce, parsley, silverbeet and shallots, and consortium partner Star is keen to know much more about them and how they can supply Queen's Wharf.

The consortium reports that it has already engaged more than 80 external firms resulting in hundreds of job opportunities. The consortium has a project team of 25 working with local consultants—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Callide, you are warned under standing order 253A for those interjections. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action. If you persist, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I will also apply a similar rule to you.

Dr LYNHAM: As I was saying, the consortium has a project team of 25 working with local consultants, leading to jobs and opportunities across a range of areas. One beneficiary is Caitlyn Stacy of Newstead, who is working with Destination Brisbane consortium as a cadet in her final year at QUT. On top of the project team, there are 150 workers with Probuild, the successful tenderer for the demolition and enabling works. The Probuild team includes graduate civil engineer Cameron McCloskey of Victoria Point. Probuild's 2017 graduate program is now open until 7 April. I urge any young graduates interested to visit the Probuild website and apply.

The ongoing commitment of the Palaszczuk government to this project means that this game-changing development will continue to deliver jobs and opportunities for locals in Brisbane and right across regional Queensland in the coming years.

Stolen Wages Class Action

Mr GORDON: My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Minister for Local Government. I congratulate the minister on his appointment as well. Could the minister please inform the House as to the reason why the government has failed to file a defence in the stolen wages class action, which was commenced in the Federal Court of Australia over five months ago on 14 September last year? Does the government appreciate and understand the stress that its failure to act is placing on members of that class action and their families?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for Cook for his question and acknowledge the hard work he does in his community, particularly those Indigenous communities up around the cape. Although I am aware of the complaint that the member raised, as the matter is subject to legal proceedings at this point in time it is inappropriate to comment on the specifics. We must acknowledge the shameful past of what occurred to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who worked so hard to develop this state's potential only to have their wages withheld in the exercise of making contributions to our wonderful state. It is a shameful period in Queensland's history and we should continue to acknowledge this and recognise that in the future.

The Palaszczuk government gave a commitment before our election to open the new stolen wages reparation fund. That fund, aimed at delivering \$21 million, opened on 18 December 2015. As of 17 February this year, it has received more than 3,600 claims delivering \$8,280,268 in payments. The community has welcomed this outcome. It was only two weeks ago in Cherbourg that I was having conversations with members of that Indigenous community about this particular matter. As I continue in my role as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, no doubt there will be many other opportunities to consult and discuss this issue with those people. I encourage the member for Cook to continue to have dialogue with me and my department on this particular matter.

Community Legal Centres

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General advise the House of the latest information with regard to funding for community legal centres in Queensland?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Bulimba for her question because I know she understands the important work that our community legal centres do. I had the great pleasure today to visit the Caxton Legal Centre once again and be joined by the Director, Scott McDougall, and also the director of Community Legal Centres Queensland to hear from the amazing staff what great work they do. This is an organisation that gave 10,000 legal advices just last year. They have 200 volunteer lawyers and expert staff helping the most vulnerable people in our community.

I also met with Colin and Mya Turner. Colin and Mya lost everything in the floods in 2011. To add to their devastation, they had issues with their insurance and then Colin found himself terminated from his employment. He reached out for help and he turned to the Caxton Legal Centre. He said not only did they help him legally with his problem but they provided emotional support. There was someone there to listen to his problems for once. He felt like for once he had an opportunity to turn his life around.

We all know in this chamber that lives can change very quickly. It is at those times that you want to know you can reach out and get that assistance most needed. The Caxton Legal Centre's biggest area of demand is in domestic and family violence and child protection. It is also in housing and homelessness and assistance in employment matters. It is not just Caxton; it is legal centres right across this great state. We know that come 30 June there is a funding cliff—\$2 million lost to community legal centres. This is over a 20 per cent cut to Commonwealth funding in just the next year alone.

I want to thank the crossbench for their joint letter to me calling on me to approach the Commonwealth about this funding. I offer the same as I asked the LNP last year—that is, join with me to send a joint letter from every single member of parliament in this chamber here today. Let's write a letter to Malcolm Turnbull and say, 'You cannot close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage and you cannot support those most in need in domestic violence unless you ensure that you are funding legal assistance in this state. Stop the cuts. Stand up for Queenslanders.'

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Email Account

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Minister for Energy. I table part of an RTI from the minister's department which shows that the Minister for Energy discussed with his staff via his personal email account matters deemed to be subject to cabinet consideration. Will the minister inform the House exactly how many emails were in his Yahoo! account in relation to official government business such as matters subject to cabinet consideration?

Tabled paper: Email, dated 12 October 2016, from Ms Tam van Alphen to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports, and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey MP, regarding GetUp!, released by the Office of the Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply under the RTI Act 2009 [\[313\]](#).

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for his question. He is referring to an RTI from the opposition over an 11-month period and there was quite a small level of documentation that came out. In relation to that private email account, I have made it very clear that it was a private email account that I used for private purposes. That is very clear. In referring to the RTI that he has just referred to in this place, I have it in my hand right here. If you look through it, it is mostly related to my local electorate in my portfolio area—in fact, specifically a renewable energy leaflet where I was reporting to my constituency in relation to our renewable energy program here in Queensland. Most of it was design work around that.

Let us not misrepresent the RTI that you applied for and you received for your own political purposes, because that is what the case is. I will not have the member for Everton misrepresenting the truth in relation to the RTI which they lodged and they received a reply to.

Energy Industry

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to the Minister for Energy. Will the minister please update the House on how the state's energy networks are providing the necessary skills and training to jobseekers, particularly in regional Queensland, and how it is vital that our electricity assets are kept in government hands?

Mr BAILEY: I welcome the question from the member for Maryborough. He is a relentless advocate for his constituency—someone who in only two years has delivered the Urraween intersection, has fixed the jetty, has got the CBD revitalisation going, has delivered on Tinana and the boat ramp. His record is amazing!

Ms Trad: What hasn't he done?

Mr BAILEY: He has pretty much done everything they did not do for three years with their record majority. It is a pleasure working with the member for Maryborough. He is relentless.

I was very happy to be up there recently to welcome 10 new apprentices into the electricity system. The Palaszczuk government absolutely supports the development of skills into the power industry. We have 97 new apprentices coming into Energy Queensland, most of them in regional areas. I met 10 of those apprentices up there—a diverse range of people. We are investing in our industry, investing in our electricity supply and keeping it in public hands.

We believe in training and we believe in jobs, unlike the member for Clayfield, who sacked 14,000 people when he had the chance. He gave us the highest level of unemployment in 11 years under his watch as treasurer. He gave a tacit apology the other day. It was such a genuine apology: he said it was all because they did not explain their policies better when in government.

He described the Newman government soon after its defeat as a good government. Let us be clear: Queenslanders are not going to want that kind of good government a second time under his leadership, pandering to One Nation. We know that the LNP is under assault in every seat in this state. They are struggling to hold it together, with the Queensland Nationals talking about splitting from the Queensland Liberals. They are under siege and they are bursting at the seams with people breaking off.

We have also seen the big makeover of 'Toffy Tim'. They wanted him to be more 'Rock-about Nicholls' but—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Minister, will you please withdraw those comments.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw, Mr Speaker. What we are seeing is a makeover to try to create an image of someone he is not—a fake image. That is what we are seeing. We know that he was the architect of a 43 per cent rise in electricity prices. In fact, he was not just the architect of asset sales; he took a harder line than Campbell Newman, as evidenced in Campbell Newman's book. He took a harder line than Campbell Newman when it came to selling off our power assets. If he gets half the chance he will do exactly the same thing if he becomes Premier of this state. We will see our power assets sold off to the highest bidder. We will see another round of 43 per cent price increases over three years. We will see him rattling on rural roads. He might have been photographed on a trail bike, but he rattled on regional roads when he was in charge of treasury.

(Time expired)

Queensland Health, Payroll System

Mr BLEIJIE: My question without notice is to the Premier. It is now eight years since Labor's bungled Health payroll disaster. Krysten is a 26-year-old nurse in my electorate whom after eight years the government has recently sent debt collectors after. Queensland Health cannot provide any evidence of the alleged overpayment and the Minister for Health refuses to meet with Krysten and me to discuss this matter. When will Krysten's—

Mr Dick interjected.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Health, you are warned under standing order 253A. I need to be able to hear the question in silence. Member for Kawana, will you repeat your question.

Mr BLEIJIE: Absolutely. It is now eight years since Labor's bungled Health payroll disaster. Krysten is a 26-year-old nurse in my electorate whom after eight years the government has recently sent debt collectors after. Queensland Health cannot provide any evidence of the alleged overpayment and the Minister for Health refuses to meet with Krysten and me to discuss this matter. When will Krysten's Health payroll nightmare, and that of many others like her, be over?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Kawana for the question. As I said today, the Health payroll issue caused a lot of distress for people for which the health minister of this state has apologised. We still have not seen any apology for the sacking of over 4,400 nurses, midwives and Health staff across this state. I have not heard any apology for that. In stark contrast, what we see from our side of government is a clear focus on delivering better health services across this state—more doctors, more nurses, more interns and more midwives.

In relation to the specifics that the member for Kawana has raised around the person in question, I am advised by the health minister that he wrote to the member for Kawana on 14 September regarding his constituent. In this correspondence to the member for Kawana, Queensland Health payroll services offered a meeting to work through the concerns at hand with his constituent. The health minister also advises me that this offer was never taken up by either the member for Kawana or his constituent and that the current debt collection process has been put on hold while this specific matter is investigated further.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana, you have asked the question. The minister's answer is relevant to the question. If you persist, you will be warned under standing order 253A.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is what I am advised. There is a process in place, and we want to deal with this issue with this person as sensitively, quickly and fairly as possible. Let me make it clear: the delivery of health services across our state is one of our priorities. There is nothing more important to families than to have good quality health care wherever they live across this state.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, you are warned under standing order 253A. Minister for Health, you are already under your first warning. The member for Kawana is now joining you. I urge you both not to continue your banter across the chamber. Premier, do you have anything further to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The final thing I want to say is that we are restoring health services in the state. We have a record Health budget and more front-line services. We are repairing the damage done under three years of Campbell Newman and Tim Nicholls.

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

North Queensland, Investment

Mr STEWART: My question is to the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. Will the minister advise the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering investment for North Queensland?

Mrs O'ROURKE: I thank the member for the question. I know he is absolutely committed to making sure that investment is delivered by this government. I am more than happy to talk about how this government is investing in and committed to the development of North Queensland. It also gives me the opportunity to use my skills as a previous educator to school those opposite and in particular the member for Hinchinbrook, because he clearly has no understanding of what is actually happening in order to develop North Queensland.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Chatsworth. The minister does not need your encouragement. If you persist, you will follow the lead of others and join the list.

Mrs O'ROURKE: After three disastrous years under the LNP, this Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to investing in North Queensland and we have seen that through various projects. As the Treasurer and the Premier have explained on previous occasions, this government stands absolutely ready to work with all Queensland projects through the NAIF and we will continue to support North Queensland projects as they seek funding through the NAIF. What the member for Hinchinbrook needs to understand is that the NAIF is not a funding source for state governments. Let me just say that again: it is not a funding source for—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under standing order 253A.

Mrs O'ROURKE: As I said, it is not a funding source for state governments. Proponents are to apply for NAIF assistance directly from the Commonwealth NAIF office. I have personally met with the NAIF board. Queensland Treasury are partnering with NAIF to identify key stakeholders and refer potential project proponents to the NAIF. As I have previously told the member for Hinchinbrook, the

Treasurer wrote to Josh Frydenberg last year—and I am happy to table that letter—and clearly outlined possible Queensland projects, such as the Cairns Airport expansion, the North East Gas Interconnector, Townsville stadium, Nullinga Dam and Rockhampton Airport, just to name a few.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 February 2016, from the Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport, Hon. Curtis Pitt, to the Commonwealth Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia, Hon. Josh Frydenberg, regarding the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility [314].

As I have previously explained to the member for Hinchinbrook, my role is not minister for North Queensland. My role is Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, and part of my role is to actually work with all relevant ministers across each of their portfolio areas to deliver for North Queensland.

(Time expired)

M1 Motorway, Congestion

Mr BOOTHMAN: My question is directed to the Premier. In peak times on the M1, commuters sit in stationary vehicles queued up to half a kilometre long waiting to exit the motorway, particularly at exit 49 at Pimpama. To prevent a tragic accident, when will this government—often described as a do-nothing government—listen to the concerns of my residents and fix this interchange?

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

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: I rule the question out of order.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Why was the question ruled out of order?

Mr SPEAKER: I have made previous rulings into the appropriate references to the government. I find that question was out of order.

Police Resources

Ms PEASE: My question is directed to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services. I was pleased to hear that new police recruits were recently deployed in regional areas. Will the minister please advise what support these new officers will receive to help them keep the community safe?

Mr SPEAKER: There is one minute of question time remaining.

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for her question and acknowledge her strong support for our men and women in blue. Our government is providing the police with the resources that they need to keep Queenslanders safe, unlike the experience with the LNP government. What did they do when they were in government? They cut 106 senior police officers. They set up the Public Safety Business Agency as a sneaky plan to privatise, civilianise and outsource watch houses, speed camera operations and police academies. They transferred front-line police and emergency officers to that same agency.

What are we doing? We are delivering more police to the front line—an extra 266 police. We are backing them with better wages and better conditions. We are giving them body worn cameras and QLITE iPads. We are providing them with the resources they need to keep Queenslanders safe—unlike those opposite. All they did was talk down the police and not support them.

Mr SPEAKER: Question time has finished.

TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.06 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill 2017 [315].

Tabled paper: Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes [316].

The Palaszczuk government is today introducing the most significant changes to Queensland's retail trading hours in more than two decades. The changes in this bill will modernise and simplify current trading hours to support jobs, cut red tape and increase choice for consumers. A massive 99

specific trading hours provisions, contained in over 40 pages of orders from the QIRC, will be replaced by just six trading hours provisions covering all large stores across the state. Based on previous independent studies, Queensland Treasury estimate the proposed changes have the potential to increase gross state product by up to \$79 million and support up to an additional 945 full-time equivalent jobs.

The key proposed reforms in the bill will mean: allowable trading hours for non-exempt shops under the act will be extended in South-East Queensland from 7 am to 9 pm Monday to Saturday, in line with the decision by the QIRC in late 2016, and in regional Queensland from 7 am to 9 pm Monday to Friday and 7 am to 6 pm on Saturday. Trading hours for Sunday and public holiday trading will be standardised across Queensland from 9 am to 6 pm. Those regional towns that currently do not have Sunday and public holiday trading will be able to opt in to these trading hours through an application to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. That situation does not change.

Special tourist areas such as Port Douglas will have access to extended trading hours that meet the needs of domestic and international visitors. There will be provision for special trading hours applications to be made for extended trading around international events, such as the Commonwealth Games. Trading hours restrictions will be removed for butcher shops, special exhibitions and trade shows. All hardware stores can open on Sundays from 6 am. Extended trading hours will apply in the period leading up to Christmas for non-exempt shops in all areas of the state, with trading to close from 6 pm on Christmas Eve to allow retail workers to go home and be with their friends and family.

The employment thresholds at which independent retail shops become subject to the same trading restrictions as larger non-exempt shops will be lifted, from 20 to 30 employees on the floor in any one shop and from 60 to 100 employees where a number of related shops are operated. This will remove a current brake on employment and business expansion for smaller retail businesses; and the people of Queensland will be able to buy cars and caravans on a Sunday.

In introducing these reforms, the government also recognises that changes to trading hours can have impacts on retail workers and their families. That is why this bill includes protections for retail workers that will make it an offence for an employer to require an employee to work the extended trading hours that are being introduced unless the employee has freely elected to work those hours. This agreement to work must be made in writing. The requirement for agreement applies to all hours which are being extended by this amendment bill, not to Sundays and public holidays only.

The bill also amends the act to include the impact on employees as a new criterion for the QIRC to consider in deciding trading hours applications. With the exception of applications in relation to international events and any opt-in applications for Sunday and public holiday trading, there will be a five-year moratorium on further trading hours applications to extend the allowable trading hours for non-exempt shops. The moratorium will provide a period of stability and certainty for all parties and put a temporary end to the ongoing process and costs involved with retail organisations applying to the QIRC for trading hours orders. A review of the new trading hours arrangements will be held prior to the end of the moratorium period.

The introduction of these reforms follows a comprehensive review of Queensland retail trading hours by an independent reference group chaired by former Speaker and now QUT School of Justice Associate Professor John Mickel. The government announced the review on 31 August 2016 in response to concerns raised by business and the community that Queensland's trading hours arrangements are complex and confusing and may act as a disincentive to business expansion, employment and economic growth. The reference group comprised key business groups, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council and unions and was asked to look at how the regulatory framework for trading hours could be improved.

The review received over 170 submissions from business, consumers, workers and other community representatives. These submissions responded to questions raised in an issues paper released by the reference group on 2 October 2016. John Mickel delivered the review's report to government in December 2016, making 13 recommendations for the reform of trading hours in Queensland. The report was released publicly on 13 February 2017.

The report from John Mickel highlighted a number of complexities and anomalies with current trading hours arrangements. For example, under the current regulations, as mentioned, there are 99 different trading hours provisions. For Sunday alone, there are 30 different trading zones across Queensland. Easter Sunday is closed for trading in South-East Queensland but open for trading in major regional centres. Under the act, non-exempt shops close at 5 pm on a Saturday but 6pm on a Sunday. In South-East Queensland most major hardware shops cannot open until 9 am on a Sunday.

Once an independent retail shop has more than 20 employees on the shop floor, they fall into the non-exempt shop category. This acts as a brake on employment. These examples highlight how the current regulation of trading hours is confusing for consumers and complex for retailers. For 20 years, successive Queensland governments have failed to act and tackle these issues. By contrast, the Palaszczuk Labor government has grasped the nettle on this major piece of economic reform.

The retail trade industry in Queensland employs 255,000 Queenslanders, or 11 per cent of all jobs across the state, paying about \$9.9 billion in wages and accounting for \$76 billion in sales. Independent studies on the relaxation of trading hours restrictions have projected an economic benefit to Queensland ranging from \$200 million to \$253 million. The Palaszczuk government can make these positive changes for Queensland because we can work with business, unions and employees and we work in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

This bill is by no means a total deregulation of trading hours. As part of the review, a survey of over 3,000 Queenslanders was conducted, which found there was no overwhelming push for the deregulation of trading hours for all businesses. Consistent with the findings of the review, this is a sensible extension and simplification of current trading hours. We have got the balance right.

I also note that in response to concerns expressed by stakeholders in regional areas, the government has not accepted the recommendation from the review to extend Sunday and public holiday trading automatically to those 23 major regional towns that currently do not have it. Instead, industrial organisations and any other organisation, including a local council, can apply to the QIRC for their local area or region to opt in to those provisions. Currently, there are three such applications for the areas of Pittsworth, Warwick and Stanthorpe.

The bill before the House will now be referred to the relevant committee before it returns for debate, likely to be in the May sittings of parliament. However, for the benefit of the House I would like to flag that we do intend to progress one particular set of amendments to the trading hours legislation separately in advance of this amendment bill. These urgent amendments to the Trading Hours (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 will be moved later today by the Attorney-General during consideration in detail of the Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. The amendments are to establish Easter Sunday as an open trading day for all non-exempt—large—shops in South-East Queensland. This will complement legislative amendments already passed as part of the Industrial Relations Act 2016 which make Easter Sunday a public holiday from 2017. Easter Sunday falls on 16 April in 2017 and it is important to provide business, consumers and the public with certainty in terms of whether it will be an open or closed trading day.

One of the recommendations from the review was that the government consider standardisation of those public holidays that are to be treated as closed days for all non-exempt shops across the state. Under the current trading hours arrangements, non-exempt shops in South-East Queensland and regional areas without seven-day trading are required to be closed on five public holidays each year: Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Anzac Day, Labour Day and Christmas Day. These are the non-exempt shops in the south-east area. However, in the major population centres and tourist areas outside South-East Queensland the restriction only applies to four public holidays. They are able not to operate on Good Friday, Anzac Day, Labour Day and Christmas Day as Easter Sunday is an open trading day in those areas.

It makes sense to standardise closed trading days across Queensland as this will provide consumers, businesses and workers with greater certainty. Making Easter Sunday an additional closed trading day throughout the state would impose economic costs through lower consumer welfare, employment and retail sales affecting a peak time for tourism and visitors to the state, particularly now that Easter Sunday is a public holiday. It would also be a backward step, considering that many areas outside of South-East Queensland are able to open on Easter Sunday. For these reasons, the aim of the urgent amendments to be introduced later today is to confirm Easter Sunday as an open trading day in South-East Queensland in time for Easter 2017.

In conclusion, the amendments in this bill simplify and bring uniformity to trading hours arrangements, allowing retailers to set their hours to best service their customer needs. This is a huge reduction in red tape that will mean more jobs for Queenslanders, a stronger economy and a healthier retail competition, which means lower prices for customers. Importantly, no-one will be made to work any of the additional hours allowed by the changes unless they have voluntarily agreed to do so. More jobs, more choice and less red tape: that is what these reforms are all about.

Finally, I wish to place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation to the review chair, Mr John Mickel, and the members of the reference group for their sterling work on what is a very complex issue. The final outcome reflected in the bill now before the House today is a victory for common sense, jobs, the economy, and the community. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. G GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.21 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.21 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 136, the Finance and Administration Committee report to the House on the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill by 28 April 2017.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

LIQUOR AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 14 February (see p. 56).

Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (4.22 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. I note the committee tabled its report on 24 February 2017 recommending passage of the bill, and I now table the government response to the committee report.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 48—Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, government response [\[317\]](#).

I would like to thank all those who made written submissions to the committee and presented to the committee hearing. I would also like to thank those parties who provided input into the policy following the government's receipt of the interim evaluation. This consultation assisted the government in considering the course of its response to the evidence.

Let us be clear: the measures implemented in this bill enhance the Palaszczuk government's tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy initiatives to foster cultural change around drinking, encourage responsible drinking practices and create a safer environment in and around licensed premises in Queensland. The interim evaluation report on the first six months of implementation of the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy noted that there has been a continuation of an existing downward trend in non-domestic assaults statewide. However, the government considers that more can be done to reduce alcohol fuelled violence in Queensland and to realise the full intent of this policy. That is why the government has determined to refine the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy framework in order to address the findings of the interim evaluation report and implement complementary initiatives that are consistent with the current evidence on effective strategies for reducing alcohol related violence.

International peer reviewed research consistently indicates that for every hour that liquor trade is reduced there is a corresponding reduction in alcohol related harm of up to 22 per cent. By reducing permanent liquor service hours to 2 am statewide and 3 am in safe night precincts, the Palaszczuk government has already implemented the single most effective tool for reducing alcohol related assaults; however, the integrity of the key policy measure—reducing permanent liquor service hours—must be maintained. That is why the government has resolved to enhance the conditions around temporary late-night extended hours permits. The current laws have not allowed fidelity to the intent of the policy.

I note that the statement of reservation by the opposition members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee opposed changes to the permit system; however, the government takes the view that the current provisions allowing for licensed premises to be granted 12 temporary late-night extended hours permits in a one-year period were intended to enable licensees to offer up to 5 am liquor service on special occasions. In fact, that is the terminology regularly used by the Office of Liquor and Gaming in relation to these permits; however, the act does not specifically limit the permits to any particular reason.

Since the reduction of permanent liquor service hours on 1 July 2016, licensees have sought permits to allow up to 5 am liquor service on a business-as-usual basis. In order to ensure that temporary late-night extended hours permits are used for genuine special occasions as originally intended, the government considers it necessary to: cap the maximum number of permits that may be granted to a licensee to six; prohibit the granting of permits for two or more consecutive days or more than one per month except in relation to legitimate multiday events; and calculate the cap for new licensees on a pro rata basis taking into account the number of months in a calendar the licence is in effect.

The new criteria add rigour to the application process by requiring licensees seeking a temporary late-night extended hours permit to demonstrate that the permit will relate to a special occasion, being certain private functions or a special public event. By defining 'special public event' as 'unique or infrequent', the bill provides for a permit to be granted only in respect of special public events which do not occur regularly. Further, the requirement for the event to be of local, state or national significance will ensure that these permits are only granted for events that hold genuine importance within our communities. The new criteria also ensure that the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming may only grant a temporary late-night extended hours permit for hours that are linked to the duration of the event or a reasonable period before and after, if necessary, to ensure a safe environment.

I want to make it clear that temporary extended hours permits to sell liquor beyond the permanently approved liquor trading hours by licensed premises are not a right, and there is no guarantee that a licensee will be granted the maximum number of permits under the new cap. To ensure that these reforms can take place as soon as possible, and consistent with the original intent of the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy provisions, the new permit regime will apply retrospectively. From assent, all permits granted for future dates will be cancelled and pending applications will have the new special occasion criteria applied. A refund of the application fees for cancelled permits will be provided to licensees.

The stringent nature of these reforms emphasises the strength of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to reducing liquor service hours. This also ensures that the current use of these permits does not extend over coming months despite other changes to the act due to the applications being lodged well in advance. The Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming will consider applications for temporary late-night extended hours permits on a case-by-case basis to determine whether all of the legislative requirements are met. Additionally, the regulation-making power provided in the bill allows for the prescription of an event or class of events which would or would not be considered a special public event. The bill also limits the maximum six permits to a calendar year to enable more efficient administration and understanding of the provisions.

I note the statement of reservation regarding lockouts. Our government has been consistent in advocating an holistic policy package for tackling alcohol fuelled violence. These comprehensive measures are premised upon a key action: the reduction of late-night liquor service hours in Queensland. The interim evaluation report examined existing research and cites two studies published in 2016 which indicate that, in their own right, lockout provisions do not reduce alcohol related violence. The interim evaluation report also advised that enforcing the lockout would not have a significant effect on existing alcohol fuelled violence trends in Queensland.

After careful consideration of the interim evaluation report and evidence available, the government has decided not to implement the 1 am lockout provisions. We want to allow the 3 am trading hours and the 2 am trading hours laws an opportunity to work. Based on the interim evaluation report's endorsement of ID scanning to enforce banning orders, the government has announced that from 1 July 2017 relevant licensed premises in safe night precincts will be required to operate an approved ID-scanning system where their normal liquor trading hours are beyond midnight. Given the link between the statutory 1 am lockout and the 3 am safe night precincts, the government's preferred approach is to provide for consistency in the availability of 3 am liquor service in all 15 safe night precincts in Queensland.

The government acknowledges the value of place based liquor management strategies, and we will continue to work with safe night precinct local boards to develop and implement harm-reduction measures that cater for the specific needs of each precinct during the implementation period. Importantly, the evaluation in 2018 will be undertaken in the proper regulatory environment, informed by evidence from independent research experts.

