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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 12 October 2017

Subject	Page
REPORT	3079
Committee of the Legislative Assembly	3079
<i>Tabled paper: Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 21—Annual Report 2016-17.</i>	3079
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	3079
Sexual Violence Awareness Month	3079
APPOINTMENT	3079
Opposition	3079
PETITIONS	3079
TABLED PAPER	3079
MINISTERIAL PAPERS	3080
Queensland Law Reform Commission; Electoral Commission of Queensland; Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council; Right to Information Act and Information Privacy Act Review	3080
<i>Tabled paper: Queensland Law Reform Commission—Annual Report 2016-17.</i>	3080
<i>Tabled paper: Electoral Commission of Queensland—Annual Report 2016-17.</i>	3080
<i>Tabled paper: Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council—Annual Report 2016-17.</i>	3080
<i>Tabled paper: Queensland Government: Report on the review of the Right to Information Act 2009 and Information Privacy Act 2009, October 2017.</i>	3080
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	3080
Jobs	3080
Sunshine Coast, Cabinet Meeting	3080
Film Industry	3081
Public Transport, Rail	3082
Government Owned Corporations	3082
Weapons Licensing	3083
Flu Summit	3084
Sexual Violence Awareness Month	3085

Table of Contents – Thursday, 12 October 2017

Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program.....	3085
Scown, Mr M.....	3085
Fraser Coast, Skills Development.....	3086
<i>Tabled Paper:</i> Report titled 'Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: Informing regional workforce development'.....	3086
Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Legacy Program.....	3086
White Spot.....	3087
Indigenous Councils, Grants.....	3087
North Queensland, Front-Line Services.....	3088
Safe Work Month.....	3088
NOTICE OF MOTION.....	3089
Electricity Supply.....	3089
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	3089
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance.....	3089
Leader of the Opposition, Performance.....	3090
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Photos of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP, with Mr Douglas Rodgers and a screenshot from Mr Douglas's Facebook page and article from the <i>Rockhampton Morning Bulletin</i> online, dated 12 October 2017, titled 'LNP reveals young gun Rockhampton candidate'.....	3090
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Screenshots of Facebook pages of LNP candidate for Ipswich West.....	3090
Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.....	3090
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Screenshot of social media page of the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, Hon. Shannon Fentiman, including photo of the member talking to construction workers from the CFMEU.....	3091
Firearms Regulation.....	3091
CFMEU.....	3092
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.....	3092
Member for Mirani.....	3092
Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order.....	3094
Notice of Motion, Dissent from Speaker's Ruling.....	3094
CFMEU.....	3095
Roads Infrastructure.....	3096
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Press release, dated 11 October 2017, from the CFMEU titled 'Aussie Miners mark day 100 locked out of work at Glenmore Oaky North mine'.....	3096
CFMEU.....	3096
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Screenshot of CFMEU Construction & General QLD/NT social media page, dated 6 February 2015, including a photo the member for Waterford, Hon. Shannon Fentiman.....	3096
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Screenshot of RiSE Qld, dated 7 December 2016, including photo of the member for Waterford, Hon. Shannon Fentiman, with CFMEU members.....	3096
Far North Queensland, Jobs.....	3098
Member for Mirani.....	3098
Health, Infrastructure.....	3098
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Brochure of the member for Warrego, Ms Ann Leahy MP.....	3099
CFMEU.....	3099
Schools, Class Sizes.....	3100
Industrial Relations, Unions.....	3101
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Copy of Affidavit of Mr Brenton Muller (Queensland Industrial Relations Commission Form 20) in the matter of the Electrical Trades Union of Employees Queensland and Others vs Brisbane City Council.....	3101
Domestic and Family Violence.....	3102
Youth Bail Houses.....	3103
Buy Queensland.....	3103
Torres Strait Islanders, Child Adoption.....	3104
Kingaroy and Nanango, Courthouse.....	3104
LEAVE TO GIVE NOTICE OF A MOTION.....	3105
Division: Question put—That leave be granted.....	3105
Resolved in the negative.....	3105
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT.....	3105
School Group Tours.....	3105
PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE.....	3105
Report, Motion to Take Note.....	3105
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.....	3106
Report, Motion to Take Note.....	3106
COAL WORKERS' PNEUMOCONIOSIS SELECT COMMITTEE.....	3113
Report, Motion to Take Note.....	3113
INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE.....	3114
Report, Motion to Take Note.....	3114
WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL.....	3116
Second Reading.....	3116
SPEAKER'S RULING.....	3118
Question Out of Order; Ruling Vacated.....	3118

Table of Contents – Thursday, 12 October 2017

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	3119
CQUniversity	3119
Liberal National Party	3119
Southport, Proposed Casino Development	3120
Formosa, Mr A; Modified Bus Stops	3120
Mobbs, Ms B; E-petition	3121
Stretton Electorate, Illaweena Street	3121
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, dated 3 August 2017, titled 'Logan Enhancement Project'.....	3121
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 8 September 2017, from Councillor Angela Owen to local residents regarding the closure of Illaweena Street.	3122
Wolston Park, Redress Scheme Report	3122
Ferny Grove, Transit Oriented Development	3123
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, from Councillor Andrew Wines regarding redevelopment of the Ferny Grove train station.	3123
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, from Councillor Steven Toomey regarding redevelopment of the Ferny Grove train station.	3123
Wild Rivers Legislation	3124
Brisbane Bayside, Ambulance Services	3124
ETHICS COMMITTEE	3125
Reports	3125
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Ethics Committee: Report No. 176, 55th Parliament—Annual Report 2016-17.....	3125
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Ethics Committee: Report No. 177—Report on a Right of Reply No. 32.....	3125
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL (IMPLEMENTING BELCARRA) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	3125
Introduction	3125
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Local Government Electoral (Implementing Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017.....	3125
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Local Government Electoral (Implementing Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes.	3125
First Reading	3127
Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee	3127
Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date	3127
WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	3127
Second Reading	3127
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article in the <i>Gold Coast Bulletin</i> online, dated 28 February 2015, titled 'Scaffolding company fined \$700K, director receives suspended jail sentence over deaths of two Gold Coast men'.	3135
Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.	3142
Resolved in the affirmative.....	3142
Consideration in Detail	3142
Clauses 1 to 70—	3142
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes to Hon. Grace Grace's amendments.	3143
Clauses 1 to 70, as amended, agreed to.	3144
Third Reading	3144
Long Title	3144
SPEAKER'S RULING	3144
Notice of Motion	3144
APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)	3144
Second Reading (Cognate Debate)	3144
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Email, dated 29 April 2017, from Mr Jason Humphreys to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon. Curtis Pitt, regarding State Actuary's Report on the Defined Benefit Scheme.	3152
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article, undated, titled 'No plan for new school: Moggill petition fails to persuade Minister'.....	3155
Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)	3157
Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2)	3157
Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.	3157
Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.	3157
Appropriation Bill (No. 2)	3157
Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.	3157
Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.	3157
Third Reading (Cognate Debate)	3157
Long Title (Cognate Debate)	3157
MOTION	3158
Electricity Supply	3158
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 5 February 2009, from Hon. Andrew Fraser MP to Hon. Martin Ferguson MP regarding the Australian Energy Regulator's review of the weighted average cost of capital.	3158
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document titled 'Budget Strategy and Outlook 2017-18'.	3158
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document titled 'Why farmers are to blame for high electricity bills'.	3162
Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.	3164
The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.....	3164
Resolved in the negative.	3164

Table of Contents – Thursday, 12 October 2017

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT	3164
ADJOURNMENT	3164
Drugs.....	3164
Mental Health	3165
Condamine Electorate, Champix.....	3166
Logan, Community Maternity Services	3166
Dig Tree Reserve	3167
Bundaberg, Ability Ball; The Arts.....	3167
Everton Electorate, Development.....	3168
Ipswich Electorate, Advance Queensland	3168
Toowoomba, Infrastructure Projects.....	3169
Jackway, Mr J	3169
ATTENDANCE	3170

THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2017



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

REPORT

Committee of the Legislative Assembly



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I lay upon the table of the House report No. 21 of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly titled *Annual Report 2016-17*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 21—Annual Report 2016-17 [2007].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Sexual Violence Awareness Month



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise that October marks Sexual Violence Awareness Month. This month is an opportunity to let those affected by sexual violence and abuse know that they are not alone. Accordingly, the Centre Against Sexual Violence has invited members to wear a teal ribbon on their lapel in support of the victims of sexual violence and abuse.

APPOINTMENT

Opposition



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.32 am): I advise the House of the resignation of the member for Gympie and the appointment of the member for Toowoomba South as the Deputy Opposition Whip. I welcome the member for Toowoomba South to his new role, which I am sure he will fulfil with distinction.

PETITIONS

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

Rosewood Railway Station, Upgrade

Mr Madden, from 391 petitioners, requesting the House to refurbish Rosewood Railway Station and commemorate the station's 100th birthday in 2018 [2008].

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

Sex Offenders and Paedophiles, Electronic Tracking Device

From 221 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure all convicted sex offenders and paedophiles are fitted with an electronic tracking device for the duration of their life once released from prison [2009].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS


MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Grace) [2010] Nonconforming petition regarding Queensland deforestation and wildlife and a USB stick listing names

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

Queensland Law Reform Commission; Electoral Commission of Queensland; Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council; Right to Information Act and Information Privacy Act Review

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (9.34 am): I table the Queensland Law Reform Commission annual report for the period 2016-17; the Electoral Commission of Queensland annual report for the period 2016-17; the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council annual report for the period 2016-17; and a report on the review of the Right to Information Act 2009 and Information Privacy Act 2009 dated October 2017.

Tabled paper: Queensland Law Reform Commission—Annual Report 2016-17 [\[2011\]](#).


Tabled paper: Electoral Commission of Queensland—Annual Report 2016-17 [\[2012\]](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council—Annual Report 2016-17 [\[2013\]](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Government: Report on the review of the Right to Information Act 2009 and Information Privacy Act 2009, October 2017 [\[2014\]](#).

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Jobs

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.34 am): As promised, my government is governing for all Queenslanders and delivering for Queenslanders. As promised, we are creating more jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders. Our Back to Work program has now assisted 7,489 jobseekers across Queensland back into work. We are well on schedule to meet our target of 8,000 jobseekers assisted by the end of this financial year. Those jobseekers have been employed by 3,555 Queensland businesses. Those Back to Work recipients represent more than half the number of jobs cut by the previous government. Those 7,489 jobs are part of more than 115,000 new jobs created under my government. That is the equivalent of more than 100 new jobs every single day we have been in office. Our Back to Work program has been so successful in regional Queensland that we have now expanded into South-East Queensland for young and long-term jobseekers. Since July when that expansion—

Mr Bleijie: It was not an issue, Grace said. She said South-East Queensland—


Ms PALASZCZUK: Why do you hate jobs, member for Kawana?

Mr Bleijie: Our policy always applied to South-East Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana! The Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Since July when that expansion occurred, 310 jobseekers have been employed in South-East Queensland under the Back to Work program. That includes 54 jobs on the Sunshine Coast, 32 in Toowoomba, 34 in Moreton Bay, 25 in Ipswich and 67 on the Gold Coast. It is a tribute to the thousands of employers across this state who have embraced the Back to Work program and it is a tribute to employment minister Grace Grace for driving its success.

Sunshine Coast, Cabinet Meeting

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): As promised, my government is governing for all Queenslanders. As promised, we are restoring front-line services and creating more jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders. Today I have some more good news.

Mr Bleijie: Slay me!

Ms PALASZCZUK: You are going to love this announcement. There are quite a few members over there who should listen to this announcement. Next Monday the cabinet will meet on the Sunshine Coast.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Ms PALASZCZUK: This meeting follows cabinet meetings in Toowoomba, Maryborough, Cairns, Gold Coast—

Mr Bleijie: Let me know where it is and I will set up my mobile office out the front.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Please do come along.

Mr Bleijie: Do you know where the Sunshine Coast is? Do you need the GPS?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: This meeting follows cabinet meetings in Toowoomba, Maryborough, Cairns, Gold Coast and Rockhampton. The Sunshine Coast, like other regions across Queensland, suffered under devastating cuts to the front line between 2012 and 2015. In the area of health alone more than 100 nursing positions were cut from the Sunshine Coast region. I am proud to say that my government has not only restored these position but we have added more. To date we have employed an additional 180 doctors and almost 600 nurses.

In terms of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service budget we have allocated \$1.15 billion this financial year, which is an increase of \$490 million, or more than 70 per cent, on the last allocation of our predecessors. In total, our state budget—which the member for Buderim voted against—invested \$1 billion in infrastructure in the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay region. This investment supports 2,700 jobs. In terms of job creation, we have worked with industry, businesses and the councils to create new opportunities.

By working together, the unemployment rate on the Sunshine Coast has been reduced from 7.3 per cent at the last election to five per cent. Skilling Queenslanders for Work has helped more than 700 people into work on the Sunshine Coast. Our Back to Work program, which was extended to the region in the last budget, has already helped 50 Sunshine Coast employers recruit 54 staff. Significantly, we have delivered the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and we have supported—

Mr Bleijie interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you will be warned if you persist.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—the expansion of the Sunshine Coast Airport—both vital assets for the region and its growth. We are delivering \$351 million of road infrastructure in 2017-18 for the north coast district. Our roads investment program is supporting 2,066 direct jobs just for north coast alone over the next four years. We are investing \$929 million towards upgrades to widen the Bruce Highway, \$132 million towards the upgrade of the Bruce Highway from Caloundra to the Pine River and \$22 million to upgrade the Kawana Way and Nicklin Way intersection for the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. My government is committed to the Sunshine Coast and we are looking forward to being on the Sunshine Coast on Monday.

Mr Bleijie interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action.

Film Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.41 am): I have made no secret of my desire to see more film production in Queensland because it means more jobs. During my trade mission to the US in 2016 I hosted a reception with the heads of major studios such as Warner Bros., Legendary, Disney and Marvel. In 2015 I also met with Marvel at their studios in LA, where I outlined the benefits of Queensland as a filming location for *Thor: Ragnarok*. I am very pleased to confirm that the Gold Coast will host the Australian premiere of Marvel's international blockbuster *Thor: Ragnarok* tomorrow night after it was filmed in Queensland. Chris Hemsworth will be on the Gold Coast as part of the star-studded event. I am also very happy to welcome Marvel and some of the members of the cast and crew of *Thor: Ragnarok* back to Queensland to celebrate the premiere. The production employed more than 1,000 Queensland cast and crew and it injected an estimated \$142 million into the Queensland economy.

In 2016-17 Queensland invested in 37 domestic and international productions worth \$214 million that created 2,340 jobs in Queensland. I am the Queensland screen industry's biggest advocate. I can assure the House that my government will keep creating screen jobs for our local crews and creatives and securing even more investment in our local economies.

Public Transport, Rail

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.42 am): The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of improving front-line services by investing in public transport infrastructure. Recently the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2 project reached a significant milestone. On Wednesday, 20 September the first two of the four new light rail vehicles required for stage 2 arrived at the port of Brisbane. These light rail vehicles are now at home at the light rail depot at Southport on the Gold Coast. These four new LRVs will increase the G:Link tram fleet from 14 to 18.

Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2 is currently in the testing and commissioning phase, with trams from the existing fleet being tested on stage 2 tracks. The arrival of the first two of four new LRVs is great news for the Gold Coast, with light rail stage 2 well on target to be completed in time for the Commonwealth Games in April 2018.

Still speaking of the Gold Coast, I can advise the House that the \$163 million Coomera-Helensvale duplication project was completed and commissioned over the recent Queen's birthday long weekend and that revenue services are already rolling along this section, boosting capacity and reliability ahead of the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. This project has provided a significant economic boost to the local construction industry, with over 200 jobs created. Queensland Rail crews and contractors have delivered a collective 450,000 hours of work since the start of construction in March last year to deliver the 8.2-kilometre heavy rail duplication, including eight new rail bridges totalling 1.4 kilometres in length.

Whilst these two major projects might be drawing to a close, we have already started our next major public transport infrastructure project. Work is already underway for Cross River Rail, which will deliver jobs and faster commute times right across the South-East Queensland network.

The NGR project has also reached an important milestone and the trains are a step closer to entering passenger service. In September I announced that the state had agreed to accept the first NGR train after a massive amount of work had been undertaken to fix the issues that had been identified by Queensland Rail engineers. The number of must-do action items has been reduced from more than 480 when I became minister in February to fewer than 20 now. The remaining actions relate to receiving some final test results, certification and provision of documentation to close out queries. We are confident that this will occur shortly. I stress, though, that the trains will not enter service until all remaining items are closed out.

The state has also agreed on modifications to the trains to improve disability access. The previous government's decision to change the specifications of the train left us with significant challenges to overcome to ensure the trains were fully accessible. The state has now decided to split the fleet of 75 trains. Thirty-five trains for long-distance services will have two toilets and 40 trains for urban services will, like most of the existing urban fleet, operate without toilets. This is the same configuration as QR's current fleet. The state will also redesign the layout of the toilet modules to enhance access for people with a disability.


We have been working hard to fix our trains and build a better public transport system, and we are making good progress. Only the Palaszczuk government—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members.

Ms TRAD: They really ought to talk to the disability sector about why they redesigned the specifications and made the trains less accessible by people with a disability. People with a disability and the disability sector know very clearly who is to blame for that. Unfortunately, it will take additional resources to fix these trains in order to make sure all Queenslanders, regardless of their ability, can access them. We are getting on with the job of fixing the mess that the previous LNP Newman-Nicholls government left us.

Government Owned Corporations

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.47 am): From the time the Palaszczuk Labor government was elected in early 2015 we have demonstrated our commitment to growing the Queensland economy, restoring confidence and targeted job creation for Queenslanders, particularly those people living in regional Queensland. As we all remember, one of

the key issues for Queenslanders at the last election was the rejection of the extensive asset sales program by the former LNP government. In contrast, part of Queensland's economic revival has been the continued public ownership of our government owned corporations.

The proposed fire sale of our energy, ports and water assets would have delivered poor outcomes for the state and for Queensland taxpayers. These businesses and others, like Queensland Rail, are owned by the Queensland government. They were originally established on behalf of Queenslanders because they provide services which are critical to the economy. Our GOCs provide critical infrastructure to the state, and over time they have had to step in when the private sector was not fulfilling the service provision requirements of a growing Queensland.

The benefits of ongoing public ownership of our assets have been clear to see in the 2017-18 budget. The government has undertaken key investments in infrastructure to underpin the future of our state, including \$150 million for Powerlink's Clean Energy Hub, \$136 million for the Burdekin Falls Dam upgrade, \$75 million for the Townsville Channel Capacity Upgrade and \$120 million for the Cairns Shipping Development Project to expand Cairns cruise-shipping capacity. These are strategic investments which have been specifically designed to drive more economic growth and job creation and to attract further investment from the private sector.

If our key energy assets had been sold off to the private sector, we would not have been in a position to step in where the Turnbull government and other state governments could not. In Queensland we have acted to place downward pressure on power prices and are attracting significant investment in renewable generation capacity. Those opposite still want to sell off our assets. It is very concerning. We on this side of the House are committed to ensuring that the returns to government—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. Member for Hinchinbrook, you have had a pretty good go.


Mr PITT: We on this side of the House are committed to ensuring that the returns to government from our publicly owned assets are passed on to Queenslanders in terms of better service delivery and to help with the cost of living. We have used dividends to directly contribute to the funding of initiatives to stabilise prices.

Our \$1.16 billion Powering Queensland Plan announced in June is a comprehensive strategy to deliver affordable, secure and sustainable energy supply now and into the future. The Palaszczuk government acted immediately to alleviate the failures of the National Energy Market and invested \$770 million to more than halve the Queensland Competition Authority's recommended price rises. That means a 3.3 per cent rise for regional households, not 7.1 per cent and certainly not 43 per cent like we saw under the previous government. We are ensuring that Queenslanders are not faced with the increases of up to 20 per cent seen in other states. The annual electricity bill for a typical household in Queensland is \$1,575, lower than New South Wales at \$1,746, Victoria at \$1,664 and South Australia at \$2,078.

Another benefit of our continued ownership of our energy infrastructure is our ability to put downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices and ensure that we continue to put enough energy into storage to meet the needs of Queenslanders during peak demand periods. In June we directed Stanwell to alter its bidding strategies in the National Electricity Market, a positive move which the Turnbull government has even tried to claim credit for. These directions meant that forward wholesale prices dropped by 13 per cent immediately after the government announced this action. For the 2018 calendar year, the wholesale price had reduced 19 per cent in July. This follows our direction to Energy Queensland to not appeal the regulator's decision, potentially saving Queenslanders billions. We also directed Stanwell to return its Swanbank E 385-megawatt gas-fired generator to service.

All of these initiatives have been to help reduce future price volatility and reinforce the state's energy security. Retaining our assets has meant something, and we have been able to show that very clearly through the 2017-18 budget. That is because we have a clear plan to retain these assets in order to continue benefiting Queenslanders.

Weapons Licensing

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.51 am): Last night this parliament voted to support Labor's stronger gun laws in Queensland after a disallowance motion brought by Katter's Australian Party to halt the


Weapons Legislation (Lever Action Shotguns) Amendment Regulation was voted down. This regulation limits access to high-capacity lever action shotguns in the community and increases community safety in Queensland.

The Weapons Act 1990 is based on John Howard's world renowned National Firearms Agreement and includes the underlying principles that weapon possession and use are subordinate to the need to ensure public and individual safety. Although the National Firearms Agreement was born out of Australia's deadly Port Arthur massacre in 1996, it is every bit as important almost 20 years later, if not more so. The serious issue of gun control and community safety is an important debate that has again been given public prominence in the wake of last week's deadly massacre in Las Vegas. Australia's gun laws have become the gold standard internationally, cited each time a gun related tragedy occurs internationally.

Community safety is further improved by imposing strict controls on the possession of weapons, and the weapons regulation categorises weapons in line with the National Firearms Agreement. Lever action shotguns with a magazine capacity of up to five rounds will now be classified as category B weapons in Queensland and those with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds will be classified as the more restrictive, highest category, category D weapons. This reclassification brings Queensland into line with the COAG decision in December 2016 to strengthen the National Firearms Agreement. Jurisdictions around Australia are also following suit. New South Wales, Western Australia and the ACT have already legislated to reclassify lever action shotguns in accordance with the agreement and other jurisdictions are now in various stages of implementation.