The bill also includes amendments to the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to allow a sentencing court to impose a banning order on offenders convicted of a prescribed drug offence where the offence was committed in, or in a public place in the vicinity of, licensed premises. The amendment delivers on our commitment to expand upon the existing banning order framework, which currently applies to offenders convicted of offences of violence committed in, or in a public place in the vicinity of, licensed premises to also include convicted drug offenders. The bill extends the existing framework to apply to an offender who is convicted of an offence against section 5, Trafficking in Dangerous Drugs, or section 6, Supplying Dangerous Drugs, of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986.

To further support the changes to the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy, the bill makes technical changes in relation to future changes to the boundaries of safe night precincts and the times during which licensees need to scan patron IDs. These amendments clarify the operation of the Liquor Act and do not alter the existing process for safe night precinct boundary changes or the intended operation of the ID-scanning provisions that are in the act.

In addition to these amendments to support the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy, as flagged by Minister Grace I will also be moving amendments during consideration in detail to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 to establish Easter Sunday as an open trading day for all non-exempt shops in South-East Queensland. An employee will be required to work on Easter Sunday only if they have freely elected to work. This will complement legislative amendments already passed as part of the Industrial Relations Act 2016 which make Easter Sunday a public holiday from 2017. Easter Sunday falls on 16 April this year.

In 2016 the government approved an independent review of Queensland's shop trading hours. One of the recommendations of the review is that the government consider standardisation of those public holidays that are to be treated as closed days for non-exempt shops across the state. Under the current trading hours arrangements, non-exempt shops in South-East Queensland and regional areas without seven-day trading are required to be closed on five public holidays each year: Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Anzac Day, Labour Day and Christmas Day. In the major population centres and tourist areas outside South-East Queensland, the restriction applies to only four public holidays: Good Friday, Anzac Day, Labour Day and Christmas Day.

It makes sense to standardise closed trading days across Queensland, as this will provide consumers, businesses and workers with greater certainty. Maintaining Easter Sunday as an additional closed trading day throughout the state would impose economic costs through lower consumer welfare, employment and retail sales, affecting a peak time for tourism and visitors to the state. It would also be a backward step considering many areas outside of South-East Queensland are able to trade on Easter Sunday.

In closing, the liquor reforms implemented by the bill are necessary to support the integrity of the government's policy to reduce liquor service hours. When we say last drinks at 2 am statewide and 3 am in safe night precincts, we mean that liquor service ends at those times. When licensees are able to continually sell liquor beyond these times as a general business practice, it not only compromises the harm-reduction benefits of the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy; it also undermines the government's efforts to facilitate cultural change.

As I said in my introductory speech, Queenslanders expect their government to listen to the evidence and take action that will reduce the harm caused by alcohol related violence. Further, the public have a right to expect balanced policymaking rather than pointscoreing. We remain determined to

tackle alcohol fuelled violence. The amendments in the bill reflect the evidence and bring us closer to our goal: a vibrant and safe night-life across Queensland. Once again, I thank the committee for its consideration of this important bill, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (4.35 pm): Well, colleagues, haven't we been here before? This is *deja vu*. That was the same speech the Attorney-General gave when she introduced lockouts in Queensland, and lockouts were going to prevent every alcohol related violence incident in the state! Now she is using the same speech to justify why lockouts will not save people in this state and that is why they are going to get rid of them.

Mrs Smith: We told you so.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection: we told you so. Two years ago there was a comprehensive plan tackling alcohol and drug related violence. That was the LNP's safe night precinct plan.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Attorney-General may want to interject, but everything she has done in the past two years, other than earlier trading times, is contained in the Safe Night Out Strategy the LNP introduced. We have gone around in circles to get to where we are today. You can shake your head, Attorney-General, but ID scanners are already law. You know that. They were the law in July 2015.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I make it clear to two potential sparring partners: please direct all comments through the chair and do not engage in conversations across the chamber.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Attorney-General knows that ID scanners are currently the law. They are the law because the LNP introduced them into law in Queensland. They were due to start in June 2015. The Attorney-General knows that she delayed the introduction of ID scanners because of all of these sorts of issues. She said at the time, 'We might not need ID scanners because we have lockout laws.' Now we do not need lockout laws because we will have ID scanners, which she has delayed again until June this year.

The law at the moment is ID scanners and lockouts. If you were in the Valley on the weekend you would know that lockouts are law in this state as we speak, but guess what? The government is turning a blind eye to them. The government is turning a blind eye to ID scanners. The government is turning a blind eye to lockout laws. The Attorney-General is the first law officer of the state. There are liquor licensing laws in place, but imagine her saying to the police, 'Don't worry. Don't abide by the laws because we're not going to enforce them. We know what the laws are. We know what is in the Criminal Code. We're just not going to enforce it because we have completely botched alcohol laws in this state.' For two years this bungling Attorney-General has gone from bungle to bungle.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Attorney-General can laugh, but the egg is on her face. We debated liquor laws over a year ago. The introduction of—

Mrs Smith interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will get to the employment minister in a minute.

Mr Cripps: Don't forget Grace!

Mr BLEIJIE: I will not forget the Minister for Employment. I will not forget her.

Mr Cripps: Or the member for Stafford.

Mr BLEIJIE: I assure the member for Hinchinbrook that I will get to the member for Brisbane Central in about 50 minutes time and I will get to the member for Stafford in about 55 minutes time. I have a few more minutes to spend talking about the Attorney-General.

When in opposition the Attorney-General said that everything contained in the safe night precincts policy was terrible and was not going to work. That is why those opposite stood up with Professor Jake Najman during the election campaign and announced this lockout laws policy, yet two years later at the committee hearing last week Professor Jake Najman said that these laws have been a complete failure and also criticised the government for getting rid of lockout laws. We know what the political reality of this situation is. Those opposite are not getting rid of lockout laws because of some interim report that was handed down. They are not getting rid of lockout laws because they have had this epiphany that lockout laws do not work, because we told them that all along. We are not getting rid of lockout laws for good public policy grounds; we are getting rid of lockout laws in the state of Queensland because of the member for Brisbane Central, because the member for Brisbane Central—

Mr Cripps: Has rolled the member for Stafford.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Hinchinbrook. The member for Brisbane Central has rolled the member for Stafford on this particular issue.

Mr Cripps: Rolled him over!

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Brisbane Central was sick and tired of not being invited to the rallies in her electorate against the lockouts. They were feeling the political pressure and, under cover of darkness and under cover of holidays—of course when the Premier was nowhere to be seen—they roll out the Deputy Premier. All of a sudden this has become an issue. I can imagine the phone call with the Deputy Premier to the Attorney-General over the Christmas break on some island somewhere: 'Listen, the lockouts are causing grief. We've got to get rid of them. We've been saying they're going to save lives for the last two years, but we've got to get rid of them. How're we going to do it?'

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection; perhaps by private email possibly. The Deputy Premier would have said to the Attorney, 'How are we going to get rid of lockout laws?', and the Attorney-General comes up with this excuse about this interim report. We had never heard of an interim report. There was never going to be an interim six-month report into the lockout laws in Queensland. There was going to be a 12-month to two-year review into the liquor laws, but all of a sudden we have an interim report. I can imagine the phone call—and the way she is smiling I know it is true—to their Labor mate Professor Peter Miller saying, 'We need you to bring forward your interim report.' He would have said, 'What interim report?', because it was never discussed! It was never announced there was going to be any interim report. There was going to be a report into liquor laws, trading hours and lockout laws, but all of a sudden the political fix came in and they needed an interim report and the interim report indicated what the LNP had said all along: lockout laws were not going to solve the issues of alcohol fuelled violence in the state of Queensland. We had said it in government. We had said it for two years and when we left government incidents of alcohol and drug related violence were on the decrease in all safe night precincts—on the decrease. Why would you stop doing something that was working?

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Attorney-General can interject all she wants, but essentially she has done a complete double backflip, triple up-in-the-air somersault and landed where the LNP started. That is what has happened here. The LNP had a policy and the Labor Party had a policy and effectively, other than earlier trading hours, the Labor Party has copied the LNP policy. Unfortunately, it has taken it two years to get to this spot. It has taken it two years to realise that we were right and it was wrong.

As I said, the Premier was away when it was announced. It was a pretty big decision to get rid of lockouts in the state, and I note that the Deputy Premier announced it, not the Premier. I quote an article from 14 February 2016 titled 'Palaszczuk on lockout laws: "please, just forget about politics for one week"'. That is what the Premier said at the time. Going back a year ago, the Premier said—

I don't know how anyone in good conscience could vote against these laws ...

that is, the lockout laws. Again she said—

I don't know how anyone in good conscience could vote against these laws ...

Guess what? The LNP in good conscience did vote against these laws and the Labor Party is now voting against its own laws that it introduced. In fact, it introduced them but never commenced them. It never commenced the laws because it said that it was not going to apply the laws and it was not going to police the laws. This has confused industry. I make the point that for 12 months industry had been preparing for lockouts to commence on 1 February. Just before lockouts were to commence, their world changed and lockouts were no more. They had already let people go because of the lockout laws. They had already changed their business practices because of the introduction of lockout laws. They had sacked workers because of the Attorney-General's lockout laws. At the eleventh hour the government then changes the lockouts, and guess what? They do not apply in the state anymore despite the law being the law of the day.

I went to Cairns and talked to the traders up there prior to Christmas about lockout laws and they were telling me that the Attorney-General had put them in a very difficult position under her legislation. Her legislation said that if you want to trade until three o'clock in the morning you have to have a 1 am lockout and if you cannot agree in the safe night precincts about that strategy you would all be at two o'clock. Unfortunately for Cairns, they took a vote and it was a tied vote. Some of the businesses wanted to trade until three o'clock with a 1 am lockout and some businesses wanted to trade until two o'clock.

It was a tied vote and they wrote to the Attorney-General—and I have seen and read the letter—saying, ‘How could you put us in this position—business against business in the Cairns community, a tourist icon?’ The Attorney-General put them in that position to vote against each other, to pit businesses against each other—small business against large business—in terms of when they would close at either 3 am or 2 am but with the 1 am lockout. They wrote to the Attorney-General and said, ‘We can’t decide because there’s been a tied vote.’ It would then be up to the Attorney-General to decide when all those businesses in Cairns closed. If I had money on it, I would suggest the Attorney would have taken the safe road and went with 2 am and that would have killed the tourism economy of Cairns. It would have killed the tourism economy of Cairns.

In the Valley they chose 3 am with a 1 am lockout and it was not a tied vote. It was not a unanimous vote, but it was not a tied vote. In Cairns the government pitted the businesses against each other. After having that fight with the business community and forcing the business community to fight amongst itself, the Attorney-General then came out in January this year and said, ‘We’re getting rid of lockout laws.’ What was the fight worth? All that fighting that took place over the last year and this Attorney-General—this minister responsible for liquor licensing—the member for Stafford, the member for Brisbane Central and the Premier all stood up in here and said, ‘How could you object to this? In good conscience, how could you vote against lockout laws?’ How in good conscience can those opposite vote to get rid of lockout laws now? When the Premier said a year ago how in good conscience could you vote against these laws, how in good conscience can those opposite introduce laws to get rid of the very laws that they put in place?

Dr Rowan: Because the Labor Party stands for hypocrisy.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Moggill about the Labor Party standing for hypocrisy. I will go one step further: the Labor Party stands for nothing. The Labor Party stands for nothing in the state of Queensland. It stands for political expediency. It stands for political fixing. It stands for political fixing particular seats when there is a hot political issue to discuss. The LNP has been consistent on lockouts in the state of Queensland. The LNP has been consistent on safe night precinct legislation. The LNP has been consistent on our policy. We have not jumped from policy to policy to policy. We consulted with Queenslanders. We had the safe night strategy out there and we consulted with Queenslanders. We not only consulted but also went back to all residents of Queensland and said, ‘This is the first round of consultation. These are the outcomes of the consultation. What do you think about this strategy?’ Queenslanders had a second bite at the cherry—a second opportunity to tell us what they thought about liquor and drug laws in the state of Queensland.

Of course, the Labor Party said that it had a better way—a better way, know it all and having the review. Let me go back a step to where this legislation all came from. It came from a couple of ministers flying down to Newcastle and having a look at what worked in Newcastle—lockout laws, ID scanners, earlier trading hours; all of that sort of stuff. They did not look at the evidence that showed that, although violence may have decreased in Newcastle, violence in the surrounding suburbs had increased. They did not look at the CBD of Sydney, or Kings Cross in Sydney, where the incidence of violence had decreased. Of course, violence had decreased in those areas, because half the businesses closed down. There was no-one there to commit violence, but I will tell members that there were people in the suburbs to commit violence. The people did not stop drinking; they just chose a different place to drink.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member from Brisbane Central. She said that is because they have done it right. This law repeals your own government’s laws. How could you have done it right? You are getting rid of your own laws.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member for Kawana, please direct your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: I say to the member for Brisbane Central that the bill that we are debating today repeals the Labor government’s policy on lockout laws. How could the government have got it so right 12 months ago and now so wrong? I will tell members why: the government is now copying LNP policy. We are going right back to where we started three years ago with the introduction of the most comprehensive legislation in Australia dealing with alcohol fuelled violence.

Where did this legislation come from? It came from a man who was elected on one issue, and that is the member for Stafford. He was elected because he said that he wanted to make a difference. I commend him for wanting to make a difference with alcohol fuelled violence. We all do. That is why we had the safe night precincts. We do not want to see violence, but we do not want to punish the majority of good citizens for the sins of a few. That is what the Labor Party was doing.

The member for Stafford was elected on one issue alone and he has spent two years flying around the state with various stakeholders, with the health minister and the Premier, standing side by side with the Attorney-General at press conferences and standing side by side with the Minister for Health at press conferences. When they wanted, they rolled out the doctor. They rolled out the member for Stafford because he was the expert in alcohol fuelled violence. I remember seeing him at all the press conferences. In fact, when the Attorney-General was in hiding, I remember the Labor Party sent out the member for Stafford to hold the press conference on liquor laws in this state on his own. Yet he has been rolled completely. What was the response of the member for Stafford to the media when he was asked last week to comment on Labor's lockout law reversal? The member for Stafford said, 'I'm not commenting, because this is not relation to my portfolio.'

When were liquor laws and alcohol fuelled violence part of his portfolio of State Development? The member stood next to the minister responsible for liquor laws and the health minister and talked about alcohol fuelled violence. It is convenient that liquor laws are not in his portfolio. I know that he lost vegetation management from his portfolio to the Deputy Premier, but he never had liquor licensing in his portfolio. The Attorney-General, the health minister and the Premier were happy to roll out the member for Stafford when it suited and then they rolled him in cabinet. When he got rolled in cabinet the member for Stafford said, 'I can't speak about this matter. It's not in my portfolio.' Is it any wonder the member for Stafford is not on the speaking list today?

A government member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He is? His name does not appear on my speaking list. I look forward to the member for Stafford coming in here and saying to the people of the state of Queensland that the one issue he was elected on was the introduction of lockout laws in the state of Queensland—

An opposition member: The greatest moral challenge of all time.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Stafford was elected on the greatest moral challenge of all time—dealing with alcohol fuelled violence—and, at the first opportunity, he absolutely squibbed it. The Labor Party rolled him out for press conference after press conference. I really feel for the member for Stafford because, if I were him, I would feel used and abused by the Labor Party. When it suited, the Labor Party was very happy to roll out the member for Stafford. They rolled him out because he was a doctor and he had expertise—

Mr Cripps: Credibility.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection from the member for Hinchinbrook. The member for Stafford had credibility on the issue, so the Labor Party rolled him out.

Ms Grace: And still does.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection from the member from Brisbane Central. The minister says that the Labor Party still rolls him out. I have not seen him rolled out since the reversal of lockout laws was announced in January.

Mr Stevens: He has been rolled.

Mr BLEIJIE: He has been rolled, not rolled out.

Ms GRACE: I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading. My interjection was not what the member said. I take offence. I ask that he withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! The minister has asked that you withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. For two years the member for Stafford has been rolled out to convince everybody that lockouts are such an issue that we need them in the state of Queensland. Of course, we do not see him now. He was quoted in the paper that it was not in his portfolio so he is not going to comment on it. Why not? He has been commenting on this issue for two years. Who has silenced the member for Stafford? Why is he all of a sudden not going to comment? Why all of a sudden—

An opposition member: He's been gagged.

Mr BLEIJIE: Has the member for Stafford been gagged? The other reason for this legislation is that Professor Peter Miller conducted a review into the lockouts in Newcastle. He wrote a piece about lockouts and earlier trading times. I have mentioned in this place before that Professor Peter Miller just happened to win the tender to review the government's lockout laws. The very professor who says that he has expertise in this issue and who recommended to the government that we should have earlier trading hours and lockout laws in the state of Queensland has now been awarded the tender to review the very laws that he helped set up.

After I questioned his independence in the media, Professor Miller sent me an email. He was very upset that I had questioned his independence. Let me make it absolutely categorical: Professor Miller cannot commit to an independent, unbiased review into the lockout laws and alcohol laws in the state of Queensland that he assisted the government to set up. If Professor Peter Miller were in any doubt as to what I thought about his independence or otherwise, let me make it abundantly clear: he cannot conduct an independent inquiry in relation to liquor laws in the state of Queensland for the Labor government, because he is on record suggesting the very laws that we are debating. He is on record suggesting earlier trading times. Can members imagine a situation in which Professor Peter Miller, who has spent his life advocating for earlier closing times, after the review and the evaluation has been done, reporting that we should not have earlier closing times? That is absolute nonsense.

Did the Attorney-General, did the Premier, did the member for Stafford—did anyone in the government or staff members in the Attorney-General's office—have meetings with Professor Peter Miller in relation to liquor laws in the state prior to him being awarded a tender? What accountability measures were put in place to ensure that Professor Peter Miller will undertake an independent inquiry with respect to the liquor laws that the government has introduced?

Ms Grace: He has integrity. That's why.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. No-one is questioning his integrity. I am questioning his independence.

Ms Grace: His independence comes with integrity.

Mr BLEIJIE: His independence comes with integrity? Really?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Could I ask the minister and the member for Kawana to cease conversations and please direct all comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: My point is that he is not independent. I cannot imagine a situation where he can produce an unbiased and independent report on laws that he advocated for in the state of Queensland. That is equivalent to the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations conducting a review into trading hours legislation that she just introduced—her own legislation, her own laws.

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Surfers Paradise, or a DG whose employment is at the whim of the Premier of the state of Queensland—who can hire and fire a DG—conducting an independent investigation with respect to one of the Premier's ministers. As if that is going to happen! One would think that it could get no more embarrassing for the government and the bungling Attorney-General than coming in here and moving legislation that repeals her own legislation which she introduced and spoke so strongly about a year ago. She said, 'How could anyone vote against this type of legislation?' We will get to that; but it can be more embarrassing, because we find out today, just before the Attorney-General got up to speak about her legislation getting rid of her own legislation, that the minister for employment—I cannot believe I am saying this—just introduced legislation and before the legislation is debated, before the minister has even moved the second reading of her own legislation, she is foreshadowing amendments to that legislation through the liquor bill we are debating now and the Attorney-General will be moving amendments.

Ms Grace: It's not in the bill.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. It is not in your bill but it should be. Those opposite forgot when Easter Sunday was. They forgot that Easter Sunday is on the day of Easter Sunday. The member for Brisbane Central wants to interject. Now let me tell the true story about what is really happening here. Last year when we debated the Industrial Relations Bill I warned the member for Brisbane Central, the minister for IR. I said at the time, and it will be in *Hansard*, 'You're making Easter Sunday a public holiday? Okay, we oppose that. I see you have made it a public holiday.' I also said, 'You forgot to amend, at the same time, the allowable trading hours legislation. You are saying to businesses in the state of Queensland you can have Easter Sunday as a public holiday, but you actually forgot to amend the legislation that allows the businesses to trade on Sunday.' Guess what? All this time has transpired and we are now debating liquor laws in the state of Queensland and then at the last minute to the liquor laws we have amendments to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 to fix up their bungle—another bungle by the Attorney-General and the minister for IR.

This amendment is so bad they cannot even move it within the current debate. They have to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill because Easter Sunday trading has got nothing to do with lockout laws. They have to rush an amendment in dealing with a bill they actually just introduced on trading hours. I suspect what has happened is they introduced the trading hours bill, then realised

that it is not actually going to be debated and passed before Easter Sunday arrives—oops, whoops, oops, whoops—so they now have to move an amendment to the liquor bill to make sure that Easter Sunday is a public holiday. You could write a script on this.

Mr Stevens: The 'saving Grace' bill!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach, the 'saving Grace' bill. This will be a Netflix original. You cannot make this stuff up.

Ms Grace: Come on, it's not as big as the ones that you've made. This is ridiculous.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. At no time have I ever stood in this place as a minister of the Crown and introduced a piece of legislation and said, 'By the way, the Attorney-General or another minister is about to introduce an amendment to their piece of legislation which I should be introducing in my legislation but because I have buggered the timing up of Easter Sunday I can't do. I have never done that. I respect this place, I respect the procedures of parliament, but to see the minister for industrial relations introduce a bill, but then the Attorney-General introduce an amendment to a piece of legislation—

Ms Grace: It's not an amendment.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. It is not an amendment she said. Madam Speaker, this is the amendment! It has been circulated. Part 5 'A-M-E-N-D-M-E-N-T'. That spells 'amendment'. How is the industrial relations minister saying, 'It's not an amendment.'? It says it is an amendment! Of course it is an amendment. The reason the industrial relations minister is carrying on the way she is carrying on is that she is embarrassed and so she should be. She ought to be embarrassed and the Attorney-General ought to be embarrassed. This whole thing is embarrassing. We are debating legislation to get rid of legislation that has been introduced but has not been policed and we are now debating an amendment to a piece of legislation introduced today to deal with Easter Sunday that has not been done. This is a joke! It is an absolute shemozzle! This mob could not run a chook raffle. This is ridiculous. The industrial relations minister should hang her head in shame with embarrassment. Getting rid of the Attorney-General's own legislation before it even starts is an embarrassment in itself.

This amendment, which will be coming in—it is an amendment; I have spelt it out so it is clearly an amendment—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. If I can give any advice to the member for Brisbane Central it would be that she should just stop interjecting because I have an answer for every interjection she has. It is so embarrassing. I have an answer for every interjection she wants to throw at me. I acknowledge it is not an amendment to the liquor bill. It is an amendment to a bill passed six months ago because, as I said, six months ago they forgot to deal with Easter Sunday. They forgot to put in the legislation the allowable trading hours. They have realised that they forgot to do it again and they have got to rush it through. Easter Sunday has been set for years. We have known the date of Easter Sunday. We had sittings at the end of last year. We came back on 14 February this year. The amendments could have been put in place then. In fact, this bill, the Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, was introduced in the last sitting. If they wanted to move the amendment which they are seeking to move today about Easter Sunday they could have introduced it in the bill two weeks ago.

Mr Cripps: They didn't know!

Mr BLEIJIE: They did not know. They forgot again. I kept reminding them. Again it is the opposition governing the state of Queensland. It is the opposition being the government. Maybe I should send the industrial relations minister one of my little Jarrod Bleijie calendars. Easter Sunday and all the public holidays are highlighted on it. I might do that. I will send the Labor members my calendar to show when Easter Sunday is. That is the amendment we are dealing with. What an embarrassment. We are going to oppose the amendment on the principle that we cannot support it because it is rotten to the core in terms of how it is being introduced. It is outside the long title. It has nothing to do with the bungled liquor laws and we will oppose it when the Attorney-General moves that particular amendment for an issue that has nothing to do with her portfolio. The minister for industrial relations forgot to do it in a bill of her own so we have to deal with that.

Let us deal with ID scanners. In June 2015 when ID scanners were due to be introduced, the Attorney-General said, 'No, we are putting those off. We will not introduce those'. They did not get rid of them; they just shot them into the long grass. However, the Attorney-General forgot and they actually

started; they forgot to delay it again. ID scanners by law came in through regulation. They simply forgot. Then the Attorney-General's department had to send out an email to licensees saying, 'You would know that the regulation enforcing ID scanners is in place in Queensland. However, we are not going to enforce it'—

Mr Stevens: He's come across to our side.

Mr BLEIJIE: The two doctors are going out to have a chat about liquor laws. The Attorney-General's department put out a missive to all the liquor licence holders across the state saying, 'You would know that ID scanners are law now, but we are not going to police the ID scanning law, so it's okay. We are turning a blind eye to the ID scanning laws.' Lockout law were due to commence on 1 February, but they turned a blind eye to that.

This legislation deals with the 12 extended licences a year that licensees could have. In consideration of introducing lockout laws, the government allowed licensees to apply for 12 special extended trading permits for particular things. For example, there might be a big concert to be held at Suncorp or at the Gabba. Some may be going to the Adele concert on Saturday night, as I am. There might be a particular thing happening around a licence, so the licensee might say, 'There will be a heap of people in that particular area and we want an extended trading licence'. Therefore, the government legislated for 12 extended permits. Not only did the government legislate; they said to the licensees, 'If you want it, you have to apply to the liquor commissioner for approval'. So businesses applied to the liquor commissioner and the liquor commissioner approved particular licences. Then—shock, horror—the government said, 'We are getting rid of lockouts, because businesses were misusing the permits'—that is, the permits that the government introduced and approved. A poor business applies for a permit pursuant to Labor's legislation, has it approved by the liquor commissioner and then apparently misuses the permit. How can you misuse something that the government has given you? How can it be misuse when the government says, 'If you have a particular function and you want to trade until five o'clock in the morning, go for it,' so they use it? They say, 'Yes please,' but then the government says that they are not only abusing but also colluding with each other on the permit system.

The permit numbers are to be reduced from 12 to six, which we oppose. We oppose it because, if it was such a great idea to have 12 in the first place, what has changed? The only thing that has changed is that lockout laws are no more. The government is getting rid of its own laws to deal with alcohol fuelled violence. Therefore, we will oppose the proposed change to the permit system. Before I rose to speak, I was told that a licensee who had applied for an extended permit for this weekend was advised at 3.34 this afternoon that their permit had been granted. Two days before the event, at 3.34 this afternoon, the Attorney-General's department advised a trader that they could have the extended trading permit.

Mr Krause: They are still approving?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Beaudesert, who has hit the nail on the head: they are still approving the permits. They were approving permits at 3.34 this afternoon. Two days before the weekend, the Attorney-General's department has approved permits. They are doing that because businesses are applying for them pursuant to the laws that the Attorney-General introduced that said they could have 12 extended trading permits a year.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I do not know even what that interjection was, so I will not take it.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Cripps: She supports it.

Mr BLEIJIE: She supports it; I take the interjection. I could say anything in this debate, but nothing can get away from the fact that this is a complete bungle by the Attorney-General. I saw the Attorney-General getting advice from the former Labor attorney-general. If I were her, I would steer clear of advice from the member for Woodridge. I would stay away from that advice, because we know what happened with SPER when the member for Woodridge was the attorney-general. We know what happened to SPER under the former Labor attorney-general.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He can interject all he wants. We know what happened to SPER under his watch. We know what is happening to the health payroll and to the nurses under his watch. You cruel, cruel man! You are a cruel man—

Mr POWER: I rise to a point of order.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Linard): Order! Member for Kawana, come back to the bill please.