The Palaszczuk government has always acknowledged that the vast majority of firearm owners in Queensland are decent, law-abiding citizens and the facts show that Queenslanders and firearm owners also take gun control seriously, because during the recent weapons amnesty here in Queensland over 16,000 weapons were surrendered. This reclassification will improve public safety whilst ensuring farmers have access to the weapons they need to do their job. Under the Palaszczuk government, Queensland will remain part of the National Firearms Agreement and Queenslanders' safety will be our priority. We will never water down gun controls in Queensland. We will never betray John Howard's courage in relation to the NFA because Australia is a safer place and Queensland is a safer place as a result of that courage.


Flu Summit

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): Queenslanders have endured one of the worst flu seasons in many years—one that has made a contribution to the record books. More than 50,000 influenza notifications have been reported across the state this year, almost double the number in previous years. The significant increase of flu cases has led to higher levels of demand on the public health system and placed more pressure on our hospitals and emergency departments. Queensland hospitals have experienced a higher rate of admissions than usual, with more than 5,400 public hospital admissions across the state for influenza. Almost 650 of those admissions received intensive care. On 14 August this year the Queensland Ambulance Service set a new record for the number of calls for assistance, with 3,882 responses on a single day.

Many take it for granted that our health system can manage these spikes in demand, but I do not. Our hardworking paramedics, clinicians and support staff have done a great job this winter. Our front-line staff are well aware of the commitment of the Palaszczuk government to support front-line services—in the same way they remember the 'cut, sack and sell' mentality of the Leader of the Opposition.

Because the number of cases of influenza and its impact on the Queensland health system was so much higher than in recent years, we need to review the impact the flu has had on our health system as we start preparing for the impact flu might have on Queensland in 2018. Accordingly, I have asked Queensland Health to convene a flu summit in Brisbane next week. The summit will bring together the knowledge and expertise from within our state's health system as well as leading national and international perspectives in the field, like Monash University and the World Health Organization. The aim of the summit is to better understand the spike in flu cases this year and find ways to ensure Queensland is well placed to do what we can to prepare for next year and future flu seasons. The summit will help us prepare for next year's flu season and help achieve our vision, which is to make Queenslanders amongst the healthiest people in the world by 2026.


Sexual Violence Awareness Month

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.56 am): October marks Sexual Violence Awareness Month. Sexual Violence Awareness Month provides an important opportunity to raise awareness of sexual violence and abuse in Queensland communities. We know that one in three women and one in six men will experience sexual violence in their lifetime. The latest data from the ABS has revealed that the number of sexual assault victims in Queensland increased for the fifth consecutive year. It is up 24 per cent since 2011. This is a national tragedy. Today we all wear teal ribbons to show support for victims of sexual assault and stand together to say no to violence in the community. It is an opportunity to let those affected by sexual violence and abuse know that they are not alone and they have our support.

The Palaszczuk government has invested funds to start to fill gaps where there had previously been no sexual assault services at all. New services have been established in Inala, Redlands, Ipswich, Moreton Bay, Mount Isa, Mackay and Toowoomba, providing vital support to victims to recover from sexual violence and improve their safety and wellbeing. Roma and Brisbane North will be the next locations for new services. We have the runs on the board, but I know there is more work to do to ease the pressure on these important services. When in power the member for Clayfield's savage cuts went deep into our sexual assault services. Wide Bay Sexual Assault Services was cut \$29,000, the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence was cut \$34,000 and Logan MPs know that \$33,000 was cut from the Centre Against Sexual Violence in Woodridge.

There remains a huge task ahead to challenge and change the attitudes and belief systems that underpin violence against women. We are rolling out Respectful Relationships education in our schools and community based communications campaigns, including our youth focused campaign Stop the Hurting, obviously to help address these attitudes. Violence of any kind, including sexual assault or the threat of sexual violence, is totally unacceptable. I urge all Queenslanders to show their support and attend an awareness-raising event in their local area this month, because together we can send the message that sexual violence will not be tolerated in our communities.

Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (9.59 am): The Palaszczuk government is working with traditional owners to protect Queensland's most amazing natural areas and expand local job opportunities in Indigenous communities. Queensland's traditional owners have been caring for country for 40,000 years and, as the traditional custodians of our land, they bring a wealth of knowledge about how to manage that land. That is why, in government, the Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program is one of my favourite programs.

This year we are funding 25 more Indigenous land and sea rangers, giving young traditional owners the chance to work on country, delivering environmental benefits and creating new tourism experiences. Today I am pleased to announce that expressions of interest for the first round of new Indigenous land and sea ranger positions across Queensland are now open. This will build on the 76 full-time rangers who are currently employed across 17 communities in North, Central, Western and South-East Queensland.

I am also pleased announce the opportunity for Indigenous groups to apply for new funding. Through the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups will have access to grants, training and mentoring support to establish new land and sea ranger teams. Our Indigenous land and sea rangers contribute greatly to the protection of Queensland's important ecosystems and Indigenous cultural heritage. The program also provides jobs and promotes economic opportunities associated with land and sea management.

When I visit remote Aboriginal communities and ask the kids there what they want to be when they grow up, so often they say that they want to be a ranger. The Palaszczuk government is proud to support this program that continues to deliver benefits for Indigenous communities and for the conservation of Queensland's most valuable landscapes.


Scown, Mr M

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.01 am): The public were rightly disturbed by the response of Mr Matthew Scown as he left court yesterday after sentencing in the Tyrell Cobb case. I can advise that I have requested a brief from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions on this matter.

In speaking more generally, I can say that there is a growing concern from the general public about whether sentencing for criminal offences arising from the death of a child is meeting the community's expectations. The government believes that this is an important area for consideration. That is why I will be referring an inquiry to the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council relating to sentencing arising from offences resulting in the death of a child.

The Palaszczuk government re-established the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council to undertake this type of important work—to undertake the research and provide reports that can help guide good policy and legislation into the future. I have already spoken to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the chair of the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council to advise them of this referral. Once the terms of reference are released, I encourage the community to have their say on this important issue. When the death of a child occurs we are all heartbroken, but when that death occurs at the hands of another person we all want to ensure that the community's expectations are being met to hold people to account.

Fraser Coast, Skills Development

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.02 am): I am pleased to inform the House that on Thursday, 14 September Jobs Queensland, in conjunction with the CSIRO and TAFE Queensland, released a research report titled *Growing opportunities in the Fraser Coast: informing regional workforce development*. I table a copy of that report.

Tabled Paper: Report titled 'Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: Informing regional workforce development' [\[2015\]](#).


This collaborative piece of research identifies key demographic trends in terms of population, industries and existing skill bases and proposes a number of scenarios for the future.

The organisations conducted their research locally, meeting with all sectors of the community, including local government, industry, education and, importantly, local residents. Based on the research undertaken, the report identified four key areas of focus for regional skills development in the Fraser Coast: service and people skills, technology skills, numeracy and problem solving and, finally, entrepreneurial skills. These identified areas will now inform the Fraser Coast Workforce Plan, which is due to be released in late 2017, and will speak specifically to the types of training courses, skill sets and investments that will need to be made in order for the Fraser Coast region to capitalise on its economic opportunities.

The report then goes into detail to investigate the specific industries and sectors that the Fraser Coast will experience high growth in and the types of growth and opportunities that it will bring. The report identifies that, with a targeted approach to servicing the existing ageing population and embracing the aged-care and disability sector, there is an outstanding opportunity for the Fraser Coast to position itself as a key knowledge and skills base in this area. This does not mean just support work positions; it means working to attract business and aligned industries to the Fraser Coast to position itself as a leader in the overall industry. It can mean manufacturing in the health equipment industry. It can mean establishing itself as a centre of excellence for training people from across the nation.

When combined with forecast growth in sectors such as tourism and renewable energy, which are both areas that I know the respective ministers are already working hard on, the research report forecasts that, on a conservative estimate, an extra 10,695 jobs will be created in these areas alone in the Fraser Coast region in the period up to 2036. I look forward to the release of the final workforce plan for the Fraser Coast which will support continued employment growth and business opportunities right across the Fraser Coast region.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Legacy Program

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Commonwealth Games) (10.05 am): There are just 174 days to go until we host the Commonwealth Games in Queensland. Our \$1.5 billion investment in Commonwealth Games infrastructure will deliver a lasting sports legacy for future generations of Queenslanders. We have invested in three new world-class sporting venues and upgrades to seven others. These facilities will live on beyond the games for our sports stars of the future and they will reinforce Queensland's reputation as a rolled-gold host for major international sporting events.


That is why I am very pleased to announce that today, as a direct legacy of the games, 13 sporting organisations will share in a \$500,000 grants program under our games sports legacy program. Today I am looking forward to joining the CEO of Rugby Union to officially announce a grant to the QRU

for the Queensland Rugby female sevens state championships for their under-15 and under-17 girls. For those members who want to come down, we are going to be on the green. Many other great Queensland sporting organisations are recipients: the sporting wheelies, Hockey Queensland, gymnastics, netball, weightlifting, table tennis, boxing and basketball.

Mr Hinchliffe: Hear, hear!

Ms JONES: I knew the member for Sandgate would like that one. I thank those organisations for taking up this great games legacy. It was a Labor government that bid for the games, because we knew that it would grow jobs, infrastructure and tourism in Queensland and create a long-term sporting legacy for the next generation of Queensland sporting stars.


White Spot

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (10.06 am): Today I am pleased to be able to inform the House of some very encouraging news for the Queensland prawn industry and all those who love Queensland seafood. As part of the Palaszczuk government's extensive biosecurity response to white spot disease, Biosecurity Queensland has concluded tests on 4,122 prawn and crab samples and, thankfully, every one of those tests was negative. The samples were collected from 38 locations from Moreton Bay to Cairns and included the Logan and Brisbane rivers. These results are significant as we work towards our stated goal of eradicating a disease that has devastated prawn farming on the Logan River and has the potential to destroy Queensland's lucrative prawn industry.

These tests indicate that the movement restrictions introduced by the former minister, the member for Rockhampton, and the Palaszczuk government's strong biosecurity response to white spot disease are working and have been effective in stopping its spread. I pay tribute to Bill Byrne, the previous minister for agriculture. He was a stalwart for agriculture. He was a supporter of the agricultural sector. This is just one example of the effectiveness and the hard work of my friend and colleague. However, it is too early to be complacent or to let down our guard. The movement restrictions on uncooked prawns, yabbies and marine worms from Moreton Bay must remain in place. We will continue the testing regime as part of an agreed national surveillance plan. To regain international disease-free status for white spot, we need to have two consecutive years of negative test results to prove that the disease is no longer present in Australian waterways. That remains our goal.

I want to place on record the Palaszczuk government's continuing thanks and appreciation to the Logan River prawn farmers and commercial fishers in Moreton Bay for their contribution to the eradication program. The tests on samples from Mooloolaba, Tin Can Bay, Noosa, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay, Bowen, Townsville and Cairns at 38 different locations were possible only through the cooperation of commercial operators. I also want to thank the Queensland public for continuing to support the prawn and crab industries through this difficult time and for adhering to the movement restrictions on uncooked prawns, yabbies and marine worms in the south-east.

Indigenous Councils, Grants


 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.10 am): The Palaszczuk government's commitment to serving Queenslanders around the state is unparalleled. In particular, the way in which we support those living in remote Indigenous communities is something I am incredibly proud of as a minister in this Labor government.

In this year's budget, the Palaszczuk government has allocated \$39 million to Aboriginal councils from three state government grant packages. The largest of the funding programs is the \$34 million state government financial aid program which includes an increase in 2017-18 by almost \$3.4 million. This funding is vital for councils to continue to deliver front-line local government services for their communities.

Councils use these grants to help them provide core services as well as sustaining local government jobs and services such as public safety officers, waste management, water treatment and supply, gas, drainage, flood mitigation and natural disaster resilience. This is essential funding for these communities. It is essential funding that the Newman-Nicholls administration thought should be cut. The previous government decided to freeze the indexation rate of the state government's financial aid program, denying Aboriginal councils the opportunity to provide these crucial services. Not only has the Palaszczuk government restored the indexation rate, we have restored the funding for the program to the level it would have been if the indexation had not been cut by the LNP.

Another important funding package is our Indigenous Local Government Sustainability Program. Under the program, Queensland's 16 Indigenous local governments have been allocated more than \$500,000 by the Palaszczuk government to spend before the end of this financial year. Recently it was exciting to announce that the Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council has used \$100,000 of its grant to purchase a new front-loaded tractor. This will help the council deliver a number of local projects and keep jobs and training opportunities within their community. It is only a Palaszczuk Labor government that will keep delivering funding projects such as these to Indigenous communities across Queensland. Once again the Palaszczuk government is righting the wrongs of three years of cutting, sacking and selling by Tim Nicholls, the former treasurer.

North Queensland, Front-Line Services


 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (10.11 am): When we came to government, front-line services in this state had suffered from three years of cuts and sackings. These sackings were felt particularly hard in North Queensland. The Palaszczuk government has been working hard from day one to restore these front-line services which provide vital services across Queensland.

Since March 2015 we have seen the restoration of front-line services in the north. For Far North Queensland we have restored 314 nurses, 99 doctors and 135 teachers. For Townsville we have restored 79 nurses, 55 doctors and 99 teachers. For Mackay we have restored 91 nurses, 56 doctors and 68 teachers. I could go on and on and on. We need to remember the impact that even one nurse, doctor or teacher can have. Each and every one changes lives on a daily basis.

I am proud to be part of a government delivering the people of North Queensland quality education and health care. However, these front-line jobs mean much more to communities of North Queensland than just delivering services. The people who work in these professions and want to live in regional Queensland can now continue to work in their chosen field and do not have to leave town to find work, allowing these front-line workers to stay in their communities.

Our government is also making significant investments in infrastructure to support these jobs, with over \$3.2 billion in this year's budget which will ensure that North Queenslanders can access services in modern facilities. Some of these upgrades include the Cairns Base Hospital redevelopment and mental health precinct construction, new classrooms for Cairns West State School, a new primary school for Burdell in Townsville, the Townsville Hospital redevelopment, the refurbishment of classrooms at Mackay West State School and new classrooms for Rockhampton Special School. That list is just scratching the surface of infrastructure projects in North Queensland that are supporting front-line jobs and providing essential health and education services. The Palaszczuk government has made and continues to make great inroads to restore and support front-line services in North Queensland.

Safe Work Month

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.13 am): Last week I officially launched Safe Work Month at a free breakfast in Brisbane's King George Square that was attended by hundreds of city workers. The breakfast included plenty of giveaways and information, fitness demonstrations and health checks, but it had a serious message: that workplace safety must be a priority for every Queenslanders.

Queensland Safety Ambassador Shane Webcke, Mental Health Ambassador Libby Trickett and Asbestos Safety Ambassador Trevor Gillmeister were also there to spread the message about workplace safety and together with Julie Goodwin we cooked a mean breakfast. Shane, Libby and Trevor are passionate about safe, healthy workplaces. As we all know, Shane and Trevor lost their fathers to work related incidents and Libby has her own story of how mental illness can stop you in your tracks.

Safe Work month reminds us that we can all do a little more to keep ourselves and our workmates safer. It is not just workers who benefit. A safe, healthy workforce is also good for a business's bottom line. Employers appreciate that, and they also appreciate that in Queensland they pay the lowest workers compensation premiums in the country and that businesses will not pay a cent in WorkCover premiums on the apprentices they hire, saving thousands.

We continue to work closely with businesses that have a high injury rate to look at ways to improve safety. We have been working with doctors and employers to get injured employees back on the job as soon as possible. To help with this, last week we launched our Getting Back campaign. It has a simple but powerful message for workers, employers and medical professionals: that work itself plays a vital role in the injury rehabilitation process.

Safe Work Month will see activities such as safety breakfasts, toolbox talks and workplace barbecues run out across the state in nine regional centres. Next week we will honour those who are excelling at the Safe Work and Return to Work Awards ceremony and the day after will host the Injury Prevention and Return to Work Conference. Everybody deserves to come home safely at the end of each working day, which is the clear message being spread during Safe Work Month.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Electricity Supply



Mr HART (Burleigh—LNP) (10.16 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House condemns the Palaszczuk government for its power rationing plan urging Queenslanders to put their air conditioners to 26 degrees or above to avoid blackouts.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.16 am): After a week of sickening revelations, today we have been reminded yet again that this is a government of cover-up, deceit and grubby deals, a government that will tell the Queensland people one thing while in the back alleys and dark corners trade off every thread of principle for its slipping grip on power.

This is a Premier who has publicly claimed that she definitely, absolutely will not be doing any deals with Pauline Hanson and One Nation. Members will remember that in this place she even produced a signed statutory declaration. Clearly she signed that statutory declaration with her hands behind her back and her fingers crossed, for today we learn from none other than the One Nation chief spin doctor, James Ashby, that despite the Premier's promises, protests and paperwork, she has in reality been getting all warm and fuzzy with One Nation. In fact, Labor and this Premier are red hot to do a deal with the redhead.

In today's *Australian* newspaper Mr Ashby confirmed that there is not and never has been any deal with the LNP. I have said it and I will say it again: there will be no deal with One Nation, there will be no shared ministry and there will be no coalition. The LNP is the only conservative party in Queensland that can fix Labor's mess. However, while ruling out any approaches from the LNP, Mr Ashby said, 'They certainly haven't spoken to me.' He went on to say, 'We have had more contact from people within the Labor camp.'

Honourable members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I see that the member for Springwood has his head down. The cat is out of the bag: a vote for One Nation is clearly a vote for Labor.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think I can feel the goodwill across the chamber at the moment.

Mr NICHOLLS: That is right: a vote for One Nation is clearly a vote for a Labor government and another three years of doing nothing, of knowing nothing and of getting nothing done. We have a Premier who refuses to condemn a union, the members of which threatened to rape the children of Queensland working families. We have a Premier who keeps her hand out for their money and we have a Premier prepared to do more grubby deals for One Nation preferences. This is a Premier of hubris and hypocrisy. She is not a Premier of principle and—

(Time expired)

Leader of the Opposition, Performance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.21 am): When you are quoting from the book of Ashby, you know you have fallen to the lowest possible place. We know there is no basement into which the Leader of the Opposition will not crawl to try to strengthen his leadership. This is absolute base politics. Good government is about strong leadership. Last night we saw the yawning chasm between the strong and effective leadership of the Premier of Queensland and the miserable and aimless dysfunction of the Leader of the Opposition. He was the only political leader who would not come into this House and state his position on more effective gun control in Queensland. The LNP is the only organisation that when playing follow-the-leader walks in a circle. The Leader of the Opposition should change the designation after his name from 'member of parliament' to 'MIA', because he is always missing in action on the big debates. Last night in a disallowance motion on gun laws he was on display as the invisible man of Queensland politics. He stood himself down when the Queensland of people needed him to step up and he has form.

One of the most predictable aspects of this parliament has been the absolute certainty that the Leader of the Opposition will go missing in the big debates. When his leadership goes missing, other voices fill the void. Last night, what did we hear from the member for Gympie? It is no wonder that he is now sitting up the back, next to the member for Buderim and leader of One Nation. The member for Gympie said that effective gun laws are designed to play 'to an audience of wealthy, unproductive inner-city zealots who think the whole world revolves around their concrete enclaves'. I say for the benefit of the member for Gympie that this is not about the inner city; it is about the safety of Queenslanders. That is what it is about.

The member for Gympie was joined by the LNP candidate for Rockhampton, who has said, 'Labor: always pandering to inner-city greens who wouldn't know a comb from a hammer.' That comes from the man who wants to represent Central Queensland. I table that quote and photos showing him yacking away with the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. That is the sort of person the Leader of the Opposition supports.


Tabled paper: Photos of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP, with Mr Douglas Rodgers and a screenshot from Mr Douglas's Facebook page and article from the *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin* online, dated 12 October 2017, titled 'LNP reveals young gun Rockhampton candidate' [\[2016\]](#).

Speaking of weakness, what about the LNP candidate for Ipswich West? He said that the postcard bandit, Brenden Abbott, was a political prisoner. What a disgrace. I tell the Leader of the Opposition that Brenden Abbott is a violent criminal who threatened innocent people with weapons, but that was said by the LNP candidate for Ipswich West and I table the printout from his Facebook page.

Tabled paper: Screenshots of Facebook pages of LNP candidate for Ipswich West [\[2017\]](#).

This is not leadership. If I cannot speak to him, I will speak to the rest of the LNP: this is not leadership; it is a path to failure for Queensland. Queenslanders deserve better. They deserve a strong and effective Labor government, led by a strong and effective premier.

Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.25 am): As a mother, I am disgusted to think that another woman would sit in silence while CFMEU thugs make vicious threats of violence and rape against children. What makes that worse is that the woman in question is the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland. What have we heard from Shannon Fentiman following those threats to rape children, bash people with crowbars and physically harm others because they do not bow to their demands? Nothing! The silence is deafening.


It seems that silence can be bought if you are a member of the Labor Party and the unions are willing to open their pockets for you. I cannot believe that I am forced to make this call to the minister for women and child safety. The minister has a duty to call out the despicable comments by the CFMEU or explain why she will not. The standard you walk past is the standard you accept and it is clear that she is willing to let this abhorrent act slide. What makes that even worse is that it is Sexual Violence Awareness Month, a month when we are supposed to promote the support options available to people affected by sexual assault and sexual abuse. Instead, we get the complete opposite from the minister. I wonder what the 1,870 people reported to have been raped in the past 12 months would say to those threats.

This minister is a fraud. She feigns outrage when a woman or child is threatened in a violent situation, but we are yet to hear that rehearsed sigh in front of the TV cameras because this involves her union mates. The real question is this: why? Why will she not speak up for the children against whom those threats were made? Where is the Minister for Child Safety whose job it is to call out that type of abuse and condemn it? Does the minister think it is okay for her union masters to use such violent and degrading threats against innocent children? I wonder if she called out and condemned sexual violence against children when she addressed the hundreds of construction workers last December as part of the CFMEU Family Violence Awareness National Week of Action. I table a photo.

Tabled paper: Screenshot of social media page of the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, Hon. Shannon Fentiman, including photo of the member talking to construction workers from the CFMEU [2018].

The reality is that, like most of her Left colleagues, she is not just beholden to her union masters; she is owned by them. She dare not bite the hand that feeds her and she dare not condemn her pay masters. Whilst the member for Waterford remains silent and until she condemns the CFMEU, she shows what we all know: she is a fraud, a phony and a failure.

Firearms Regulation

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.28 am): From the quality of the intervention of those opposite, it is quite clear that the contribution of the member for Mudgeeraba was all about politics and not about values.

Ms BATES: I rise to a point of order. I take offence at the comments from the Deputy Premier. As a survivor of domestic and family violence, I find it appalling. I ask that she withdraw unconditionally.

Mr SPEAKER: I am informed there was a personal reflection. Deputy Premier, please withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. There is a big national debate happening in our nation and it is about gun ownership and strong gun controls. We have actually seen an extraordinary move by a former prime minister of our nation, the architect of the National Firearms Agreement, who intervened in this debate today and penned an open letter with his former deputy, Tim Fischer, to make a compelling plea to the people of New South Wales to not back in dangerous parties with dangerous policies around weakening gun controls in New South Wales. I will refer to that in a moment.

Last night we saw some more extraordinary interventions and debates in this chamber. We saw an extraordinary split in the LNP. The member for Gympie, who now sits next to the One Nation leader in this House, split from his party and supported One Nation's position in relation to gun control and ownership. What was also extraordinary, as the member for Woodridge and my ministerial colleague has reflected upon, is the fact that not one single LNP member, apart from that member who voted contrary to his party's position, actually contributed to the debate—not the shadow police minister who has been saying a lot of things outside of this chamber—

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms TRAD: Sorry—I take that interjection—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Deputy Premier appears to be deliberately misleading the House. All she has to do is refer to *Hansard* to see how wrong her comments are. A number of members spoke, including the shadow minister and the member for Gregory.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Leader of Opposition Business knows that that is not a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: We will move on. There is no point of order. It is a frivolous point of order. If you want to write to me about a matter, I invite you to do that, member for Callide. Resume your seat.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I will write to you on the basis that the Deputy Premier appears to be deliberately misleading the House.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members.

Ms TRAD: Nothing changes the fact that the member for Gympie crossed the floor last night. Nothing changes that fact. The Leader of the Opposition was silent in this debate. It was an unbelievable display of either indifference or complete laziness around a big national debate in our country. This was incredibly significant. As I said, even a former prime minister and architect of the National Firearms Agreement has come out in relation to this debate.

The Leader of the Opposition was silent. Why was he silent? Is it because he has done a secret deal with One Nation to reverse this regulation change? Is this about the One Nation tail wagging the LNP dog? The Leader of the Opposition must absolutely categorically rule out not reversing this regulation change. If he does not then it will just show that we cannot trust the LNP and, as John Howard said, we cannot vote for this dangerous party.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I am informed that we have students from the Coolabunia State School in the electorate of Nanango observing our proceedings from the gallery.

CFMEU

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.33 am): The Queensland Labor Party and its MPs are a disgrace for not condemning the CFMEU union thugs who threaten to bash people with crowbars and rape children. This type of vile behaviour has not been condemned by those opposite and by this Premier, and it sickens me, like it has sickened all Queenslanders. Rape is not okay. Threatening rape is not okay. Standing by it and accepting this behaviour is simply not okay.

What type of people are they over there to think this behaviour is acceptable? Is the CFMEU's dirty, tainted cash worth that much to all of them over there? All too often under this Premier's leadership we have seen those opposite roll out for the cameras and come into this place—

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. This is a significant and serious issue. Your rulings in relation to statements made by ministers have been followed by this side of the House. The Minister for Industrial Relations has kept on with continual chat and has been hurling interjections, which are clearly not being taken and are designed to interrupt the Deputy Leader of the Opposition giving her statement. I seek your clear ruling on this.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I have allowed members to be reasonably free with their interjections during private members' statements. That has been my consistent approach. I am trying to be consistent. You may think I am not. I warn all members to let the speaker be heard unless there is clear provocation.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: All too often under this Premier's leadership we have seen all of those opposite roll into this place and in front of the cameras with fake outrage on a variety of issues. The Premier is always coming into this place and always saying she is angry and always saying she is furious about other issues. Yesterday when there was an issue abhorrent to all of us and all Queenslanders, was the Premier angry? Was the Premier furious? No. All we got from this Premier was, 'It is unacceptable.' That response is unacceptable, Premier.


As a mother of three daughters who have been targeted by the unions I was sickened that our female Premier did not have the guts, the leadership or the courage to call this thuggery out. I, like most Queensland women, found the Premier's response to these vile thugs threatening rape to children utterly appalling. Even Anna Bligh sacked Kerry Shine over his rape comments. Come on, Premier; what sort of message are you sending to our young children? As a role model for women in this great state, what sort of message are you sending to them?

If that was not bad enough, this House had to be subjected to the comments from the member for Mirani. There is still no word of leadership from the Premier ruling those out. How dare he come into this House and actually defend those vile human beings who threatened rape to our children. When is this Premier going to get into this House and show some leadership?

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will finish at 11.37 am.

Member for Mirani

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (10.37 am): My question without notice is to the Premier. Last night in this House the member for Mirani sought to legitimise the alleged threats by the CFMEU to rape children and defend their lawlessness and vile thuggery to other workers on the picket line.

Mr PEARCE: I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. With regard to my adjournment speech, I never once condoned threats of violence or sexual assault. The point I conveyed last night was that those opposite were smearing an entire community and an entire workforce with the comments they were making in this place. They are absolutely untrue and unfair.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Mirani. It is not really an opportunity for a speech. If you find those comments offensive and you wish them to be withdrawn, there is an opportunity for you to do that.

Mr PEARCE: I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: The whole lot. I am personally offended by the statements that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition just made. I want them to be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Mirani. If you find a comment offensive, you have to rise immediately the comments have been made. The comments I am referring to, I am assuming—are they the comments that the Leader of the Opposition just raised in his question?

Mr PEARCE: That is correct.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Will you withdraw, Leader of the Opposition, the comments that you have just made that the member finds offensive?

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw, Mr Speaker. My question without notice is to the Premier. Last night in this House the member for Mirani said—and I quote from *Hansard*—

A threat to rape suggests that there is an intent to rape. The loose language around the comments are hurtful and lots of families across Central Queensland tonight are feeling the pain.

Does this legitimise the alleged threats by the CFMEU to rape children and defend their lawlessness and vile thuggery to other workers on the picket line? As the leader of the government, will the Premier now finally show some leadership and immediately disassociate the government from the CFMEU and stand down their apologists in caucus?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question framed by the Leader of the Opposition is clearly an imputation and, as a consequence, outside the standing orders.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I am listening to the point of order. If you want to rise, push the button and rise at the appropriate time. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: He has read a quote that stands for itself and relates to the member for Mirani's comments. He has then gone on to impute a motive and an association of those statements that do not apply and are not appropriate. There is no requirement for the Premier to answer a question that is outside of the standing orders. There is an imputation clearly integral to the question and that is why I ask you to rule the question out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, can I please see the question?

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I can provide you with the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Can I have a look at it please?

Mr SEENEY: As a point of order, Mr Speaker, can I indicate that the crux of the question is: as the leader of the government, will the Premier now finally show some leadership? That is the crux of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Can I please have a look at the question that the Leader of the Opposition has asked?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Crux or no crux, the imputation that is contained within the question makes it out of order. It does not matter what the ultimate question is. The imputation makes the question out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, will you peruse this wording? Is this the question that you asked?

Mr NICHOLLS: That was the first question. I then—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, my question is to the Leader of the Opposition. Is the question that the Leader of Opposition Business showed me the question that you asked? Is that the question?

Mr NICHOLLS: That was the first question. You asked—

A government member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Excuse me. That was the first question. You then asked me to rephrase and I rephrased the question which is not written in the form that has just been given to you. It was rephrased as you requested after I withdrew the original part of the question that the member for Mirani took exception to.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: As a consequence, Mr Speaker, I think the concern is that you have the Leader of Opposition Business seeking to mislead you.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I rephrased the question to quote the comments made by the member for Mirani. The Leader of the House has acknowledged that they were an accurate quote. I then put the question to the Premier. The question is this: as the leader of this government, will the Premier now finally show some leadership, immediately disassociate herself from the CFMEU—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There were further words than that.

Mr NICHOLLS:—and stand down their apologists in her caucus. Mr Speaker, I would submit to you there is no imputation in that question.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, we can take all of question time to argue over the very first question that has been asked in question time. Leader of the House, what was the point of order you were raising? Is it anything new?

Opposition members: No.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not need your assistance, members.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I think the question that was put by the Leader of the Opposition, as reframed as it was according to your guidance, contained an imputation that is out of order, and I ask that you rule the question out of order and we move on.

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I am going to rule the question out of order.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, if you do not like it, you know what action you can take. Leader of the Opposition, can you ask your second question please?

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I seek your guidance on why that question was ruled out of order. That, I think, is a fair question to ask on the basis of why that question is out of order because the question, as I say, is as it was and simply asked the Premier will she show some leadership. It contained no imputation in that respect.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, we have spent nearly 15 minutes arguing over the very first question that has been asked. I have ruled the question out of order because I cannot actually be certain as to what the question was. I am proposing that we move on to another question to be asked by the Leader of the Opposition. I will be more than happy to review the *Hansard* record and come back and report to the House at a future time. I remind members of the importance when questions are asked and points of order are raised that there be silence so I can consider the issues being raised. We have taken almost 15 minutes to consider the issues around the relevance of the very first question. The member for Callide is on his feet. What is your point of order, member for Callide?

Notice of Motion, Dissent from Speaker's Ruling

Mr SEENEY: I give notice that I will move dissent from your ruling that the first question was out of order.

CFMEU

Mr NICHOLLS: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. Yesterday it was reported that the CFMEU issued a statement that they 'make no apology' for their alleged threats to rape children. Does the Premier have the courage of her convictions to tell the CFMEU they can keep their \$180,000 of grubby donations—

Government members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS:—and cut them off from access to government?

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I just remind you—I know it is a challenging topic, it is very controversial and I know members have strong views because I can hear their interjections—that I have made rulings in the past in relation to silence while members are asking questions.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like to go to the fact that we need to see the facts contained in the Leader of the Opposition's question authenticated. I do not believe—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: He has not tabled the statement. He has been very willing to table documents.

Mr SPEAKER: Will you resume your seat please, Leader of the House. Members, I have just commented on the importance of silence when I am trying to hear points of order and make rulings. That applies to both sides. What was your point of order? Leader of the House, you are fine? The question has been asked. I will allow the Premier latitude to answer the question however she chooses and we will move on. Premier, is there anything you wish to say in response to that question?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I challenge the basis upon which that question has just been asked. I table the statement from the CFMEU regarding the incident that the question is based on.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We will wait. Leader of the Opposition, can you verify and authenticate the accuracy of the facts stated in your question?

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, I can.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have the call to answer the question.

Ms Trad: How?

Mr SPEAKER: No. It is not a debate about how he can. He has told me he can authenticate and verify the accuracy of the statements he has raised in his question. If members want to write to me about this matter—I already have the Leader of the Opposition writing to me and there was a motion of discontent or whatever it was. Premier, would you like to respond please?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Let me make it very clear: what we have seen in this House is those opposite asking questions that are deliberately misleading. That is a very serious offence in the standing orders and can amount to a contempt of this parliament. I can remember being dragged before the Ethics Committee about those very issues when I was sitting in that chair when there were seven of us there, yet the same standard does not apply to those opposite.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I know everyone is hot under the collar. The Premier is answering the question. I have given her the latitude to answer it as she chooses so I would invite members to allow her to answer it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am yet to see from the Leader of the Opposition those direct comments contained in the press release. I ask him now to table that, to authenticate those comments, so the whole House can see those comments on the record. That is my challenge: table the press release that he just quoted from because the Minister for Industrial Relations has said that is not what has been said.

Mrs Frecklington: Still defending them.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I am not defending anybody here. I am asking you to authenticate your question that you have asked.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I can hear you, member for Everton.

Roads Infrastructure

Mr PEGG: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier outline what actions the government is taking to reduce road congestion and support local businesses through improved transport?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am more than happy to take that question by the member for Stretton, because he raises a very important issue—one that is of concern to a lot of commuters around Queensland—and that is how we reduce travelling times and reduce congestion for commuters. We know how important that is for families. That is why I was very pleased to be at the announcement yesterday of \$190 million for that upgrade which will have a huge impact on a number of families living in that area. I thank the member for Stretton for his very strong advocacy when it comes to those issues.

I was joined by the member for Springwood and the member for Woodridge, both ministers in my government. We had a teacher who came along from the local primary school who told me how important it was to ease congestion around the school. We will continue to work with the federal government to get the best outcomes for the people of Queensland. That is incredibly important and it is something that we will do.

I was very pleased to recently announce another upgrade that my government is very proud to support, and that is the Sumners Road interchange in the seat of Mount Ommaney. I am very pleased to put some facts on the record today for the people of Mount Ommaney: 85,000 cars per day are passing along the Centenary Highway and 35,000 are using Sumners and Monier roads. We will now spend \$65 million duplicating the bridge that crosses the Centenary Highway linking Sumners and Monier roads. I was very pleased to be joined by our candidate for Mount Ommaney, Jessica Pugh, who has been raising this issue with me—

Mr Pitt: A great candidate.

Ms PALASZCZUK: A great candidate who has been raising this issue with me. Let me give a brief history of the project. This project was scrapped by the Newman government when the member for Clayfield became treasurer. He only put it back on the agenda if Queensland sold the assets.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I cannot hear the Premier's answer to the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: What I found most interesting is that four hours after I made that announcement the media were called back to the exact same place. There with the Leader of the Opposition—they found him that day; he was missing in action for a while—at the same place I stood four hours earlier was the member for Mount Ommaney proclaiming, 'We were just waiting for the election and we were going to make the same announcement.' The people of Mount Ommaney know that my government will deliver because we stand on our track record and we will deliver for the people of Mount Ommaney.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I table the item from the CFMEU produced by the Minister for Industrial Relations for the benefit of the parliamentary record.

Tabled paper: Press release, dated 11 October 2017, from the CFMEU titled 'Aussie Miners mark day 100 locked out of work at Glenmore Oaky North mine' [2019].

CFMEU

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Premier. I table two photos of the Minister for Women and Minister for Child Safety showing her at a CFMEU event thanking CFMEU thugs for their role in getting her elected. Is this why she has been deafly silent and has not condemned the CFMEU's threat to rape children?

Tabled paper: Screenshot of CFMEU Construction & General QLD/NT social media page, dated 6 February 2015, including a photo of the member for Waterford, Hon. Shannon Fentiman [2020].

Tabled paper: Screenshot of RiSE Qld, dated 7 December 2016, including photo of the member for Waterford, Hon. Shannon Fentiman, with CFMEU members [2021].

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is an imputation in the question that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has asked. Her reference to 'thugs' is something that could easily be rephrased to allow it to be a question that can be answered.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I have already commented on the need for silence while I am taking advice and considering issues. I will allow the question. I will allow the Premier latitude to answer the question as she chooses.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for asking the question. The Minister for Women has advised me that she attended that function in December last year. It was a meeting organised to help prevent domestic and family violence, and that is her role as the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you have not stopped all morning. You are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action. I can hear you very loudly and clearly, and I am certain other members can. If members on the other side take a similar approach, I will warn them as well.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Having answered that part of the question, I would now like to address the issue of the cuts we saw to sexual violence across the state under Tim Nicholls—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Premier has not answered the question. The question was why she has not condemned the minister for not saying anything in condemnation of the CFMEU—

Ms PALASZCZUK: It was a charity fundraiser.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The question was not why she was at the fundraiser with the CFMEU; it was why the minister has not condemned the actions of the CFMEU relating to raping children.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are both warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition's point of order fails to recognise the direction and guidance you gave which highlighted that the Premier had significant latitude in answering the question. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should have noticed and heard that the Premier addressed elements of her question quite clearly in relation to the attendance of the minister at an event. She then went on to address other matters that relate to the issues that have been raised—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action. There is no point of order. Premier, do you have anything further to add in relation to the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, I do. Here is some leadership for you—no deals with One Nation. There is some leadership for you.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. I think the Premier has answered the question. We will hear more about this topic later, I imagine. We will move on.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have not finished, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Is it relevant?

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is about sexual violence. I think it is also very important to talk about the cuts that happened under the former LNP government. If we want to talk about outrage, where was the outrage when the Gold Coast Sexual Assault Support Service had a \$34,000 cut? What about when Wide Bay Sexual Assault Services had a \$29,000 cut? What about when funding was cut by \$33,000 in Logan and by \$69,000 on the Sunshine Coast, where we will be going on Monday? Why doesn't the Deputy Leader of the Opposition explain in this House why she was part of a government that cut those sexual assault services that actually help the victims of sexual assault? That is their legacy. That is their record. Do not come in here with your high morality when you have nothing to justify it at all when you—

Honourable members interjected.

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I think the shouting match will now stop. Member for Moggill, I do not think you have been warned before, but if you persist you will be warned. I think the Premier has answered the question. We will move on.

Far North Queensland, Jobs

Mr CRAWFORD: My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to the government's focus on job creation and in particular its efforts to generate jobs in regional communities. Will the Treasurer advise of recent initiatives in Far North Queensland to create jobs?

Mr PITT: It is a pleasure to get a question in this House today that is sensible. I thank the member for Barron River. I want to say how great it was to attend the Cairns Aviation Skills Centre open day with the member for Barron River last weekend. It was a great event. We were there to make a very good announcement for Far North Queensland. We were very pleased to announce that we will be supporting the \$4.5 million expansion by Hawker Pacific to their Cairns maintenance hangar. It will give it twice as much capacity and it will allow them to capture more heavy maintenance work which otherwise might have been lost to Asia or Europe.

This is a job-creating project that is going to see great outcomes. It is expected that there will be an additional 39 workers by September 2021 and that about 50 jobs will be created during construction. We are contributing nearly \$2.5 million under our Jobs and Regional Growth Fund, a fund that I worked very closely with the Minister for State Development on. This program is doing great things right around the state.

I go to the member's question. The Far North Queensland economy is kicking on. It is recovering and it is going from strength to strength. It was important to hold this event at the Cairns Aviation Skills Centre open day because it underlines the strength of the aviation sector already in Far North Queensland and all of the job opportunities that may come from that particular space and this kind of business. When it comes to keeping promises, on this side of the House we have kept our promise. The Premier has been very clear that this government's whole purpose is about job creation in this state. As we have seen, 115,400 net new jobs have been created. In Far North Queensland, we have seen the creation of more than 8,600 new jobs. The unemployment rate has come down statewide from 6.6 per cent, which is what we inherited from those opposite, to six per cent but in Far North Queensland it has been an even bigger story. We inherited an unemployment rate of 7.9 per cent from those opposite, and the most recent figures show that unemployment in the Cairns region is down to 5.8 per cent. As for the youth unemployment rate, it peaked at 28 per cent and it is now down to 14.6 per cent. It has nearly halved in nine months. A lot of that can be put down to Back to Work.

This latest announcement about the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund is great for Hawker Pacific—and I really appreciate the member's question—but this is not the first time we have seen a good outcome under this particular program. The member for Mackay would remember when we announced Bio Processing Australia, which is a project worth nearly \$50 million that is expected to create 70 construction jobs and about 49 ongoing high-skilled, high-tech jobs. That is the point. We are not just about creating any jobs; we are about making sure that kids in regional Queensland can go to university in regional Queensland after graduating from high school and get a high-tech, high-skilled job. That is what this government is about; it is about building the future. That is the sort of question we should get in the House, instead of the nonsense we are getting today from those opposite.

Member for Mirani

Ms DAVIS: My question without notice is to the Premier. Does the Premier agree with the statement by the member for Mirani recorded in *Hansard* last night that a threat to rape does not indicate an intent to rape?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do not agree with that and the member has clarified those comments for the benefit of the House. If those members had listened, they would have heard very clearly the member for Mirani rose in his place in this House on a matter of privilege suddenly arising and corrected the record.

Health, Infrastructure

Ms PEASE: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister please outline the Palaszczuk government's commitment to improving health infrastructure and the importance of health infrastructure to the delivery of front-line services? Are there any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: What a pleasure it was to be in the great bayside suburb of Wynnum on the weekend with the Premier and the member for Lytton to celebrate the opening of the new Wynnum-Manly Community Health Centre, Gundu Pa. What a great privilege it was for me as health minister to be there to see this terrific facility opened to benefit the people of the bayside. This facility was only built because of the great commitment by the Premier when she was the Leader of the Opposition and by the member for Lytton when she was the candidate for Lytton.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: Stop misleading the House, member for Southern Downs. The people of the bayside stood there when the former health minister—aided and supported completely by the Leader of the Opposition—razed the Wynnum nursing home to the ground completely, traumatising families on the bayside forever. Out of that great problem for that community came something very good and special because that is Labor's commitment to infrastructure in health care.

Let us look at what they have delivered on the other side. I was in Hervey Bay to look at the new \$44 million expansion to the emergency department and I drove down the road and what did I see? A billboard from the member for billboards—sorry, the member for Hervey Bay—claiming credit for a project into which his government committed absolutely not one red cent. What did I see delivered to the letterboxes in the electorate of Warrego from the member for Warrego? It was a leaflet which states—

I'm proud to have delivered some great achievements for the Warrego Electorate including initiating the \$70 million redevelopment of the Roma Hospital—

Do these people have no shame? There was not one red cent from the member for Warrego. I table that leaflet.

Tabled paper: Brochure of the member for Warrego, Ms Ann Leahy MP [2022].

The only thing the LNP have ever delivered to the people of Queensland is a leaflet and a billboard. They have never delivered health infrastructure. The Premier was out in Kingaroy recently building a new hospital for the people of Kingaroy. How did the LNP say they would build it? The only way they would build a hospital is by selling Stanwell Power Station. That is what the new candidate for Broadwater said. Thanks, member for Broadwater; we will not have any more of you in the House. They have knocked you over—a talented woman gone for good, replaced by a bloke.