Mr BLEIJIE: I certainly will. It is with great excitement that we hear that the member for Stafford will be contributing to this debate, as he has been the expert and the government spokesperson on this issue. In fact, I would suggest that he been more of a government spokesperson on lockout laws than has the Attorney-General, the health minister or the Premier. Certainly, if you googled 'Dr Anthony Lynham, member for Stafford, lockout laws', you will get more hits than the same search under the Attorney-General's name. However, after today's embarrassing backdown, backflip and triple somersault, no doubt we will be reading a lot more about the Attorney-General. In the eight years that I have been here, I do not know that I have seen a minister of the Crown introduce legislation and then stop enforcing that legislation and completely repeal it, which is what this bill will do. This bill is completely repealing the legislation that she introduced and spoke so passionately about—

Mrs D'Ath: One part of it.

Mr BLEIJIE: One part of it? Does the Attorney-General not think that lockouts are a pretty big part of this? Are they not a pretty big part of liquor laws in the state of Queensland? Are they just 'one part of it'? I take that interjection. The Attorney-General says that it is just one part—just a small part—of the liquor laws in the state of Queensland, but the lockout laws were the element of their law, because the reduction of trading hours was based on lockouts. You could trade until three o'clock in the morning if you had a 1 am lockout. If you did not have a 1 am lockout, you had to trade to 2 am. The basis of the Attorney-General's trading-hour reduction was the lockouts. The heart of it was the lockouts. If they rip out the heart of it, what are we left with? Other than the trading hours, we are left with the safe night strategy that the LNP introduced. Under that strategy, education was going to be introduced in year 7 and was to run through to year 12.

Mr Langbroek: Yes, I did that.

Mr BLEIJIE: The former minister for education introduced that for years 7 to 12. Is education happening in our schools? Is it compulsory? I have not heard if education is happening in schools. We had the police banning orders. We now have people being charged and convicted under the one-punch laws that we introduced, which is the charge of unlawful striking causing death. Labor had 20 years to come up with a one-punch law. We did it and we did it because we sought advice from the chief prosecutor at the time, Mr Moynihan, who is now His Honour. I thank him for the advice that he gave to come up with the charge of unlawful striking causing death. For years, families of victims had been wanting an alternative to manslaughter, as a lot of people were not being convicted of that charge and they certainly were not being convicted of murder. That was a good change and it still applies.

I have already talked about ID scanners. We thought they were a great idea, but they thought they were a bad idea. Then they delayed them and now they will fix everything, because they are reintroducing them and claiming them. When the Premier talked about lockout laws and trading hours, she said, 'We are going to get rid of the lockout laws that we introduced because we think that ID scanners will be a good solution in place of lockout laws.'

Mrs Smith interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Why was that statement not the statement a year and a half ago? Why was that statement not around a year ago when we debated the liquor laws? They said plenty about ID scanners—privacy, concerns; delay, delay, delay. That is why the Attorney-General delayed it. Now we see that ID scanners are going to solve all the issues. They are now the friends of ID scanners which are meant to commence mid this year. Of course, we have seen all the other bumbles in terms of liquor reform.

What would we expect when we have a government that has restarted the debt collectors for nurses across the state caught up with the health payroll bungle? We would expect bumbles in this legislation. It is the Labor Party. It is the Labor government. Whatever they touch turns to rubbish. Whatever they touch is rubbish.

The Attorney-General gave a great big speech about liquor laws in this state. She did not talk much about lockout laws just now. She did not actually talk about what this bill does. It gets rid of what she put in a year ago.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I was listening intently, Attorney-General, I can assure you of that. I have listened to the rubbish for two years. I have listened to the same rubbish being rolled out. Now when we accuse the government of all the rubbish they were spurring out—including by the member for Stafford—we find that it is not rubbish anymore. It is apparently good policy not to have lockout laws.

No-one is fooled by this bungle. No-one is fooled by what this government is trying to do. They are fixing a political issue for them. The issue is that people were campaigning against the member for Brisbane Central and the member for South Brisbane, the Deputy Premier. Why do members think the Deputy Premier made the announcement about getting rid of lockouts? It was because when the boss was away the deputy came out to play and made the decision to get rid of the lockouts. She called the Attorney-General and said, 'No, no, no.'

If members want any reminder of that I point to the fact that at estimates last year the Leader of the Opposition directly asked the Premier about lockouts. The Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield, said to the Premier, 'Do you support your lockout laws and will you introduce them on 1 February?' The Premier said, 'I have no intention to change our laws beginning on 1 February.' I then asked the Attorney-General in estimates whether she still supports lockouts. She said, 'We have no intention to change our policy that commences on 1 February.'

Ladies and gentlemen, the only thing that commenced on 1 February was lockouts. They supported lockouts right up until the end of last year but realised with the protests and the petitions that they had a political issue. The member for Brisbane Central rolled into cabinet and the member for Stafford was rolled by those members who are being impacted politically.

We will support getting rid of lockouts because that is our policy. We said at the time that it was not going to work. We do not think it will work. We campaigned on that. Believe it or not, I stood on a stage with the Greens party.

Mr Seeney: No wonder you had trouble saying it.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Callide. No wonder I had trouble saying it. I stood on a stage with the Greens party.

Miss Barton: Why would you admit it?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Broadwater—why would I admit it? I will regret it for the rest of my life. When I had members of the Greens party cheering me on in terms of alcohol policy in the state of Queensland I questioned whether I was on the right side of the law. I questioned what we were doing. Then I saw the businesses in the crowd, I saw the security guards in the crowd, I saw the DJs in the crowd, I saw young women hospitality workers in the crowd who were going to lose their jobs because of Labor's lockouts laws. That is when I knew that we had the right policy.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. The member for Brisbane Central was not at the protest.

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I cannot help but take an interjection from the current member for Murrumba. I am not sure where he has been pushed off to now the other guy is coming into his seat. He interjects and says that that comes from the person who is taking away penalty rates. That cannot go unchallenged.

I suggest the member for Murrumba talk to the fellow sitting just a couple of seats down. The member for Woodridge was the industrial relations minister at the time and referred the industrial relations power of the state of Queensland to the federal government that set up the Fair Work Commission—that set up the very body that made the penalty rate decision. The member for Woodridge referred the powers to the federal government. The member for Woodridge set up the Fair Work Commission.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Fair Work Commission was set up by the member for Woodridge.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He handballed it all. He threw it all to the federal government and said, 'You deal with it.' We did not support it.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the member for Woodridge's interjection. We opposed the law at the time. We opposed his referral of powers to the Fair Work Commission. We objected to it. The minister referred the powers to the federal government. He set up the Fair Work Commission. If the member for Murrumba wants to have a fight then he should talk to the member for Woodridge because he was the bloke who set the Fair Work Commission up. He was the one who said to Queensland workers, 'Out with you; off to Canberra.'

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Linard): Member for Kawana, please keep your comments relevant to the bill.

Ms Grace interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, I ask that you cease interjecting. Member for Kawana, you still have time on the clock, would you like to come back to the bill?

Mr BLEIJIE: As I was saying, the Premier and the Attorney-General indicated that they still support lockout laws.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: You put it there, mate. The Attorney-General and the Premier said last year that the lockout laws will stay and commence on 1 February.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I would suggest that the members opposite, particularly the member for Woodridge, who is doing lots of interjecting and is not in his seat—I understand his embarrassment that he was the one who referred the industrial relations powers that set up—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Health, I ask that you cease interjecting. While we are at it, I remind members in the chamber of the honours list: the education minister, the health minister and the members for Indooroopilly, Hinchinbrook, Callide, Kawana and Nanango. Those members received warnings this afternoon. I ask that all members—

Mrs Frecklington: Was I on that?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nanango is on that list. I remind members that those members have been warned and ask everyone in the chamber to be quiet. The member for Kawana has the call.

Mr BLEIJIE: When we are talking about the Premier and the Attorney-General saying that they still support lockouts commencing on 1 February, let us not forget that in November last year the LNP moved a motion essentially saying that we should get rid of lockouts in this state and they said no. In November last year—

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General who is yawning and says it is boring. We are debating your bill. Had the Attorney-General not bungled this issue so much we would not be debating this issue. In November last year the Attorney-General voted in this place to keep lockouts.

The LNP have been consistently opposed to lockouts. The LNP have been consistent with our safe night strategy. The LNP have been consistent with our education in schools. The LNP have been consistent with banning orders. The LNP have been consistent with additional police powers. The LNP have been consistent with ID scanners. The LNP have been consistent over and over again with our laws in relation to alcohol and drug fuelled violence. We have not changed our position on this. We have not jumped from position to position. We have not jumped issue because of protests. We have not jumped just because the member for Brisbane Central cannot front a protest in her own electorate on liquor laws and then all of a sudden changed their mind. This is an embarrassment for the Attorney-General. This is an embarrassment for the government.

Mr Power: Are you guys reminded of why you lost the election, because you were like this all the time.

Mr BLEIJIE: Who are you? I do not even know who you are. There is a stranger in the House. The government should be embarrassed by these laws. The government should be embarrassed.

Mr Power interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Linard): Member for Logan, your interjections are irrelevant. I ask that you cease interjecting.

Mr BLEIJIE: Everything about the member for Logan is irrelevant, Madam Deputy Speaker, I can assure you of that.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, that is not necessary either and unparliamentary. Return to the bill, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Logan voted in this place in November last year to keep lockouts. Is the member for Logan going to vote for this legislation that gets rid of lockouts? If he does, he will effectively be supporting an LNP motion that we debated in November.

Mr Power interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Logan, you are now warned under standing order 253A. I ask that you cease interjecting. Member for Kawana, cease goading and return to the bill.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Logan and others voted against a motion in November to get rid of lockout laws. If the member for Logan chooses to vote for this legislation this evening or tomorrow, whenever it is debated, he is effectively supporting LNP policy because that is what this bill is. This bill is LNP policy other than two elements. One element is reducing 12 extended trading hours licences to six; we oppose that. The other element we oppose is the amendment to Easter Sunday trading which has nothing to do with the liquor laws we are debating today.

The government have botched this. The government bungle time and time again. No doubt in six months we will be back here debating some new liquor laws because they will realise that what they have introduced is not working. They will realise that what they have done is taken the problem from where it is controlled with police, chaplains and other areas in our safe night precincts and put the violence in the suburbs. Then they will come in here asking parliament to move more amendments. We see it time and time again, whether it is the member for Woodridge with all of his bungles or the Attorney-General with all of her bungles.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He laughs about it now because he knows I am telling the truth—or the Minister for Industrial Relations, and we will get to more of her bungles when we debate the clauses later on with the amendment outside of the long title of the bill.

The Labor Party know they bungled and botched this whole thing, but what would you expect? They tried to fix liquor laws when the member for Woodridge was last in cabinet, when he was the attorney-general in Anna Bligh's cabinet. They first tried to do drink-safe precincts, if members remember. Then just before the election, for another political fix, Paul Lucas, who took the attorney-generalship from the member for Woodridge, came out and said, 'We should get rid of drink-safe precincts.' Then Anna Bligh knocked that on the head and said, 'No. We are going to have drink-safe precincts.' Then I remember the member for Hinchinbrook and I, along with the former member for Springwood, Barbara Stone, went on a tour around the state looking at all of the issues with alcohol fuelled violence. They came up with all of these proposals and various things—all of which the Labor Party rejected.

Mr Langbroek: Get rid of glass.

Mr BLEIJIE: Apart from one. I take the interjection—apart from getting rid of glass. They said that everyone who goes out has the mindset to grab a glass and hit someone over the head with it. That is what happens when you punish the majority for the sins of a few.

Mr Cripps: There was no evidence.

Mr BLEIJIE: There was no evidence of it. I take the member for Hinchinbrook's interjection. There was no evidence whatsoever of that occurring, but they just came up with this great idea—this thought bubble—'Let's ban glass.' The member for Woodridge was part of a government that did that. Just banning glass was going to fix all of the issues. The member for Woodridge was a cabinet minister. Just ban glass—no evidence, as with the Attorney-General.

I realise that I only have four minutes left on the clock and I have so much more to say. The Attorney-General when she introduced the legislation introducing lockout laws relied on all of this evidence as to why lockout laws should apply. She is now relying on evidence as to why lockout laws should not apply. What is the evidence? Does the evidence say lockouts work or does the evidence say lockouts do not work, because the Attorney-General cannot rely on the same evidence to reach different conclusions? That is what she is doing. The Attorney-General has one piece of evidence that supported lockouts and she is using the same piece of evidence now to reject lockouts. This is nothing but a bungle. We would love to have a great debate about alcohol laws and alcohol fuelled violence and all of the issues and solve the problems, but this is simply fixing a mistake of the Labor government.

The LNP will be supporting the lockout removal because we have never supported lockouts. We will be opposing the elements with respect to reducing 12 extended trading hours licences to six. The government gave the licensees the power and the ability to apply then accused them of consorting. I wonder if they are going to be tied up in the new consorting laws the government has introduced. They said, 'You have 12 but now you are consorting, so we are going to reduce it to six.' It is just rubbish. It is just a botched attempt to try to fix some issues.

We will certainly be opposing the amendment in relation to the Easter Sunday public holiday that they will move outside the long title to fix an issue. We said to them last year—check the *Hansard*—‘You forgot about Easter Sunday,’ and all of a sudden we have this swifty amendment to be moved. I know how the Attorney-General feels because it has nothing to do with her. It was a ministerial colleague who forgot about it—a completely different department—but the poor Attorney-General just happens to have legislation up this week. The only piece of legislation they could slip this swift amendment into is the Attorney-General’s.

I feel for her. I think it might have happened to me on a couple of occasions. I know exactly what she is thinking. I know exactly what she is going through. I know what she would have said to her officers about the Minister for Industrial Relations, who slipped this little amendment in and said, ‘Gee, you have a bill on the *Notice Paper*. Sorry, can you slip this little amendment in?’ I feel for her. It has nothing to do with her. I understand. It is completely the industrial relations minister’s fault, but the bungles are the same. Whether you talk about the Attorney-General or the Minister for Industrial Relations, they bungle as much as each other.

I commend the repeal of the lockout laws. I oppose the reduction from 12 to six extended trading hours licences. I certainly oppose the hotchpotch attempt to try to make sure that traders have Easter Sunday as a public holiday. This is nothing more than an embarrassment for the government, an embarrassment for the Attorney-General, an embarrassment for the former attorney-general and an embarrassment for Annastacia Palaszczuk’s Labor government.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.37 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. It really is a pleasure to follow the member for Kawana—I think. We heard interjections earlier that this is a ‘saving grace bill’ and all of those sorts of things. I just want to make it abundantly clear to the member for Brisbane Central that, in relation to the amendments before the House, the green—do you know what that is? The green is the explanatory notes. The explanatory notes state—

For amendments to be moved during consideration in detail by

The Honourable Yvette D’Ath MP

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and

Minister for Training and Skills

The explanatory notes state—

The amendments to the *Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990* to be moved during consideration in detail establish Easter Sunday as an open trading day for all non-exempt (large) shops in south-east Queensland.

There is no doubt that this is an amendment in relation to a mistake. As we now know, it is known as the ‘saving grace bill’. Coming back to the bill itself, I make the point that the member for Kawana has well and truly covered all aspects of the bill, so I will talk more about the committee process.

Let me say, first of all, that we were advised late on the 14th that we were to table this report by the 24th. It was after hours so our secretariat had gone home. We had nine days to report and we really did work hard. I can assure all members of the House that members on this side of the House were enthusiastic participants in that process. We were keen to see this go through, but we were also very keen to make sure that people out there in the marketplace had an opportunity to give their views in relation to this backflip by the government.

We made sure that we did have open hearings. We made sure that we gave every participant an opportunity to voice their concerns. I thank the secretariat for the amazing work they did in putting this report together and in pulling together all of the evidence, and of course I thank my colleagues on the committee. I have to say that we were almost in full agreement on the report. We agreed that the bill should be passed. There was just one little thing—one main thing, I should say—that we could not quite get the members opposite over the line on, and that was to stick with 12 extended hours permits rather than reducing it to six. We could not quite get them over the line, but it turns out that there may be the need for an amendment in the later part of the debate on this. If that is the case, we might have all 12 extended trading hour permits available to the people in those—

Miss Barton: Don’t tell Grace.

Mr CRANDON: No, we will not tell Grace. The main stumbling block, as I said, was the reduction from 12 to six. I want to point out that we got this to press late on the 24th. It was after five o’clock on the 24th. Normally there would not be anything in the media when something is tabled that late. It was tabled I think at quarter past 5, by the time it got to the Table Office. The Table Office stayed back late

on that Friday afternoon to make sure that it was tabled properly. At about quarter past five, or sometime after that, the report was tabled by the Table Office. The media did report on it the next morning. Apart from the fact that they said words to the effect that we should pass the bill, they said more about the statement of reservation from members on this side than they did in relation to the body of the report.

It is worth noting that some of the comments that they made were along the lines of, 'People cannot really agree on what the evidence supplied was.' It is worth talking about one particular piece of the statement of reservation where it refers to Professor Najman. The professor, as quoted in our statement of reservation, states—

What we find in our research is that changing the structural parameters changes the behaviour. If you increase the cost of alcohol, you reduce the consumption. If you reduce the number of venues, you reduce the consumption. If you reduce the number of hours of opening, you reduce the consumption. Irrespective of what people think, feel, believe or want, it follows. It happens. We have reason to suspect that that is what will happen here.

In the professor's contribution back in 2014 and since 2014 until now I am wondering whether it was a scientific experiment by the professor, because he relied so much on so much evidence. Before I go into that evidence, let me quote the member for Pine Rivers in following on from what the professor said. The member for Pine Rivers, perhaps trying to get him to change his mind or to clarify things, said—

Couldn't it be that some of those findings that you refer to that reduce consumption in venues are coming through your data because you are not actually capturing consumption through other places like consumption in the home, for example?

Ms Boyd: Please tell me what I was thinking!

Mr CRANDON: I take your interjection, member for Pine Rivers: you can speak about it when you stand to talk about this. When you get up to talk about this, you will be able to speak about it. Let me get back to the professor. The professor, in answer to a question from the member for Pine Rivers, stated—

The answer is no—unambiguously no. The reason for that is that, firstly, we are relying on—I do not know; I could find for you, and I did find for the government—20 studies around the world in different cultural contexts and different circumstances, all with the same result. I could not find one study which was contrary to that result.

This exchange lays bare the backflip of the government, as a government MP was calling into question the views of a witness who had previously been held up as one of the experts on the way the government's lockout laws were designed. The opposition, as has already been pointed out by the member for Kawana, has been absolutely consistent in maintaining its position on this. The opposition has consistently maintained that the government's policy direction in the area was flawed and, interestingly, Professor Najman has now backflipped. In fact, if you read through the transcript, he actually backflips on some of his own material that he provided to our committee in writing. I refer members to the witness statements. He backflipped and said that the one o'clock thing is not all that important—I am paraphrasing—and he does not want to get locked in on that. He talks about the length of time people are drinking and so forth.

Miss Barton interjected.

Mr CRANDON: Well, he did. Back in the day he wanted people to be locked out, but he did not receive any phone calls from anybody to ask him whether or not—

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr CRANDON: Absolutely you have to feel sorry for him because he did not get any phone calls from anyone. This came out of the blue to the professor, if you read the transcript. He was not aware that it was going to happen. It has happened and he had to try to save face. He has put some very good scientific material together over an extended period of time. As he says, he provided for the government 20 studies from around the world and they were uncontroversial. 'Unambiguously no' was the answer to the question from the member for Pine Rivers. What we have is a bill to reverse a mistake by this government. Members opposite were told again and again. Every time they talked to people in the industry they were told the same thing: 'It won't work; we can do it a better way.' Yet they persevered. They pushed on. They drafted the laws in this way and now they find themselves in a situation where they have to do a backflip.

We have an issue with the backflip because of the same question rule and whether or not some of these things will actually get up because they may not have the full support of the House. Time will tell. I will finish my contribution by repeating what the view is from Professor Najman. He has backed away from the lockouts. He considers that other elements of the legislation simply have not worked. Thank goodness this government has backed away from all of that so-called evidence and they have seen the common sense of unwinding the laws that were so ill-thought-through in the first place.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.50 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. From the outset I would like to wholeheartedly thank the research director and the committee staff who did an exceptional job supporting the committee when we had a heavy workload in other areas. I would also like to pay tribute to the Premier and Attorney-General in acknowledging that there needed to be a legislative change incorporating feedback from industry, stakeholders, the communities and evidence based policy.

I would also like to acknowledge those who took their time to submit to the committee process and appear before the committee as witnesses. Consultation and collaboration are hallmarks of this Palaszczuk government. They were sorely lacking when the LNP Newman government was in power. While those opposite today have faux conniptions about the lack of consultation in this space, I am confident that it is far above and beyond what we would find in a regime of theirs. The measures in this bill enhance our government's tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy initiatives. The goal of our policy remains the same—to foster cultural change around drinking, to encourage reasonable drinking practices and to create a safer environment in and around licensed premises in Queensland.

These measures have been introduced now that the government has had the opportunity to review the findings of research conducted by Deakin University's institute for social science into the first six months of operation of Queensland's alcohol fuelled violence laws. This bill's amendments give effect to the evidence provided from across Queensland as part of the six-month interim evaluation report. These measures are the best option to reduce the toll of alcohol fuelled violence in a quantifiable and effective manner.

This bill represents changes in a long journey with legislators and the entertainment and night-life industry. At its heart, it repeals the 1 am lockdown, repeals the 3 am safe night precincts model, alters trading hours for licensees removed from the safe night precincts due to boundary changes, tightens the temporary late-night extended trading hours permit regime and extends the banning order sentencing regime to prescribed drug offences. In addition, this bill clarifies that licensees of regulated premises with approved regular extended trading hours beyond midnight must continue to scan patron IDs if serving liquor beyond their usual hours under a temporary late-night extended hours permit.

When I talk to mums and dads or when I talk to people in my community about trading hours for pubs and clubs and the regulations or the operations, overwhelmingly it comes back to one thing—people want to have peace of mind that they can go out and have a good time with their friends and come home safely. This bill and the Palaszczuk Labor government's bills before it aim to achieve that. We are committed to getting the balance right. Unlike those opposite, Labor in government does not put ego ahead of the community.

It was clear through the submissions and the witnesses appearing before the committee that industry supports the repeal of lockdowns for safety. Safe Night Townsville CBD Precinct stated that there was never a clear evidence based conclusion that lockdowns work for the reduction of offences and assaults. Broadbeach SNP talked about the potential to have intoxicated patrons on the streets with a lockdown and concerns around safety and security being controlled in the same manner as a licensed premises, stating, 'Locking patrons out on the street will cause more issues.' Mr John Lynch of the Safe Night Cairns CBD Precinct talked at length about the impact of lockdowns, with the result being that distressed people are left out on the street separated from their friends and their belongings and tourists are stranded in a foreign place.

There can be no doubt that we bring a different style of government to those opposite. While the statement of reservation talks of major policy backflips and broken election promises, on this side of the House we call this an open and consultative style of government. Admittedly, my time in this place has been short, but never have I seen a statement of reservation in a committee report with the amount of vitriol, rhetoric and carry-on as the one from the opposition on this bill. Not content with simply stating the facts, they needed to stoop to the lowest common denominator—to juvenile politicking.

Queenslanders deserve better out of this place. They deserve an opposition which is out of the gutter. Rather than stating a position, those opposite have taken cheap pot shots. The member for Coomera just said that, aside from one item in the bill, we had agreement in the committee process, yet there is a lengthy statement of reservation that took shot after shot at the government and government committee members. They even stooped so low as to make imputations from the questions I asked of witnesses. I would like to pause on that matter for a moment because the member for Coomera mentioned this in his speech, as well as this being an item in the statement of reservation. It is cute the way they have put this together. It is very cute indeed to go through a line of questioning and pick out a particular question and then draw imputations from that.

If members turn to page 8 of the transcript, they will actually see a very long dialogue that I engaged in with the professor around the topic of preloading and how that may impact on lockouts. For the record, it is worth highlighting that there were in fact a number of points and back-and-forth dialogue between the professor and me, so it is very, very cute to just take one of those comments and responses about that. They have twisted people's words to highlight their own points or to highlight in their view someone else's failings, and I think that is absolutely reprehensible. It just goes to show the calibre of those opposite.

The member for Kawana stood up in here for 60 minutes and took cheap pot shots at anyone he could across the chamber. I would like to see an analysis of how much time he spent talking about the content of the bill or the committee report versus commentary on government members. Once again, this demonstrates that the opposition do not have content or policy and they do not have anything positive to talk about. All they are doing is simply taking pot shots at individuals and processes.

The opposition could have taken the higher ground and said, 'We acknowledge that this is evidence based policy. We acknowledge that the government may need to adapt and be nimble and operate in real time—that the government might need to see evidence based policy and react to that.' That is not what they have done. What they have done instead is sit through the committee process and say there is only one little point of difference with the government but then they have produced a lengthy statement of reservation full of rhetoric, vitriol and carry-on and have come into this place and continued to take shots at the government. I think the community deserve better than what they are getting from the opposition. It is little wonder that the LNP are over there and not here on the government side of the House because they have absolutely no credibility around that.

As I have said, there is a statement of reservation drawing imputations from questions. That demonstrates the true desperation of those opposite. Asking questions of witnesses is what the committee process is all about. Taking one question from a line of questioning out of context in an attempt to prove a shaky point is an absolutely low act.

Mr Crandon: You protest too much.

Ms BOYD: No, Michael, you acted unprofessionally.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Linard): Order! Member for Pine Rivers, I ask that you use the correct titles when addressing members. Members for Coomera, Beaudesert and Gaven, I would like to mention your interjections are not being taken as readily as they are being thrown. Member for Pine Rivers, you have one second.

Ms BOYD: The one thing that those opposite prove is that they do not have the intestinal fortitude or the maturity to deal with tough issues and to govern with empathy and consideration or any level of professionalism. Queenslanders deserve better than the calibre of those opposite. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Boyd, adjourned.

MOTION

Queensland Rail, Timetable; Order for Production of Documents



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

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport to produce to the House within 72 hours a report from Queensland Rail on the outcome of the chair's 'stress test' of the Citytrain timetable.

Those opposite should hang their head in shame for how they have treated South-East Queensland rail commuters: they have cut and slashed train services; they have not hired enough drivers; they have packed passengers onto trains like sardines; and they have stuffed up the new train order. The Premier claims to lead an open and accountable government; she claims to be the paragon of integrity and transparency, but the Palaszczuk Labor government will not let commuters know what is going on. They keep commuters in the dark and it is simply not good enough.

We have a test for the Deputy Premier. Will she be up-front with commuters and table the Queensland Rail timetable stress test results? It is as simple as that. Will the Deputy Premier be up-front with commuters and table the Queensland Rail timetable stress test results?