That is all they deliver. They deliver leaflets, they deliver billboards, but they cannot deliver the hard infrastructure that health care needs for Queensland. That is the choice now. The choice is between a Leader of the Opposition who will do anything to try to obtain power and a leader, our Premier, who delivers for Queensland. The choice is between a government of achievement and delivery and an opposition that spends its time crawling in the basement to strike a deal in some desperate attempt to gain power.

CFMEU

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Minister for Child Safety. As the minister responsible for the protection of Queensland children, will the minister now condemn the CFMEU for their vile threats to rape children?

Ms FENTIMAN: Like the Premier said yesterday, these comments are appalling. They are absolutely unacceptable—

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Indooroopilly, you are warned under standing order 253A. You have had a pretty good go all morning. I will take the appropriate action if you continue.

Ms FENTIMAN: They are appalling, they are absolutely unacceptable and they are under police investigation, which is absolutely the appropriate course of action. I have to say that what we have seen here today is also appalling. The LNP opposition when in power, when the member for Clayfield was the treasurer, ripped money out of sexual assault services and ripped money out of domestic violence shelters.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Thank you, I can hear you, members.

Ms FENTIMAN: Where was the outrage when the member for Clayfield delivered a budget that ripped funding from every shelter in this state from the Torres Strait to the Gold Coast?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mrs Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, I can hear you, member for Mount Ommaney. You are now warned under standing order 253A. If you continue I will take the appropriate action.

A government member: Blackface.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take that interjection. They will not condemn cuts that they made to domestic violence shelters and sexual assault services and they will not condemn their own candidate for Redcliffe for posting a photo of a man in blackface on social media.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Glass House, I find you are trying to talk over the top of the minister when she is answering the question. Her answer is relevant. You are warned under 253A. If you persist I will take the appropriate action.

Ms FENTIMAN: Of course we saw last night a completely divided LNP, but we know the one thing they are united on. They are united on cuts—

Ms BATES: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Ms BATES: It is on relevance. The question clearly asks the minister to condemn the CFMEU for their vile threats to rape children. The minister is not being relevant to the question and I ask you, Mr Speaker, to bring her back to the substance of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: I thought she had answered that question. Minister, do you have anything further that you wish to add that is relevant to the question?

Ms FENTIMAN: I do, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, last night we saw a deeply divided LNP.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I think you have answered the question adequately. We might move on.

Schools, Class Sizes

Ms LINARD: My question is of the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's efforts to reduce class sizes in Queensland state schools?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for Nudgee for her question. Recently I had the great privilege to go into her electorate and meet with many of the P&C and P&F representatives and principals from her community who are working very hard. We made a very strong election commitment that we would have more teachers in classrooms across Queensland. That is why I am proud of the Palaszczuk government which has delivered on our election commitment of providing 875 teachers above growth. We know that at the moment state schooling in particular is growing at twice the rate of independent and Catholic schools in Queensland and they need those additional teachers.

We also had to address the cuts to teacher positions in schools in Queensland that the then treasurer, the now Leader of the Opposition, made. He did this in a number of ways. Under the LNP government we actually saw increases in class sizes each and every single year that they were in office. In actual fact, 14,000 classes—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I am interested in what the minister is saying. If you do not want to hear it, please leave the chamber.

Ms JONES: In actual fact, we saw 14,000 classes over class size targets under the LNP. That is because they oversaw a reduction in 500 teaching positions. How did they do this? This happened because the LNP government cut the allocation of teachers to Queensland schools. They removed the primary rounding benefit, cutting 186 full-time-equivalent teachers from classrooms. The LNP cut key teacher allocations in primary schools—another 117 full-time equivalents gone. They also cut secondary resource teachers, 202—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Minister. Members of the government, this is an important matter to me and I think some other members of the chamber, so I would urge you to be silent so the minister can answer the question that has been asked.

Ms JONES: Finally, the then LNP government cut secondary resource teachers from high schools; 202 full-time-equivalent jobs were cut from those schools. They also adjusted the secondary rounding, costing another 10 full-time-equivalent teachers. I have outlined this to the House during the estimates process at every single estimates hearing for the past three years. I have highlighted that when we add these together a total of 515 full-time-equivalent teacher positions were cut from Queensland schools under the former government. Honourable members do not have to take my word for it. At the time the Queensland Association of State School Principals said—

We are very aware of the concerns regarding the changes as part of the whole-of-government budget cuts to our staffing planner. The removal of the rounding benefits will mean that schools will have to make some challenging decisions around the number of classes that are formed and the use of any remaining FTEs.

At the time principals raised concerns, the unions raised concerns, parents raised concerns and the LNP chose to ignore the concerns of our principals in our classrooms.

I want to finish on this note. This morning members opposite want to talk about everything apart from Gympie. The people of Queensland have woken to a deeply divided LNP that are willing to get in bed with One Nation and wind back gun laws in this state. They want to talk about anything but Gympie.

(Time expired)

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I know everyone is primed.

Industrial Relations, Unions

Mr EMERSON: My question is to the Premier. I table a court document sworn by an ETU organiser in which he testifies that campaigning for the Labor Party's re-election in the upcoming state election is more important than getting wage increases for their members and workers.

Tabled paper: Copy of Affidavit of Mr Brenton Muller (Queensland Industrial Relations Commission Form 20) in the matter of the Electrical Trades Union of Employees Queensland and Others vs Brisbane City Council [\[2023\]](#).

I ask the Premier: does this not show that under the Palaszczuk government's union friendly industrial system the unions have lost their way? The union bosses really do not care about workers; their grubby organisations really only care about flexing union muscle via the Labor Party.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. There are clearly imputations contained within the question that the member for Indooroopilly has asked. He can easily rephrase that question without the imputations and provide an opportunity for the Premier to answer the question. I would encourage you, Mr Speaker, to give him that guidance.

A government member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. You will get the call.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. Frivolous points of order are an offence against the standing orders of this House. The Leader of the House is taking a frivolous point of order, claiming there are imputations in every question without telling the House what those imputations are. It is a clear strategy to destroy question time and to provide ministers with an opportunity to avoid questions. I would suggest the Leader of the House needs to be warned that if this behaviour continues he should be asked to leave the House.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. I did not want to give regard or honour to the imputations that were contained in the member for Indooroopilly's question by repeating them, but phrases such as 'grubby' are clearly an imputation on the material contained within the question. As I said, they could easily be rephrased in order to make sure that the question does not stand outside standing orders.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Callide. Just be quiet for a moment.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, you have warned the member for Callide and he has interjected again while you have asked for quiet in reflecting upon points of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. I know. I do not need your assistance. It is fine. In my view the question is whether the term 'grubby' is parliamentary or not. I find there was no imputation against the member. There may have been an imputation against someone else. If members want to use the term 'grubby' I think that is inappropriate, but the question has been asked. I will allow it. The Premier has latitude to answer the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Indooroopilly for the question. This seems to be from the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. I think it is about an enterprise bargaining agreement that he signed an affidavit in relation to. I would have to look at it in more detail to see exactly what the member for Indooroopilly was specifically talking about.

In relation to the ETU, they fundamentally stand up for workers' rights, as I would expect them to in their role. I do know what else the ETU did during the last campaign: they stood up for not having their assets sold in this state. If we want to talk about the past, there is no clearer evidence that the member for Indooroopilly was part of a cabinet that sat around the table and talked very clearly about selling off our state's power assets. On this side of the House when we were in opposition we stood up to them and we said we would not sell our assets. If they had proceeded—

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: They asked about the ETU, Mr Speaker, and they called them grubby.

Ms Trad: A nasty name.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They were being very nasty.

Mr SPEAKER: I think we will move on.

Domestic and Family Violence

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Will the minister please update the House about the Palaszczuk government's efforts to combat domestic and family violence and whether there are other law reforms that could undermine the progress that is being made?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question and for her advocacy in combating domestic and family violence in her seat of Bulimba. Among our many reforms to tackle domestic and family violence we have increased penalties for breaches of domestic violence orders and, importantly, empowered police to issue police protection notices on the spot to protect women and children. As part of that we are also taking strong action to protect women and children from firearms, because while empowering police to issue police protection notices on the spot we also amended the Weapons Act to take firearms out of the hands of perpetrators. Anyone who thinks this is not a problem is kidding themselves, because the numbers are stark.

Over the past few years 1,246 weapons licences have been revoked due to domestic and family violence. More than 350 new applications or renewals were rejected due to domestic and family violence. Our new laws are working to keep women and children safe, but last night we were reminded of how that could be under threat, because in a debate around important legislation to keep our communities safe we saw a deeply divided LNP and we saw how scared they are.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. The minister has the call.

Ms FENTIMAN: We saw how scared they are of One Nation. We saw a complete failure of leadership by the member for Clayfield, whose own deputy whip could not be convinced to vote for this important reform to keep our communities safe. We saw the member for Gympie—now sitting up the back—cross the floor. We saw LNP member after LNP member try and talk him out of it. They were lined up to talk the member for Gympie out of it, but the member for Clayfield was not there. He was again missing in action on a very important national debate. We have already seen the member for Buderim defect; we have now seen the member for Gympie cross the floor. Who is next? We have seen a complete failure of leadership from the member for Clayfield. They all failed to convince the member for Gympie not to cross the floor. We have seen John Howard write to voters in New South Wales about the dangers of voting for extreme parties on gun laws. John Howard needs to write to Queenslanders about the dangers of a divided LNP and One Nation coalition.

Mr SPEAKER: I am informed that we have another group of students from the Coolabunia State School in the electorate of Nanango observing our proceedings. Welcome!

Youth Bail Houses

Mr WALKER: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. I refer to media reports on 27 August that Deputy Premier Jackie Trad scuttled the proposed youth bail house at Cornwall Street in her electorate, and I ask: Attorney, were any of the three Labor members in Townsville consulted—and I mean consulted—about the two youth bail houses proposed for the Townsville community before the announcement on 15 September and did they also stand up for their local communities like the Deputy Premier?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I wondered when we were going to get back to the youth justice scare campaign. It has been a little while, so here we are again. To answer the question very succinctly: yes, the members for the Townsville region were consulted in relation to this policy. Yes, they stand up for their communities because they want to make their communities safer. Do you know how you make communities safer? Stop young people from reoffending. Do you know how you do that? The evidence points to early intervention. The evidence also shows that the LNP's policy is a complete failure. The Childrens Court itself said they contributed to some of the increases. There was \$16 million wasted on boot camps with no reduction in reoffending. Everything they did is not based on evidence. In fact, the experts will tell you that not only do they not work but they can cause more damage.

The bottom line is that everyone claims they want to make our communities safer and reduce youth crime, but only one party has policies based on evidence that will do that, and that is the Labor Party and the Palaszczuk government. It is this government that has consulted widely with stakeholders about what works. What are the strategies that we need? Early intervention. I want to acknowledge the great work of the Minister for Education, because over 4,000 kids last year re-engaged in schooling. That is how you stop kids from turning to crime. Get them early when they are disengaging in school and get them back in there. If they end up in the youth justice system, have a look at why they are there in the first place. Have a look at the number that identify with mental health issues, who have been sexually assaulted, who have been assaulted and neglected or who have abuse and substance issues and make sure that you provide supports around that.

Make sure that you are working with families to tackle generational unemployment, generational incarceration and the significant number of Indigenous people in our justice system. If you are not willing to talk about these issues and if you are not willing to put programs and supports in place to address them, you are not going to reduce crime in this state. If all you are going to do is create new offences and lock more kids up, guess what? They come out. Then what? They reoffend again. It is a revolving door. We came into government with an exploding population in our adult prison systems because those opposite have no strategy when it comes to the criminal justice system and reducing crime. It is only the Labor government that wants to make our communities safer with good evidence based policy.

Mr SPEAKER: I am informed that we have students from the Forest Lake State High School in the electorate of Algeester observing our proceedings in the gallery. Welcome!

Buy Queensland

Mr BROWN: My question is of the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Sport. Will the minister please update the House on the commencement of the Buy Queensland policy and the impact that repealing the policy would have on jobs and local communities?

Mr de BRENNI: I appreciate the question that has been asked by the member for Capalaba. I know that he appreciates that this opposition will go to any lengths to hide the fact that they have no commitment to Queensland jobs. We on this side of the House all remember the 14,000 public servants they sacked. We saw unemployment across the economy soar under the leadership of the member for Clayfield and Campbell Newman. Now we see a pathetic approach to procurement that has been slammed by the Auditor-General.

Over the course of this week we have seen a consistent pattern of misleading conduct by the opposition in this House. During question time yesterday the member for Burnett asked a question of the Premier of Queensland about a tender for fencing in Central Queensland. The member said—

I table documents showing that after the start of the government's hyped procurement policy, Minister de Brenni awarded a ... fencing contract and 12 jobs to a Tamworth company ...

I do accept the fact that the Buy Queensland procurement policy is much hyped. So far, 2,151 Queensland businesses have attended information sessions across the state. Queensland businesses are clearly loving this Buy Queensland policy and so is the Queensland public. The LNP and the

member for Burnett are again playing it fast and loose. There is little attention to the truth and the facts. This misleading approach is the hallmark of the Nicholls opposition. It has been the hallmark of the member for Burnett.

The member for Burnett knows that the tender was advertised in April and awarded in August. Buy Queensland came into effect on 1 September. If the member for Burnett needs help with the calendar, I will help him out later. The member knew this because the tender document he tabled is clearly marked. He tabled it for the benefit of the House to demonstrate his misleading conduct, as it is dated 8 June. This means that this tender was completed under the LNP's policy—their absolute shambles of a procurement policy, which we made a clear decision to dump for precisely those sorts of outcomes. It is their flawed 'lowest price at any cost' policy that was criticised by the Auditor-General. Under them it was lowest price at any cost. Their published policies demonstrate this.

The most concerning thing for Queenslanders in relation to the \$18 billion stewardship of procurement in Queensland is that the LNP have put out a two-page document. That is all they could come up with over a weekend. That is what they think of Queensland businesses and Queensland jobs—a two-page policy that says that lowest price is only the beginning under a Nicholls government.

Torres Strait Islanders, Child Adoption

Mr GORDON: My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Could the minister outline for the benefit of the House the government's commitment and progress towards the legalisation of the ancient traditional custom in the Torres Strait of island adoption?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Cook for this question. Child giving, kupai omasker, is a traditional practice of Torres Strait Islander peoples. In my role as the ministerial champion for the Torres Strait I have been privileged to meet with aunties in the Torres Strait, on Thursday Island, about this practice. Labor has had a policy of working with the community towards legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander child giving. I am continuing those discussions with community leaders. I will continue to work with the working party that has a range of stakeholders on it, including the member for Cook and the former chief justice of the Family Court, Alistair Nicholson, to ensure we have the very best model moving forward. We will continue to work with the community to ensure we legalise, in the best possible model, this practice and we will continue those discussions.

Kingaroy and Nanango, Courthouse

Mr MADDEN: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills. Will the minister update the House on the progress of the upgrades to the Kingaroy and Nanango courthouse?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I know that he is very interested in the investment we are making in the justice system and in our courthouses. I am very pleased with the investment we are making in courthouses in regional Queensland. Recently the Premier and I, along with the Minister for State Development, went out to the electorate of Nanango, to Kingaroy. I was really pleased to inspect the works being undertaken on the new courthouse out there. It will be completed very soon.

These facilities will be of huge benefit to the whole region, both Nanango and Kingaroy. They include the construction of a compliant ramp and lift to assist people with disabilities; refurbishment of the existing courtroom and construction of a second courtroom to meet operational service demand for both District and Magistrates courts; a new conference room, holding cells and meeting rooms; connection with the police station next door; a solicitor-client secure interview room; videoconferencing facilities; secure access into court for the judiciary and vulnerable witnesses; upgrades to the jury assembly and deliberation rooms; importantly, vulnerable witness and Protect All Children Today rooms and toilets; and secure detainee access direct from the watch house into the secure dock. These are wonderful new facilities for this courthouse.

The member for Nanango has been out praising the work that is going on in this courthouse, claiming that the LNP funded it. I am sure that she will be honest enough to go out and advise the people that in fact those opposite funded less than half of what is now being invested in this courthouse. The Palaszczuk government is investing \$5.3 million in this courthouse. The LNP committed \$2.15 million, which would have seen just an upgrade of the existing courtroom. It would not have added a whole extra courtroom, which will be critical for the District and Magistrates courts that are circuiting through there.

The Palaszczuk government is investing in our regional courthouses like in Beenleigh, Southport, Townsville and Rockhampton. This government is investing to provide specialist DV services and facilities to match that in those courthouses. We are also providing local jobs. I thank the Minister for Housing and Public Works in relation to his work on our procurement policy. Unlike those opposite, who want Queenslanders to have to match the lowest bid—cheapest work—it is the Labor government that will ensure local jobs, local contracts and local work.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

LEAVE TO GIVE NOTICE OF A MOTION



Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.37 am): I seek leave to give notice of a motion.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 5:

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Dickson.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

NOES, 77:

ALP, 39—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

LNP, 38—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Cramp, Cripps, Davis, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Walker, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Byrne, Costigan; Enoch, Stuckey; Lauga, Crandon.

Resolved in the negative.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Mr SPEAKER: I am pleased to inform members that we have more students from the Nanango electorate from the school in Kumbia. Welcome.

PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 7 September (see p. 2812), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Public Works and Utilities Committee report No. 40 titled *Auditor-General report to parliament 7: 2016-17—Water: 2015-16 results of financial audits*, tabled 31 May 2017.



Mr WHITING (Murrumba—ALP) (11.44 am): It gives me great pleasure to resume the debate on the noting of this report. I spent 12 years as a councillor and we spent many years on the issue of water and wastewater. It is very clear from this report that the Auditor-General has said that the management of these water entities is financially sound, that the sector is financially sound. A pertinent point that we need to note is that the payments made as dividends to the people of Queensland through the government were made in cash with no extra borrowings—that is, we were able to fund those payments through those water entities without extra borrowings. That is a great outcome. These entities are working hard for the people of Queensland to ensure that these government corporations—these government businesses that we still own—are able to deliver money to the people of Queensland to fund those essential services. I note that the report says that the debt and equity ratios remain unchanged, and that is a very important point. For those people who are familiar with financial statements, those ratios are the ones that people look very closely at. It is very pleasing to see that their debt and equity ratios remain unchanged, once again indicating a robust and sound financial position for these government organisations.

One of the interesting things we discovered from this report relates to the price path debt through Seqwater. It found that once again Seqwater has that strong, robust sustainability. The points made on the price path debt are particularly interesting. It shows that over that 10 years we have the price path happening and we are helping the water businesses transition so that they can recoup the full cost it takes to deliver water and take wastewater away. That is a very important point and that debt has been used in this case to ease that pathway for consumers. I believe this is a very good thing. From my time in council I know that water and sewerage businesses are very expensive. It is a very expensive process when you start digging up the ground, putting new things in and replacing assets. Those assets need to be continually renewed all of the time. You just cannot put them in the ground and leave them there. You have to make sure that they do not leak and that they are not clogging up. If they are made of an old material, they have to be replaced. We need to have a plan to completely renew those assets over time, and that is a public safety issue as well, and it is an expensive process. This report points out that the price pathway we have to cover these things is sustainable and it is not putting an undue burden on consumers. Rather, it smooths that out over 10 years.

Another issue that I want to point out while talking about these assets—and this report intimates or addresses the issue—is that we have to future proof our water and sewerage assets. Where are we going to be in 10, 20 or 50 years time—a time when the climate has changed, a time when it may well be drier, a time when we do see big storm events or the return of drought? It is very important that we remember that as we think about these water assets. Through action by the government we are drought proofing our system and our water grid. We are making sure that it is robust enough to cope with those weather shocks that we will see in the future. The water desal plant has been talked about and I want to reiterate that this plant is already working for Queenslanders. It delivered water during the flood events that we have had in recent times. It is good to know that we have a lovely asset which only takes a couple of days to fire up to 100 per cent capacity. It can reach 33 per cent capacity in 24 hours. This asset is already delivering water into the water grid now, and in the last report I heard it was about nine megalitres a week. It fires up two days a week and that asset is putting water into the water grid. I commend the report to the House.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (11.50 am): I move—

That the House take note of report No. 35 of the Agriculture and Environment Committee titled *Barrier fences in Queensland* tabled on June 2017.

This report presents the findings of a review that the committee undertook as part of its powers under section 94 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. I would like to thank those who lodged written submissions and those who took the time to share their views with the committee at its public meetings. I also thank the organisations and landholders who kindly accommodated the committee on its site visits. The committee benefited greatly from witnessing firsthand the issues that landholders are facing and the efforts that are undertaken on a daily basis to keep barrier fences across Queensland in working order.

To that end, I also thank the previous chair of the committee, the member for Stretton. He took me through a visit that he undertook with some of the public servants from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. The member for Stretton was particularly thankful for the time taken by Kevin Strong, Paul Gray, Zane McDonald and Chris Bohun, who took him along—

Mr Pegg: They did a fantastic job.

Mr KELLY: I take that interjection. Yes, they did a fantastic job and they greatly increased our understanding. I became a member of the committee fairly close to the end of its inquiry, but I found it a very interesting process to be involved in. When the committee was visiting Western Queensland on other inquiries, I saw firsthand how much of a difference this fence is making. That really brought to my mind one of the great strengths of the Palaszczuk Labor government, which is that it is a government that listens and puts in place sensible policies. That was also brought home to me as I was walking around in Barcaldine with a local landholder, who was singing the praises of the strategies that we had put in place in relation to fencing. That is also borne out by this committee report.

Certainly, when I am doorknocking in my own electorate I am constantly told and reminded that people much prefer the sensible, steady, good governance that we have been providing as opposed to the absolute chaos that we saw under the previous government. I can only imagine what the chaos would be if we had the LNP and One Nation in power. No doubt, the electors of Queensland will reject that proposal thoroughly, as they did the last time.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr KELLY: No doubt, that is why the member is not standing at the next election. The construction and maintenance of barrier fences has been a key strategy for managing invasive pest species in Queensland since the 1880s. Today, the Queensland government maintains two substantial barrier fences: the wild dog barrier fence and the Darling Downs-Moreton rabbit fence.