Commuters need confidence. They need confidence that they will be able to catch a train when they want to go to work, when they want to go to school, in periods of high demand, in periods of low demand, during school holidays, on Christmas Day, to attend the Adele concert or during the biggest event that Queensland will have seen for such a long time, the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth

Games. We know the Queensland Rail commissioner Phillip Strachan had serious concerns about Queensland Rail's ability to handle these events. That is why Mr Strachan recommended this stress test of the timetable be undertaken. Mr Strachan is now Queensland Rail Chair. He has undertaken the stress testing that he wanted, so where is the report? It is hardly surprising that we have not seen it because this government has form in covering up unfavourable data and reports.

Just recently we had to consistently call for access to the TransLink monthly performance data, which was long overdue. It was simply like pulling teeth. Then, finally, the government dumped the data late in the afternoon on a Friday. They were so embarrassed by what was contained in that report. Is it any wonder, because it showed that train services in South-East Queensland have not been this bad since the Premier was Anna Bligh's transport minister, and we all know what dark days they were for commuters here in South-East Queensland.

Today the October to December 2016 TransLink Tracker was released. Is that not a doozy? It has confirmed what we all knew: commuters are fleeing our public transport network and it is because of the inexperience and ineptitude of those opposite. Across the TransLink network, patronage is down 4.35 million from the previous quarter while specifically for trains, patronage is down 1.35 million from the previous quarter. This is a damning indictment of this government's rail fail. The last time patronage was going down and down like this was under the tenure of the Premier as the then transport minister. It is simply a case of back to the future with this lot.

The TransLink Tracker also shows reliability on the network falling off a cliff. They could not even change the vertical scale to make that look any better. A cliff is a cliff is a cliff when it looks like that. Rail on-time running is down three per cent over the quarter while the number of services actually delivered is down 1.07 per cent at a time when there was supposed to be more services.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has also buried the report on the Moreton Bay Rail Link signalling issues—the report that the Premier's hand-picked director-general wanted edited. This was the red flag, the precursor, to the rail fail issues we are seeing today, but the government refuses to fess up to commuters about their incompetence.

SEQ commuters are the ones who need a stress test after putting up with the cuts, the cancellations and the delays that this Labor government has served up to them. Commuters will need a stress test for the extra 2½ years of rail fail they will have to endure and the 16,000 service cuts that will occur this year alone. The government must release the stress test results. This is the Premier's and the Deputy Premier's mess. Again, it will take the LNP to clear it up.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (6.05 pm): I move—

That the words 'within 72 hours' be omitted.

Since the Strachan report was handed down some three weeks ago we have been getting on with the job of fixing the trains. The Premier has given me a job to do and I am absolutely focused on doing that job. All members would be aware that the Palaszczuk government has committed to implementing all of the 36 recommendations of the inquiry. Since the report was handed down we have already been hard at work to fix the trains.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr Cramp interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Deputy Premier. I apologise for interrupting your speech. Member for Albert and member for Gaven, you are both warned under standing order 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action. You have had fair warning all afternoon.

Ms TRAD: Judging by the tenor of their interjections, they should go into the naughty corner.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, please do not provoke the opposition.

Ms TRAD: Since the report was handed down we have already been hard at work to fix the trains. We have advertised externally for train crew with prior experience. Applications have closed and they are all being assessed as we speak. On 13 February, 25 drivers and 40 guards started their training at Queensland Rail. The Citytrain Response Unit has been established with Jacqui Walters as chair. CRU has hit the ground running, working with QR and DTMR to implement the recommendations. Queensland Rail, TMR and Citytrain Response Unit have been working to finalise the high-level response plan, which we will release next week.

I want to note in particular recommendation 5 of the Strachan inquiry because it is a focus of the opposition's motion tonight. It states—

Assess the sustainability of service levels under the current timetable, introduced on 23 January 2017, to enable, at a minimum, the provision of stable services and sufficient training capacity to facilitate the long-term return to desired service levels

That work is well underway and we will release the outcomes of that assessment when it has been completed and quality assured by the Citytrain Response Unit.

Let us be clear: while the work is underway it is not yet complete. That is why this motion is nothing more than a silly juvenile stunt. I would like to table for the benefit of the House and for those opposite a letter from the Chair of Queensland Rail, Phillip Strachan, in relation to the stress testing of the timetable and the fact of the matter that the stress testing is still underway.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 March 2017, from the Chair of Queensland Rail, Mr Phillip Strachan, to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, Hon. Jackie Trad, in relation to timetable issues and the Commission of Inquiry [318].

For the opposition to seek to order me, via resolution of parliament, to produce a report before the work has even been completed and quality assured is just playing politics. While we have been getting on with the job since the report was handed down, all the LNP have done is snipe from the sidelines and try to avoid any responsibility of which they should clearly shoulder a significant proportion. It is clear to anyone who has read the report that the problems highlighted by Phillip Strachan did not just happen overnight. The seeds were sown on the LNP's watch when they were cutting costs and jobs right across government and readying QR for sale.

The bottom line is that the Strachan report states that if the training of drivers had not been suspended in 2014—on the LNP's watch—QR would have had up to 30 more drivers in October 2016. This independent report clearly states that a Queensland Rail workforce and resource plan forecast a deficit in drivers and guards as far back as 2013, and the member for Indooroopilly quoted as much but did nothing about it. The commission of inquiry states that the LNP's hand-picked CEO—not the board's recommendation, but the LNP's hand-picked CEO—Glen Dawe implemented a 'suspension of new driver intakes from February 2014'. This suspension of new driver intakes ended in February after the election of the Palaszczuk Labor government. Glen Dawe was appointed by the LNP despite not being the preferred candidate of the QR board. The commission confirmed that under the former government Queensland Rail suspended the training of drivers just months after construction started on the Redcliffe rail line, despite previous warnings of a shortage of drivers and guards. We would have had 30 more drivers in October of last year if their suspension had not been in place.

I will not be diverted from the job at hand. The job at hand is to fix Queensland Rail, and that is what I am doing. Those opposite are interested in playing politics and stupid juvenile games, and they should be ignored.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (6.11 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Glass House and oppose the Deputy Premier's amendment to the motion. We know that Labor likes to keep commuters waiting on the station, and now they just like to keep commuters waiting. The Deputy Premier needs to come clean on this: when will she report to parliament and tell commuters the truth?

Ms Trad: When the work is done!

Mr CRANDON: There we go again: 'When the work is done.' More reviews! In 2009 when I came into this place the Gold Coast line was known as the *Bombay Express* because it was so packed. For three years I fought with the Labor government to try and get that changed and no action was taken. Then we came into government, and over a two-year period in 2013-14 we increased the number of services on the Gold Coast line by 93 a week. Services were increased by 4,800 or thereabouts every year by the LNP government. The interim timetable that we are talking about today has taken 10 per cent of those services away again. We have gone back to before 2013.

When we talk about services in the interim timetable, around 10 per cent of the services have been lost. What else has happened? What about the percentage of services on time? The new interim timetable came in on 23 January and how is it working? Yesterday afternoon, 85.71 per cent of services on the Gold Coast line were on time. Almost 15 per cent were behind time, out of time or maybe did not even turn up because the figures are not exactly clear. What about last Wednesday morning? You would not want to be catching a train to go to the airport to catch a flight overseas or interstate, because last Wednesday morning 73.33 per cent were on time. Twenty-seven per cent of the services at peak time last Wednesday morning did not turn up on time. You would not want to be on a time clock at work in the middle of Brisbane when more than a quarter of the trains were late. Was it any better in the

afternoon? Not much better, because 78.5 per cent of the services were on time. It is pathetic. We have a reduced service—we have lost 10 per cent of the increase that we got back in 2013-14—with the interim timetable coming into place. We have also now gone backwards as far as service is concerned.

We have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to duplicate the line between Coomera and Helensvale in time for the Commonwealth Games, which is less than 400 days away. The problem is that we are going to have plenty of trains during the Commonwealth Games to get people backwards and forwards but, based on the feedback we have been getting from the government, we are not going to have train services on the duplicated line anywhere near the services that we have today. We are looking at a situation where we have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to satisfy the needs of the Commonwealth Games, but the question is where will we be when it comes to giving people a good, reliable service from 2018 going forward?

What happens when the trains are late? My constituents lose interest in catching trains and they start to hop on the M1. What happens on the M1? I have roadblock after roadblock of people—

Mr Boothman: Cars queuing.

Mr CRANDON: Cars queuing on exit 49. The member for Albert tried to raise a question this morning about the upgrade of exit 49 and it was ruled out of order, but the point is that we have ramping on the M1 onto exits 49, 45 and 41. Why do we have that sort of ramping? Because we have more and more cars in the fastest growing area in Australia, and our train service is unreliable so people are abandoning the train service. The Deputy Premier needs to come clean. When will she report to parliament and tell commuters the truth?

Mr SAUNDERS (Maryborough—ALP) (6.16 pm): There is no reason why Queensland Rail should not have the best rail network in Australia; that is why the Palaszczuk government is committed to implementing all 36 recommendations of the Strachan inquiry report. I could not agree with the Premier more: the Deputy Premier is as tough as steel, and I cannot think of anyone better to implement the recommendations of the Strachan report and get Queensland Rail back on track.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you have made your contribution. I do not know if there was argy-bargy between you and the member for Maryborough. Member for Maryborough, I call you for your contribution.

Mr SAUNDERS: This includes assessing the current timetable to ensure that the provision of rail services in the state is reliable and stable. It is not just the timetable that they are talking about over on the other side of the House but the reliability of the services. Queensland Rail has a long and proud history across our state of running services as well as manufacturing trains and carrying out maintenance work. This work is absolutely critical to ensuring that Queensland Rail is able to provide reliable, stable passenger rail services, but you cannot run a reliable train timetable without reliable trains. I can tell you how good the trains were that we made in Maryborough, Queensland. The tilt train did 5 million kilometres—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are under first warning. Those interjections have no relevance whatsoever to the member's contribution. I call the member for Maryborough.

Mr SAUNDERS: We are still using suburban trains in Brisbane that were built in Maryborough 25 years ago such is the quality of that work, and that is why the train system has been great. That mob across there sold us out, because the new trains are coming from India. Wasn't it ironic that the member for Coomera talked about the *Bombay Express*, when we have the *Shanghai Express* and the *Delhi Express* all coming thanks to the LNP. I would like to table this. This is a great article; I could not stop reading it this morning. It says, 'New train for half price'. This sounds like a Silly Solly's ad. Can you believe this?

Mr SPEAKER: Would you like to table it, please. It is not a prop.

Mr SAUNDERS: Can you believe this? It says, 'New train for half price'—

Mr SPEAKER: There is a staffer there, member for Maryborough.

Mr SAUNDERS: I table that, Mr Speaker.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 29 January 2014, by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade, Hon. Time Nicholls, and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Scott Emerson, titled 'New trains for half the price' [\[319\]](#).

As the Deputy Premier said earlier today, you only get what you pay for. The LNP bought the trains from the New Delhi \$2 shop. Not only did they get cheap trains; they also brought a great city to its knees. That decision has now affected train services in Brisbane. Not only did they bring a great city

to its knees by getting \$2 trains from Chennai and New Delhi; they also did not get drivers. They were not content with cutting the jobs of public servants in hospitals and so on. They also cut train drivers. Now they say that it is all our fault. No, it is not.

I can speak from experience. I was a fireman on the railway so I know what I am talking about. How many members opposite have been on a train? I doubt that half of them have even used public transport in Brisbane. They travel in chauffeur driven cars to work every day. It is only the working people who catch the train to work every day.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am having difficulty hearing the member. If I cannot hear then Hansard will not be able to, either.

Mr SAUNDERS: Let us talk about great trains. Members can imagine the trains being built in Maryborough operating on the suburban rail network. At the moment trains are being brought in from India—16-tonne light. I would like LNP members to explain to my 220 workers at the great manufacturing plant of Downer why the contract went to India. Then they should tell Brisbane commuters what is happening. Those opposite cut drivers and decreased the quality of the trains.

I am a regional member of parliament but when I am in Brisbane I use the rail network. I often take a trip out to Sandgate, which is represented by a great member of parliament. When I am on the train to Sandgate I note that the trains are made in Maryborough, not a 'Bombay Express' given to us by those opposite—the cut-price \$2 trains.

LNP members and the One Nation leader tell us that they are for Queenslanders. The member for Buderim was in cabinet when the train contract was taken away from Maryborough. Those opposite tell us that they are for Australians and Queenslanders, yet the member for Buderim sat in cabinet and voted for the \$2 trains.

(Time expired)

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (6.22 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the motion moved by the shadow minister and against the amendment moved by the Deputy Premier. My electorate relies on trains. It is home to the Grovely, Oxford Park and Mitchelton stations—it will soon be home to the Gaythorne and Enoggera stations—on the Ferny Grove line, and those at the northern end of my electorate also use the Strathpine line. People rely on trains and they expect them to run on time. This debacle can be described in no better way than the way the member for Nanango described it: this is the stuff-up of all stuff-ups. The only thing less reliable than the trains at the moment is Labor Party members sticking with the electorates they were elected to represent!

A new timetable was released with great fanfare when the Redcliffe peninsula line was opened in October last year. Very soon after that, because of the government's lack of foresight and lack of planning, we had the interim timetable. Not long after that we had the revised interim timetable. Then not long after that we went back to the interim timetable. Now we have the hopeful timetable. That is all we have at the moment—hoping that a train will arrive on time.

It is no surprise that the Deputy Premier has done what she does best—that is, blame somebody else. Nobody in government has taken responsibility for the stuff-up of all stuff-ups. They blame the opposition first, despite the fact that we have not been in government for two years. They still try to work out some way to sheet the blame home to us. When they cannot do that, they blame the bureaucrats: 'Let's blame some poor innocent bureaucrat behind the scenes.' Ministers have all claimed they had nothing to do with this, that they are hands-off, that QR is a statutory authority. They take no responsibility when things go wrong, but when things go well they take the credit. The Christmas Day debacle was apparently not their fault, but when things apparently went right on New Year's Day they credited the minister for it. Those opposite have to make up their minds about whether they are or are not responsible. The only person they have not blamed is Donald Trump, and that will happen shortly I am very sure.

If this issue were not so serious it would be funny. On Christmas Day, the most special family day of the year, people were stranded at railway stations with no idea what was happening—no communication, no idea whatsoever. It has not been fixed. The Deputy Premier gets up and says, 'We are working hard.' Guess what: it still ain't working. Just this week I saw a Facebook post about Burpengary station. It states—

My 6.31 train is cancelled 5 minutes after the time it was supposed to get here—for the second Monday in a row.

On Monday this week the daily peak on-time running, which the member for Crandon quoted—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr MANDER: You deserve a seat! One day you will get a seat named after you, member for Coomera. On the Ferny Grove line, the on-time running in the morning peak was 76.47 per cent. That means that one in four trains is not arriving on time. People are totally and utterly sick of it.

What about the overtime bill? What about the amount of money that has been wasted on overtime? It is running to hundreds of thousands of dollars. What deal did the government do with the unions to do away with the 20-minute break after every two hours? Anecdotally, I have heard that they got overtime on demand. When you wanted overtime you rang up and got the overtime, whether overtime was justified or not. We had people sitting in train stations all day doing nothing. People were granted overtime despite the fact that overtime was not justified.

Today the Deputy Premier moved an amendment and tabled a particular document, which shows no report-back date. Today she got from Phillip Strachan an explanation of when it will be ready. It is dated 1 March 2017. She got her letter from the principal giving her permission to foot the delay.



Mr BUTCHER (Gladstone—ALP) (6.27 pm): Mr Speaker—

Mrs Smith: Another audition.

Mr BUTCHER: Thank you very much. It is great to see the member for Mount Ommaney sitting on the opposition front bench. I rise tonight to make a contribution—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I cannot hear the member for Gladstone. As I said, if I cannot then Hansard cannot. Please start again.

Mr BUTCHER: I rise to speak against the motion and in favour of the amendment. A little birdie told me that the One Nation leader is not in the chamber tonight but is in the Strangers Bar. I looked around to see who from the LNP is not present in the chamber. Where is the member for Whitsunday? Where is the Leader of the Opposition? Maybe they are in communication over there while they are having a coffee.

Mr WATTS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is a longstanding convention to not talk about members' absence from the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, you are correct. I call the member for Gladstone to not continue with that line of debate.

Mr BUTCHER: As the Assistant Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, I know that Queenslanders deserve reliable and on-time public transport. The Premier and the Deputy Premier have made it clear that our government accepts all 36 recommendations of the Strachan inquiry and that they will be implemented. Anyone who has read the Strachan report will know that the problems that have manifested in Queensland Rail did not happen overnight and reforming Queensland Rail will not happen overnight. It will take time, and we are getting on with the job. We are doing that. This includes recommendation 5 of the Strachan report to assess the sustainability of service levels under the current timetable which was implemented on 23 January 2017.

I have read the comments in the Strachan report, including that the board did not approve the revision to the previous interim timetable that had operated in late 2016. It is clear from the Strachan report that there were structural and governance problems in the organisation leading to significant problems that are laid bare in the report. We have already put in place a new chair, Mr Phillip Strachan, who will be tasked with restoring strong governance processes at QR. I know the work that Mr Strachan has done in his previous role at Rio Tinto and I have full faith in his ability to deliver these recommendations to bring a reliable rail system for the state of Queensland. This work is already happening and, unlike the LNP, we are not going to cut corners because these recommendations need to be implemented properly to ensure that we put in place sustainable and effective solutions.

We all know that the LNP was obsessed with cuts. It cut jobs, it cut front-line services and it cut corners in Queensland Rail. When ordering the new stock, it reminds me of the old Coles ad with the big red finger—'Down, down, prices are down. We want all the world to know that you are saving, and you are saving for real. Down, down, down they go!' The Newman-Nicholls LNP government initiated an enterprise-wide efficiency program in Queensland Rail. The 2013-14 Queensland Rail annual report stated that this was about 'the application of contestability principles to the service delivery model' and that this 'agenda aligns' with the Peter Costello led Commission of Audit to privatise Queensland Rail under a franchise and lease agreement. We know what that means: the LNP was getting ready to privatise QR.

It was the LNP and the members for Clayfield and Indooroopilly that bypassed the Queensland Rail board to hire Campbell Newman's mate Glen Dawe. We know now from the commission of inquiry that it was Glen Dawe who decided to suspend QR driver training in 2014. This independent report clearly states that a Queensland Rail workforce and resource plan forecast a deficit of drivers and guards as far back as 2013. If it was not for Campbell Newman's buddy getting the job and the LNP's plan to sell QR, we would have 30 additional drivers today. I cannot help but notice that the members for Clayfield and Indooroopilly have stayed very quiet on these sections of the Strachan report.

This motion is a blatant attempt to distract who is really responsible for the issues at Queensland Rail, but I am not interested in being distracted by the silly political games which we are seeing here tonight. As the assistant minister I am interested in working alongside the Deputy Premier of Queensland to make sure that we deliver on the recommendations of the Strachan report and to make sure that Queensland Rail is able to provide the services that Queenslanders deserve. We know that this motion is a political stunt and I will not be supporting it but will be supporting the amendment and the amended motion.

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

AYES, 44:

ALP, 41—Bailey, Boyd, 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.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 40:

LNP, 40—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Pair: Brown, McEachan.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

Motion agreed to.

Motion, as agreed—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport to produce to the House a report from Queensland Rail on the outcome of the chair's 'stress test' of the Citytrain timetable.

Sitting suspended from 6.38 pm to 7.40 pm.

SUGAR INDUSTRY (ARBITRATION FOR MILL OWNERS AND SUGAR MARKETING ENTITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 28 February (see p. 287).

Second Reading

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (7.40 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Queensland Liberal National Party is determined to end the stalemate between Wilmar Sugar and Queensland Sugar Ltd—QSL—a stalemate that is affecting the farm businesses and lives of 1,500 Queensland canegrowers and their families. The long-running dispute cannot be allowed to continue. That is why the LNP has taken action to stand up for canegrowers. The situation is urgent and I continue to urge both parties to reach a commercial agreement, either at or before the mediation meeting to be held on Thursday—that is, tomorrow. As I have always said, a commercial resolution is in the best interests of all parties. Both Wilmar and QSL need to accept that their failure to resolve the matter is doing enormous harm to growers, their families, their communities and, ultimately, to the state's third largest agricultural industry. If Wilmar and QSL fail to reach agreement, they will have to explain to canegrowers why, at the eleventh hour, they are not prepared to proceed with a sensible commercial outcome that ensures that the canegrowers' harvest—their crush for this coming season—can be marketed in accordance with the law.

The LNP's interest and work in this matter goes back to April 2014. Our interest has always been to ensure that canegrowers have a genuine choice in marketing. We will be proceeding with this legislation, as it will provide for formal arbitration to resolve any future deadlocks in contractual negotiations between sugar millers and sugar marketers in the same way that arbitration is available to resolve deadlocks between canegrowers and sugar-milling companies.

Let me deal with a matter that was raised by the agriculture minister earlier today in relation to my first reading speech that I gave yesterday for this bill. To be clear, voluntary mediation for the dispute has been offered to Wilmar and rejected on numerous occasions, including in the past fortnight. It had been suggested at a meeting that I held with a representative of the Australian Sugar Milling Council on 14 February 2017. To date, Wilmar has declined all suggestions for mediation by the LNP. Again, as I indicated in my speech, the first offer for mediation was made back in 2014 by the then LNP minister for agriculture, Dr John McVeigh. That offer was rejected by Wilmar. Further offers have also been made, including to have former federal industry minister Ian Macfarlane act as a mediator. Again, that offer has been rejected. Indeed, in August last year the LNP shadow minister for agriculture, Dale Last, made an offer to Wilmar to personally pay for a mediator. That offer was also rejected. I wish to make it clear that mediation has been offered by the LNP—

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I look forward to the contribution of the member for Thuringowa to this debate, given his notable silence over the entire dispute. I wish to make it clear that mediation has been offered by the LNP to try to help solve this dispute on numerous occasions, but on each occasion that offer has not been taken up by Wilmar.

The objectives of the opposition's amendments are to ensure that sugar mill owners and sugar-marketing entities undertake negotiations in a fair, timely and businesslike manner to finalise on-supply agreements—formal contracts that allow sugar produced by mills to be delivered, held in storage and subsequently sold by marketing entities. In the event of a breakdown in protracted negotiations, as we have witnessed since 2014 with Wilmar and growers and Wilmar and marketers, both parties—sugar mill owners and marketing entities—are required to enter into formal arbitration to try to resolve any disputed terms in the intended on-supply contract. After a negotiating period of at least 10 business days, either party can give notice to refer disputes for formal arbitration under the Commercial Arbitration Act 2013—that is, this is not a new process. This is a process that follows the Commercial Arbitration Act—an act that has been in place since 2014. The arbitration tribunal will decide disputes about proposed terms of the intended on-supply agreement. Each party will have to pay its own costs for the arbitration.

The bill also provides for concurrent arbitration to occur for on-supply agreements between sugar mill owners and marketing entities and between sugarcane growers and mill owners for cane supply agreements and that arrangement is already provided for in the current legislation—that is, the arbitration between the growers and the owners for their cane supply agreements.

We had hoped that this bill was unnecessary legislation. We had hoped that the parties involved—the millers and the marketers—would reach a sensible commercial decision but, with the onset of the crush in about 15 weeks or 16 weeks, that has not occurred. That has meant that growers have been unable to forward price their GEI in the traditional and time-accustomed manner of doing so. The policy of the legislation before the House today is to ensure that there is a genuine choice in marketing for sugarcane growers for their grower economic interest sugar and that that policy intent is not frustrated by actions taken by millers and/or marketers designed to remove that choice from canegrowers.

The policy will also ensure that contracts between growers and millers and marketing entities are negotiated and finalised in a timely manner to allow all contracts to be in place well before the start of each crushing/milling season. There is a necessity for that for growers so that they can plan for the future and that they can take action in order to invest and procure their crush. To ensure that any disputes are resolved so that all contracts between growers, millers and marketing entities are negotiated and finalised, this will occur in a timely manner and be in place well before the start of each season.

As we have discovered, there are no viable alternatives that would achieve the policy objectives of this legislation. Quite clearly, commercial negotiation has failed. Indeed, all the action that we have seen to try to resolve this matter has occurred in just over two weeks since we announced our intention to take action should the commercial resolution not be finalised by 28 February. That there has been any action and that there has been movement by both sides, which has occurred, is simply as a result

of the legislation and the actions taken by the LNP. I want to be clear: we gave a commitment to the canegrowers of the Burdekin, of the Herbert River district and of the central district that we would introduce this legislation. We will honour that commitment. We will honour that promise. We will protect the canegrowers and the canegrowers' families when the Labor government will not.

When the Labor government will turn its back on canegrowers, when it is prepared to put at risk the investment of billions of dollars over decades of families into their business and their interests in favour of turning a cold shoulder and a blind eye to the very real problems they face, the hardships that they are causing those growers and the stress that they are putting on their families, the LNP will act.

It is only the ALP and this agriculture minister who do not have the intestinal fortitude, do not have the guts to go up and face the canegrowers to explain why his government is taking no action and why he is defending the rights of international commodities traders over the rights of canegrowers here in Australia and threatening their livelihoods, their futures and their farms. We will honour that promise. We remain committed to seeing this legislation through to its conclusion tonight in this House.

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Economic Development) (7.50 pm): What an extraordinary contribution we have just heard from the Leader of the Opposition. This entire parliament has been misled as to why we are here this evening and why the LNP are acting in the fashion they are. It has all been revealed today in the rural press. George Christensen could not keep his mouth shut. The release states—

Mr Christensen also revealed the reason he did not quit the Liberal-National Party was because state party leaders— those opposite—

in Queensland committed to legislation to force the parties arguing over sugar contracts into arbitration.

He said the state LNP introduced those laws at the request of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

That is why we are here tonight. We are not here for any reason other than the Leader of the Opposition doing the bidding of Malcolm Turnbull because they have not got the guts to deal with it properly. That is why we are here. Everybody knows it.

Those opposite refuse to allow this bill to be properly ventilated and scrutinised by the parliament or the relevant committee and have moved to debate this bill one day after its introduction. To rush through legislation without following due process is indicative of an opposition that has a bill that will not stand up to even modest scrutiny. Those opposite are avoiding modest scrutiny.

In 2015 the committee process was followed. The regulatory impact statement was completed, the stakeholders had their views heard and the resounding assessment was that the 2015 amendment was not required and would be damaging to the industry as a whole. We said it would not work, yet the member for Clayfield has thrown off his last vestige of liberalism, pandering to the funk politics of the National Party backbench—this mob over here—the One Nation-lites and the fifth columnists who are sitting down the back.

Let us be clear: this is not a legislative attempt to help the cane industry in this state. This is an attempt by the opposition to keep together whatever cohesion they have left in the party room in this House and, more notably, in the federal parliament. This debate is an attempt to keep George Christensen and other George Christensen-like mini-mes in the LNP tent. It will fail. He will not stay within the Liberal National Party. I note the comments of George Christensen that have been reported further in the ABC—

Malcolm Turnbull, Barnaby Joyce, and Scott Morrison got on the phone to Queensland opposition leader Tim Nicholls and deputy leader Deb Frecklington, and collectively found a way forward.