Mr Rickuss: The government doesn't; the councils do.

Mr KELLY: Member for Lockyer, you should read the report.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member for Greenslopes and member for Lockyer, please direct all your comments through the chair.

Mr KELLY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate your guidance. The wild dog barrier fence extends for 2,560 kilometres. It is a critical piece of infrastructure that protects the sheep-grazing areas of South and South-West Queensland. The Darling Downs-Moreton rabbit fence extends for 555 kilometres. It is designed to prevent the spread of rabbits from southern and western areas into the protected areas of the Darling Downs, the Lockyer Valley and South-East Queensland. There are also local government administered check fences and privately owned cluster fences, which were also examined by the committee.


The committee looked into the effectiveness of the fences at protecting stock and crops from wild dogs, rabbits and other introduced species. Although there were some concerns about the success of the fences—for example, wild dogs are known to exist within the fenced area—overall, the committee was satisfied that the fences are a critical component of Queensland's pest management program.

The fences require continual patrolling and maintenance to check and repair any damage to them caused by wind, water, fire, animals and other factors. That patrolling and maintenance bring associated costs. At the conclusion of the inquiry the committee was satisfied that both of the barrier fences represented good value for money. These fences are protecting our valuable farming communities and they should be actively maintained as part of Queensland's control strategy for wild dogs and rabbits.

The committee also investigated the management of the fences overseen by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board. A number of stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction with the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board, particularly with regard to precept payments that some local governments are required to pay to go towards the cost of maintaining the fence. The committee believes that the efforts of the Darling Downs-Moreton Bay Rabbit Board are worthy of appreciation. The board has been successful in maintaining the rabbit fence under very difficult circumstances. However, it seems that the board has focused on the maintenance of the fence at the expense of its pest control function. Therefore, the committee recommended that the management structure of the board be reviewed to ensure that it has the capacity—

(Time expired)

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Condamine, I would like to welcome to the gallery leaders from Burleigh Heads State School from the electorate of Burleigh.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (11.56 am): At the outset of my address, I would like to thank the committee secretariat. As a member of the Agriculture and Environment Committee, I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the committee's report No. 35, titled *Barrier fences in Queensland*. The inquiry was initiated by the committee on 28 October 2015 to examine the effectiveness and cost of maintaining both the rabbit and dingo barrier fences.

The construction of the rabbit barrier fence began in 1886 and was completed in 1906. The rabbit barrier fence has operated under the oversight of the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board since 1964 and is funded by eight councils: the Western Downs Regional Council, the Gold Coast City Council, the Ipswich City Council, the Lockyer Valley Regional Council, the Scenic Rim Regional Council, the Southern Downs Regional Council and the Toowoomba Regional Council. Although there have been—and continue to be—some outbreaks of rabbits from the clean side of the fence from time to time, the

overwhelming view of the councils involved in the operation of the rabbit fence is that it serves an invaluable service. Estimates put the ratio of rabbits between the clean and dirty side to be about 15 to one.

Over the years, the role of the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board has been the subject of much debate and was again during this inquiry. This discussion revolves mainly around the funding model. Although some of the councils regard the funds via precepts as money well spent, other councils would like to be removed from the funding model, stating that they are paying to protect areas that are not contributing financially.


The committee recommended that the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board be reviewed, with particular emphasis on the funding model. It must be emphasised that these precepts are paying for the protection of the rest of the state. The Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board is struggling with a lack of funds. I think the state should consider how they can contribute to that protection.

The construction of the dingo barrier fence commenced in 1948 by landholders using materials supplied by the government under the supervision of government inspectors. The landholders were then responsible for the maintenance of the fence. Over time, that led to some sections of the barrier fence falling into disrepair. In 1974, it was estimated that it would cost \$915,000 to return the fence to a dog-proof condition. In 1982, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries reduced and realigned the fence to a distance of 2,500 kilometres and has maintained it through precepts from the nine councils that are receiving the benefit of this fence: Balonne, Barcoo, Roma, Blackall, Bulloo, Dalby, Murweh, Paroo and Quilpie. Some groups such as the Condamine Alliance questioned the effectiveness of the fence as wild dogs now exist on both sides of the barrier fence.

There are a number of reasons for this, such as the decline in the sheep industry, properties employing fewer staff, fewer landowners and staff having ready access to firearms and a reluctance of some landowners to use 10/80 baits. Despite the existence of wild dogs on both sides of the fence, there is overwhelming evidence that there are far more dogs on the dirty side than on the clean side and strong support for continued funding of the dingo barrier fence.

The reconstruction costs of the dingo barrier fence is an area that should be the subject of some scrutiny. According to figures supplied by the department, the cost is in the vicinity of \$23,500 per kilometre. That is an astounding figure. When one considers that the average cost to construct a cluster fence is about \$8,000 per kilometre this would seem to be a massive price difference. Whilst there are differences in the structure of cluster fences compared to barrier fences, that price difference does require some explanation.

I would like to thank other members of the committee and research staff for their input in presenting this report and I commend the report to the House.


 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (12.00 pm): Before I speak to report No. 35 of the 55th Parliament I would like to thank my fellow committee members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee. I would also like to thank the committee staff: Rob Hansen, committee secretary; Scarlett Stephan, assistant committee secretary; and Alana Darling, committee support officer. I would also like to thank the submitters and those groups and individuals with whom the committee met.

On 28 October 2015, the Agriculture and Environment Committee resolved to hold an inquiry into barrier fences in Queensland in accordance with its public works powers under section 94 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. On 21 January 2015 the committee tabled report No. 35 titled *Barrier fences in Queensland* and in the report the committee made six recommendations: firstly, that the wild dog barrier fence and the rabbit fence continue to be actively maintained as major components of Queensland's control strategies over wild dogs and rabbits; that the organisation responsible for the rabbit fence develop a strategy for statewide control of rabbit populations, with an approach similar to the Wild Dog Management Strategy 2011-16; that the government review the management structure of the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board and its capacity to meet the objectives of the organisation; that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries consider the merits and a cost-benefit analysis of the proposal to extend the wild dog barrier fence northwards from the Windorah area to within the area of the Longreach Regional Council; that the Queensland government maintain the Feral Pest Initiative committee, including its capacity to consider how cluster fencing fits into the broader dog management scheme and whether there is any merit in repositioning or extending the barrier fencing; and finally, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries include the New South Wales Border Fence Maintenance Board in any future consultation regarding the wild dog control strategy and barrier fence construction.

Barrier fences began as a response to the rapid northward spread of wild rabbits following their introduction into Victoria in 1859. The first state level response to the issue, the Rabbit Nuisance Act 1880, established a tender process for construction of a rabbit proof fence. As wild dogs became a problem, parts of the rabbit fence were top netted to exclude wild dogs. The current wild dog fence that was purpose built to include wild dogs stems from a proposal in 1948 to establish a barrier fence in order to protect actual and potential sheep-producing regions. The fence was subsequently built by landholders using government supplied materials under the direction and supervision of government inspectors. It now runs from north of Dalby northwards, then west to Windorah and then south to the New South Wales border at Bulloo. Since the realignment in 1982, the wild dog fence has been maintained by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and its predecessors while the rabbit fences are maintained by the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board based at Warwick.

The recommendations by the committee were supported in principle by the government. In the government's response concerning recommendation 1 it notes that work continues on the wild dog barrier fence and the rabbit fence on an ongoing basis. The Queensland government will maintain the Feral Pest Initiative committee, including its capacity to consider how cluster fencing fits into the broader dog management scheme and whether there is any merit in repositioning or extending the barrier fence. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is currently in the process of organising an external audit as part of a review of the Wild Dog Management Strategy. The department will consider the appropriateness of including additional items in the terms of reference for the external audit to allow consideration of cluster fencing and the repositioning or extending of barrier fencing as part of the audit.

In closing, I would like to once again thank my fellow committee members, committee support staff, the submitters and those kind people who accommodated us. I commend report No. 35 of the 55th Parliament, *Barrier fences for Queensland*, to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.05 pm): In Western Queensland the wild dog barrier fence has for a long time been one of the most important pieces of infrastructure. As the member for Gregory it is very much a part of the electorate that I represent and also a part of the electorate that the member for Warrego represents. It has played a significant role in making sure that we protect our pastures but also protect our livestock and certainly our wool industry from the scourge of wild dogs. For a very long time wild dogs have been a massive problem in Western Queensland. We are seeing a return to the sheep industry. To be a part of that industry we need to maintain important pieces of infrastructure such as the wild dog barrier fence.


The wild dog barrier fence plays a significant economic role in our region, but we have to make sure that we maintain it. This is an important piece of infrastructure that was constructed back in 1948 and has played a significant role. We have to remember that Western Queensland, Mitchell grass country, gidgee, pebbly country, the region that I represent, is wool and sheep industry country. We all know that the wool industry, when it gets going, plays a significant role. It provides jobs and is an economic contributor to towns such as Longreach, Ilfracombe, Isisford, Blackall, Tambo, down to Stonehenge and Jundah and through to the member for Warrego's area.

Prior to 1989 when the federal Labor government took away the floor price, the wool industry was a powerhouse. When that floor price went, the wool industry spiralled down very rapidly and we saw prices for wool at 400 cents a kilogram clean. The good news is that we now have wool prices at 1400 cents a kilogram clean. Wool is being used in wider clothing items. We are starting to see it in sportswear, not just in Italian suits and jumpers. It is moving into a more cross-section of the clothing industry, which is spurring it along. There is a huge appetite overseas for the wool that we produce here in Queensland. We used to have close to 20 million sheep in Queensland with nearly nine million in the central west. Places like Longreach and the central west were renowned for their wool industry. Since the floor price was taken away in 1989 and the drop in prices in the early 1990s down to 400 cents a kilogram clean, we have seen sheep numbers dwindle to the point where right now we only have a million sheep in Queensland. Over the last couple of years we have seen an increase of around 250,000 sheep. A lot of those sheep have gone back to the central west. I see wool producers on a daily basis. Despite the drought there is optimism in their eyes.

We have to continue to maintain the wild dog barrier fence properly. I see in the report that it is costing Queensland taxpayers \$23,500 a kilometre to fix the wild dog barrier fence, whereas people are putting up cluster fencing for \$4,500 a kilometre. I have some concern about that and would like to see more detail in relation to it. We have to make sure that we spend our money wisely. The more money we spend and the more wisely we spend it, the longer we will be able to maintain the wild dog barrier fence. As the member for Greenslopes mentioned, cluster fencing is important. I remind the

House that cluster fencing started under the former LNP minister for natural resources, Andrew Cripps, who was passionate about making sure that we had alternatives so as to increase the wool industry in Western Queensland. I congratulate Andrew Cripps for starting that great initiative.

Cluster fencing has been fantastic. It has increased optimism in Western Queensland. We need to continue constructing and maintaining cluster fencing. We also need to look at ensuring that the cluster fences line up with the wild dog barrier fence. We have to connect all of the cluster fences and include the wild dog barrier fence. I can assure the House that if the wool industry returns to Western Queensland, sheep numbers will go up and the shearers, the crutchers and others will return, as well. We have to support the wild dog barrier fence.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (12.10 pm): I am delighted to speak on the *Barrier fences in Queensland* report prepared by the Agriculture and Environment Committee. The committee looked at the cost of maintaining the existing barrier fences; the effectiveness of the barrier fences at protecting stock and crops from attacks by wild dogs, rabbits and other introduced species; the unintended impacts on native species; the recent upgrades to sections of the wild dog fence by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; and whether the barrier fences should be expanded to other areas of the state to protect stock. I thank the committee for its recommendations, which are sensible and canvass relevant issues.


I am very pleased to say that the committee travelled to Western Queensland. They visited places in my electorate such as Cunnamulla and places in the electorate of the member for Gregory such as Tambo. I was able to join committee members for inspections of cluster fences in the Cunnamulla region. Members of the Paroo shire took us out to a property about which I will speak a little later. We also visited the dingo barrier fence near Tambo. Unfortunately, the member for Gregory was not with us that morning, but he joined us that night for a lengthy community discussion about cluster fencing and the dingo barrier fence. The member for Burnett will probably remember that trip quite well, because we experienced 45 degree heat at the Cunnamulla airport. Yes, it was very hot on that day.

I thank the Paroo shire and, in particular, I sincerely thank Jim and Trish McKenzie and their family. Jim and Trish own the property that we visited, Gamarren. I know of the difficulties that they have been going through with drought, wild dogs and low commodity prices. I know of the stress that those things have caused the family. It was great to see them. I think it was probably the first time that a committee has visited that particular property at Cunnamulla. It might even be one of the first times that a whole committee has visited that community. It is good to see that Jim and Trish are continuing in the wool industry. The cluster fences have given them confidence to go forward in their business and enabled them to succession plan for their family. Cluster fencing will certainly help that family continue to manage their property well into the future and it will help them get back into the wool industry. In that part of the world, they are very concerned about the impacts of wild dogs and other plague animals and species.

There is no doubt that the dingo barrier fence is ageing. I can remember as a child I spent time building some parts of the spur fences to the dingo barrier fence. Certainly that fence is ageing. Fences do not last forever in the conditions that we have. The government needs to recognise the value of the dingo barrier fence and the protection that it provides not just to livestock and local communities; it increases the capacity of agriculture to contribute to the wealth of the state. It was beneficial for committee members to talk firsthand to landholders about the differences between cluster fences and the dingo barrier fence. Usually it is only once people see the difference that they understand the different functions and roles that they play in communities.

I make particular note of the recommendations in the committee report, particularly recommendation No. 6 to include the New South Wales Border Fence Maintenance Board in any future consultation regarding a wild dog control strategy and barrier fence construction, which is particularly important. We have an existing fence that is well maintained. Given that a significant portion of the border fence is in my electorate between New South Wales and South Australia, that recommendation is particularly important. I commend and thank Andrew Cripps, the former LNP minister, who started the cluster fencing program. He went out to one of the first cluster fences that was built at Morven.

I note that the cost for cluster fences is about \$7,000 to \$8,000 per kilometre and the subsidy is about \$2,000 to \$3,000 per kilometre. Therefore, landholders make the majority of the investment into cluster fences, not governments and not the state government. I thank the committee for the work that they have done.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.15 pm): I rise to contribute to the commentary on the Agriculture and Environment Committee's report No. 35, *Barrier fences in Queensland*. The committee's task was to consider the policy outcomes to be achieved by the wild dog barrier fence and the rabbit fence and, to a lesser extent, examine the operations of local government administered check fences and the construction of fencing clusters. The report took some time to write, as the membership of the committee changed a number of times. It had multiple wonderful chairs.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mrs GILBERT: The member for Gladstone was one of those many chairs. I thank all of them and all of the parliamentary staff who supported us from the beginning through to the tabling of this report. It was great to be a part of this report process, because we had the opportunity to go into the communities and look at the different types of fences. We looked at how different shires combat pests, particularly wild dogs. I thank the communities of Tambo, Roma and Cunnamulla for their hospitality. They were very open with their views on the different ways that shires deal with pests. Not all of the shires deal with wild dogs in the same way. Some are baiting and some are not; some are culling the dogs and some are not. There is a bit of tension between landholders from different shires who do not believe that everybody is doing the same heavy lifting to get rid of the scourge of wild dogs.

It was quite alarming to hear from landholders about the terrible destruction that wild dogs do within the sheep industry and, in particular, the way that they rip apart sheep and lambs, not for food but for fun. It is really important that we get the fencing right. The Palaszczuk government has introduced more funding to improve the fencing and I believe that will go a long way to help the sheep industry.


Another problem that we came across is absentee landholders who are not doing enough to keep their properties clean. We heard how some landholders have turned to cattle instead of sheep because they do not want to see their stock being ripped apart. However, the land is better suited to sheep because cattle hooves are more destructive on the ground. It is very important that we get sheep back onto properties, not just for the environment but also for the economy of those areas.

The committee's recommendation No. 1 states—

The committee recommends that the Wild Dog Barrier Fence and the Rabbit Fence continue to be actively maintained as major components of Queensland's control strategies for wild dogs and rabbits.

We must protect crops and animals from destruction by pests.

Recommendation 4 was that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries consider the merits and a cost-benefit analysis of the proposal to extend the wild dog barrier fence northwards from the Windorah area to within the area of the Longreach Regional Council. It is important that we get sheep back onto these properties. As other members have said, people in the towns we visited reported to us that once sheep left, a whole lot of people left those towns. The workers from the properties and the shearers left those communities and that has had a huge impact on small rural towns. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.20 pm): I rise to speak to report No. 35 of the Agriculture and Environment Committee entitled *Barrier fences in Queensland*. There is no question that across rural and regional Queensland we have a significant problem with wild dogs. Wild dogs are decimating sheep and goat herds and encroaching on fringe suburban areas of some of our major regional centres.

I have witnessed firsthand the devastation that wild dogs can cause on two separate occasions on my property south of Townsville. We have lost a significant number of pets to wild dog attacks. I have inspected sheep and cattle that have been attacked by wild dogs. There is no question that this is a significant problem for our western sheep and cattle producers.

I have spoken to graziers who have invested in barrier fences and those who remain outside the fence. There is overwhelming evidence to support the benefits of barrier fencing, or cluster fencing as it is called, in building and maintaining herds. The re-emergence of sheep and goats in Western Queensland has been well documented. It is certainly my plan to expand this across rural Queensland. Put simply, more sheep and goats means more jobs, more economic prosperity for our rural towns and, importantly, more people living in rural Queensland.

I am not denying that cluster fencing is prohibitively expensive. I take the point from my colleague the member for Gregory regarding the wide disparity in construction costs between government and private landholders. However, I firmly believe the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages for without barrier fences graziers would not be able to run sheep or goats in the numbers required and cattle herds would be severely impacted.

Let us not underestimate the extent of the wild dog problem in Queensland. I have visited and spoken to the western mayors at Winton, Longreach and Barcaldine. The number of wild dog scalps being brought into council offices is simply astounding. We are not talking about a few hundred; we are talking thousands. When we multiply this across the state, we begin to understand the extent of the problem.

My focus today is on barrier fences to exclude wild dogs. However, I am also mindful of the role these fences play in keeping out rabbits. If we look back through history, we should not underestimate the impact that rabbits have had on our rural areas and native flora and fauna.


The adoption of the Wild Dog Management Strategy and subsequent integration of maintenance of the wild dog fence into the control plans of local wild dog committees has been a giant leap forward in terms of maintenance and planning. As members would appreciate, barrier fences are only as good as the maintenance program involved in ensuring these fences are appropriately managed.

There is no question that dog fences are an effective barrier to pest animal movement. Local governments have a key role to play in the planning, delivery and maintenance of barrier fences. As we move forward, there will need to be an ongoing commitment by the state and federal governments to barrier fence funding. The delivery and maintenance of these fences is beyond the capacity of individual landholders and local government authorities. However, as I have previously stated, the benefits are clear to see.

When we look at a map of Queensland and the location of barrier or cluster fencing we begin to appreciate the work that has been done to date on this initiative. When we start to see the jigsaw filled in we see the benefits that this fencing is providing to large areas in Western Queensland. We certainly appreciate the benefits of this fencing.

The challenge moving forward is to extend that fencing into country that is deemed productive and to fill in those gaps. Certainly those graziers who have not taken up the option to fence their properties are already experiencing an increase in displaced wild dogs, kangaroos and other feral pests. We certainly need a long-term plan in Queensland going forward that will give our western communities that certainty and give our landholders certainty and confidence going forward to be able to plan the expansion of their herds.

I fully support the recommendations contained within the report and commend the committee for their work in preparing this document. The benefits of barrier fencing are clear to see. If we are to grow our agriculture sector we need to embrace this initiative and expand it across our western shires.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (12.24 pm): As the grandson of a sheep farmer and with an uncle who is a sheep farmer, this is an issue that I had heard about long before I entered this place. We see tears welling up in the eyes of farmers when they describe how they have to go and put down ewes and lambs when they have been attacked by dogs. They are often just maimed for the kidneys of the animals. Not all of the meat is taken.

I was a member of the committee that went out to Tambo and other regional centres to see the cluster fencing in action. What is interesting for me is that this is a collective action problem. We speak about the tragedy of the commons, where people can overexploit their use, but this is a different type of collective action problem. If one farmer does not maintain their part of the fence they endanger not only their own farm but also the farms of others. This led to a tipping point where farmers turned more and more to cattle that were less vulnerable and the fences further degraded.

Instead of the vicious cycle where more and more farmers opt out of a system of collective action to preserve our fences, this government has helped create a virtuous cycle where the maintenance of the cluster fencing and dog fences has created greater employment and greater productivity for sheep farmers in the west. This was described by the member for Burdekin as being a jigsaw being filled in. This virtuous cycle saw each farmer begin to contribute their part to the collective action of reducing dogs.

One old hand who was passionate about cluster fencing described to me that in the old days leaseholders were forced to maintain their fences in certain areas. Indeed there were inspectors who would go out there to inspect them. The tradition of increasing the wealth of regional areas by government having a role in making sure the collective action is maintained has a long history.

It is important that these things are a collective decision of the community. Towns in the west could truly be said to be built on this collective action—the collective work and effort of shearers and the collective action to build these fences. I commend the report to the House and note that this collective action must be maintained.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COAL WORKERS' PNEUMOCONIOSIS SELECT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mrs JR MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (12.27 pm): I move—

That the House take note of report No. 3, *A Mine Safety and Health Authority for Queensland including the committee's exposure draft Mine Safety and Health Authority Bill 2017*, tabled on 24 August 2017.

This report presents the committee's exposure draft of the Mine Safety and Health Authority Bill 2017—a prompt but thoroughly considered response to the catastrophic, systemic failings outlined in the committee's landmark *Black lung white lies* report and its accompanying detailed recommendations and its blueprint for reform. This committee was entrusted by the parliament of Queensland with the unique and critically important role of translating these and other subsequent recommendations in reports of the committee's various terms of reference into draft legislation for the Assembly's consideration. The draft bill represents a critical first step in doing just that, standing to provide for the establishment of a more independent, transparent and robust regulatory structure to ensure that the health and wellbeing of our mining and quarrying workers is appropriately safeguarded and protected.