...

It is much quicker to get that legislation through the Queensland Parliament, which is unicameral where it has the numbers, and can rush it through.

That is the entire motive we have here. Let us not pretend it is about the cane industry. What would be the result if George did not get his way, if he had some sort of hissy fit? George said—

Barnaby Joyce has always said that if something happens that neutralises a state solution then it will be back on the federal level, and he will be willing to do whatever it takes to get something done.

Why is this legislation so important to George Christensen? The ABC reports—

Mr Christensen said once he learnt the legislation was being planned, he decided not to send a letter of resignation to the Prime Minister, which was later leaked to the media.

How can that happen? Let us be clear: the federal Liberal Party does not want to deal with this matter. Can members imagine what the Abbott acolytes are going to do with this issue in the federal arena against the National Party? Let us be clear: the federal Liberal Party does not want to deal with it. It does not want to know about it. This is all about saving a coalition federal government hanging on by a thread. Because George Christensen is calling the shots of the Liberal National Party this House is now debating rushed, flawed legislation just as George Christensen wanted. I hope those opposite feel good being yo-yos. The sessional orders give me limited speaking time, but I want to table the relevant documents from the last time this issue arose: the consultation regulatory impact statement of the Queensland Productivity Commission; the decision regulatory impact statement of the Queensland Productivity Commission; media statements from the Australian Sugar Milling Council; and a letter from Julie Bishop, foreign minister, who made her views quite clear back then.

Tabled paper: Queensland Productivity Commission: Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill 2015, Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement, October 2015 [320].

Tabled paper: Queensland Productivity Commission: Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill 2015, Decision Regulatory Impact Statement, November 2015 [321].

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 9 June 2015, from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Julie Bishop, to the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing, Hon. Bill Byrne, regarding the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act 2015 [322].

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 28 February 2017, from the Australian Sugar Milling Council titled 'More changes 15 months after the last failed LNP regulation' [323].

I table these for future reference as this amendment will not work in practice and will do nothing to assist resolution. When there is a cause for further legislation on sugar, which there will have to be out of this nonsense here this evening, these documents will stand in condemnation of the LNP bill and the Leader of the Opposition who is conducting this debate without a skerrick of evidence, based on pure base politics.

Yesterday in his introductory speech the Leader of the Opposition stated the LNP was standing up for growers. I remind those opposite that the role of a government is to stand up for everybody: growers, millers, exporters and consumers. This mob opposite run around picking sides, trying to pick a winner. Picking winners and statutory marketing arrangements have been dismantled at great cost in Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! The voices are getting very loud. The minister is being just slightly antagonistic to members of the opposition so I would ask him to keep that in mind. I would ask the members of the opposition, if they need to interject, to at least do it with the volume down a bit. I call the minister.

Mr BYRNE: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I intend to be really antagonistic to the opposition.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would suggest you not go too far.

Mr BYRNE: I will try to keep it within the realms of behaviour. Those documents I have just tabled stand in condemnation of the bill and the Leader of the Opposition who is conducting the debate on pure political base politics. Yesterday in his speech it was all about picking sides in this debate. Governments represent the entire supply chain. That is exactly what we have done as a Labor government. We have represented all interests and chosen to intervene at the point where commercial decisions were reaching a point of finalisation. The point that we have chosen to actually intervene to do something substantive will result in the right outcome. We have done it. We have set it up. We were waiting for the right opportunity. We were not running around pandering and threatening parts of industry with draconian legislation that is entirely counterproductive.

Ultimately this debate is about the National Party branch dreams coming true. This is a matter that should concern all businesses in Queensland, in particular the unstated issue of sovereign risk that is not mentioned by the opposition leader. It would be an economic disaster for this to be propagated and permanent in any way, shape or form. Queensland and Australia were built on foreign investment. International investment is essential to the growth of our economy and it is something that politicians should engage in sensibly. This debate has been reduced to this nonsense idea that it is a major multinational evil company coming in and beating up the poor little Australian bloke. What a load of nonsense! The truth is these are two heavy hitting, multibillion dollar entities going at it in a commercial negotiation. Those negotiations are robust by their very nature. I very much doubt whether anyone opposite has ever been involved in such negotiations.

We as a government will wait for the opportunity to intervene where it will be decisive. Let me guarantee this: it will be decisive because there is not a single member of the industry who sensibly thinks that the proposals put forward here will be of any use in this season. The advice from the regulatory impact statement was that the options put forward by the opposition will take a minimum of nine months and cost \$1 million plus for the transaction and that it certainly could run out to 18 months or more. It is going to be a legal feast for barristers and lawyers. The idea that what has been put forward this evening is going to have any effect whatsoever on the crushing season this year is a complete nonsense. I look forward to the Leader of the Opposition standing up and telling me how he intends to see this bill acted on to deliver the result that he so blatantly claims will be the outcome because it will not affect this crush. It is a completely pointless exercise. It will not work. It will be massively expensive. It is pure political posturing.

Anyone who has had a look at this will understand what it is about: it is about Tim Nicholls, the Leader of the Opposition, keeping his job. By the time we are finished tonight, any economic credentials he had left will be completely and utterly eviscerated. Sensible Queensland government ministers go about encouraging all aspects of industry and that is what we have done. We have acted prudently and in the right place. In many respects, the continued LNP threats of intervention have completely compromised the commercial deliberations. For those opposite to suggest that their actions previously and tonight have not been an influence on the problems within the commercial arrangements is insanity. It is ludicrous to suggest that they have not been a distorting and a problematic component of what has gone forward. In my view, they stand condemned for having no economic credentials whatsoever. They are doing everything they can to jam an industry and back in their own National Party branch members—extreme elements such as George Christensen and others who want to walk to other parties. They are trying to shore up their support in regional Queensland. This has nothing to do with the sugar industry and everything to do with self-preservation in a disintegrating political mess that they have created.

(Time expired)

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (8.01 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Sugar Industry (Arbitration for Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill 2017. This bill is of enormous importance to canegrowers throughout Queensland and, more particularly, those canegrowers with farms between Sarina and Ingham who fall under the umbrella of Wilmar Sugar. In that area, eight Wilmar owned mills process some 16.8 million tons of cane each year. The sugar industry is the biggest single economic driver in my electorate of the Burdekin, generating some \$450 million in revenue each year. The industry is at significant risk because of a dispute between Wilmar and Queensland Sugar Ltd, QSL. The sugar industry started in the Burdekin in 1878. Here we are, 139 years later, facing the biggest challenge in the history of the Burdekin sugar industry. On the weekend of 18 and 19 February, almost 1,000 canefarmers attended forums at Ingham and Ayr to vent their frustration at the delays in resolving this dispute, which is centred on the lack of an on-supply agreement between Wilmar and QSL.

At this point, I think it is important that I outline how the contract process works between canefarmers and sugar mills, and between marketers and sugar mills. Normally, growers have the ability to take advantage of the market and forward price up to three years out from the harvest. At the present time, growers are unable to forward price or lock in a contract with their preferred marketer due to the lack of an on-supply agreement between Wilmar and QSL. In simple terms, growers want choice. Timing is crucial as the 2017 crush will commence in June and growers need to have signed cane supply agreements in place well before the harvest commences. As the Sugar Industry Act stipulates, a grower may not supply sugar cane nor a miller accept cane without a cane supply agreement in place. It will take at least a month from the time QSL and Wilmar agree in principle to an on-supply agreement before contracts are formalised and Wilmar growers can effectively nominate QSL as their preferred marketer. Yet, here we have a minister who stood in this place yesterday and said—

Why is this being considered urgent? What is the fundamental issue here?

Mr Byrne: I just explained that, mate.

Mr LAST: Minister, let me remind you that the fundamental issue here is that we have a dispute between Wilmar and QSL that has dragged on for 12 months and shows no signs of being resolved. You may not care about the canefarmers, but I do.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! Member for Burdekin and Minister, you will speak through the chair.

Mr LAST: When I was elected, I made a commitment to resolve the issue with the marketing of sugar, because my farmers were telling me loudly and clearly that they wanted choice in the marketing of their GEI sugar. Unfortunately, before my canefarmers can sign a cane supply agreement, there needs to be in place an on-supply agreement between the miller and the marketer and that is where the issue arises. For over 12 months we on this side of the House have been doing everything that we possibly can to resolve this dispute. On a number of occasions we have met with Wilmar and QSL. The leader, the deputy leader and I have written to Mr Kuok, inviting him to come to Australia to assist in resolving this issue. We have offered mediation. For Wilmar and QSL to now say that they need more time to resolve this dispute is nothing short of insulting. The 1,500 cane-growing families affected by this dispute are effectively being held to ransom. They are small business people who happen to grow sugar cane and, without the certainty of a contract going forward, they are unable to plan for the future. Planting sugar cane is a significant investment. For many farmers, the decision to plant cane has been complicated by the fact that we do not have an OSA between Wilmar and QSL. Sugar prices are at an historically high level and farmers are keen to sign contracts that will lock in those prices.

I am proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with my canefarmers on this issue. I can say unequivocally that I am in this fight to the end. Given that we are now three months away from the start of the 2017 crushing season, this dispute needs to be sorted out. There has been plenty of posturing and plenty of political statements and scaremongering from the pretenders, but at the end of the day it is the LNP that has drawn a line in the sand and said that enough is enough. It is the LNP that introduced this legislation into parliament with a view to bringing this unsavoury dispute to an end. This issue has been allowed to fester for over 12 months. I can say that we on this side of the House are serious about protecting our sugar industry from predatory marketing practices and providing choice in marketing.

Mr BYRNE: I rise to a point of order. I find it offensive that this debate is talking about predatory marketing behaviour and the inference of that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no personal reflection.

Mr LAST: The amendments seek to ensure that: sugar mill owners and sugar marketing entities undertake negotiations in a fair, timely and businesslike manner to finalise on-supply agreements; that, in the event of a breakdown in protracted negotiations, both parties, sugar mill owners and marketing entities, are required to enter into formal arbitration to resolve any disputed terms in the intended on-supply contract; that after a negotiating period either party can give notice to refer disputes for formal arbitration under the Commercial Arbitration Act 2013; and that the arbitration tribunal will decide disputes about proposed terms of the intended on-supply agreement.

It is vitally important for my canefarmers in the Burdekin and, indeed, the broader Wilmar cane-growing areas that the current dispute regarding an on-supply agreement be resolved as soon as possible and certainly well before the start of the 2017 crushing season. If members want to know the impact that this dispute is having, they need only visit the communities of Ayr and Home Hill in my electorate. The uncertainty and the lack of confidence that this dispute has caused is palpable in those communities. Not only are the farmers hurting but the lack of confidence is transferred to the businesses in the community. Farmers who may have been contemplating the purchase of new machinery such as a pump or on-farm investment have held off because of that uncertainty. Financial institutions are applying pressure to my farmers, who are unable to lock in forward contracts. In one case, a bank will not loan money to a farmer to purchase an adjoining cane farm because of the uncertain future in this industry. Those are real impacts of this dispute, which is also leading to a divide between the canefarmers and the employees at the sugar mills who, I might add, are the unwilling victims in this dispute.

There is no question that this is a commercial matter that should have been resolved between the relevant parties. The fact that those two entities have been unable to reach agreement on an OSA is both disappointing and frustrating for all concerned. However, there should be no doubt that we on this side of the House are resolute in our determination to bring this dispute to a satisfactory end. The fact that we need to resort to legislation to bring the impasse to a head is indicative of that commitment. It is my fervent hope and desire that the parties can reach agreement in the coming days, without having to resort to arbitration. Our farmers and their families, business owners and all relevant stakeholders would like nothing more than to see an on-supply agreement finalised as soon as possible, which would allow our farmers to lock in their cane supply arrangements.

These amendments before the House tonight will deliver a dispute-breaking arbitration mechanism going forward in the event of a deadlock between a miller and a marketer regarding on-supply agreements. Given the events over the past 12 months, that is exactly what we need. If six

of the seven milling companies in Queensland can reach agreement with their growers, I see no reason why Wilmar and QSL cannot resolve their differences for the sake of the sugar industry in North Queensland—a sugar industry with a proud tradition and one that we cannot afford to lose from this great state. I urge all members here tonight to support this bill. We owe it to our farmers. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (8.10 pm): Formally this bill is known as the Sugar Industry (Arbitration for Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill 2017, but we know now that Malcolm Turnbull actually calls it the ‘keep George Christensen in the tent’ bill. I understand the bill we are now debating has been introduced for the purpose of resolving disputes between the manufacturer of raw sugar and a sugar marketer.

Let me say from the beginning that as the member for Mirani I represent in this place a large sugarcane production area. While I am still learning, I have to give recognition to the producers in the Mackay district. Having spent my younger days on the land in north-west New South Wales, I have enough knowledge to be able to recognise the efforts and commitment of the Mackay and districts canegrowers. I personally believe that the management practices of the region are of the highest quality. I know that the cane industry is a major contributor to the local economy, including providing many jobs.

I recall the last time this issue was raised in this place. I argued that the canegrowers understand their industry. They know what is best for their business. Government should not be building brick walls that would obstruct the industry doing what it considers to be in its best interests. It seems that I may have got it wrong so I will be adding to this debate comment that I hope canegrowers may want to listen to and consider.

I agree with Marty McCarthy, an ABC Rural reporter. He said, ‘At the core of this argument is growers wanting control of their destiny in a deregulated environment.’ While the LNP talk about doing the right thing, I, because of my association with the sugar industry, personally worry about what this will mean to the industry in Mirani in the short term. Growers argue that they have no choice who crushes their cane, but they want to say who markets the sugar. They have an economic interest.

Marty McCarthy went on to say that it is also a debate over foreign investment. Wilmar is one of the most powerful community traders in the world. I think that is a point we need to remember. These guys will not hesitate in doing what they have to to get what they want. They have made a significant investment in Australia, and I think everybody acknowledges that. I have no love for the multinationals like Wilmar—no more than the multinationals that as part of their profit driven agendas have brought coal communities to their knees, destroyed job security and implemented a casualised workforce, which is unacceptable to us.

The bill opens up the possibility that a canegrower or their representative might be a party to the agreement between the miller and the marketer. This would need the agreement of both the mill owner and the marketer, but even its suggestion is unprecedented. If agreed, it could make a canefarmer a party to a contract, potentially a multi hundred million dollar contract in relation to product that they do not own and have never owned.

I would like to ask what the parliament’s portfolio committee thinks of this. What involvement have they had? I would ask what the independent legal experts say. I would ask what the regulatory assessment says. We know the answer to that. They were never asked. This has bypassed the process. This is why I get concerned.

The LNP has chosen to act in what it sees as being in the interests of some canegrowers while the Palaszczuk government has acted for the entire sugarcane community and all those who work in it. We have steadfastly refused to take sides because we act in the interests of all the supply chain—growers, millers, workers, marketers. We do not pick winners and losers, but we do see the dangers of playing politics. That is what I am concerned about for the people in the Mirani electorate. Industry needs the certainty of no government interference in their commercial arrangements. Interference only delays the negotiations, as we have seen here.

I recall that foreign minister Julie Bishop urged the Queensland government not to support the sugar market legislation in 2015 because she saw it as a risk to foreign investment that would damage Australia’s reputation as a place to invest. The Productivity Commission’s interim report into regulation in the agriculture sector was damning of the legislation and said it should be repealed. These organisations outside government and outside what happens in here are saying that the original legislation was going down the wrong track. That is what I am concerned about.

Foreign Investment Review Board chair, Brian Wilson, says that the political pressure being applied by the LNP on the foreign millers is a risk to the Australian economy. Do we just ignore that? There is a significant risk to future investment in Queensland agriculture if companies prepared to invest in our industries are unfairly victimised.

Mills need investment. I know that from my area. A lot of cane was not able to be removed from the paddocks simply because the mills were not up to standard. That is because no money is being spent on them. Some growers have seen their cane rot in the ground this season because of a lack of milling capacity.

Where would the industry be today if investors were not prepared to sink their cash into milling operations? MSF Sugar, owned by Thailand company Mittr Pohl, has invested more than \$200 million in regional Queensland in the past three years and has plans to invest another \$100 million. That is \$300 million coming into the economy of Queensland. The area under cane has increased as a result of these actions.

The bill does much more than introduce a dispute resolution process. This legislation builds on a clause that created the environment for the dispute to happen in the first place. It then attempts to resolve it and more. This is a flawed approach. The better alternative would be to remove what is causing the problem in the first place—legally questionable and unfair legislation.

There is no doubt in my mind that that is of concern. I have been involved in the coal industry. I have been involved in the union movement. I am proud to stand up and say that. It is not always as easy as it looks. We have to cover all bases before we go rushing in and making decisions that are not in the best interests of the people we represent. I have made those mistakes in the past.

I am really concerned that the people of the Mirani electorate that I represent will be severely impacted by this legislation being debated tonight if it goes wrong. I do not have the answers, but if this goes wrong by crikey there are going to be some people on that side of the House doing some apologising. Unfortunately, the damage will have been done. We have to do everything we can as elected members of parliament to make sure that the people we represent get the best outcome.

Mr Costigan: Then vote accordingly.

Mr PEARCE: Every time you open your mouth, I have this picture of a cow lifting its tail. That is how much interest you have in the growers. If you want to be a smarty, let us think about the people, their families and the workers. It is not about the LNP getting recognised or using this opportunity to create a political farce. This is about families. This is about the economy. This is about the regions. It is not about George Christensen and it is not about the Leader of the Opposition in this place. It is about those people who have put millions of dollars and hundreds and hundreds of hours and blood, sweat and tears into their business. To have the concern about it being turned upside down in a couple of weeks concerns me. I want to go on the record in this place as being concerned about the outcome of this legislation, if it goes through, for the people in my electorate. If I have got it wrong again, I will have the guts to stand up and say I got it wrong. If I am right, those opposite better be prepared to stand up and say they got it wrong because I will be riding them.

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (8.19 pm): I rise to support the Sugar Industry (Arbitration for Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill 2017. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for introducing this piece of legislation and for his support in attempting to resolve this very difficult and complex issue facing the sugar industry in Queensland.

I will commence my observations by addressing some of the comments that the member for Mirani just made. He said this is about the farming families of the Queensland sugar industry. The 300 or 400 canefarmers and their families who turned out in the school hall at Ingham State High School a couple of Saturdays ago are farming families. They are very clear about their opinion of what needs to occur to address the ongoing dispute between millers and marketing entities in Queensland that are preventing them from accessing the opportunity to sign a cane supply agreement with their mills. I am here today, having spoken to and listened to farmers and farming families, to address directly the comments made by the member for Mirani.

One of the other things that the member for Mirani alleged was that this issue has arisen as a result of a faulty piece of legislation that passed through this House in December 2015. That is also not the case. The fact of the matter is that this is a different issue. The issue that the House addressed in December 2015 was a dispute between growers and millers and the problems that they were facing at the time to enter into a cane supply agreement between those two parties. What we face now is a situation where one remaining milling company and a marketer—namely QSL, which is the preferred

marketer for quite a few of the growers in those mill areas between Ingham and Sarina—do not have an on-supply agreement. The growers are not able to access a cane supply agreement because there is no on-supply agreement between their miller and their preferred marketer. The spirit and the objectives of the amendments that were passed by this House in December 2015 are being frustrated by the fact that an on-supply agreement cannot be reached between millers and marketers—namely, Wilmar and QSL.

The untruthfulness of the statement made by the member for Mirani about the faultiness of the legislation passed in December 2015 is put to bed when you make the observation that all other milling companies operating in Queensland and the growers supplying those mills have successfully signed cane supply agreements in their mill areas and they have on-supply agreements with the marketing entities. The legislation has not failed. It has been successful. There is evidence in this state of the successful conclusion of those negotiations in a commercial nature between millers and marketers and, subsequently, between millers and growers. The member for Mirani is somewhere else, but he is certainly not operating in the state of Queensland and he is certainly not talking to the farmers and the farming families in his electorate of Mirani.

In contrast, we have a situation where the 2017 harvesting season is on its way. For those farmers and farming families in sugarcane-growing districts between the Herbert River district in the north and Sarina in the south, we do not have any certainty. We do not have any security. We have no opportunity to forward price in a sugar market that is presently very strong. We cannot plan for our businesses going forward in the future. Small businesses in town that rely on the activity in the sugar industry do not have any certainty or security because their customer base does not have any certainty and security.

I am glad that the Minister for Agriculture has just returned to the chamber because my next comments relate to his behaviour throughout this entire situation. The attitude of the Minister for Agriculture through this entire saga has been akin to Chicken Little. The Minister for Agriculture has been running around saying, 'The sky is going to fall on our head. There is terrible uncertainty created by the amendments that were passed in 2015,' but, as I have just outlined to the House, none of that is true. Every other milling company has a cane supply agreement with their growers and an on-supply agreement with their sugar marketing entities.

Mr BYRNE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I fear that the member is misleading the House. That is an incorrect statement about the number of agreements. It is completely false.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Minister, resume your seat. It is not a point of order; it is a point of view.

Mr CRIPPS: The 2017 harvesting season will commence in every other mill and every other harvesting district in this state except at the moment in those districts which have Wilmar mills. That is the point that we are facing today.

The Minister for Agriculture has said repeatedly that there is going to be some sort of investment scare, that there is going to be investment fleeing from the state of Queensland. In a question that the minister answered in the House I think it was in early 2016 or it might have been in late 2015 when we passed the last amendments he said that Maryborough Sugar would not be proceeding with a whole heap of capital upgrades to their milling infrastructure in the state of Queensland. I table an article from the *Australian Financial Review* dated 30 August 2016 about half a billion dollars going into the four mills owned by MSF in Queensland for co-generation using a by-product of crushing sugar cane—the gas. If you are not intending to stay in the state of Queensland, if you are not intending to continue to crush cane, half a billion dollars investment in capital projects in your milling infrastructure in the state of Queensland using a by-product of crushing cane is a very strange and unusual activity to undertake. I table that article for the information of the House.

Table paper: Article from the *Australian Financial Review* online, dated 30 August 2016, titled 'MSF Sugar to spend \$500m on four "green" power stations' [[324](#)].

The minister yesterday arrived at five minutes to midnight and announced that the Palaszczuk government would pay for a mediator to come in to try to resolve the dispute between QSL and Wilmar. After paying absolutely no attention to this issue for years, the Palaszczuk government, in a classic Johnny-come-lately manoeuvre, have turned up and offered some mediation. That is fine. That is great. We hope it is successful in fact. I think the Leader of the Opposition said that during his contribution to the debate—but nothing that I heard yesterday in the ministerial statement from the Minister for Agriculture and nothing that I read in his press release regarding this issue said it would be binding mediation. There is no guarantee of an outcome between the milling company involved, Wilmar, and

QSL, the marketer. There is no guaranteed outcome whatsoever as a result of this last minute stunt by the Minister for Agriculture, who perennially suffers from relevance deprivation syndrome in the Labor cabinet.

The mechanism that is being proposed in the legislation tonight that the Leader of the Opposition has introduced provides a backstop that if there is no commercial agreement between either of these two parties then it will, if triggered by either of the two parties, go to an arbitration process and that will lead to a conclusion. That will provide some certainty to the parties involved in this dispute. The alternative is no guaranteed solution, no guaranteed resolution. All members of this House should vote for this piece of legislation as a result.

There is some allegation going around that this is going to impact on the parties already engaged in commercial negotiations. That is complete nonsense. These amendments to the Sugar Industry Act will only be triggered if, in fact, commercial negotiations fail and the arbitration process goes ahead. All the other milling companies with cane supply agreements and on-supply agreements have not had to trigger this legislation and they are not impacted. Wilmar and QSL and growers in Wilmar mill areas can avoid these amendments, if they so desire, by entering into commercial negotiations.

The crux of this issue is that the spirit and the objectives of the amendments that were passed by this House in December 2015 are not being recognised and respected by Wilmar and QSL, and therefore the growers in those mill areas do not have access to a cane supply agreement and do not have any certainty and security. The LNP is acting in accordance with our commitment to the people whom we represent that we will provide them with some certainty and security. I am very proud of that fact and I commend this bill to the House on that basis.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (8.30 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Sugar Industry (Arbitration for Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill 2017. It is a bit like *Groundhog Day* today, with the LNP putting up another bungled bill in an attempt to fix the 2015 bungle. The position of the Palaszczuk government has always been that there should be a commercial agreement between the millers and growers without interference from government for cane supply.

Where the growers and millers have been able to mature their relationship and come to a commercial agreement, like MSF, they have continued with sound agreements in spite of the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill. The LNP jumped the gun in 2015 with its bill and stifled any opportunity for the parties to come to a mature commercial agreement. The 2015 bill eroded all trust between parties and has caused a huge wedge in the industry. That is why we are back here today debating this.

The sugar industry contributes greatly to the Queensland economy. It is too important for the livelihoods of many Queenslanders up and down the coast for the LNP to keep interfering in the industry. This bill will not meet the needs of the industry. Will we be back here next year with another amendment to the amended bill, still interfering in the industry? Last year the member for Nanango in her Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill stated—

We have heard so much nonsense about this economic vandalism and winding back the clock to the 1950s. Everyone understands the industry has been deregulated and no-one is seeking to undo those changes.

Unfortunately for the member for Nanango, she has proven the Labor government right. This bill is exposing the sugar industry to economic vandalism before our eyes. The LNP's first bill is wreaking havoc and causing tensions in relationships between millers and growers. We have another rushed bill from the LNP, more town hall meetings with growers and a lot of back-peddalling from the LNP trying to mend the mess and the chaos they created in 2015. They made a promise to the industry that they had the answers to their problems. The industry was sold a pup.

The LNP wants to send the sugar industry back to the future. On this side of the House we want the sugar industry to grow and to evolve into the modern world where it has the potential to produce more than just sugar. The possibilities are remarkable. Biofuels, medicines and plastics are just a start. With the interference of the LNP, there will be no incentive for investors to be involved in R and D in the industry. The Leader of the Opposition and the LNP are short-sighted and doing a real injustice to the farmers and the millers. They are just here to score short-term political points at the cost of the sugar industry. We do not want to see the sugar industry go down the drain. I cannot support the bill.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (8.34 pm): I am proud to rise to speak in support of the Sugar Industry (Arbitration for Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill because I, for one, do want to stand up for the industry. I was proud to do it in 2015 and I am proud to do it again tonight,

because I am greatly concerned about the sugar stakeholders involved in this stand-off, as some mills move to sell all sugar they produce after 1 July 2017. The absolute end date is approaching with no resolution on the horizon.

This has dragged on far too long and put our third largest agricultural industry at risk—an industry that supports thousands of farming families and mill workers in regional Queensland. We have seen countless streams of media releases back and forth on this issue from all sides and now, unfortunately, nothing has been resolved. We see plenty of activity from many stakeholders constantly sending out propaganda to their farmers explaining how they will do a better job than the independent industry owned QSL.

This sugar war has gone on for too long and we need to broker a resolution. We hear from those opposite a lot about this issue but no solutions. We need to invest the political capital right now to resolve this issue. While we hear about the reregulation of the industry, let us remember that the principal object of the sugar act is to facilitate an internationally competitive, export orientated sugar industry based on sustainable production that benefits those involved in the industry and the wider community. These are strong words in the act which even brings in towns which service each separate cane-growing district as part of a solid working relationship which needs to be assisted. We must show compassion and empathy to these regions. We must acknowledge that we are prepared to stand up for the farmer and the small business men and women over large international corporations who are playing this never-ending game.

We hear about sovereign risk and foreign investment. What about the billions of dollars invested in farms and farming plant and equipment on the 4,000 farms that canegrowers own and operate? The LNP welcomes the investment of foreign companies in our milling sector—a milling sector estimated to be worth \$4 billion. None of us wants to see foreign investment dry up and we acknowledge that it is important, but we also recognise the investment of our 4,000 canefarmers in land, machinery and improvements—a total investment estimated to be nearly \$12 billion.

I firmly believe that, if millers are as good as they proclaim, they should be offering growers a choice to utilise the arrangements that many other millers and growers have agreed to right across the state. The LNP made those common-sense changes to the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill in the parliament on 2 December 2015. Since then, the vast majority of milling companies have successfully negotiated with QSL regarding on-supply agreements between millers and marketers, and provided growers with cane supply contracts which offer real choice in their marketing. This allows me to congratulate the growers and millers in my region for moving professionally forward showing maturity—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! There is quite a lot of conversation going on and a number of members are standing in the aisles. I ask members to resume their seats or if they need to have a conversation to take it outside. I can barely hear the member for Burnett.

Mr BENNETT: I thought I was using my big boy voice too. This allows me to congratulate, as I said earlier, the growers and millers in my region for moving forward professionally and showing maturity and getting on with the job in the best interests of our growers. I acknowledge the Bundaberg and Isis mills, along with the Maryborough mill, that have been able to work through the new marketing contracts to provide their growers with the economic choice in marketing for the grower's economic interest of their sugar.

These industries need absolute proof, one way or the other, that they are able to price and sell their sugar at a premium to what QSL currently does or not. The urgency of this debate is to have this issue resolved and support those millers and marketers who have been asked and encouraged to do this but have to date refused. Several of the millers and marketers appear to be making other claims that have been shown to be rather misleading. The industry has always made payment for the cane that is supplied to millers, calculated using a formula documented in a cane supply agreement, or CSA. The formula determines returns received—the industry income—from the manufacture and sale of raw sugar from the cane that is supplied to millers.

The formula is based on returns on capital investment by the industry players. A component of the formula links the sugarcane price to the raw sugar price. Overall, the formula reflects the above. Generally, growers receive two-thirds of the monies made from the sale and the miller receives one-third. Current and future arrangements for the marketing of Australian sugar needs our assistance, not ignorantly claiming that it is too hard.

The LNP has made its position absolutely clear—that we would stand by farmers and work with the industry to find a solution. That deadline has expired and we are now doing exactly what we said we would do: that is, to provide arbitration to break stalemates like the stalemates we now have. I strongly support the bill, and I hope others will have the fortitude to do the same.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (8.39 pm): I rise to oppose the bill. My connection with the Queensland sugar industry comes not through my studies in agriculture but by way of my father's twin sister, Doreen Madden, who married an Innisfail canefarmer, Peter Mitchell, during World War II. When her younger brother, Terry Madden, travelled to North Queensland to visit her after the war after having served in Bomber Command, he was not to know when he knocked on the back door of Innisfail's Canecutter Hotel one Sunday afternoon hoping to buy a bottle of beer that the pretty young Australian-Italian lady who answered the door was to become his future wife and my Auntie Lena.

With this strong family connection with the Queensland sugar industry, it disappoints me to see the LNP members once again rushing headlong into commercial agreements to save their own bacon. It is like we have gone back in time and are revisiting 2015 all over again. This is not good enough for an industry that is valued at over \$2 billion. Way back in 2015, the LNP members said they had the solution. They said, 'Let's re-regulate sugar and interfere with commercial arrangements.' They said, 'This will solve the problem.' The LNP members charged ahead and got what they wanted, and they could not stop crowing about how they had fixed the problem.

Now, here we are once again listening to the LNP members say they can solve the problem. They already claimed they had done that in 2015. Once again, the LNP members are rushing through legislation to fix something they had already claimed they had fixed. The irony is breathtaking. This parliament has the mechanisms to look at this bill and look at it in a methodical and thorough manner and make considered recommendations. It is important that we have all the information on hand to make the best decision for the entire industry.

By rushing this bill, we are all making decisions without all of the evidence. We know the Turnbull-Joyce government has a Productivity Commission report addressing changes the LNP made in 2015. Sadly, because of simple political opportunism, they are refusing to release this document. They are doing this to simply hide the fact that the report correctly identified the 2015 amendments were and are a disaster for the entire cane industry. We know this because in the report the recommendation was to repeal the LNP's amendments. Not to be frightened off by the experts, the LNP members are charging like bulls at a gate to once again rush through ill-thought-out and disastrous amendments.

It is like Groundhog Day. The government has been consistent throughout this debate. This is a commercial agreement that needs to be dealt with without government interference and the addition of more red tape. It is important we give the industry the space it needs to reach an agreement. We warned the sugar industry in 2015 that any interference by the government in these commercial negotiations would simply drag out the issue further. Lo and behold, we fast forward to today and here we are again—a warning that interference in commercial arrangements runs the real risk of prolonging this issue once again.

Be in no doubt that this debate is all about saving the face of the LNP members. They are pushing themselves into commercial arrangements because of the direct threats from LNP backbenchers both in this chamber and in Canberra. It seems it does not take much for the member for Clayfield to turn into water and abandon his Liberal roots. I can only wonder how many of the LNP members threatened to quit the party if he did not abandon his personal beliefs. When the blowtorches from his own colleagues were turned on him, he could not help but turn to water and abandon his principles. This is a commercial matter. If the LNP had kept out of the negotiations in 2015, we would not be having this argument today. We do not need the LNP to repeat the same mistakes all over again with this rushed and ill-thought-out bill. This is why I oppose the bill.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (8.44 pm): We have heard some members opposite tonight trying their best to pretend to stand up for the sugar industry, but at the end of the day the proof will be in the pudding, when we pick up the papers tomorrow and see which way the red army voted in relation to the bill that is being debated before the House tonight. As I look up to the gallery, I see plenty of key stakeholders here tonight. There are also people watching the webcast of what is happening here in Her Majesty's parliament tonight. This is not Groundhog Day; this is D-Day for Wilmar and QSL. As the old saying goes, it takes two to tango, and the egos between these two organisations are bigger than the bulk sugar terminal at Mackay Harbour.

Members on this side of the House are passionate about agriculture. The only farmer on that side of the House, with due respect, is the member for Bulimba. We have heard from a couple of speakers from the government side, including the member for Ipswich West, who would love to be the minister for agriculture in another life. In the debate tonight, we heard from the Labor member for Mackay, and I hear the giggles coming from the gallery. She had 10 minutes on the clock and she could only use three of them. She ran out of puff after three minutes. I am glad I went into Lyn Dupuy's Pharmacy at Amcal in Mount Pleasant and bought some No-Doz again before this week's sitting. We heard from the member for Mirani.

Mrs GILBERT: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Whitsunday is now starting to be offensive and I would like him to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Member for Whitsunday, the member for Mackay would like you to withdraw.

Mr COSTIGAN: I am more than happy to withdraw. I thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was going to come to the member for Mirani, who claims to stand up for the sugar industry but again the proof will be in the pudding.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Whitsunday is certainly being provocative, but I ask that we keep the interjections down to a level where we can hear the member.

Mr COSTIGAN: This is no audition; this is me as the member for Whitsunday and the shadow assistant minister for North Queensland. I am joining particularly with my fellow North Queensland colleagues—the member for Burdekin, the member for Hinchinbrook and others on this side of the House—showing the fire and brimstone that needs to be shown here tonight because our farming families have had a gutful. They have had enough.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Southern Downs, member for Murrumba and member for Gladstone, we do not have conversations across the chamber. It is the turn of the member for Whitsunday. If there are any further interjections, I will be issuing warnings. I have a blank sheet here so we can always start now.

Mr COSTIGAN: We talk about mental health issues across the community. As MPs, no matter our political persuasions, we all come in here and say that these are serious issues. This is a serious issue because mental health is talked about now like never before. What about the mental health of our canefarmers and our cane-farming families? What about those 1,500 farmers from Sarina in the south to Ingham in the north? There are eight Wilmar mills across that footprint. We have the four Burdekin mills, represented by the member for Burdekin, and the growers who feed into those Wilmar mills. We have Victoria and Macknade in the Herbert River district to the north. We also have the central district. I remind all members in the House here tonight that there is still more land under cane in the central district—bookended by Plane Creek and Proserpine—than any other cane-growing district in North Queensland. I refer to the Wilmar mills at Plane Creek and Proserpine in the north, the latter of which is in my own electorate.

We talk about the importance of this industry. This is a \$2 billion industry and it is so important to those sugar-growing communities in North Queensland, like Sarina, Proserpine, Ayr, Home Hill, Ingham and on it goes. Where would we be in North Queensland without the sugar industry? What about those families? I talk about the mental health issues because there are families who are hurting and there are families who are worried. They cannot plan. They cannot have any certainty. We talk about the knock-on effect.

The member for Burdekin quite eloquently talked about the knock-on effect to businesses in his electorate. It is no different in my electorate of Whitsunday. Honourable members should talk to the Zarb family at Mount Ossa Rural or the Rogers family in Proserpine Rural and other businesses in those small communities. People need certainty. There are a lot of families out there who have been worried sick because they do not see any commercial breakthrough that we have all been banking on and hoping for.

Let us be blunt: what the LNP did from opposition with the support of the crossbenchers in 2015 was not only quite remarkable but it gave the sugar industry and growers hope. We do not want to see the canegrowers reduced to 21st century peasants. We do not want to see that because that is not good for North Queensland and the communities that I represent. Those families include the Cantamessas, the Tibaldis, the Falettis, the Italians who have come to the Proserpine district and the

Maltese in Mackay. I acknowledge Kevin Borg, the Chairman of Canegrowers Mackay, who has Maltese blood flowing through his veins and who is in the gallery here tonight. Only recently we saw the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in my electorate listening to canegrowers in Mackay with the acting chairman, Tony Ross, and his fellow board members. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition then travelled up to Proserpine to listen to the concerns of Canegrowers Proserpine. On 19 February—just recently—we saw the Leader of the Opposition in the Burdekin with the member for Burdekin, the shadow minister for agriculture. Do honourable members know why? It was because on this side of the House we care.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Minister and member for Nanango, I warn you under standing order 253A for disorderly conduct.

Mr COSTIGAN: We do care. Our care is genuine because we understand the importance of this \$2 billion industry and what it means to our communities up and down the North Queensland coast. We have heard from other members. I will not duplicate what members on this side of the House have said in this debate. It is a very important debate. I am pleased we are thrashing it out tonight because there are people, particularly in North Queensland, watching the parliament tonight to see what transpires. This is a good thing because the Queensland parliament is debating a very important issue, a Queensland issue and succinctly a North Queensland issue. It is all well and good to have the argy-bargy in Canberra. However, I can tell everyone in the House that there is no navel-gazing on my part. We are looking to the future and looking to stand up for our cane-farming families. The member for Hinchinbrook talked earlier about the multinational Wilmar. While we welcome foreign investment in the sugar industry and in this nation, there are the appropriate checks and balances through the FIRB and on it goes—and the appropriate thresholds. There is probably a lot of debate out there, but without foreign investment this economy, our nation and our state will grind to a halt. It was pleasing to see the two million tonnes going through the rollers at the Proserpine mill this year. Across that Wilmar footprint it is millions of tonnes of cane. I would love to see more cane going through the rollers at Proserpine mill. Maybe if the Urannah Dam can be built more and more cane will go through the rollers at the Proserpine mill.

I come back to those families: the Italians in Proserpine and the Maltese in Mackay. In my own electorate there are the Simpsons, the Considines, the Blairs, the Falettis, the Caseys, the Altmanns, the Deikes, the Holcombes and on it goes. It always gives me great pride to see those sticks of cane up for show at the Proserpine show in June every year. As the Leader of the Opposition said from the get-go tonight, crushing ain't too far away. Of course, last year in the central district we had a crushing season from hell. It went on and on like *Gone with the Wind*. In fact, it was the longest crushing season since the advent of the mechanical cane harvester, which is another issue altogether.

In relation to the bill, this is good stuff from the LNP opposition tonight because we need to break the deadlock. We would love to see a commercial breakthrough between the two warring parties, Wilmar Sugar and QSL. They are both to blame and everyone else in the milling game has got on with business in terms of cane supply agreements and on-supply agreements.

Mr Last interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: As the member for Burdekin has just reminded me, six of the seven—Tully, Cofco and MSF Sugar—have all got on with it. After December 2015 in North Queensland we did not go into the cane fields with helmets wondering if the sky was going to fall. It did not happen; the sun came up the next day. However, we have seen the recalcitrant multinational in Wilmar thumbing their nose at the Queensland parliament thinking they are a law unto themselves.

Mackay is still the sugar capital; there is no doubt about that. It is the city that I represent. The pressure is on the members for Mirani and Mackay tonight to cross the floor and make sure they do the right thing by canegrowers in our region, including their own constituencies. We have heard them get up and talk tonight—three minutes from the member for Mackay. I have to say I cannot wait to walk up Sydney Street when I get back after the sitting week and say, 'She fired a shot for three minutes.' Three minutes! I will look after the electorate of Mackay as well. People come across the river to me every day. There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: This has gone on for far too long. For far too long it has dragged on and on. It is utterly absurd for the member for Mirani to say this bill is flawed. The member for Burnett interjected a moment ago to say, 'What are we supposed to do? Sit around and do nothing?' The people of North Queensland, in particular our cane-growing communities, are looking to the Queensland parliament to play hard ball. Tonight if we have to bang heads, then so be it. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (8.55 pm): I rise to oppose the bill. That was probably one of the best job interviews I have heard. I take my hat off to the member for Whitsunday. That is probably one of the best job interviews for the One Nation Party, and he is about to go out and see his boss. Well done! After all the years I have employed staff I would have taken him on that speech because that was an absolutely great interview. I must congratulate the member for Whitsunday.

We sat here in 2015—and it is Groundhog Day, as the member for Whitsunday said. We warned this would happen; we talked about it, and we were told it would not happen. I come from a great sugar-growing area: Maryborough, where MSF is located. It is a fantastic company. It is a bit poor. The growers and the millers have a fantastic relationship. I remember that in 2015 the rabble on that side said it could not happen and that the growers in Maryborough and the millers were selling out the industry. No, they worked together. That is what they do. If Queensland followed the example that MSF set with their growers and the millers and the community, we would not have this.

It is ironic that we hear those from the opposite side of the House talking about free enterprise. Here we have a party that is interfering with the business process of the community and the business sector. They are always telling us on this side of the House that we are interfering in the business side of things, yet here they are interfering in the business side of things. In 2015 everyone on that side of the House was warned that this would go pear-shaped, and did one of them believe us? No, they pushed ahead and here we are today.

This is not about looking after the growers. This is about making sure that the Turnbull government stays in power, that Christensen does not leave. That is what this is all about. This is also an opportunity for job interviews for those opposite with their future leader whom we know is in the precinct tonight. That is what it is all about. Let us talk about honesty. Do not beat around the bush. Where I come from people do not beat around the bush; they talk honestly. What is happening here is that those opposite are making sure they are getting their resumes ready—

Mr King: Sharpen them up.

Mr SAUNDERS: They are sharpening them up for the move to PHON. That is what they are doing. It is about time they owned up and were fair dinkum to the people of Queensland and to the growers and told them what the real motive is over there, why they want to hold George Christensen in the federal parliament as a National Party member instead of seeing him go over to One Nation. This is all about saving members on that side of the House so they can do up their resumes for One Nation.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The level of conversation is rising. It is getting so loud that it is very difficult to hear what the member for Maryborough is saying. Could members please take their conversations outside.

Mr SAUNDERS: One of the things I picked up on when talking to the member for Mackay about the biofuels industry is the future of the cane industry. In my electorate we are working as a government very strongly with MSF regarding the future of biofuels and bioproducts. We have a great company with Mike Barry at the helm—and I am starting to sound like the member for Whitsunday in terms of name dropping, 'I've been everywhere man! I know every name.' I am starting to sound like him. We have a great company who is willing to invest in my community and good jobs.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take the interjection from the member for Gladstone. We have a company that wants to inject hundreds of millions of dollars across Queensland into the sugar industry and particularly in my part of Queensland, the great city of Maryborough. This bill puts that in jeopardy because these companies are going overseas. They do not have to come to Queensland; they can invest their money overseas. There is no law that says they have to be here. They are creating jobs. Unlike the other side, who are doing up resumes to move camps, the companies that I deal with are looking to create jobs in this great state. As a government and as a community, is it our right to get involved in argy-bargy and discussions between the company and the growers? Is it right for us to dictate to the commercial trades? I know that when I was in business I did not like my trades being dictated to by outside interests. That side of the House keep telling us that we interfere all the time.

Mr Krause interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member for Beaudesert, if you wish to make an interjection you need to be in your seat.

Mr SAUNDERS: I will take that interjection. Talking about the injured, what about the workers who work in the mills?

An opposition member interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: They are workers—that is right—but what about the workers who work in the mills like the fitters and turners and electricians? There are a lot of them. I have not heard one of the members opposite mention the workers in the mills tonight.

This bill is all about self-interest from that side of the House. As I said, they are all doing their speeches because they hope that the people who are sitting in the Strangers' Dining Room will be watching the TV so they can go, 'Yes, tick. No, tick.' It is all about self-interest and looking after themselves; it is not about the industry.

As I said, I am totally against the bill and I urge all members on the other side of the House—and I said this in 2015—to think very closely before they vote tonight, to think about the ramifications this will have throughout the industry in Queensland. For once, I would ask them not to put their own self-interest first: put the interests of Queenslanders first for a change.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.01 pm): That speech clearly shows how out of touch this Palaszczuk Labor government is: they are prepared to put the cane-growing industry of Queensland completely last. There are canegrowers in this House sitting up in the visitors' gallery tonight who had to listen to that diatribe. What a shame! I am quite sure that the member over there will go home next week to his electorate and say something completely different, because that is what he does.

I rise to speak in support of the bill that was put before the House by the Leader of the Opposition. This is not something that we have come to as a Johnny-come-lately. In December 2015 we stood in this House and made amendments to ensure that we could protect the economic interests of canegrowers and support the sugar industry here in Queensland. Six out of the seven mills currently have contracts in place with their growers. Right now we have a deadlock for those remaining, and this bill is needed to end that deadlock—the stalemate—between Wilmar Sugar and Queensland Sugar Ltd. The Queensland sugar industry needs this stalemate resolved, and we need to ensure that our sugar industry does not end up in this situation again.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, I warn you under standing order 253A.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This is a mess of Labor's making; it is simply their problem. The Sugar Industry Act 1999, which we are amending, is Labor's legislation. It sets out general rules for the industry. It is there to do a job and if it is not working—and it is not working now—then it should be changed. Madam Deputy Speaker, 1,500 canegrowers and their families, their workers and their local communities are in limbo because of the stalemate occurring right now. The lazy Palaszczuk government, and more so the lazy agriculture minister, refuse to lift a finger; that has been made very plain. The fact is that we are in this position because the Beattie government deregulated the sugar industry and failed to include any common-sense provisions to deal with ongoing marketing through QSL.

Deregulation was begun under Labor with its Sugar Industry Act 1999 and continued for the next seven years. Marketing was the last sector to be deregulated. The Beattie government and the mills told canegrowers that all would be good. 'Trust us, all will be good.' We can all remember the Beattie of those days saying, 'Just trust us.' Then Labor pulled the rug out from under canegrowers, ignoring their pleas for caution and their calls for a guarantee of continued support for their industry owned marketer QSL. Labor ignored the concerns of the growers just as Labor is ignoring the concerns of the growers today. This is a mess that Labor has created and now it is up to us on this side of the House, the LNP and the crossbenchers, to try to fix up the mess.

At the deregulation of marketing of Queensland's raw sugar exports from 2006 there was a general agreement—let us call it a gentleman's agreement—to continue the pooling arrangements with QSL, but it was under a voluntary marketing agreement. Growers were not happy, but Labor ignored them and pressed ahead. The Labor government ignoring the needs of regional Queensland is a typical story that we hear day after day in this House.

The critical weakness of Labor's Sugar Industry Reform Act 2004 was the assumption that the system would continue in a voluntary manner. Labor's amending act failed to ensure that a sugar miller could only leave QSL when a significant majority of its cane suppliers voted to do so. At the time growers and their representatives called for this—pleaded for this—but they were simply ignored. Had this been in place we would not be dealing with the current dire situation as the 2017 season looms closer.

Let us be clear: it is a legal requirement for a grower to have a cane supply agreement in order to supply cane to a mill. I repeat: it is a legal requirement for a grower to have a cane supply agreement in order to supply to a mill. I am absolutely sure that the Palaszczuk Labor government and its Minister

for Agriculture do not understand this fundamental point, and we can see their vacant stares over there. The LNP simply cannot and will not accept a situation where up to 1,500 growers are caught between the law, the miller and the market. Those 1,500 growers are simply jammed because of the failure of the Beattie Labor government to listen to common sense and those with experience in the industry, and they are jammed because they have an incompetent agriculture minister and a Palaszczuk government which simply refuses to stand up for them.

In 2010 Wilmar purchased seven sugar mills and a majority share in the refiner Sugar Australia, which owns the CSR brand, amongst others, in Australia and New Zealand. Wilmar then purchased the Proserpine sugar mill in 2011. This investment was very welcome. The investment by the Singaporean to buy eight Queensland sugar mills for around \$2 billion is still very welcome. At the time it was seen as a friendly takeover by a new owner who was prepared to upgrade and invest in the mills, and Wilmar has undertaken those major upgrades. However, it would be a massive understatement to say that what has not been welcomed is the decision by Wilmar to pull out of the longstanding arrangements with QSL. That decision, made in April 2014 and quickly followed by MSF and Tully Sugar, put the growing and milling sectors on a collision course that has taken the best part of three years to resolve.

Every other sugar-milling company except for Wilmar has been able to reach agreement with QSL and provide cane supply contracts for the coming season which offer growers choice. Thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government and her incompetent Minister for Agriculture, we have a season that is about to start and 1,500 growers who do not have cane supply agreements, which are a legal requirement.

We hear that both parties are close to agreement. That is certainly good news. The LNP agrees—and we have always consistently stated—that commercial agreements being reached between business without government intervention is the best way forward. This is a fundamental principle that we in the LNP believe in. I hope that Wilmar and QSL do reach agreement and that contracts are made available to our growers as quickly as possible. Let us be clear: the only reason they are meeting and getting close to agreeing, as we are told, is the actions of the LNP and those on this side of the House. It is certainly not because of the Johnny-come-lately, lazy agriculture minister and this incompetent Palaszczuk Labor government.

This bill needs to be passed so that our sugar industry is never again put in this situation. I place on record my hope that the arbitration provision in this bill is never needed. We hope that after the past few years, particularly the past 12 months, sugar-milling companies, QSL and any other sugar-marketing entity are able to reach a commercial agreement in a professional, commercial and conciliatory manner; however, if this is not possible there will be an option of arbitration to break any future stalemate. I repeat: I hope this provision is never needed, but it will be available so that the current situation affecting 1,500 canegrowers never arises again. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.11 pm): I rise to speak against the Sugar Industry (Arbitration for Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill 2017. Yesterday the member for Clayfield moved that this bill be declared urgent, yet there was no justification in the Leader of the Opposition's speech to indicate why the Agriculture and Environment Committee should not examine the bill and why the bill had to be pushed through during this sitting week. I note that the LNP outlined in the bill's explanatory notes that it has consulted with stakeholders, but consultation on a bill of this nature should be public, with submissions from stakeholders publicly available, and the Agriculture and Environment Committee should have the opportunity to hear evidence from stakeholders. As the chair of that committee, I am somewhat disappointed. We have a pretty good crew on the Agriculture and Environment Committee, with the members for Condamine, Gregory, Mount Isa, Ipswich West and Mackay working together well.

I will take the title of Johnny-come-lately. I assume that is directed at someone like me. The reality is: just as I did in relation to the milk bill, just as I did in relation to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, and just as I will do with many other bills on this committee and any other committee, I will work my way through the bill, listen to the arguments from both sides and listen to the stakeholders. I will not get that opportunity in relation to this bill, and that is disappointing. Most importantly, stakeholders have lost the opportunity to have their say.

I was not on the Agriculture and Environment Committee in 2015 when the committee examined the previous amendment to the Sugar Industry Act 1999, but I do note the first recommendation of the committee. The report states—

The committee recommends that the completion of the regulatory impact assessment ... be required before the House considers the passage of the Bill in its present form.

It is disappointing that the opposition has decided not to conduct a regulatory impact assessment of this bill before the second reading debate, considering that the last regulatory impact statement stated—

- (a) there was no evidence to support a case for market failure in the Queensland sugar industry that would indicate the need for additional Government intervention; and
- (b) that the benefits of additional regulation, as proposed by the Bill, do not outweigh the costs.

The Decision RIS concludes that retaining the existing regulatory framework—with no additional regulation—will provide the greatest net benefit to Queensland.

I also note that in 2015 the Agriculture and Environment Committee was asked to consider the bill urgent, though the committee noted at the time—

The committee sees no reason to rush the next stage. In fact, the normal three month delay before the commencement of the second reading debate will allow time for DAF to complete the regulatory impact assessment of the Bill, as recommended by the committee, so Parliament can make an informed decision about the Bill's merits.

I do not see any reason this bill should not go through the same process to allow this House to make an informed decision about the bill's merits, yet the opposition seems intent on pushing through legislation without adequate consultation and assessment. I question why the LNP demands that this bill be passed with minimal scrutiny. I can only speculate that this is an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to shore up his National Party backbench with a sugar hit at the expense of his own free market views. Some stakeholders have been vocal, and I note that the Australian Sugar Milling Council stated on 16 February—

All mills opposed the 2015 legislation that the LNP supported. It was flawed from the start, mills were not consulted and identified from day one the many failings of the political interference. Despite this, with that legislation in place all mills have done everything possible to progress commercial arrangements with growers and marketers ahead of the 2017 season

Even with the milling council, which is made up of grower owned mills as well as multinationals, saying that it opposed the 2015 legislation, here we are again to add more legislation to sugar. Again I ask those opposite to let this proposed legislation receive proper scrutiny. This House is making a decision on sugar legislation without all of the facts on the table. I refer to the Productivity Commission report.

The federal Productivity Commission conducted an inquiry into agriculture. I understand that this government requested that the report be released before this debate, but the federal government is yet to table it. The draft report does comment on the amendments made to the Sugar Industry Act by the LNP. The report recommends—

The Queensland Government should repeal the amendments made by the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act 2015.