The establishment of the Mine Safety and Health Authority was at the core of many of the committee's recommendations. As the committee outlined in its report—

Importantly, it is clear that the responsibility for overseeing the health and safety of workers should not rest with the body also charged with promoting and supporting the industry; namely DNRM. While the objectives of a productive coal industry and a safe and healthy workforce are not altogether incongruous, this split focus is not in the best interest of either goal.


The committee recognises that this draft bill challenges the long-running status quo and, accordingly, that some aspects would sit rather uncomfortably for some parts of industry and particularly for officers of the department. It stands to interrupt certain established patterns of behaviour—and appropriately so—marking a departure from the current *laissez faire* model of regulation under which many different parties were allowed to fail in their duties to workers, whether knowingly or unknowingly, leading to the tragic and totally preventable circumstances we find ourselves in today—that is, where men are dying of this disease.

This proposed Mine Safety and Health Authority is a solution directed at remedying problems in the system as a whole, not at deficiencies of any one party. It is a proven model, informed by the example of similar independent bodies in New South Wales and in the United States. The committee's consultation with workers, with dust management and health experts across the country and internationally and with many operators, affirmed for the committee that this is a model that miners can trust and which is workable. This change is absolutely necessary and it will lead to better outcomes for all.

In this report we made clear that the exposure draft was not intended to be a final version of this bill. We have said from the outset that further refinement would be required. However, the committee could not justify delaying such important conversations given the urgent nature of the need for change and the long history of neglected recommendations and abandoned reforms within the mining portfolio which have seen us arrive at this current state of affairs—that is, miners are still being diagnosed to this day and dying of coal workers' pneumoconiosis. To deny the need for this authority is to make clear that the critical lessons from the re-identification of this insidious disease, black lung, have gone unnoticed yet again.

The committee has followed closely the consideration of the enclosed bill and the subsequent tabling of this report. I want to make it clear to the assembly today that we, our committee, intends to table another report in response to the committee report on the draft bill. We are bitterly disappointed that one of the recommendations is that the bill 'be noted'. Men are dying of this disease. That departmental officers have mounted a rearguard action against this report is absolutely disgraceful. The fact that other reports have been run through the cabinet and the parliament very quickly and yet our committee took 90 days will be forever a stain on the government and the parliament.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. L SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.32 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, before I speak specifically to the subject at hand, I ask the indulgence of you and parliament to pass on my personal condolences to Mrs Ciara Furlong, who is the Assistant Committee Secretary of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, on the recent very tragic and untimely passing of her husband. She is a fantastic parliamentary officer. She serves our committee exceptionally well. One can only imagine the difficulty that Ciara and her family are going through at the moment in such an untimely set of circumstances for someone so young and at such an early time of their life—just starting out in her married life and had just bought her own home. I would like to pass on my condolences. I also acknowledge the honourable member for Greenslopes, who represented our committee at the funeral, and other parliamentary officers who were there.

Turning specifically to the business at hand, I would like to reinforce many of the comments made by the chair of the committee, Mrs Miller, the member for Bundamba. The Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee has laboured long and hard for more than 12 months now. We have met hundreds of people around Queensland. We have taken probably hundreds of hours of evidence in camera and also publicly. I think it is probably fair to say that we have a significant number of people in Queensland in industry, probably departmentally and elsewhere, who continue to be in denial about what we have uncovered.

We uncovered significant systemic failings with regard to the health and safety process which was supposed to protect coal workers in particular in Queensland. It failed and it failed at every level. It failed departmentally. It failed professionally amongst the radiologists, the radiographers and the nominated medical advisers who were supposed to have been looking after those coal workers in Queensland. It failed amongst the specialists and it failed in the extended arms that are associated in so many ways.

We made 68 compelling recommendations. I am a little bit concerned that there is no real intent or political conviction one way or the other to see this through—I really am. I would like to counsel that—and I note the honourable Minister for Health—regardless of the outcome of the next state election, whoever is in government you will be derelict if you fail to carry forward on the recommendations which were made by this committee and also put into this draft bill. I think what we have now is the government playing for time, kicking things into the long grass, because we have offended too many people. There are too many people who are cosy in this relationship, whether it be the Resources Council, some of the big mining companies, some even on the periphery of the unions and certainly some people in government departments who are uncomfortable with what we have put forward.

It is not good enough to say that we have fixed it or that we have largely fixed it because we are adopting the Sim/Monash review. That is only one part of it. That fixes some of the diagnostic issues and some of the other pathway issues. It does not fix the systemic issue. We totally expected that when the chair of the committee tabled the draft bill it would require enhancement. That is the purpose of parliamentary committees. That is why we adopted parliamentary bill committees in 2010—a great move. I was very pleased to be the deputy chair of the committee that made that recommendation. It is about enhancing the policy proposals and also the legislative response that we take into this parliament. That is what it is all about.


I would implore, as we go forward and debate the other report from the review committee at some future time if the parliament is not prorogued, that this bill comes back into the parliament with enhancement. Otherwise those coal workers—there are now close to 30, and there will be more—who are diagnosed with CWP and their families will be let down and future miners will be let down as well.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (12.37 pm): I move—

That the House take note of report No. 52, *Oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission*, tabled on 28 August 2017.

This report presents a summary of the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee's examination of the oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission. On 14 February 2017, the committee's jurisdiction under schedule 6 of the standing orders changed and the Family Responsibilities Commission, the FRC, became subject to oversight by the Infrastructure, Planning and

Natural Resources Committee. This was a new area of consideration for this committee. I was greatly impressed with the interest and importance that all members of the committee brought to this role. As regional members of parliament, the committee had firsthand experience of the significant issues that many Indigenous communities face.

The committee was able to meet Commissioner Glasgow on three occasions and gained an appreciation of the valuable work that the commissioner, other commissioners and staff members of the FRC do. During these discussions several issues emerged which impact on the FRC's ability to fulfil its legislative obligations and efficiently deliver its service now and into the future. I think it is important that we look into the future with regard to this position of commissioner.

Commissioner Glasgow was first appointed as the FRC commissioner on 25 April 2008 and reappointed from 1 January 2015 for a further term of three years. The commissioner's term of appointment expires in January 2018. This came through very strongly to the committee and we were greatly impressed with the achievement of Commissioner Glasgow. Under his leadership the FRC has achieved significant outcomes in the welfare of communities in which he operates. However, the committee is concerned that at the beginning of 2018 there will be a significant loss of knowledge and expertise from the FRC compounded by the retirement of many long-serving Aurukun commissioners.


This committee believes timely consideration should be given to this matter. When you go to Aurukun and talk to the commissioner and the people who are working hand in hand with the community, it is very important that we go through a transition period when the commissioner finishes his time to when another commissioner takes over. He has achieved so much and there has been so much cooperation with the community. We cannot risk losing that spirit of cooperation if there is not a sensible handover period.

The FRC identified that the provision of school attendance reports was a major challenge. In January 2017 the Department of Education and Training moved from the Access database to the OneSchool database. The effect of this change resulted in reports which were not in a format that could be used effectively by the FRC or uploaded directly to the FRC's customer relationship management database. The committee encouraged the Department of Education and Training to continue to work with the Families Responsibilities Commission to resolve the provision of reported school absences to the Family Responsibilities Commission in a format which supports the commission's work.

There are issues around school attendance, and the committee appreciates that significant efforts have been made to address this issue. The committee has undertaken to seek a briefing from officers from DATSIP and DET in regard to this matter. Domestic and family violence issues were also considered. The committee found that there was a significant gap in targeted support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families living in remote communities. The committee's report outlines these concerns.

On behalf of the committee I thank Commissioner Glasgow. I also thank those individuals who gave evidence and the secretariat for their nonstop hard work—

(Time expired)

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (12.43 pm): I am delighted to contribute to the debate on the report on the oversight of the Families Responsibilities Commission. The Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee, due to the change of jurisdiction under schedule 6, received responsibility for the Families Responsibilities Commission.

The report made one recommendation, and I draw the government's attention to that recommendation not only because it is intended to bring about better outcomes for the communities in service delivery but also because it recognises the extensive corporate knowledge that the Families Responsibilities Commission and their staff have in relation to the communities which they visit and serve. I think that is a particularly important recommendation from the committee and I draw the government's attention to it.

In conducting its oversight functions, the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee took a briefing from the Finance and Administration Committee. We then followed up with travel to Cairns to meet with Families Responsibilities Commissioner David Glasgow, his office and his staff. We were lucky enough to visit the community of Aurukun with Commissioner Glasgow and his staff to see firsthand the work of the FRC.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! The time for committee reports has expired.


Debate, on motion of Ms Leahy, adjourned.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 11 October (see p. 3043), on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (12.44 pm), continuing: I rise to conclude my contribution to the debate which I commenced yesterday. I will focus on one aspect that is relatively uncommon in the broader debate, and that is the proposed reinstatement of the codes of practice to full legislative status under this bill. That would be a return to the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 and the position of recognising these particular codes of practice as legislative status.

The bill provides that these safety measures referred to in the various codes are mandatory unless the business can display equal or better measures that are either in place or working on being in place. That entails the imposition of a reverse onus of proof. We know that Labor governments love a reverse onus of proof. They have a long history and I reflect particularly on vegetation management. They love to reverse the onus of proof wherever they can. It took an LNP government last term to address some of these problems in an act that overturned a whole range of other personal liabilities that would accrue to directors of businesses and companies. It also addressed and amended 89 acts in this Queensland jurisdiction that reversed the onus of proof. It is concerning to see that a reverse onus of proof has now been reintroduced with these codes of practice.


I am also concerned about the independent ACTU union official that conducted this review, Tim Lyons. He reflected his opinion in the review—although it has not been reflected in the bill at this stage—that in 2018 at the COAG review Queensland should be advocating for the reversal of the onus of proof in prosecutions. That should concern all businesses. It is chilling to think that next year we are going to see more reverse onus of proof arguments put forward at COAG representing Queensland.

I would like to reflect briefly on the impacts of these particular bills on the business community. I spoke a little bit about it in my contribution yesterday. The CCIQ have spoken about this. In their best guess the imposition of these rules will not in any way, shape or form improve health and safety outcomes in Queensland, will not see an improvement in health and safety culture, and will not address the issue at hand, which is fatalities. It was addressed purely for rank political purposes. Businesses will again cop it in the neck because they are forced to go back to square one and revisit all their health and safety obligations. There has been no drive for this whatsoever from the business community. Every proponent and every submitter to the committee said that this is unnecessary, except the trade unions of course. We now have a \$1 billion imposition on the heads of business to make this work. As I reflected yesterday, we are asking questions as to why this legislation is necessary. The business community of Queensland are the ones who are left with long-lasting questions. They have to go back to square one.

One of the questions they will be asking is this: what is our liability under this act? It is going to be untested. It is unclear. There are discrepancies in definitions—between ‘senior officers’ in this act and ‘officers’ in another. It is completely unworkable and it is completely unclear as to how this will work. The most concerning part is about where it ends in the management chain. Where does this end? We have seen various jurisdictions introduce these laws. In the ACT, the officers who will be caught by these laws are officers under the section 9 definition in the Corporations Act, which will be a secretary, a director or a person capable of making decisions that influence the organisation.

There is no clear way forward here. Businesses that have just come to terms with the 2011 amendments will now need to go back to square one and reconsider these issues all over again. That will be a cost to business and there will be no discernible improvement in the health and safety environment for Queensland workers. It will simply be a cost and an imposition on businesses.

All businesses should be chilled by these new laws. They are not being introduced to work harder for Queensland workers; they are being introduced as a payback of debt for the CFMEU donations to the Labor Party. We have been here and we heard about it again today throughout question time. I do not think this Labor government will stop with this. They have this track record now of bill after bill after bill. In the last sitting week, we saw a bill on the labour hire movement. In this sitting week, we have this particular bill. I do not think the Labor Party will stop until they have managed to choke up Queensland businesses with union-demanding legislation. They will not just be choking workplaces. Labor will not be satisfied until they have choked up middle management and every boardroom in Queensland. That will be a cost to Queensland taxpayers and Queensland businesses. This House should be rightly alarmed. I urge the House to reject the bill.


 **Ms DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (12.51 pm): I rise to contribute to the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. The member for Kawana has spent a lot of time in this place condemning unions—and not just one union, but any and all unions—but not so much time condemning businesses that deliberately take safety shortcuts to save money and increase their profits at the expense of worker safety. To blame union officials for the behaviour of individual members is misleading. The member for Kawana knows that he has no argument so he has nothing else to offer except mudslinging. The truth is that the member for Kawana is absolutely terrified of unions because he knows that they are all that stand between workers' rights and his puppetmaster's greed.

We have seen already so many examples in the media of worker exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous employers—employers who are prepared to go to any lengths to maximise their profits over the wellbeing of their workers. As has been seen many, many times, a lack of appropriate training, a lack of ensuring adequate safety equipment, cutting corners, taking shortcuts or deliberately purchasing unsafe materials have all led to workplace injury or worse. When it comes to the construction industry, it is over-represented in dangerous activities and workplaces. This is why construction sites are fenced, and if you try to enter one you need to have safety gear on and you need to have an induction.

I know firsthand the impact of workplace death and injury in the construction industry. Most people would have walked down or driven down Edward Street. There is a high-rise on Edward Street on which my ex-husband worked. He is a steel fixer. For those who do not know what that is, it is the trade that puts all the steel reinforcing in the concrete before it is poured for each deck, which then becomes each floor of a high-rise building. They were working on a building in Edward Street and were on to the 13th floor when the unimaginable happened. Whilst working on the deck next to one of his work mates, a concrete pump came away from where it was working. It swung across the deck and hit his workmate, killing him instantly, right next to where my ex-husband was working.

I will never forget that afternoon. He arrived home absolutely distraught. He could not speak. He was shaking uncontrollably. He could not even form the words to tell me what had happened. I knew the man who was working next to him. I knew his wife and I knew his children. Was there any care for them from the construction company about their loss? There was nothing. Do you know who stood by that family? It was their union. Those so-called union thugs raised thousands of dollars to support the member's family and provided counselling for anyone on that worksite who wanted it. It was the union that funded that man's funeral. Yes, shortcuts had been taken and safety was not up to scratch, which is what we see all too often by corporate companies that prioritise profit over safety. Construction is dangerous enough without companies deliberately taking extra risks with workers' lives and getting away with it with a small slap on the wrist.

We on this side of the House will always stand up for workers. We on this side of the House will always do what needs to be done to restore the balance between workers and business, and we are never going to be ashamed of it. It is for these reasons that I support this bill and I am proud to be a union member and a member of the Labor Party.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.55 pm): I too as a member of the Finance and Administration Committee rise to speak on this bill this afternoon. There are a few things I would like to say from the outset. We have seen in the last 48 hours a great deal of emotion and examples being given in relation to the activity of certain members of the union. I will make it very clear up-front—and it has been mentioned by other speakers on this side of the chamber—that the LNP believes very much in the absolute dignity of work and the right for all workers to go to work each day, to get paid a decent wage and, most importantly, to come home safely to their families at the end of every shift or every day. I absolutely respect—and I have said this in a previous speech—those old Labor values that embrace unionism from the past and, in that spirit, potentially in the future as well, but I will come to certain examples that truly are indefensible shortly in my contribution this afternoon.

I would like to share an anecdote to give an example to the House that, when it comes to understanding the impact and trauma of workplace fatalities, there is no mortgage on just one side of the chamber. I can distinctly recall many, many years ago working with an outstanding lady when one of her two sons was tragically killed in an industrial accident. I have never in all of my life since seen the definition of tragedy etched so permanently on someone's face. She was inconsolable, as I would be in that same situation. She was absolutely rocked to the core, and that lady pretty much ceased to live herself that day.

When it comes to understanding and seeing firsthand the trauma of workplace health and safety injuries—and, most importantly, fatalities—I completely understand that. I really do, but there is more that I would like to contribute this afternoon. Since 2003, the number of workplace fatalities has reduced, as well as the rate of injury and death. That was outlined in the contribution by the shadow minister last night. We all know that workplace health and safety is and always will be a shared responsibility between the employer, the employee, unions and safety advocates. That dynamic will never, ever change.

Whilst the system is not perfect, I can say that very, very mercifully things have changed dramatically and improved in relation to workplace safety more so now than ever in the past. This is a great thing, but I have to point out that no other state—and I stress 'state'—has the offence of industrial manslaughter. We should be working to achieve national consistency, particularly for the many employers that operate across the state boundaries. We should be improving workplace health and safety, where everyone works together to improve the education, the awareness and the safety of the culture throughout the workplace. This is of paramount importance. It always has been and always will be.


I come to the crux of my contribution. This bill does not seem to be so much about improving safety. I have to say, without any cynicism whatsoever, that it appears *prima facie* to be all about keeping the CFMEU happy and getting donations to support the imminent state election campaign. How do we know this? We too have examples in the real world. I have a very good mate who runs a medium sized construction company. I do not need to preface this comment by saying 'a little birdie told me' because he told me directly. In the last two or three weeks there has been the usual bringing the tin around, as they say, onto the worksite. It is a specific one-off donation for the war chest for the forthcoming election, whenever that may be, between now and May next year.

Debate, on motion of Mr Minnikin, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Question Out of Order; Ruling Vacated

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I refer to my ruling this morning in which I ruled out of order the Leader of the Opposition's first question to the Premier. I have now had the benefit of reading the *Record of Proceedings* and I concede that my ruling this morning was in error and the question should have been allowed. The rephrased question was, in fact, two questions. The first part essentially asked for an opinion and was out of order, but the second part was a question within standing orders. Unfortunately, I cannot effectively remedy the error except to acknowledge the error, and I accordingly apologise to the Leader of the Opposition.


There were a number of contributors to this error: the fact that the Leader of the Opposition modified his question after having to make a withdrawal on the application of the member for Mirani and thus was unable to show me the question asked; the multiple points of order taken; and the number of interjections and overall noise in the House. The number of points of order being taken and the spurious arguments being put forth have to come to an end. I warn all members that if they rise on a point of order that has no substance and is essentially frivolous, they are being disorderly and I will act accordingly.

I particularly want to address the constant points of order and interjections alleging imputations and/or inferences in questions. I would urge all members to carefully read my ruling of 25 May 2016. In the parliamentary sense, Speakers will generally not intervene where the imputation or inference is directed to philosophy, viewpoint or policy, but Speakers are likely to intervene where the imputation is a phrase imputing, attributing, ascribing or charging someone with a personal motive, crime, misconduct, negligence or other fault or the inference is about personal motive, adverse action, crime, misconduct, negligence or other fault. Importantly, the imputation or inference must be directed to or reference another member of parliament.

Finally, I suggest that members take extreme care to ensure that facts stated in their questions are correct. Questions should not be phrased so as to state as fact that which is not fact but assumption and/or supposition.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CQUniversity


 **Mr ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (2.33 pm): I rise this afternoon to talk about the great work CQUniversity is doing in my electorate of Noosa and how this world-class training facility is set to expand and offer the community new, well-paid full-time employment opportunities through training. CQUniversity recently announced the creation of a new region, spanning from Caloundra through to Gympie with the Noosa campus being at the hub of the region. Education is the cornerstone of any community. In order for Noosa families to live, work and raise a family, our local workforce must diversify and reduce its dependency on tourism and hospitality.

The Noosa campus currently provides services and support to 1,700 students per year and with the sad trend of 50 per cent of school leavers leaving the Sunshine Coast to study, CQUniversity has identified the need to significantly invest in its expansion in order to meet demand. This will involve more courses and more facilities.

Recently I had the privilege of helping to organise a roundtable discussion with the university chancellor, the vice-chancellor, the Noosa mayor, the CEO of Noosa Hospital and the managing director of Noosa Care to discuss the many opportunities presented by the expansion, and all in attendance shared the same degree of enthusiasm and optimism. Noosa's future has never been brighter as educators and employers team together to create sustainable, long-term employment opportunities, particularly in the health and aged care sectors. There are also great possibilities in the marine and environmental sciences for the management of the Noosa River.

Partnership and collaboration is critical to this new vision becoming a reality. With the LNP's Noosa Hospital guarantee of a 30-year lease and an additional \$5 million each year to fund extra public services, Ramsay Health Care will have the confidence to upgrade and expand, employing more locals and continuing to deliver quality health care. I would remind those opposite that while the new university hospital on the Sunshine Coast is a wonderful facility, people have to be able to easily access it. Currently, public transport from the northern end of the Sunshine Coast is abysmal. The award-winning and highly respected Noosa Care own two aged care facilities in the shire and are desperate to expand. They, too, can see a partnership with on-site training and employment opportunities via courses from CQUniversity. With more teachers, students and their families moving to Noosa to study and to work, the local economy and full-time job creation will be the ultimate beneficiary. I am excited and proud to be part of that future.

Liberal National Party


 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (2.35 pm): I rise to talk about public servants—the hardworking public servants who manage our health care, our public safety, our regulations and our laws. They are our firefighters, doctors and police, but they are also the thousands of staff behind the front lines who process payroll, administration, maintenance and construction. They are hardworking public servants who once again face the precarious possibility of being sacked or sent to the redundancy scrap heap under the same pen of the member for Clayfield, who had three years of merrymaking and mayhem whilst arguably the cruellest cabinet that this state has ever seen took aim again and again.

When I was a public servant working as a paramedic I can remember vividly attending a particular scene where a person was having chest pain. It was a government department and the pain was not cardiac and it was not a heart attack; it was a panic attack—a panic attack because their department was awaiting news that very day as to who was losing their job, whose contract was not being renewed and who had to go home and tell their family that their income had stopped. The mood in that government office was palpable because it was not just the lady I was treating who was stressing; it was the whole department.

I have attended thousands of cases over 15 years and I have seen injury and violence that defies imagination, but this case sticks in my mind. The reason it does is that it was avoidable; it did not need to happen. The member for Clayfield as treasurer did not need to do it. He did not have to subject tens of thousands of government employees to the stress and heartache of not knowing whether that day would be the day they would find out the news.