Further to that, the draft report notes—

Reregulating the Queensland sugar industry will limit the competitive forces driving innovation and productivity growth in sugarcane farming. It is also likely to constrain innovation in marketing and continue to limit the premiums available to sugarcane growers.

The Commission's view is that costs of the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act outweigh the benefits. Repealing the Act could enable consolidation and productivity gains which would enhance the international competitiveness of the sugar industry.

Again, it strikes me that the opposition is rushing to get this legislation through the House against all evidence that has been presented on this matter to date. In my maiden speech I reflected that I believe a functioning democracy is a key to building a better community. While travelling overseas I realised that democracies only ever work when citizens have and take up the opportunity to participate, so it is disappointing that the opposition refuses to allow the citizens of Queensland to participate fully on this important matter. It is unacceptable that the urgency of this bill has not been justified. It is unsatisfactory that the opposition has not given all stakeholders the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation. As the committee chair I am certainly very disappointed that the usual committee process has been circumvented for political expediency. I oppose this bill.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (9.17 pm): I rise to speak to the Sugar Industry (Arbitration of Mill Owners and Sugar Marketing Entities) Amendment Bill 2017. Now is the time for everyone to step up and support canegrowers, because the market is not working. Despite government rhetoric—that is all it is: spin—this is not about an ideological attack on the market. This is about recognising that the market is not perfect. This is about making pragmatic, common-sense changes that will benefit growers, workers, their families and, ultimately, Queensland. It is patently clear that we need to end the long-running stalemate between Wilmar Sugar and industry owned marketing company Queensland Sugar Ltd, QSL.

This bill seeks to put a precontract arbitration process in place for sugar on-supply disputes between millers and marketers. Currently the legislation provides for arbitration only between the grower and the miller and not between millers and marketers. Two weeks ago the LNP opposition gave Wilmar Sugar and QSL 48 hours to reach agreement. That deadline passed and now we are making good on our promise to introduce laws which compel dispute resolution.

This long-running dispute is putting the incomes of up to 1,500 North Queensland canegrowers at risk. The stalemate has dragged on for far too long. It is adversely affecting our largest agricultural industry—an industry that supports thousands of farming families and mill workers in regional Queensland. This issue had its genesis three years ago. When the sugar industry was deregulated in 2006, millers signed a memorandum of understanding agreeing to use the marketing company QSL under a voluntary single desk model until 2016. Three years ago, in 2014, three of the four foreign owned millers—Wilmar Sugar, Tully Sugar and MSF—gave three years notice of their intention to opt out of the agreement from this year onwards. They intended to market export sugar themselves. Subsequently, in December 2015 the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act was passed. A key component of that recognised the grower's economic interest or share of the sugar that exists after the cane has been processed by the miller. It allows the grower to control and nominate who markets their share of sugar, which has historically been two-thirds of the sugar.

Six of the seven milling companies in Queensland have negotiated on-supply contracts with marketer QSL and cane supply agreements with their growers offering marketing choice. Maryborough, Bundaberg, Isis, Mackay and Tully mills have all been able to provide their growers with genuine choice in marketing for grower economic interest, or GEI, sugar. Now it is time for Wilmar and QSL to put aside their differences and finalise agreements so the remaining growers in the Burdekin, Herbert, Proserpine and Plane Creek districts can have contracts for the coming season.

Let us be very clear how this works. Growers who supply Wilmar have no choice but to supply Wilmar mills. They will happily do that with the current high sugar prices, but they need cane supply contracts. They are not asking for the world. They are asking for the same contracts that have been made available by every other milling company in Queensland. They need to be able to lock in contracts so they know what they will receive for their cane. Time is running out as there is less than 17 weeks to go to the start of the crushing season and the 1,500 growers who supply the eight Wilmar mills in North Queensland need contracts to lock into the strong world price for sugar. Their banks want to know their projected income to meet loan repayments.

The legislation will provide for formal arbitration to resolve any future deadlocks in contractual negotiations between sugar millers and sugar marketers in the same way arbitration is available to resolve deadlocks between canegrowers and sugar-milling companies. It will have no effect on already finalised contracts. This bill is to ensure that canegrowers are never placed in this position again. We cannot leave it all to the market, because clearly in this case the market is not working. We need to fix it. Carping from the Labor Party and the government will not fix it. Political pointscoring and aimlessly criticising measures to ensure arbitration are unproductive. The inability of the Minister for Agriculture to deal with this issue and the dithering from the government would leave sugar growers in dire straits. It would place in jeopardy a significant portion of our third largest agricultural industry.

All the Labor government can do is side with the multinationals and falsely claim that by standing up for growers we are placing billions of dollars in foreign investment in jeopardy. What about the billions of dollars invested in farms and farming plant and equipment by our 4,000 canegrowers? What about the workers, farmers, their families and their communities? Are we to ignore their situation? If so, what is the point of being in government? Let there be no misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the truth. The LNP welcomes the investment of foreign companies in our milling sector—a sector which is estimated to be worth \$4 billion—but we also recognise another valuable investment. We recognise the investment that more than 4,000 canefarmers have made in land, machinery and improvements of more than an estimated \$1½ billion. We recognise that good markets and business practice operate within certainty. We recognise that canefarmers need certainty so they can invest, grow and support regional communities. We are providing that certainty with this legislation. I urge this House to support the bill.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (9.24 pm): I am supportive of the opposition's amendments because time is running out for growers who need to sign a cane supply agreement and we need to put a final stop to the appalling behaviour of the multinational miller Wilmar. However, I was greatly honoured to secure the passage of the choice in marketing legislation and six mills have agreed to an on-supply agreement with QSL. Those communities are doing very well in relation to that cane supply agreement and the on-supply agreement with QSL. Had the choice in marketing legislation been

defeated, there would be no protests and no town meetings with growers who mill with Wilmar as no grower would have a choice but would be forced to market with the multinational millers. We have not only secured choice in marketing but growers are able to access arbitration if a cane supply agreement cannot be reached. The Sugar Industry Act at section 33A titled 'Arbitration of disputed terms of intended supply contract' states—

- (1) This section applies if—
 - (a) a grower is negotiating, or has attempted to negotiate, a supply contract (an *intended supply contract*) with a mill owner, whether the grower is acting on the grower's own behalf or is in a group of growers that has appointed a bargaining representative to negotiate the contract on behalf of the group; and
 - (b) the grower or bargaining representative gives the mill owner a notice requiring the mill owner to use all reasonable endeavours to negotiate a supply contract within a stated period (the *negotiation period*) of at least 10 business days; and
 - (c) at the end of the negotiation period, the grower and mill owner dispute a proposed term of the intended supply contract.
- (2) The grower and mill owner are taken to have made an agreement (the *referral agreement*)—
 - (a) to refer the dispute to arbitration; and
 - (b) for the dispute to be arbitrated under the *Commercial Arbitration Act 2013* ...

Despite almost 12 months of the canegrowers negotiating in good faith with Wilmar, Wilmar has dodged, stalled and attempted to manipulate legislation and has forced Burdekin District Cane Growers to arbitration. To further stall, Wilmar has now challenged section 33A, which I just read out, to access arbitration through the courts in an attempt to deem section 33A unconstitutional. Wilmar is hoping to prolong, to delay, to stall this as long as it possibly can, and it has the money, it has the resources, it has the finances and it has the government backing. It has everyone behind it apart from the Queensland communities. The Queensland people are backing the canegrowers—not the multinationals, not the shareholders overseas. That is what the Queensland community stretching from Far North Queensland right down to the Sunshine Coast is doing. They provide valuable support to all of those communities and it is very important that these amendments pass. At the present moment, as I was saying, Wilmar is looking to prolong this as long as it possibly can, hoping to wear the farmers down. Those farmers need to provide security for their families. They need to get loans from the bank. They need the plant, but without a cane supply agreement they cannot do any of that.

While the LNP has had very little conversation outside of today with the KAP, I believe that the interests of the canegrowers are far more important than politics and MPs' job security. As I have said, we will be supporting the opposition's amendment that provides precontractual arbitration for on-supply agreements between millers and QSL. However, we will be moving an amendment to give better guidance to the arbitration process to determine the terms of a cane supply agreement. As I was saying, Wilmar is abusing the current arbitration process. It has all the money, the lawyers and the influence to continue to stall and delay. These amendments do not infringe or alter the LNP's amendments. In fact, they complement them and, as I have said before, provide better clarity. I still believe that this is not the be-all and end-all, especially when we are looking at a company that is determined to not only mill but also market. It wants to screw the farmers. The company is looking for shareholders, it is looking to provide profits for its overseas investors, but the farmers are looking to put food on their table and support their families. I prefer to back Australian farmers than multinational millers.

We have privatised Queensland Rail. Each year, there is \$1.8 billion in profit just in the coal component. Aurizon has made a profit of \$4 billion. That money could have gone back into the Queensland economy and to the Queensland people. Privatisation is bad business. The situation with the canegrowers is an example of what happens to Australian people, and Queensland farmers, when we sell out to foreign companies.

The Senate inquiry made only one recommendation, and that was to have a code of conduct. I point the finger at the federal government. One recommendation out of that Senate inquiry was to introduce and implement a code of conduct and the federal government has been dodging, weaving and hiding. This is a very serious situation. This argument is not going to stop; it is going to keep going. We need the federal government to introduce and implement a code of conduct to put companies like Wilmar in order to ensure that a fair process is put in place.

As I was saying, Wilmar has a team of lawyers and a team of financiers. Wilmar will challenge every section of the act to prolong negotiations for as long as it can. It is very important that we support this legislation and get it across the line to support the farmers of this state.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (9.31 pm): I rise to speak against this bill. I believe that this bill undermines a reform that has delivered a real resurgence in the sugar industry, and that is deregulation. The sugar industry brings in \$2 billion in export earnings to the state and it has been boosted by foreign

investment, which has been encouraged by deregulation. In recent years, because of deregulation and reform, the mill owners have invested \$3 billion into infrastructure, but any more foreign investment will be chased away by this inimical meddling by the LNP.

The LNP wants to reverse deregulation and reform. This is after the federal government delivered \$444 million to support this reform and the state invested \$85 million. That lot opposite have an arrogant disdain of the expenditure of these public funds. Why are we putting the growth of this industry under threat? As the Minister for Agriculture said, it is nothing to do with the good of the industry; it is about picking sides and folding to ultimatums. This bill has nothing to do with the good of the industry.

Do members know who was not mentioned by the LNP? The member for Maryborough referred to them. The blue-collar workers at the mills. Half of the guys I went to school with ended up working at the mills. No member opposite has chosen to speak on behalf of the mill workers across Queensland. Representatives of industry and commerce in Queensland tell us that this so-called change in this bill, introduced by the LNP, is not good for the industry.

The last time the LNP meddled in the sugar industry in 2015, an article in the *Australian Financial Review* stated—

Queensland is poised to re-regulate its \$2 billion sugar industry, only 10 years after a \$444 million bailout package from federal taxpayers to move the industry away from government intervention.

...

A recent Queensland Productivity Commission report warned the plan ... to reintroduce pre-arbitration between cane growers and the sugar mills could cost the industry millions ... The commission found no evidence of abuse of market power by the sugar millers—as claimed by cane growers—saying commercial negotiations had delivered significant investment into the industry.

At that time, the *Courier-Mail* also stated the following in its editorial—

... an unholy alliance between the LNP and Katter's Australian Party seems hellbent on dragging Queensland back to some agrarian socialist dystopia ... even debating re-regulation of the state's \$2 billion sugar industry—effectively re-establishing a single-desk system—is simply extraordinary ... It ... beggars belief that the Parliament would even consider such a move in a modern 21st century economy.

...

What is also hard to believe is that the LNP—a party which allegedly stands for private enterprise, smaller government and free markets—has allowed itself to be captured by this nonsense.

Those are the words of the *Courier-Mail*. When the *Courier-Mail* states that, one would think that the members opposite would listen. What are they doing? They are digging their hole deeper. We know the saying, 'When in a hole, stop digging.' I cannot understand why the members opposite have become born-again agrarian socialists. This bill is heavy-handed regulation by the state. They are embracing that. Under this bill, the state becomes a monopolistic director of economic activity.

I certainly salute the member for Dalrymple and the member for Mount Isa for going down this track. They have nailed their colours to the mast. They have a broad suite of policies along this line and they are proud of them. My question to the LNP members is: why are they doing this? We know that it is partially political preservation. The concern of the members opposite is not about the economic betterment of our state; their concern is internal: how to keep their party together.

An opposition member: Rubbish!

Mr WHITING: I do not think it is rubbish, because we on this side know that the Queensland LNP has deteriorated into a party of schisms, splinters and cells. Over the past eight or 10 years, the LNP has had about seven leaders. That shows how structurally divided it is. This bill is the kind of legislation that the members opposite have to introduce to keep people in the tent. It is all to keep some federal politicians happy. It is all to keep George Christensen from walking. What did George Christensen—the friend of the member for Whitsunday—say today? George Christensen has said—and the minister has said this—that he is not going to leave the LNP, because he was assured that the LNP in this chamber would get this bill passed. He made that absolutely clear. It is not just George Christensen. It could be that the LNP needs to keep the member for Whitsunday from wandering off as well. We have heard the member for Whitsunday rail against the red army, but we know his heart's true desire is to join the member for Buderim in the 'Red-haired Army'. No matter what the LNP thinks of him, they cannot afford to let him sign up.

Let me make this prediction. The LNP may appease this far right splinter, but they will leave anyway. The LNP will be left without numbers and without any economic credibility: lose, lose. If the LNP members keep trying to appease the far right, what other economic right-wing policies are they going to adopt? Will they try to appease far-right parties by adopting a flat tax base in the state, because

that is what they want? Are the LNP members prepared to endanger the sound finances that we have all built up in this state just to satisfy their political whims? What other deals do the LNP members have to do to keep a majority in the federal parliament? What other grubby Canberra deals do the members opposite have to bring into this chamber? This bill is a sign that we have in the opposition a weak, fundamentally divided party that is prepared to sacrifice economic credibility to appease the far right.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (9.38 pm): The members opposite refer to agrarian socialism as though it is a bad thing. I wear it like a badge. Tonight, we are debating the imbalance of market power. I ask members to think of an agricultural pursuit in this state and they will find an imbalance of power. They will see at one end the primary producers, the price takers, and at the other end the people who are dominating the market—in this case the millers—who have a concentration of market power. That distorts the market. It does not create an effective market; it creates a dysfunctional market.

In 2015, the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Bill was introduced to address that market imbalance. The people of Queensland spoke with that bill. We successfully moved to not overreach in the market, but attempt to restore some balance between the powerful millers and the growers. I think by anyone's level of fairness that is a worthwhile endeavour. It is incomprehensible to put any other interpretation on the facts. If you are a canefarmer you do not have the option of carting your produce to a plethora of mills. You have one or two mills to pick from within close proximity or you become nonviable. They have all the power. When companies like Wilmar started buying up mills they were given that power on the basis that there was QSL, there was a middle man. It was approved under the condition that they knew there was an independent operator. To throw around words like 'reregulation' is highly misleading. It would almost be reregulation if you forced the growers to just go through Wilmar, which would have been the case if we did not have the sugar choice bill. We have opened up to competition in the marketing so they have a choice of two. It is very unfair and misleading to say it is reregulation.

I believe workers have a right to a fair wage and arbitration and so do primary producers. They have a right to arbitration and a fair price for their produce. Wilmar has been the one mill holding out. If the sugar choice bill did not work, why did all the others take it on board and happily go along with their business with the growers and form contracts? The one that put the full page ad in the newspaper before the last bill feels that they can flex their corporate muscles and dictate what happens in this state. Like it or not, the people's parliament of Queensland's elected members voted to restore some balance to the sugar industry. All the other mills accepted the umpire's decision and said 'That is the will of the parliament, let's get on with business and work with canegrowers,' except for the big one, the one that stands to gain all the advantage. They have interests in ships and refineries. They want to take over the marketing. Isn't it strange that they are having problems with the cane supply agreements? They seem to have difficulties with the act. It reeks of mischievous behaviour and someone using the imbalance of the concentration of marketing power in the marketplace and abusing it.

Wilmar is saying, 'We do not care what the will of the parliament and the people of Queensland is. We will keep fighting until we get our way. We are a multinational company. We run things in Queensland.' I find that offensive. They should accept the decision of this parliament, move on with business and work with canefarmers. The situation at hand is that we have one mill holding out with these canegrowers who are running disturbance. We still have problems in the arbitration space between the growers and the millers. This bill is attempting to address that, which is a worthwhile endeavour. However, we still acknowledge that there are problems in that front end that need tidying up as well. We will put forward amendments to try to address that. It is a very difficult space to work in. There is still work to be done in that space.

I say to this parliament that if they want to keep playing games then let us take in some standard form contracts that have been used before with QSL and let them face that. I know that these mills have invested a lot, which is important, but there has also been a big investment from the 4,000 canefarmers. They invest a lot in their farms and we must recognise their investment. I appreciate the virtues of this bill. We will be supporting it and putting forward some amendments to protect the interests of the canefarmers of Queensland to make sure that they have the right to a stable and reasonable income just like other workers in this state. Farmers deserve a fair price for their produce.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—PHON) (9.44 pm): It does not matter if it is in relation to Shoalwater Bay in North Queensland, where the federal government is trying to sell land from underneath the residents, or it is in relation to Wilmar, which is trying to do these canefarmers over in the Burdekin, this parliament has to do the right thing. It has to stand up for people, regardless of which side of politics is putting the bill up—today it is the LNP—and put in place arbitration so that people will be treated fairly

and equally. Wilmar must be driven to the table to get an equitable outcome for farmers. They are the ones who we are talking about today. It is not about anything other than getting a fair and equitable deal and guaranteeing their future.

Multinational companies have never really cared about farmers that much. They will take and take and that should not happen. I will support this bill tonight, but if it does not get up I will be moving a private member's bill tomorrow. The objective of that will be a transitional provision of the Sugar Industry Act 1999 to extend the period stated in section 298, being 1 July 2017, by the inclusion of a new section 299, the application of section 33B on 1 July 2018 applying the existing cane supply contracts when either the contract ends or on 1 July 2018, whichever comes earliest.

I make this point very clear: this problem will not go away if this issue is not resolved here tonight. I know that the crossbenches are keen to make this happen. I know that the LNP is keen to make this happen and they have my full support tonight because this is about putting people before politics.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.46 pm), in reply: I am grateful to everyone for their contribution. I mean that I am grateful to those on the government side for their contribution because now we clearly know where they stand. They have nailed their colours to the mast. With all of their contributions—the personal attacks, all of the vitriol, all of their little rehearsed lines that they came out with—they have clearly nailed their colours to the mast. Not once in this debate has anyone found fault with the legislation that is before the House. Not once was a clause discussed. Not once was a subclause referred to. Not once did they say, 'This will not work for this reason.' Not once did they say, 'The 2015 legislation has been ineffective for this reason.' We have heard lots of spouting, we have heard lots of histrionics, we have heard the Minister for Agriculture—and that is an oxymoron when you put it beside the words 'member for Rockhampton'—say that the world will come to an end. This amazing convert to the principles of free market and the reports of the Productivity Commission ignores the Productivity Commission when it says that the cost of power will be going up by \$10 billion. Guess who will be paying the cost of that power? Canegrowers will be paying it as they pay more for pumping their water and the headlong rush to this government's crazy 50 per cent renewable energy target.

All across the government were they talking about the Productivity Commission when that report came out? Of course they were not! Were they talking about the free market and the operation of the private sector when the Minister for Housing and Public Works cancelled the Logan Renewal Initiative and stopped 2,600 homes being built and put 400 people out of work? Of course not! Were they worried about the free market when they whacked an extra 8,000 public servants on for no appreciable increase in service delivery? Of course they were not! Were they worried about an efficient and effective delivery of services when they kowtowed to the Rail, Tram and Bus Union in relation to the South-East Queensland rail fail? Of course they were not!

We see crocodile tears indeed when we hear the Labor Party members say that they believe in the way that the free market operates. They talked about what happens down in Canberra, but did they mention Bill Shorten and the way that he sold out the cleaners? Was there any mention of that by the Minister for Agriculture? We heard not a word. They talk about workers. I heard the member for Maryborough, unfortunately, talking about workers. Did he mention the fact that the leader of the Labor Party sat with Dick Pratt in Toorak, sipping on Cristal, as he signed away the rights of workers? Absolutely not! All we heard from the member for Rockhampton and Minister for Agriculture was a rant. That is all I can say about it. It is not deserving of any more comment than that. It was a rant and nothing else. The member for Hinchinbrook dealt with that.

In contrast, the member for Burdekin gave a measured speech in which he detailed the significance of the impact on his community. He spoke about the families that for three years have been living with the stress and strain of these circumstances not being addressed. He outlined the need for urgency in relation to addressing this matter straightaway.

The member for Hinchinbrook has more knowledge about cane in one of his fingers than the entire department under this minister. Why does he know about it? Because he lives it! His family have worked in it. He works and lives in those communities and he has represented them fearlessly since 2006. He is not a Johnny-come-lately to the scene. He is not a head shaker or a pretender. He has fought for those communities, year in and year out.

In her contribution, the member for Nanango went through the provisions of the sugar act in some considerable detail and outlined exactly what the problem is, which is that there must be a cane supply agreement. The fundamental is that there must be a cane supply agreement, which is something that all on the side seem to have completely and utterly overlooked. There must be a cane supply agreement.

Therefore, we reach the fundamental nub of the matter: despite the rants, despite the histrionics, despite the lack of content and despite any rational or reasonable argument, those opposite will continue to blindly adhere to the dictates of a multinational out of Singapore. They will oppose the best interests of Queensland and Queensland canefarmers and they will risk their families, their livelihoods and their futures. We in the LNP will not stand for that. We will put Queensland first.

I want to deal with the issues raised by the member for Dalrymple. I listened carefully to what the member for Dalrymple said. I listened as he foreshadowed his amendment. In the member's explanation there was one short statement about the amendment, which has been circulated and I have looked at it. However, it is not clear that any case has been made in relation to the amendment. The member will have the chance to move the amendment and he may take that opportunity to explain it, what it will mean, where it has come from and what impact it will have. Having received the amendment very late in the piece makes it extremely difficult to make a decision on it. Therefore, I invite the member for Dalrymple, at the time of moving the amendment, to give us a clear understanding of it if he wishes to gain some support. I ask him to explain what it means and what its legal impact will be.

I repeat: this legislation is about putting Queensland and Queenslanders first. This is not about the mealy-mouthed subservience that we heard from the Minister for Agriculture. It is about delivering real results and, having made a commitment, keeping that commitment. That commitment was made to the people who turned up at the Burdekin Theatre in Ayr, the people who turned up in the Herbert River district and those canegrowers and millers from Mackay who travelled for three and a half hours to be at the meeting at the Burdekin Theatre. Those meetings in Ayr and the Herbert River district were probably the biggest meetings of canegrowers that have been held in decades in relation to this matter. I thank them for what they have done. I acknowledge their continued fight for their industry. I let them know that we stand with them on this fight.

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

AYES, 44:

LNP, 40—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Dickson.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 42:

ALP, 41—Bailey, Boyd, 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.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Pyne.

Pair: Brown, McEachan.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Error in Division

 **Mr GORDON** (Cook—Ind) (10.05 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I believe I have made an error in my last vote and seek guidance from you.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Cook, on the sheet it has you recorded as voting aye—in favour of the bill. Is that correct? Is that what your intention was?

Mr GORDON: My intention was to vote no. It was an error.

Mr SPEAKER: Did you vote that way on the sheet?

Mr GORDON: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Cook, according to the records you have voted aye. Whilst you may have intended to vote otherwise, my ruling is that it will not change the vote. I am recording your vote as voting for the ayes. We will proceed. The result of the division is 44 ayes and 42 noes. The second reading has been done.

SUGAR INDUSTRY (ARBITRATION FOR MILL OWNERS AND SUGAR MARKETING ENTITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from p 432.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—



Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (10.08 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 5 (Amendment of s 33A (Arbitration of disputed terms of intended supply contract))

Page 4, after line 24—

insert—

(2A) Section 33A—

insert—

(8A) For deciding a term of the intended supply contract, the arbitral tribunal must also have regard to the following principles—

- (a) the terms of the contract should encourage and adequately reward the grower for producing the largest quantity of cane of the highest quality for manufacturing raw sugar;
- (b) the terms of the contract should promote the highest possible efficiency and lowest possible costs for the mill owner in processing the cane to which the contract relates;
- (c) the terms of the contract should strike a fair balance as between the risks taken by the parties (including the investment made), and the rewards payable to the parties, for supplying and processing the cane and selling the on-supply sugar to which the contract relates.

(8B) In having regard to the principle mentioned in subsection (8A)(c), the arbitral tribunal must also have regard to the established usages in the sugar industry in Queensland, as reflected in the cane payment formula, by which about two-thirds of the value of the on-supply sugar to which a supply contract relates has been distributed to the grower and about one-third to the mill owner.

Unfortunately, we have found ourselves in the situation where a major international company is using its resources and influence to take advantage of a much smaller local business. This is despite the clear intent of this House to ensure there is some fairness in the Queensland sugar industry. The key issue ruining the mediation process between Wilmar and the growers is the lack of clarity in the arbitration process to resolve disputes in terms of supply contracts. An example is what is taking place at the present time with the Burdekin district canegrowers. Wilmar is challenging section 33 of the choice in marketing legislation that refers to access to arbitration.

These principles intend to ensure canefarmers are fairly treated in terms of their claim about the value of their product. The principles include rewarding the grower for producing the largest quantity of cane of the highest quality, promoting the highest possible efficiency and lowest possible costs for the mill owners and striking a fair balance between the risk taken by the millers and growers. The amendment is to give regard to the established cane payment formula which has been used by the industry for a long time. We believe far more could be done in this regard and the arbitration process would benefit from greater prescription of the terms of the cane supply agreement for the arbitrator to consider. These growers deserve the support of everyone in the House when negotiating with a massive foreign multinational that clearly have no respect for the decisions of this parliament.

At the moment the Burdekin growers have taken Wilmar to arbitration. They are in the process of arbitration. They are using their finances and their resources to challenge section 33A, which is access to arbitration. They are saying that that section is not constitutional. I have introduced this amendment to give clarity when canegrowers are in arbitration with the multinational millers.

Mr NICHOLLS: Let me see if I understand what was just said in terms of the amendment moved by the member for Dalrymple. The member for Dalrymple is proposing, as I read his amendment, to change the legislation, not the bill that is currently before the House insofar as it deals with on-supply agreements but the previous bill from 2015 because of a claim that it may be unconstitutional, because that is something that has been pushed by Wilmar. Let me address that issue.