In the Cairns and hinterland health service alone the LNP went after 95 staff and sent them to the scrap heap; 12 doctors, gone; 24 health practitioners, gone; 58 nurses, gone. That is just one department of government in one location of Queensland. In contrast, our government, the Palaszczuk government, not only restored these numbers but we have grown them: 544 new health staff in the Cairns and hinterland health service alone: 118 new doctors, hired; 62 new health practitioners, hired; 365 nurses, hired. Queenslanders spoke in 2015 when they threw the LNP out—and rightly so. Queenslanders remember what they did. They remember what the LNP stands for. On this side of the House we respect our front-line staff, our Public Service. Those on that side just want to cut it, they want to sell it and they want to sack them.

Southport, Proposed Casino Development


 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (2.38 pm): I rise to speak in this debate of Private Members' Statements about the proposed casino development in Southport. Recently the Mayor of the Gold Coast, Tom Tate, announced to the media that he thought that the Southport parklands, Carey Park, the tennis club and the bowls club on the Southport foreshore area of the Broadwater would make an ideal location for a casino and tourism development.

I want to place on the public record my concern about this, because Southport is not the location for another casino on the Gold Coast. Nor is the use of public land like the iconic Carey Park, resuming the Southport Bowls Club—a club that has been there for over 100 years—or taking away the Queens Park Tennis Centre—the home of champions and one of the oldest tennis centres in Queensland—the appropriate location to be proposing a casino development in Southport. I can inform the House that there were some 200-300 people who turned up at the initial protest rally on 2 September. Along with those people was well-known Southport councillor Dawn Crichlow, who spoke very strongly against the development, supported by other council colleagues William Owen-Jones, Glenn Tozer and Councillor Daphne McDonald from the southern end of the Gold Coast. The message that day was very clear: Southport is not the right place for a casino on the Gold Coast. I have gone on the public record a number of times to suggest that the more appropriate location for a casino—if there is to be another casino on the Gold Coast—would be on the Glitter Strip somewhere between Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach.

The Southport Liquor Accord includes all of the publicans and licensed club owners within Southport. There are a number of very significant sporting clubs and community clubs on the Gold Coast. The CSI Club in Southport, which is currently undergoing a significant renovation; the Southport RSL and general manager Paul Burton, who heads the liquor accord; the Southport Sharks, one of the biggest clubs in Queensland; the Musgrave Hills Bowls Club; the Southport Yacht Club; and the Main Beach Surf Lifesaving Club have all expressed concern about this proposed development. All of them are concerned about the impact that a casino in Southport would have on their various community organisations. In the strongest possible terms I want to place on the public record my concern and my absolute objection to this casino being developed in Southport.

Southport has been earmarked by previous state governments—including the LNP government—and council as the centre for knowledge, business and health, and that is what Southport needs to be. It is the CBD of the Gold Coast and we need to continue promoting it as the centre for business.

Formosa, Mr A; Modified Bus Stops


 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.42 pm): I rise firstly to recognise Bribie Island bus driver Andrew Formosa, who saw a man collapsed at a bus stop. He got out of his bus, performed CPR on this person and saved the man's life. Andrew did not have to learn CPR: he did it in his own time and I want to recognise him for his efforts.

I want to speak about buses and, more importantly, bus stops. I am not talking about *On the Buses*—I will leave the comedy show for those opposite because that is what they seem to be good at. I will talk about the great achievements of the Palaszczuk government, but first let me refer to Bribie Island bus driver Greg Eaves, who came to my office to talk to me about the fact that people with mobility devices were having a lot of trouble getting on and off buses safely. The difficulty comes when there is no kerbing and channelling and the bus ramp becomes too steep to be usable. This is apparent everywhere throughout parts of Queensland. Unlike those opposite from the lofty heights of Clayfield, who would not understand what it is not to have kerbing and channelling, we do understand. The Palaszczuk government understands and has now rolled out funding to build concrete platforms at bus

stops to fix this problem so that needy passengers throughout Queensland will be able to get on and off buses. It is my pleasure to announce such 12 bus stops at Ningi, Sandstone Point and Bribie Island. Funding will be given to the Moreton Bay Regional Council, which will deliver the project with the assistance of division 1 councillor Brooke Savige. This project will create regional jobs throughout Queensland for council workers.

Under the Palaszczuk government our electorates have all received infrastructure projects that are underway and not just promises, unlike Newman's treasurer Tim Nicholls, the member for Clayfield. The best that he could muster in his term of government was the 'tower of power' at 1 William Street. It is very disappointing that, when I looked through the infrastructure spends that had been done in the Pumicestone electorate throughout the Newman years, I could only find \$1.6 million spent on infrastructure, but under the Palaszczuk government it is over \$100 million not to mention the 88 nurses and 42 doctors. The list is exhaustive and it goes on. Do you think the people of Queensland will walk blindly into your cut, sack and sell trap again? I think not.

Mobbs, Ms B; E-petition


 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.44 pm): I recently tabled a paper petition and an e-petition on behalf of Bonnie Mobbs, who is a very brave mum fighting for reforms to our justice system. Late last year Bonnie lost her beloved daughter Shelsea. Shelsea Schilling was tragically taken from her family by her bikie former boyfriend. He menaced, stalked and eventually violently murdered her before killing himself in November last year. Now Bonnie has become part of the fight for domestic violence reforms, which is a role to which she never aspired. Bonnie was here in February when this parliament passed the LNP's tough new domestic violence laws which will help keep victims safe into the future.

In March it was reported that three people who watched on as Shelsea was murdered are not being charged. Those reports stated that Queensland, unlike other jurisdictions, does not have a legislative provision which compels people to rescue victims when they witness a violent crime being committed in front of them. As a result, several witnesses were allegedly in a position to help Shelsea, but they did nothing to assist and they have not been charged. This is a loophole which Bonnie wants to close. Bonnie wants this House to ensure that witnesses are obligated to report or attempt to prevent serious indictable offences such as serious assaults, murder or suicide.

The e-petition calls for changes to legislation to make it an offence for any person who is a witness to the commission of a serious indictable offence to fail to report the commission of the offence and/or fail to do anything within their power to stop the offence being committed or continuing. It is not just Bonnie calling for these changes: this year the Queensland Coroner recommended that Queensland adopt the Northern Territory's laws which deal with failing to help when someone is dying. In the Northern Territory it is an offence for any person to callously fail to provide rescue, resuscitation, medical treatment, first aid or succour of any kind to a person urgently in need of it and whose life may be in danger if it is not provided. In the view of the Queensland Coroner, a similar offence in Queensland may provide more incentive for people not to simply stand by when someone is dying.

This recommendation was contained in the findings of an inquest into the death of Karen Louise Richards in 2014. She died when her spouse and drug supplier failed to call triple 0 or provide CPR after she suffered a drug overdose. Despite these recommendations appearing in black and white, we have seen no action from this do-nothing Labor government. I was very pleased to support Bonnie and sponsor her petition as she continues to crusade for reforms to our domestic violence laws because, even after the pain of losing her beautiful daughter, Bonnie is continuing her fight to save others like Shelsea in the future.

Stretton Electorate, Illaweena Street

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (2.47 pm): I rise to speak about the absolute traffic nightmare in my community that has been caused by the decision of the Brisbane City Council to fully close Illaweena Street. The decision by Councillor Owen and Lord Mayor Quirk to fully close Illaweena Street has caused traffic chaos in my local area which continues day after day because of their ridiculous decision. Right now is school pick-up time and there will be absolute traffic chaos right now at Stretton State College, as there has been during every pick-up and drop-off time since this decision was made. I want to provide the House with some background to this issue. On 3 August this year Transurban issued a works notification stating that there would be a single-lane traffic flow arrangement on Illaweena Street on school days, and I table that works notification for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 3 August 2017, titled 'Logan Enhancement Project' [\[2030\]](#).

Just before the works were due to commence Councillor Owen issued a letter dated 8 September 2017, which I also table, stating that Illaweena Street would be subject to a full closure.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 8 September 2017, from Councillor Angela Owen to local residents regarding the closure of Illaweena Street [2029].


Mr Power: Why?

Mr PEGG: I hear the member for Logan ask why. My community is asking why as well. At a subsequent P&C meeting soon after this decision, Councillor Owen stated that the decision was based on assessment and consultation with stakeholders. Neither Councillor Owen, Lord Mayor Quirk nor anyone else from BCC has provided any details of this assessment process or consultation with stakeholders. I would have thought that the Stretton State College community and local residents would be important stakeholders, but they were not consulted in relation to this ridiculous decision. This decision has caused an absolute traffic nightmare in my community since school has resumed. Many students have been late to school and parents late to work. Vehicles which would ordinarily use Illaweena Street are now forced to use other roads, causing major congestion on Beaudesert Road and Trinity Way.

My community has rallied very strongly against this outrageous decision by the Brisbane City Council. There have been community rallies and a petition circulating has received a total of over 1,000 signatures. The Stretton State College P&C has done a tremendous amount of work in relation to this issue. I particularly acknowledge the efforts of Louise Nann and Donna Longworth, who are in the gallery, and Esther Stuart and Hayley Geraghty. The Brisbane City Council has no idea what it has got itself into by taking on these mums from Stretton State College, believe you me.

I thank the Minister for Main Roads, Mark Bailey, for visiting the site and condemning the decision. I also thank Councillor Peter Cumming and Councillor Shayne Sutton for visiting and agreeing to table the community petition in council and for speaking to P&C representatives. In the absence of Councillor Owen and the Lord Mayor, it was great to see that there are some councillors willing to provide assistance to a community in need. I will keep fighting for our local area on this important issue. Our community deserves to be listened to and treated with respect. Councillor Owen and Lord Mayor Quirk must reverse this terrible decision and open Illaweena Street.

Wolston Park, Redress Scheme Report

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (2.50 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government has had some trouble with transparency and accountability when it comes to the reports it has commissioned during its time in government. Time and time again we have seen this Labor government commission report after report but Queenslanders are none the wiser, with much of the information heavily redacted or never released. Perhaps the most hurtful and most distressing example of this is in the case of the Wolston Park redress scheme.

At the outset I say that the LNP team stands shoulder to shoulder with the Wolston Park women. We would like to thank the consultant, Betty Taylor, for her sensitivity, respect and advocacy throughout this process. Throughout this term we have seen the health minister continually shift the blame to save face, whether it is to the HHSs or to any other entity within or engaged by the department, but in this instance it has gone too far, with the minister suggesting during estimates that any delay in the reporting time lies with the consultant. Hurtfully, we saw the minister tell the committee—

She—

Betty Taylor—

has not finalised that—

the report—

yet but we anticipate it to be finalised shortly.

I note that his director-general said that they had not even received the report. We know that this is not true because the report was finalised and on 27 July this year the report's author told one survivor that it was finalised and with the department. Above all, this was a hurtful and disappointing inference to make in a sensitive situation, where the survivors were faced with confusion as to the status of the report and the validity of the information they were being given throughout the process. I will be writing to the Speaker as it appears that the minister misled the committee. The Wolston Park women deserved better back then and they deserve better now.

There are further concerns about several changes that the minister's department has requested to make to the report. Whilst two minor amendments have been made in good faith, there are two requested adjustments that are of particular concern, the first being the redaction of the list of drugs used and the second being the redaction of the terms 'drugs' and 'chemical straitjacketing', with those words to be replaced with the word 'medication'. According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, the term 'medication' means 'a medicine, or a set of medicines or drugs used to improve a particular condition or illness'. There is no doubt that these redactions and changes will downplay the horrific abuse that occurred at Wolston Park. The redaction of the drugs used as well as the use of the term 'medication' in the place of 'drugs' and 'straitjacketing' will have implications on the interpretation of the report and the extent of the abuse that occurred within the Wolston Park facility.

The minister was quick to get on the defensive during estimates, saying that he was not hiding anything. I can assure the House: the LNP has been sensitive and respectful with this matter and with our dealings with these women. They want the truth. They do not want a sugar-coated report. They do not want to be misled as to the status of the report and the reason. They want a respectful and accurate report and the LNP will always support that. The minister cannot say that he is being sensitive and respectful when he is trashing the very process which will provide these women with an accurate and respectful report.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Before I call the member for Ferny Grove, there is a large amount of audible conversation. I ask members to take their conversations outside or sit and listen to the member for Ferny Grove.

Ferny Grove, Transit Oriented Development



Hon. M FURNER (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.53 pm): This week the spotlight has been on the integrity and accountability of local government in Queensland. Just two days ago I stood in this House and introduced legislation to deal with the conduct of councillors. This came on the back of the Premier tabling the Crime and Corruption Commission's report on Operation Belcarra and our government's response. Members can imagine my surprise when it came to my attention yesterday that two councillors in Brisbane, in my electorate of Ferny Grove, are using ratepayers' money to politicise a proposed state government development, the Ferny Grove transit oriented development—a state government development that will still need council development approval before it proceeds.

Given its importance in the area and the flow-on effect it has to traffic on surrounding roads, the Palaszczuk government quite rightly identified it as an area of opportunity to create a TOD. This will deliver renewed energy in our community and 629 full-time-equivalent jobs, with about a further 430 full-time-equivalent jobs once the development is operational.

The Palaszczuk government has committed to funding 253 additional commuter car parks for the project. The government funded car parks will be in addition to the 300-plus car parks provided by the developer for residential, retail and cinema customers. The build will be conducted in such a way that parking disruption will be minimised during construction. The site's capacity will actually exceed 1,500 car parks when complete. That is right: there will be more car parks, not fewer.


I was bewildered yesterday at the propaganda that is being distributed by the local LNP councillors in my electorate stating that the project would close more than 1,000 car parks at the station. I table those documents for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, from Councillor Andrew Wines regarding redevelopment of the Ferny Grove train station [\[2031\]](#).

Tabled paper: Document, undated, from Councillor Steven Toomey regarding redevelopment of the Ferny Grove train station [\[2032\]](#).

What a scurrilous, blatant lie these Brisbane city councillors are peddling. What else can we expect from the Queensland LNP? Councillor Toomey and Councillor Wines are deluded if they think this project will do anything but benefit the people of Ferny Grove through the introduction of the additional car parks, jobs and entertainment that will come from this development. This project, combined with the construction of Cross River Rail, means that commuters in Ferny Grove will have a much better journey to and from work. This is a project that will provide hundreds of jobs—jobs for constituents of Ferny Grove that are now at risk as a result of these LNP councillors playing gutter politics. What else would we expect from the LNP? ABS figures clearly show that 115,400 jobs have been created since we were elected in January 2015.

Wild Rivers Legislation


 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to inform the House of the impacts of any return of wild rivers or pristine rivers policies by the Palaszczuk Labor government on the communities of south-west Queensland and the Cooper Basin and electricity costs across the state. I am advised that state Labor passed a motion at its 2017 annual conference to introduce pristine rivers legislation and that the loony left are secretly drafting the changes in a desperate bid to secure Greens preferences. There has been no consultation with those who live or work in the Cooper Basin. This is another example of Labor putting the jobs of inner-city MPs ahead of the jobs of regional Queenslanders.

Any reintroduction of the wild rivers or pristine rivers legislation framework will shut down the resources industry and jobs in outback towns like Quilpie and Thargomindah and will increase red tape for landholders across the Channel Country. In the Cooper Basin, petroleum products have been produced for the past 60 years and landholders have been managing the land for over 130 years. That the Cooper Basin is seen by outsiders to be pristine is testament to the good management practices of the resources industry and local landholders. Natural gas sourced from the Cooper Basin is an essential source of energy for manufacturers and of electricity during times of peak demand. Ethane produced in the Cooper is used in Australian stretch wrapping for food, packaging, water tanks, wheelie bins and the lining of our milk and juice cartons.

Labor claims to support gas production, with Minister Anthony Lynham saying that any plan to shut down gas production across Queensland would drive up electricity prices and cost jobs across industry, particularly manufacturing. He must be very embarrassed with his colleagues trying to shut down the resources industry in the Cooper Basin.

As we read in the *Brisbane Times*, Anastacia Palaszczuk claims that she will not do any deals with One Nation, and her party is not below pandering to them on policy to win preferences. A case in point is this decision from Labor to join One Nation's policy of banning further gas development in the Cooper Basin in south-west Queensland. Petroleum and gas developments in the Channel Country are subject to strict controls through the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014 and the Channel Country is a strategic environmental area put in place by the LNP whilst in government, and these are some of the strictest controls in any part of Queensland. Given these strict controls that are in place, the only reason one can conclude that Labor and One Nation are joining forces to ban the resources development in the Cooper Basin is for preferences and the people who live in those communities and depend on those livelihoods in places such as Quilpie and Thargomindah have every right to be furious as their futures are being used as political pawns.

Brisbane Bayside, Ambulance Services


 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.59 pm): Today I rise to inform the House that, following the LNP's savage cuts to front-line services, the Palaszczuk government is not only restoring front-line services; we are enhancing them. Since coming to government we have increased nurse numbers by over 4,300, 1,250 doctors and 1,200 allied health workers. We have also increased ambulance officers by 225, with a further 115 to come this financial year. Earlier this year I was approached by United Voice, the union that looks after ambulance officers and paramedics. It raised concerns with me about the bayside area, including the electorates of Lytton, Capalaba, Redlands and Cleveland and now parts of Springwood, and the need for a critical care paramedic unit. In addition to postgraduate tertiary education, most critical care paramedics have a masters as well. Critical care paramedics support the excellent care by our advanced care paramedics, using their additional knowledge and experience to provide live professional development and optimise patient safety and outcomes. Critical care paramedics have a wider scope of practice which allows more options for stabilisation of seriously injured and critically ill patients and provide an additional level of care to allow safer transfer to major hospitals from the bayside.

Currently patients who require a critical care paramedic have them come from Logan or Nathan areas into the bayside. I have spoken with paramedics and they tell me that this is important for bayside residents. Along with Joan Pease, the member for Lytton, Mick de Brenni, the member for Springwood, and Redlands candidate Kim Richards, we have taken these concerns to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. I want to thank the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services for listening to our concerns, because I am pleased to advise the House that a dedicated 24-hour critical care paramedic unit will be based on the bayside, stationed out of the Capalaba Ambulance Station. It will comprise five critical care paramedics and a dedicated critical care pod vehicle and is an investment of over three-quarters of a million dollars. This will bolster ambulance

services on the bayside. I am proud to be part of a government that puts the people of Queensland first. It is envisaged to have this operational in time for Christmas. I hope the members for Cleveland and Redlands are listening, because this will help their constituents as well. I would hope that they would just thank us rather than being part of an opposition that wants to tear down our front-line services.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Reports

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.03 pm), by leave: I table Ethics Committee report No. 176, titled *Annual report 2016-2017*, and report No. 177, titled *Report on a right of reply No. 32*.


Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 176, 55th Parliament—Annual Report 2016-17 [\[2024\]](#).

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 177—Report on a Right of Reply No. 32 [\[2025\]](#).

I advise the House that the Ethics Committee has attached extracts of the minutes relevant to the committee's consideration of report No. 177 to the report to comply with the intent of standing order 211 as recommended by the House and by the CLA. I commend the reports and the committee's recommendations to the House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL (IMPLEMENTING BELCARRA) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (3.03 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Electoral Act 1992, the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Local Government Electoral (Implementing Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 [\[2026\]](#).

Tabled paper: Local Government Electoral (Implementing Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes [\[2027\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. This bill will amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Electoral Act 1992, the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 to implement recommendations from the Crime and Corruption Commission's report, *Operation Belcarra: a blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local government*. The report made 31 recommendations designed to reduce the risk of corruption and increase transparency, integrity and accountability in Queensland local governments. My government takes the recommendations very seriously and I am proud to say that we support, or support in principle, all 31 recommendations. We are absolutely resolute in our commitment to improve transparency and integrity at all levels of government.

The CCC report provides a blueprint to improve equity, transparency, integrity and accountability in Queensland local government elections and decision-making. As noted by the CCC, allegations of this nature have been repeatedly examined over the last 25 years. This highlights the potential for donations from property developers to lead to the perception of corruption. As elected representatives, we all hold positions of considerable responsibility. We must always act in a way that reflects the trust that has been placed in us by our communities. Let me make this clear: Queensland is home to some of the most innovative and successful local governments in the nation. Councils are led by mayors and councillors who are passionate and committed to serving their communities. I know the majority of local government elected representatives are doing exceptional work. They work in the best interests of their council and community and I want to acknowledge their efforts.

I have confidence in the state's local government system, but the system is not perfect and when problems are identified we should address them. My government is moving swiftly on the Operation Belcarra report, particularly on two key areas which are addressed in the bill I introduce today. The bill today specifically introduces a prohibition on property developer donations. As I have made very clear—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Kawana, you need to be in your proper seat if you are going to interject; otherwise you will be warned.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I have made very clear, I will not make rules for local government that I am not prepared to follow myself. That is why the ban on property developer donations will apply at both the state and local government level. Similar to the approach in New South Wales, Queensland will introduce a ban on political donations from property developers at the state level. This is an important step given that the state is also involved in development assessment, whether it be through environmental approvals or the power to call in a development if it involves a state interest. It is my intention that this ban will apply from today.

The bill inserts a new subdivision 4 in part 11, division 8 in the Electoral Act 1992 and a new division 1A in part 6 in the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 which makes it unlawful for a donation from a prohibited donor to be directly or indirectly made or accepted. The term 'prohibited donor' is defined to include a property developer and their close associates such as related corporations, directors and their spouses—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Callide, your interjections are not being taken.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—and any industry representative organisation whose members are mainly property developers. For the purposes of the ban, a political donation is defined to include direct and indirect gifts to a political party, elected member or candidate in an election. While gifts made to an entity in a private capacity are specifically excluded from the ban, it will apply to political party subscription fees which exceed \$1,000 per year and any fundraising contributions. The bill includes a range of new offences with strong penalties, including a specific provision for prohibited donations to be recovered by the state. Under these provisions, if a person accepts a prohibited donation, the state may recover up to twice the amount or value of the donation.