For as long as I can remember, the Queensland parliament in passing laws is a sovereign parliament. It can pass laws for the peace, order and good government of the state of Queensland. The Queensland parliament when it passes laws, provided they do not conflict with a Commonwealth statute, does not come under the Australian Constitution. As this law applies to Queensland disputes for a Queensland problem and sets out a Queensland solution that is not in conflict with a federal law—which it does not appear to be—I find it difficult to understand the argument that it is unconstitutional. That might be an argument that is being made, but it is not an argument that I think is sustainable in any way, shape or form because we are dealing with the powers of this parliament, not the powers of the Commonwealth under the federal Constitution. We are not impinging on the free trade between the states or part III of the Constitution. We are passing legislation permitted by the Queensland Constitution.

Even if that were the case, I am having difficulty understanding how the member for Dalrymple's amendment, which inserts terms into the arbitration process, would cure a problem that is said to come as a result of a constitutional breach because his proposed amendment says that, for the term of the intended supply contract, the terms shall have regard to the following principles. It seems to be trying to insert into the arbitration process a number of principles that do not seem to have any relationship whatsoever to do with any constitutional breach.

I think the danger with this is that we already have an arbitration underway. That arbitration has been entered into on the basis of the 2015 legislation which shows that it does work—notice was given and parties have entered into arbitration. Then to change the terms of the legislation while parties are already in an arbitration would seem to me to be a pretty poor way of going about solving the problem, because we do not even know if we have a problem yet. There has been no outcome from the arbitration that has identified any problem there. I suspect that what we have is one of the parties to the arbitration suggesting changes halfway through. I do not believe that that is the appropriate way to deal with any concerns that they may have about the legislation. The proper way is the way that we have done it with this legislation, and that is to prepare it and to circulate it amongst all parties and to get their input, to consider their input and then to bring it to the House.

In terms of the member's suggested amendment, there would be a better and more appropriate way of dealing with the concerns. If there are indeed concerns about the arbitration, I am not sure they would be valid because at the moment arbitration takes place under the Commercial Arbitration Act 2013. That provides rules about settling a dispute. It states—

- (1) The arbitral tribunal must decide the dispute in accordance with such rules of law as are chosen by the parties as applicable to the substance of the dispute.

The parties can themselves nominate to the arbitrator the laws that are to be taken into account when the dispute is to be resolved—the laws of Queensland; the laws, custom and tradition, as is often the case in building disputes. They actually have the power to make a submission to the arbitrator about how that should occur. The other rules that apply are—

- (2) Any designation of the law or legal system of a given State or Territory must be construed, unless otherwise expressed, as directly referring to the substantive law of that State or Territory ...
- (3) Failing any designation by the parties, the arbitral tribunal must apply the law determined by the conflict of laws rules which it considers applicable.

This is a well-understood arbitration framework. It has been harmonised throughout Australia since 2013, and we reformed it in government in 2013 to bring it up to speed and to make sure that our arbitration system was the best practice arbitration system. That was done I think by the then attorney-general back in 2013.

The amendments that are in place under the provisions of the 2015 legislation call into play the Commercial Arbitration Act. It allows for the law of the state to be applied in that area and it allows for the parties to make submissions in relation to the law that is to be applied. I think that is the best solution, using a well-tried and proven process that has been put in place. I do not believe it is the best solution to halfway through an arbitration start changing the directions that the arbitrator must follow in resolving that dispute.

Mr KATTER: In response to the Leader of the Opposition's contribution, I think he got bogged down insofar as it related to the constitutional effect of the amendment. I think the main intent of the proposed amendment by the member for Dalrymple is to acknowledge that the bill that we just voted on addressed the on-supply agreements but that there still exists a very large problem at the front end of cane supply agreements. From our reading of the situation, there seems to be no hope of resolution as it stands at the moment. The whole point of the exercise is that there is an imbalance in bargaining power or market power with one operator.

I think the comments made by the leader were very valid in that in most cases parties are acting in good faith, but I think we on this side of the House would acknowledge that one operator is not acting in good faith and that there needs to be a circuit-breaker. We have tried not to overstep the mark. I acknowledge that it is a difficult space to act in—coming into that commercial arbitration space—but there needs to be some form work around it and the gaps need to close on this operator who is not acting in good faith with these farmers. There needs to be some form work around it to close some of the doors that they keep sneaking out of in terms of their negotiations.

At the moment the activity by one particular mill is being completely mischievous. They have used every opportunity possible to get out of it. I do not think they are acting in good faith. They certainly invite some sort of interruption or involvement in the process. That is what we have tried to do because there still exists a problem in that space. Quite frankly, I think it should go further, but we have tried to compromise to have at least some form work around it that they are guided to act under. We think that is a reasonable proposition.

Mr NICHOLLS: I have listened carefully to both the member for Dalrymple and the member for Mount Isa, and I understand their concerns. Their concerns are born out of frustration with the arbitration and Wilmar, I presume, as the miller, not acting in the view of the other party to the arbitration in a reasonable way, but that is what arbitration is designed to resolve.

I understand there has also been a court application and that court application was decided against Wilmar in favour of the grower organisation. It shows that the legislation, notwithstanding the imbalance in financial power and legal muscle, when properly interpreted by the Supreme Court in Queensland has worked to rebalance the scales in favour of those organisations. It is, by its nature, going to be a lengthy process. That is why arbitration in these circumstances, as we have always said, ought to be the last resort, not the first resort. That is why the parties should reach a commercial agreement rather than relying on the legislation to solve it, because by the time it gets to legislation the parties have so hardened their position that the only practical or feasible way of coming to a sensible solution is by asking a third party to make a decision. That third party has to be free to make that decision. The third party can accept what needs to go in there and the third party can accept the terms upon which he or she wants to settle the dispute and make the ruling.

Mr KNUTH: Mr Speaker, I just want to say—

Mr SPEAKER: No, you do not get another opportunity, member for Dalrymple.

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

Resolved in the negative under standing order 106.

Non-government amendment (Mr Knuth) negatived.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.28 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

AYES, 43:

LNP, 40—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Dickson.

NOES, 43:

ALP, 41—Bailey, Boyd, 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.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

Pair: Brown, McEachan.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.

Mr SPEAKER: The reason I cast my vote with the noes is that I am not convinced of the urgency and I believe it is appropriate that this matter be considered by a parliamentary committee. I believe sufficient matters have been raised during the debate to support that position.

Resolved in the negative.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.32 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will warn members if you persist. I ask you to leave the chamber quietly.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education, you will be warned if you persist. I ask you to leave the chamber, please.

Border Rivers, Water Reform

 **Hon. L SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (10.32 pm): Since 1994, the communities of the Border Rivers have laboured under constant water reform. This has provided great uncertainty within their communities. Indeed, there have been countless thousands of hours where these communities have been involved in responding to requests by government and various water authorities as to what those reform proposals are going to mean for them. We have seen a water allocation management planning process. More recently, we have seen the spectre of what has come—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, we might start again. There is too much discussion in the chamber. Members, if you are going to leave, please leave. We will start the clock again with the member for Southern Downs. We will all listen in silence.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for your protection and indulgence. As I said a moment ago, since 1994, the communities of the Border Rivers have laboured under the spectre of constant water reform which has had a major and devastating impact on the morale of those communities—firstly, through the state inspired water allocation management planning process, which started at that particular stage, and more recently through the proposals to take back hundreds and hundreds of gigalitres of water through the Murray-Darling Basin plan. Indeed, we have seen recently the spectre of what has been proposed through the northern basin plan where there has been an increase in the amount of water which is expected to be recovered from the Border Rivers.

What was proposed prior to this more recent iteration was some eight gigalitres with another 15 gigalitres of shared recovery. What has now been foisted on that community is an expectation of an additional 6,000 megalitres of water which has to be recovered from the Border Rivers. To put it in context, that means some 45 jobs from the area of Goondiwindi and surrounds. I will use a very simple multiplier. One megalitre of water is around \$1,000. If we multiply it out, it is about \$5,000 so the impact of this more recent decision and requirement is around \$30 million.

I absolutely and unequivocally support the Goondiwindi Regional Council working with Border Rivers Food and Fibre as they are now seeking to implore the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to leave it where it was previously—that is, no expectation that the Border Rivers has to go and find another 6,000 megalitres of water. This will have a diabolical impact on those communities. It has already provided a significant contribution through great difficulty to what has been required to the Murray-Darling plan. Enough is enough. It is about time the Murray-Darling Basin Authority listened to what this community has to say.

Fair Work Commission, Penalty Rates

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (10.36 pm): Over 11,000 of Central Queensland's lowest paid workers in pharmacy, retail, hospitality and fast food are set to face a pay cut of up to \$77 per week following the Fair Work Commission's decision to slash Sunday penalty rates. Every day I talk to local people in my community who rely on penalty rates to make ends meet. Those rates are meant to be a reward for the sacrifice staff make in giving up time with family and friends on weekends and other special occasions. This decision is devastating for thousands of hardworking Queenslanders. The

commission's decision will also take money out of the real economy, reducing the spending power of thousands of Queensland families. This will have a negative impact on local economies, especially in Central Queensland.

I support federal Labor's private member's bill to prevent the penalty rates cut from taking effect and to ensure that in the future penalty rates cannot be cut if it results in a reduction in workers' take-home pay. I am incredibly disappointed that the federal member for Capricornia is turning her back on the workers of Central Queensland and supporting these penalty rates cuts. Whilst Michelle Landry and the LNP is giving the big banks a \$50 billion tax handout, she is giving the person making her coffee a pay cut. The member for Capricornia, Minister Canavan and Senator Hanson must vote to support our community's lowest paid workers and vote in favour of Labor's private member's bill.

We are seeing the same old LNP that we have seen time and time again—proposing to slash penalty rates. It is in their DNA—like the federal LNP member for Gilmore who likened these penalty rates cuts to 'a gift, a gift for our young people', and the Prime Minister who told parliament last week that 'he supports the decision' to cut penalty rates for 700,000 workers. Then there is LNP Senator Ian Macdonald who last week was fighting for his right to have a travel gold pass after he retires but wants to get rid of penalty rates. Turnbull and the LNP are tough on pensioners but soft on banks. Honest Australians are being accused of Centrelink fraud, while multinationals are avoiding tax. This is the most out-of-touch government in Australian history.

The LNP's BFF, Senator Hanson, has also turned her back on local workers. She too has called for penalty rates to be abolished entirely. 'Right across the board, get rid of the penalty rates,' Senator Hanson said. 'Get rid of the 17½ per cent loading,' she said, and 'You can't survive in today's climate paying penalty rates.' I beg to differ, and so too do many of the businesses in Keppel, like Katie and Zen at Yeppoon Central Meats and Billingtons Cedar Park Meats, who run their business with a social conscience and who know that their workers deserve their weekend penalty rates. Both businesses have said that they will not be enforcing the Fair Work Commission's ruling and will not be cutting their staff's penalty rates. It is no surprise that, since their announcement, thousands of local people have thrown their support right behind these businesses because our community knows that workers deserve those penalty rates. I say to those businesses: good on you. We are right behind you.

Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.39 pm): One of the best kept secrets on the Gold Coast is the existence of the Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra, who are a collection of extremely talented and mostly part-time musicians joined together by their common love of music. On this past weekend I was privileged to attend the Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra's 'Two Bands, One Voice' performance following their two-day workshop with the RAN Band Queensland, more colloquially known as the Queensland Navy band. I thank the Queensland Navy band for sharing their finely honed musical talents with our local orchestra.

I am proud to have been a patron of the wonderful Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra for a number of years along with my fellow LNP politicians Rob Molhoek, member for Southport; and John-Paul Langbroek, member for Surfers Paradise. I have been lucky to attend several of the talented performances that they have conducted over this time as they bring their beautiful efforts to the ears of Gold Coast residents. As somewhat of a music aficionado, I have attended a multitude of wonderful performances by various musicians and other orchestras and I can confidently say that the Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra ranks amongst the most enjoyable I have attended. My only wish is that there were more people there to savour the majesty of the experience.

The performance on Sunday, 25 February featured music and arrangements from notables such as Andrew Lloyd Webber, Franco Cesarini and Don Henley among others with additional music and performances by the Queensland Navy band to support the Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra. There were also members from the Gold Coast City Brass Band to round out the big band sound, and the collective muscle of these accomplished musicians delivered a repertoire of positively delightful compositions that were literally 'music to my ears'. I offer my sincere congratulations to the Director of Music, Gordon Richmond, as well as Matt Pearson. Along with the orchestra, they put on a truly wonderful performance. Of particular noteworthiness was the participation of the Queensland Navy band under Chief Petty Officer Andrew Stapleton, whose team gave much appreciated professional support to the Gold Coast Wind Orchestra.

I am pleased to sponsor and support this vibrant community activity which highlights the kaleidoscope of artistic and cultural diversity available on the fabulous Gold Coast. Whilst we may be seen as the glitzy, glamorous city of fun and sand, there are some serious artistic contributors within our community and none better demonstrated than by the dedicated, talented and friendly members of the Gold Coast City Wind Orchestra. I say congratulations on their wonderful performance. I look forward to attending their performance again next year with great expectation.

Callanan, Dr V

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (10.42 pm): I rise tonight to speak about one of the truly great Queensland medical professionals who was duly recognised for his outstanding contribution to medicine, spanning 55 years, during the Townsville Hospital's Staff Excellence Awards held recently. On that point, I commend the Townsville Hospital and Health Service's board, led by Chair Tony Mooney, in deciding to hold this event for their most important asset, the staff of the Townsville Hospital and Health Service. It was fantastic to have the Minister for Health attend as well. The awards recognised and honoured those staff nominated by their peers who have demonstrated high values each day in delivering high-quality health service and demonstrated integrity, compassion, engagement, accountability and respect.

Tonight I would like to pay tribute to a distinguished gentleman who is ultimately most likely responsible for me standing here in this parliament giving this speech. His name is Dr Vic Callanan. He is an associate professor of anaesthetics and has been recognised formally by numerous professional and community leaders including the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, Australian Resuscitation Council and Surf Life Saving. He started practising medicine in 1960 in Home Hill. One of his many roles in Townsville was chair of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade—and some members may remember the former name of the QAS—which I joined in 1990 as a much younger man than the one standing in this House. I applied to join the Townsville brigade. Dr Vic and his committee must have seen something in me as I got a start.

Some seven years on I went on to begin the intensive care paramedic program and was mentored by many senior consultants and anaesthetists of the Townsville Hospital including Dr Vic, who ran the intensive care unit of the Townsville Hospital. That was just another one of many achievements during Vic's remarkable and seemingly endless years of service. It is remarkable that at over 80 years of age Dr Callanan, now retired, still visits the hospital to provide mentoring for young anaesthetists each Friday. I recall during my training in the intensive care unit several years ago that a lady collapsed. Her blood pressure went through her boots. She had atrial fibrillation and there he was; Dr Callanan and the team went to work. Dr Vic looked at me as a young student and he said, 'What do you think we should do?,' and I said, 'Cardiovert.' He said, 'Righto, you do it.' I did it and she survived, and he said, 'Beginners luck!'

As a member of state parliament, I ask my fellow members to join me in simply saying thank you to Dr Vic Callanan. He is indeed truly one of the most remarkable gentlemen I have ever had the pleasure to meet. On behalf of our Queensland government, I say thank you for his commendable and admirable contribution to saving the lives of many Queenslanders.

Holness, Ms M

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (10.45 pm): I rise tonight to talk of an organisation in Caloundra called Zonta and a member of that organisation, Marilyn Holness. Zonta is an organisation formed in 1919 with the aim of empowering women through service and promotion. It has over 30,000 members in over 60 countries and has a very strong and active group of women in Caloundra numbering 28. They may not be large in number, but they are devoted to the protection of women and children. With that in mind, about eight years ago Zonta Caloundra determined to build a domestic violence shelter in Caloundra. The lady that led the challenge was Marilyn Holness but she was always supported by the membership. They launched the RISE project, standing for restart in a safe environment, with the aim of building two short-term accommodation houses for people escaping domestic violence.

To give members some context, between May 2015 and August 2016 in the Caloundra Magistrates Court 740 applications for domestic violence orders were filed, over 300 interim orders were made and over 400 final orders were made. I am certain those figures are replicated across many members' seats. It is against this background that Caloundra Zonta began its work. At present, those in need travel to Nambour, Noosa or Maroochydore for accommodation. That will soon be a thing of the past due to the efforts of these women.

Marilyn holds a true belief that this shelter is essential and she relentlessly pursued the goal believing this support is critical to our community. The women of Zonta got behind the project and in 2013 land was donated by Mr Doug Drinnan to enable fundraising to begin. The local community got behind the project with donations from the local council, Bendigo community bank, Rotary Club of Caloundra Pacific, Ray White and Coast2Bay Housing to name but a few. Over time Zonta raised \$190,000 but still needed another \$90,000 to fund the construction of the building. They hit on a marketing campaign to raise that money in 90 days and they did it. The refuge will be built and finally there will be a place where victims of domestic violence can find peace and security if only for a short time. Sadly, these shelters will be needed in places for many years.

Between November 2015 and August 2016 there were over 900 breaches of orders on the coast—again, a figure I am sure would be the same across the state. The women of Caloundra Zonta had a dream and they would not let go of it. The first sod has been turned and the block is now ready for construction and, perhaps sadly, it will soon take its first occupants. To those occupants the shelter will perhaps be the first safe home they have had for some time and a place where children will not hear the yelling, crying or physical abuse that has been their life for many years.

I congratulate Marilyn Holness and Zonta for not giving up. I honour all women who hold high principles and follow through to the betterment of our society.

Multiculturalism

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (10.48 pm): I have spoken before in this House about the vibrant multicultural community we have in Stretton. My electorate of Stretton has the highest number of people born overseas of any electorate in the state. It also has the highest number of people who speak a language other than English at home of any electorate in the state. We lead the state in diversity and richness of culture.

The overwhelmingly multicultural composition of Stretton means that in my community various important unique and harmonious events are celebrated, including Chinese Lunar New Year, Eid al-Fitr and Diwali, among others. It is a place of fantastic cultural celebration that is embraced by the whole community. Recently my community celebrated Chinese Lunar New Year. It is a fantastic community celebration that is well supported by local schools, businesses and shopping centres. It is an event that is embraced by the whole community, fostering cultural understanding and inclusion. I know that the Queensland government recognises Chinese Lunar New Year with a reception at Parliament House, and I am sure that it will continue to be recognised in the future.

There were many wonderful events occurring in my local community. I attended various events organised by Chinese Consulate, Buddha's Light International Association of Queensland at the Chung Tian Temple, Michaels Oriental Restaurant, the Taiwan Friendship Association of Queensland, the Lions Club of Brisbane Chinese and the Hakka Association of Queensland. I got to enjoy some fantastic food, lion dancing and cultural performances to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year with friends and community members. It was fantastic to see the member for Sunnybank in attendance at many of these events and also the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business and the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Sport. This demonstrates the commitment of the Palaszczuk government to support events which promote community cohesion, foster community participation and encourage a greater understanding of cultural diversity.

Members should be aware that these Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations celebrated the Year of the Rooster. In case members do not know, the years of the rooster were 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981 and 1993. People born in the Year of the Rooster are said to be very observant, hardworking, resourceful, courageous and talented. They are also very active people who enjoy sports. I understand the Premier is a rooster, and I can definitely see all of those qualities in our Premier.

I commend all the hardworking community members who worked so hard to spread joy throughout the community during the Chinese Lunar New Year period. I wish everyone in the community and all members of this House a very happy and prosperous Year of the Rooster.

Roy Emerson, Statue; Nanango Hospital, Buildings

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.51 pm): It was terrific to join with Blackbutt community members to recently celebrate the official opening of a life-size bronze statue immortalising Australian tennis great Roy Emerson. Roy Emerson was born on a dairy farm just kilometres from Blackbutt and called Blackbutt home before he began his tennis career. Roy,

who we all know and love, was a former No. 1 tennis player who won 12 major single titles, 16 Grand Slam tournament men's double titles and is undoubtedly one of Australia's greatest players. It was an historic and momentous occasion to honour their homegrown hero. Roy and his wife Joy attended along with other Australian tennis greats Wendy Turnbull, Ashley Cooper and Mal Anderson.

I especially want to pay tribute to the volunteers from the Blackbutt and District Heritage Association, particularly Noelene Bird, Iris Crumpton, Hazel Christie-Small and their team of committee members who deserve an enormous congratulations for their commitment to commissioning the statue and staffing the Roy Emerson Museum. They also partnered with Tennis Queensland, Tennis Australia and Mr Peter Rasey of Frew Park—formerly the Milton Tennis Centre—in Brisbane to ensure the project had as much support as possible. They did an amazing job in raising some \$37,000, which was pledged through various local groups and individuals. The statue forms part of the Roy Emerson Museum, which is based in the former Nukku State School building in Blackbutt. Together they provide locals and tourists with an insight into this wonderfully talented tennis player and his connection with Blackbutt and the South Burnett. The group also aim to name part of the D'Aguilar Highway as Roy Emerson Way, and although this project has been rejected by the current Labor government, I now offer my support to restart the petition to make this a reality.

In relation to the relocation of the Nanango Hospital buildings, this is typical Labor form in how they decide not to support our local communities. When the local historical society—in particular Ros Gregor—heard that these buildings were just going to be demolished, she contacted me. We fought hard, and it was fantastic to see these buildings relocated to the Nanango Show Society. Of course the committee there were very pleased to have these facilities, and what a great common-sense outcome it has been. I really do want to congratulate the Nanango Show Society as well for their ongoing work and utilising the historic buildings that we have been able to secure from the Nanango Hospital.

Jordan, Mrs E

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (10.55 pm): As the member for Ipswich West I am delighted that the new state seat centred on the Ipswich suburb of Springfield is to be named Jordan in honour of the former member for Ipswich West, Vi Jordan, a truly amazing woman. Vi was the second woman elected to the Queensland Legislative Assembly and the first to represent the Australian Labor Party.

Ellen Violet Jordan was born on 29 June 1913 at Ipswich, the eldest of three children of English born James Bertie Norman Perrett, a railway fitter, and his Queensland born wife, Ann Jane, nee Brown. Educated at Brassall State Primary School and Ipswich Girls' Grammar School, Vi won, but did not take up, a scholarship to attend the teacher training college in Brisbane. An accomplished musician, she became an associate of the London College of Music and of the Trinity College of Music, London. On 14 May 1932 at the age of 18 she married David Jordan, a railway porter, at St Thomas's Church of England, North Ipswich.

With the outbreak of World War II Vi became secretary of the first aid and air raid precautions committee and president of the Ipswich civilian welfare committee for service women at RAAF Base Amberley. A member of the Australian Labor Party from the late 1940s, from 1956 to 1967 she was president of the Labor women's central organising committee; secretary of the Somerset executive committee from 1958 to 1965; and secretary of both the Somerset and Ipswich West ladies' branches. In 1960 at the Labor-in-Politics Convention in Brisbane she moved a successful resolution that women be allowed direct representation on the Queensland central executive. She was chosen as that representative and thus became the first woman other than a union delegate on the executive.

In 1961 Vi was the first woman elected to the Ipswich City Council, and she held this position until 1967. In 1966 she was selected as the ALP candidate for the state seat of Ipswich West for the 1966 election. Under the campaign leadership of Bill Hayden she defeated Jim Finimore, who had been the mayor of Ipswich for 17 years. Serving for three terms during which the ALP was in opposition, she was the first woman in the Queensland parliament since Irene Longman's defeat in 1932. Vi Jordan fought tirelessly for the rights of the working class and for political, economic and social equality for women. In 1976 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia and the next year she was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal.

Predeceased by her husband, who passed away in 1967, and survived by her son, Keith, she died of myocardial infarction on 7 May 1982 at Ipswich. A proud Ipswichian, when laid to rest at the Ipswich General Cemetery Vi was praised for her ability 'to always keep Ipswich on the map'.

Vegetation Management

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (10.58 pm): It has been nearly six months now since the LNP defeated the Labor Party's draconian vegetation management laws that were brought into this place under the cover of darkness on the night of Thursday, 19 March 2016. The Deputy Premier decided to try to sneak them through committee in about four weeks, which is a very short time frame for such an important piece of legislation for rural and regional Queensland. The laws would have had a terrible impact on the ability of landholders and farmers to manage their vegetation and property in the best way they can to keep it productive and get rid of regrowth and other issues that they need to manage in terms of vegetation.

There is an issue outstanding when it comes to vegetation management laws, and that is that a review has apparently been underway for many months now into the vegetation management codes. As many members will know, a lot of activity that goes on on properties is governed by those codes, which are monitored by the department and set out under the act. That review has been a long time coming. We are used to seeing plenty of reviews go on for a very long time, but the government really should have completed it by now and put beyond doubt what is going to come out of that review for landholders. I call on the government to get its act together and complete that review and let farmers and landholders know where they are going, because there is uncertainty about the future.

We know that the government has pledged to bring those laws back if it is re-elected, with the support of the Greens, to again restrict the ability of farmers and landholders to manage their land. While members here know that the LNP will always stand up for farmers and their ability to manage their land, Labor will simply cave in to the Greens, lock up the land and take away landholders' rights and their ability to manage their property.

One of the issues facing my electorate is youth crime. Last week the shadow Attorney-General visited Beaudesert, where there has been a recent spate of youth crime. A lot of people are very concerned about the soft approach that has been adopted by this government to the youth justice system—unwinding reforms that had been implemented by the former government which had proven, through the 2014-15 year, to reduce the rate of youth crime. The fact that Beaudesert is encountering an uptick in youth crime is a direct result of the winding back of those youth justice reforms. I again call on the government to listen to the people of the community—in Beaudesert, Townsville, Cairns and many other places in Queensland—who want to see a stronger, better approach to dealing with youth justice that deters offenders from offending in the first place.

Neighbourhood Watch

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (11.01 pm): On the weekend I again had the opportunity to attend the Douglas Neighbourhood Watch meeting in my electorate. The group has been operating in our community for more than 15 years, doing some fantastic work to raise awareness about safety and local issues. It is interesting to see how far it has come during this time. The organisation has a keen group of active members who attend regular meetings as well as more than 1,200 people participating in their Facebook group. It is a great example of how we can use technology as another way to bring communities together.

At the Neighbourhood Watch meeting group members Michael and Tracey raised some concerns around local parking and road issues which I am following up for them. They also told me about their appreciation of the Palaszczuk government's effort to tackle local crime. In particular, the group was extremely grateful for the work of our local Stronger Communities Action Group, coordinated by Inspector Glenn Doyle, and the work of extra police on the ground through Operation Oscar Merchant. We discussed the fact that through these initiatives we are starting to see positive results when it comes to crime. In fact, since the start of our targeted police operation we have seen decreases in key areas of property crime and car theft.

We know that more always needs to be done to ensure residents in our community feel safe. We as a government will leave no stone unturned in continuing to work on driving down crime, but we cannot do it alone. Groups like the Douglas Neighbourhood Watch are an important piece of this puzzle.

I would like to applaud Michael, Tracey and the entire group on their amazing efforts now and over the past 15 years. They have such a strong network in our community working very closely with me as the local member and with local police. It was my strong belief in the power of community to really make a difference that got me into politics in the first place, and today I am very pleased to be working alongside fantastic groups like this which are helping to make our community stronger.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.03 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, 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