The bill also strengthens the requirements about how councillor conflicts of interest—real or perceived—are managed. The bill introduces requirements for additional information to be included when a councillor declares a conflict of interest or a material personal interest in a matter. This will enable the community to have a better understanding of precisely what the conflict is when it is declared. The bill also establishes an obligation on other councillors to report a councillor's conflict of interest or material personal interest if they believe—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, if you persist you will be warned under standing order 253A.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—or suspect on reasonable grounds that the councillor in question has an interest that has not been declared. The bill also introduces significantly stronger penalties for noncompliance by councillors with the tighter conflict of interest obligations. I know that, during consideration and debate on this bill both in this chamber and in the public arena, references will be made to extending the ban on donations from property developers to other types of donors. In response, I wish to draw everyone's attention to pages 78 and 79 of the CCC's report on Operation Belcarra. On those pages, the CCC clearly states that other types of donors do not demonstrate the same risk of actual or perceived corruption in Queensland local government as property developers. Furthermore, the CCC concludes that 'a more encompassing ban is not appropriate.' I am prepared to be guided by the advice provided by our independent corruption watchdog and I urge others to do the same.

This bill is part of a comprehensive suite of reforms aimed at increasing transparency, integrity and accountability in state and local government. It is consistent with and continues to reinforce my government's well-established record on integrity and accountability. Earlier this year, my government introduced Australia's first real-time electronic donation disclosure system to ensure that Queenslanders are fully informed when they go to the polls. A new model for the management of councillor complaints is also currently before the House.

My government has never wavered from the principle that elected officials must meet the community's reasonable and legitimate expectation of integrity. Under the former government, we saw transparency and integrity utterly undermined in this state. This bill reinforces our commitment to integrity and transparency.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Kawana. I have counselled you several times. You will be warned under standing order 253A the next time.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am proud to lead a government that has worked tirelessly to restore these values. I remind honourable members that this legislation adopts the recommendations from the extensive and independent investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission. While I respect the views of stakeholders, including those who argue against a ban on property developer donations, the CCC, our standing royal commission, found this to be a risk of corruption. The CCC concluded—

There is a real risk of corruption when donations are made with the expectation that the recipient will, in return, make decisions that deliver material benefits to the donor.

In this year—the 30th anniversary of the *Moonlight State* and the initiation of the Fitzgerald Inquiry that led to the formation of the CCC's precursor, the Criminal Justice Commission—the parliament and all members of parliament need to ensure we guard against the risk of corruption, real or perceived, re-emerging in the body politic. That is why my government has taken such significant actions around lowering the threshold for declaring political donations and introducing Australia's first system of real-time disclosure of political donations. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (3.12 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (3.12 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 27 November 2017.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, whenever a member is placed on a warning in the morning session, by lunchtime the slate becomes clean and we start afresh. That is why the member for Kawana was going down the path of receiving a warning.

Mr Bleijie: A fresh start.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: A fresh start.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3116, on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (3.13 pm), continuing: Before the lunch adjournment I was saying that no other state has the offence of industrial manslaughter. That brings me to ask: why? It has been pretty interesting to read a couple of extracts from today's newspapers, including an article in the *Australian* with the headline 'ALP retreats on manslaughter law for miners'. It states—

Last night, as Industrial Relations Minister Grace Grace began the debate on the legislation—without the amendment that applied to the mining sector—a government spokeswoman—

whomever that might be—

confirmed the resources sector coverage was 'not happening'.

'It's going to consultation.'

Finally, that word 'consultation' appears in relation to this bill. I come back to the premise of why. As the shadow minister for multicultural affairs, I enjoy the interaction that I have in that sphere with the member for Brisbane Central. In relation to why there might be this absolute, blind necessity to get this industrial manslaughter legislation through so urgently as this parliament is drawing to a close over the coming months—or, who knows, weeks—I will quote from the editorial in today's *Courier-Mail*, which states—

Given the CFMEU—

Here we go again with the CFMEU—

has proved such a rich vein of funds, tipping \$180,000 into Labor's coffers since 2015, Ms Palaszczuk is obviously reluctant to bite the hand that feeds her.

Little wonder the moral superiority of the Left is morphing into such low acts when their political arm continues to take their money and remain members.

Before the break I mentioned that one of my very good friends is a contractor who has a medium sized construction firm. He has said that, in addition to the normal shenanigans on site that he endures with the CFMEU, there was a special whip-round with a cup for a top-up of the coffers for the election, whenever that might be. It was interesting to note that some of the workers mentioned the fact that they were particularly concerned about some of their Labor members. One was the member for Brisbane Central. In July this year, the media reported that the CFMEU was doing letterbox drops in the electorate of the Minister for Employment as well—I might add—as the electorates of other cabinet ministers about, from the CFMEU's perspective, Labor's appalling record. The flyer said, 'Health and safety neglected under Grace Grace's watch.' In the interests of administrative efficiency I will not table a copy of it, but the DL drop contained a picture of the minister and was titled, 'It's a disaster'. It also contained the typical little tick boxes of different things. The first box to be ticked on the campaign flyer was that industrial manslaughter laws were not implemented yet.

I will go back to the genesis of this bill. In July this year, the *Best practice review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland—final report* was published. That report made 58 recommendations. That review was undertaken in response—and all sides of the chamber are on song with this issue—to the tragic circumstances surrounding a couple of fatalities that received a lot of media publicity. In no order at all there was the tragedy that occurred at Dreamworld in October last year and also the incident at the redevelopment of Eagle Farm Racecourse where, tragically, people lost their lives.

The reviewer stated that these incidents 'raised concerns about the effectiveness of current offences and penalties under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011'. That act is based on the model Work Health and Safety Act—the model act as it is referred to—which was also adopted about six years ago by the ACT, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, South Australia, and Tasmania. Under the terms of reference for the review, the reviewer was asked to consider Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's 'effectiveness in light of contemporary regulatory practice'. That included all the functions of WHSQ including, as one would expect, inspections, investigations, prosecutions and enforcement undertakings. The reviewer also considered specific issues, such as whether an 'offence of gross negligence causing death ... should be introduced' and whether current penalty levels under the Work Health and Safety Act were a sufficient deterrent to noncompliance.

The review and subsequent recommendations specifically recommended the appropriateness of WHSQ's compliance and enforcement policy and the effectiveness of the compliance regime. Very tellingly and interestingly, the reviewer, Mr Tim Lyons, was appointed by the honourable Grace Grace MP, the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs to undertake the best practice review and to consider and report on any potential measures, both operational and legislative, that could be taken to address the matters raised in the terms of reference. The reviewer was supported by a tripartite reference group which provided commentary and advice on the matters to be considered as part of the review.

Some members may know the history of this particular gentlemen, Mr Lyons. He was a former senior ACTU official. In 2015 he quit as the assistant secretary after failing to replace then general secretary Dave Oliver. The government received a report from Mr Lyons which made 58 recommendations, the majority of which relate to operational improvements for WHSQ or the Work Health and Safety Board. The discussion paper was released at 2.10 pm on Thursday, 13 April 2017. I

would not normally get fixated in a debate in relation to very specific dates and very specific times, but it comes back to the essence of openness, transparency and accountability. As it was dropped at 2.10 pm on Thursday, 13 April, due to the four day Easter break, the CCIQ and other interested stakeholders were provided with only two full business days to review a 104-page document, review sources, consult with members et cetera and provide meaningful commentary at a face-to-face consultation with the reviewer, Mr Tim Lyons. That is two days to review a 104-page report. It is interesting that with the amendments that have been circulated in the last 24 hours we finally see the word 'consultation' with the amendments that have been moved that I spoke about recently in relation to the applicability with miners.

Tellingly, one of the submissions to the Queensland parliamentary Finance and Administration Committee on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was from the National Electrical and Communications Association, NECA, which is the peak industry body representing the interests of electrical and communications contractors Australia-wide. The NECA has 5,000 contracting companies as members and they in turn employ around 100,000 people Australia-wide. It is a significant body. The NECA employs almost 350 people across its seven chapters between Queensland, New South Wales, ACT and the other eastern seaboard states. They employ, in turn, around about 2,000 apprentice electricians and provide training to another couple of thousand.

The NECA supports workplace health and safety measures and assists its members in fulfilling their obligations in this regard through what they call their NECASafe program. This program through NECA encourages businesses to proactively and responsibly monitor their workplace safety through an overarching duty of care framework that includes procedures, policies and audits. The NECA supports all aspects of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 other—I repeat 'other'—than the introduction of the new offence of industrial manslaughter into the Work Health and Safety Act and the Electrical Safety Act. The Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will provide a significant and confusing shake-up to workplace health and safety laws in Queensland. There is already an existing manslaughter offence in the Queensland Criminal Code that means that directors can already be criminally prosecuted for serious and reckless breaches of employer duty of care and, as anyone on this side of the chamber would say, that is as it should be.

In its submission the NECA expressed concern about the changes as they simply double up on these existing provisions and take Queensland out of step with all other states. To add additional changes into the Work Health and Safety Act and the Electrical Safety Act only provides confusion and raises the concern of jurisdiction shopping with the very real likelihood that prosecutors will have multiple attempts under various legislative provisions.

Furthermore, Queensland business owners and managers are already personally liable for the health and safety of their workers under the Work Health and Safety Act. Since the existing legislation commenced on 1 January 2012—coming up to seven years ago—all executive officers of a business have been responsible and largely liable for the health and safety of every employee, contractor and subcontractor in their workplace. These new changes came only several years after the major rewrite in 2012 that was designed to promote consistency of arrangements across all states.


The new industrial manslaughter law will now take Queensland entirely out of step with approaches in other states with only the ACT having these provisions that have never been tested or used and only apply to 20 per cent of the ACT workforce. The new industrial manslaughter provisions create a significant new burden for those businesses that operate across interstate borders. It is important to note this new legislative proposal has also been introduced, tellingly, without the government conducting a regulatory impact statement—an RIS.

One further submission that I would like to touch on in my contribution is that of the Queensland Law Society. The society considers the introduction of a separate industrial manslaughter offence is simply not warranted. Offences addressing fatalities occurring at or in the course of work already exist in section 31 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and, of course, in the Criminal Code. The provisions do not account for circumstances of accident, involuntariness, reasonable excuse or acts independent of the will of the defendant employer and do not afford other defences which would otherwise be available in the Criminal Code for other homicide based offences. The Law Society told the committee that with a reduction in the standard of proof, the reduction of the fault element in negligence and a complete removal of any defence to these charges the society is concerned that these offences could be utilised by a prosecutorial agency to prosecute a person for a homicide offence not anticipated in the scope of this legislation and where there would otherwise have been insufficient evidence to prove the offence. Other contributors also spoke in a similar vein, as did the Bar Association of Queensland.

As one of the non-government members on the committee, I concur with the thoughts that were shared by the other non-government members of the committee. The non-government members of the Finance and Administration Committee completely reject the need for this union-building legislation which is faulty at law, as has been described previously by other submitters. It also needs to be clearly noted that it is adding a further cost to industry as advised by the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland, the CCIQ.

As many previous speakers have said, workplace health and safety is a shared responsibility. The LNP members of the Finance and Administration Committee believe in the dignity of work. That has been said by just about every other speaker. As I said at the start of this contribution to the debate, it is the right of every worker to go to work, receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's effort and, most importantly, come home to their loved ones at the end of their shift. At the end of the day, the only benefit that will be obtained by the practical approval by the House of this particular legislation is to empower union representatives to threaten and coerce employers to adopt more union reps and union affiliated employees or face serious prosecution consequences through union instigated prosecutions.

I have only two minutes left on the clock and so much source material to back up exactly where they have been coming from in the last 72 hours. Within the last 24 hours in this chamber on this topic we have seen some contributions which have bordered on two things, puerile and facile. This bill takes a sledgehammer-to-crack-a-walnut approach. This bill is all about union payback masquerading as workplace health and safety. I urge members to reject this bill.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.29 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As the father of an 11-year-old, I hate to imagine that in just a few years I could face the horror faced by some Queensland families who have lost sons or daughters who had only just started their first jobs. What is worse, they then learned that their child's death was preventable, caused by the recklessness or the negligence of others. Those families have faced the frustration of knowing that little would be done about that negligence and that other families could face similar tragedies into the future. The committee received public submissions and undertook hearings. The participants who moved me most were the parents of those killed at work. They are members of the interim consultative committee for work related fatalities and serious incidents. They brought home to the committee the serious nature of the legislation that we are debating today. Their sense of loss and grief was palpable. Their sons were not statistics, but cherished and loved individuals. They hold a deep sense of injustice that, in their view, the recklessness and negligence shown did not lead to manslaughter charges.

Dan Kennedy and his wife, Debbie, spoke about the preventable death of their 20-year-old son Dale and of Dale's 15-month-old son who has been left without a father. Dan said—

To date there has been a clear message sent to our family and other affected families that indicates that an industrial death is of less importance than other deaths investigated by the Queensland Police Service.

Today we can send a message to Queensland, the Kennedy family and other affected families that this House does believe it important that their son's death is investigated and that justice is done.

Another committee member who urged the committee to take action is Kevin Fuller, whose son, Matthew, was killed within his first two weeks on the job. Kevin said, '... please do not miss out on this opportunity to make the timely and important improvements'. Mr Fuller is right: we cannot miss this opportunity to bring justice to Queensland workplaces and prevent other workers from being killed.

It was a shame that the committee could not reach agreement on whether the bill be passed. It is an even greater shame that in their statements of reservation and this debate the deputy chair and member for Mermaid Beach, the member for Toowoomba South and the member for Chatsworth have simply had an antiworker and antiunion rant. That is both disappointing and entirely predictable. It fails to take seriously the need for justice when it comes to industrial manslaughter. The member for Kawana was once again disappointing and predictable as he ranted and raved against the unions without addressing the substance of the bill and the desire for justice for those Queenslanders whose sons and daughters have been killed at work.

We cannot ignore those who endanger workers through wilful blindness towards safe work conditions. At a briefing, the department stated—

Establishing a standalone offence also sends a clear message to duty holders that companies and the senior officers working for them will be held accountable for neglecting safety management.

Instead of the obsessive rants we have heard from the opposition against the organisations that try to keep Queensland workers safe—that is, Queensland unions—those opposite should support this bill and hold the negligent accountable. Union representatives know all too well what it is like to be at a site where a worker has been killed, to spend time with their families and to attend their funeral.

This bill seeks to introduce an offence of industrial manslaughter to the Work Health and Safety Act, the Electrical Act and the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act. It seeks to establish an independent statutory office for work health and safety prosecutions. It seeks to address issue resolution matters by expanding the jurisdiction of the QIRC to include hearing and determining work health and safety disputes. It aims to restore the status of codes and practices existing under the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995. It seeks to prohibit the enforceable undertakings being accepted for contraventions or alleged contraventions of the Work Health and Safety Act that involve a fatality. The bill seeks to reintroduce the ability for a person conducting a business or undertaking to appoint a workplace health and safety officer. It also seeks to enhance support for and the role of health and safety representatives in the workplace.

The member for Chatsworth spoke about consultation. As part of that consultation, in March 2017 the minister appointed, as someone independent of the department, Mr Tim Lyons to undertake a best practice review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. The review established a tripartite reference group consisting of the Ai Group, Master Builders Queensland, the Queensland Council of Unions, the Australian Workers' Union, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council and technical experts from Central Queensland University and the University of Queensland.

Some stakeholders had concerns about the standard of proof to be used to establish a breach of duty. Through the process of the hearings, the department advised that, when it comes to industrial manslaughter, the existing standard of criminal negligence will apply. The department stated—

This means that a person will be found negligent where their conduct so far departs from the standard of care expected to avoid danger to life, health and safety, and the conduct substantially contributed to the death.

We have heard that the mechanism of the bill can ensure that complex structures do not artificially remove senior responsible officers from their responsibilities where their conduct is criminally negligent. That is to ensure that safety at work becomes a culture that goes through the entire business and right through the chain of businesses that conduct the work. The bill will also create an independent office for workplace health and safety prosecutions that will have direct responsibility for ensuring that prosecutions are taken more seriously and that there is a greater understanding of the nature of workplace responsibility where there is negligent conduct.

The member for Mermaid Beach brought up the issue of cost. He said that the cost would be \$1.5 billion. However, it is both predictable and disappointing that he failed to highlight to the House what Dr Blackwood and Mr Goldsbrough of the department said in answer to a question that he put to them at a committee hearing. Mr Stevens asked—

You feel there will be no cost to industry; is that what you are saying?

Dr Blackwood clearly answered—

The costs are already there for industry to undertake that. For instance, if they wanted to have a HSO for argument's sake that would be a benefit to the business in terms of ensuring the safety of its workforce and, as I say, with things like the codes of practice there is a requirement to comply with those as a minimum at the moment. So they would probably be the key areas. The other one is health and safety reps which again provides some support to businesses in terms of ensuring that they have good health and safety outcomes.

Mr Goldsbrough added—

Can I add, the intention was, and I think I raised this at the last committee hearing, around really putting cultural change back into workplaces and getting workplaces to drive that change. There will be some cost to business from this bill, there is no doubt about that, but at the same time if we do achieve a cultural change in workplaces then there is going to be considerable savings, we would expect, as well.

Further, to show how much Mr Stevens has failed to bring this to the attention of the House, he went on to ask—

I would really like to ask the question to Mr Goldsbrough, thank you member for Logan.

We had had a bit of an altercation. He continued—


You have identified that there was an economic cost to industry and yet the department felt no need to identify what that cost would be; is that what I am hearing?

Once again Mr Goldsbrough made it clear—

As Dr Blackwood mentioned in his statement, a number of the aspects of this bill have previously been in place. Things like WHSOs, HSR training and all that was previously in the legislation. Workplaces previously had accommodated that cost within their cost structure and pricing and so in that context there is not sufficient change.

It seems that the members of the opposition have run spurious arguments that they have already put to department representatives during the committee hearings. Even though the department has answered those arguments, they have failed to bring those answers to the attention of the House. They have failed to explain that. I hope all in this House want to see brought to justice those who are so negligent in the performance of their duties that they substantially contribute to a death.

In conclusion, having met the parents involved in the interim consultative committee for work related fatalities I found them to be great advocates for workers. I make particular note of Michael Garrels and Kevin Fuller who were in the House yesterday. If their sons had half the strength, integrity and dignity of their parents then unfortunately this state has lost great Queenslanders. We owe it to them to pass laws that will create a more just workplace. There can be no dignity in a workplace where there is not justice. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (3.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. From the outset, can I declare that my husband actually undertakes work for WorkCover. He is a workplace health and safety lawyer in this state. I am enormously proud of the work he does. I should, for the benefit of the House, declare that from the outset.

I rise in support of this bill because I feel passionately about ensuring that our workplaces are the safest they can be for workers who every day go to work, undertake jobs and hope to go back home to their families safely every night. I did hear from experts in the field that in Australia one of the most dangerous places for people to be is actually their workplaces when we take into account the number of fatalities that occur on an annual basis.

When Queenslanders go to work at the start of the day, they expect to come home, but that is not always the case, quite tragically. In October of last year we saw two horrific tragedies which prompted the Palaszczuk government to act. When Cindy Low, Kate Goodchild, Luke Dorsett and Roozbeh Araghi made their trips to Dreamworld on the Gold Coast a year ago this month, nobody expected that they would not make it home. Similarly, when 34-year-old Ashley Morris and 55-year-old Humberto Leite went to work at Eagle Farm on 6 October last year, they were expected to go home that evening, but they did not. As lawmakers, it is our job to do all we can to ensure that preventable tragedies like this do not occur.


Following these tragedies, the Palaszczuk government announced a review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. I commend the minister, Grace Grace, for her excellent work in this area and for commissioning this important review. The review made some 58 recommendations aimed at keeping Queenslanders safer and this bill gives effect to key recommended legislative changes.

I support this bill which seeks to introduce a new law to deal with industrial manslaughter. It is incredibly important that we ensure business owners are appropriately penalised when negligent business decisions cause death. All businesses, no matter their size, have a responsibility to keep their workers and their customers safe. This bill will impose a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment for industrial manslaughter for an individual and the fine for a body corporate will be \$10 million. This is consistent with the review recommendation.

In addition to these penalties, the bill will also establish an independent statutory office for workplace health and safety prosecutions, expand the jurisdiction of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to hear and determine disputes relating to workplace health and safety issues, require a mandatory review of approved codes of practice every five years and enhance the role of and support for health and safety representatives, as well as a number of other amendments to protect workers.

I know that this side of the House believes businesses should guarantee a workplace that is safe for everyone, just as as lawmakers we try to ensure that our roads are as safe as possible for everyone using them. We expect and hope as lawmakers that the laws that we make will impact the lives of Queenslanders in a positive and constructive way. That is exactly what will be achieved through the passage of this bill through this House.

In the case of tragedies like these, we want families to get the justice they deserve and for businesses to be held to account so that we forever improve the practices within our workplaces. Labor supports keeping Queensland workers and communities safe. I call on the Liberal National Party opposition to join with us and vote for this common-sense legislation. One death in any workplace is one death too many.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.43 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. Together with other LNP members I do not support this bill due to the fact that this legislation is really only about union empowerment and political payback by this Labor government to its union masters. There is little doubt that this Labor government is beholden to extensive union influence, including a number of unions with a track record of criminality, lawlessness, illegality, bullying, coercion and intimidation. To see this we only have to look at the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption headed up by former High Court Justice of Australia Dyson Heydon.

This proposed legislation is flawed as per the submissions of both the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Bar Association. This legislation was drafted following the final report of the best practice review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland which was published on 3 July 2017. This review made 58 recommendations.

It is important at this stage to note that this review was brought about in response to the tragic incidents and fatalities that occurred at Eagle Farm Racecourse and Dreamworld. These tragic incidents occurred on 6 October 2016 and 25 October 2016 respectively. The Dreamworld incident did not involve the death of any worker, but, as we remember, it involved the deaths of four visitors to that particular theme park. I certainly offer my condolences to the families of those involved at the time.

Mr Tim Lyons was appointed by the Hon. Grace Grace MP, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, to undertake a best practice review and also to consider and report on any potential measures, both operational and legislative, that could be undertaken to address the matters raised in the terms of reference. Mr Lyons was supported by a tripartite reference group which provided advice on the matters that were to be considered. However, for the benefit of those in the House who do not know Mr Lyons, he is in fact a former ACTU official who resigned in 2015 as the assistant secretary after failing to replace general secretary, Dave Oliver.

Mr Walker interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I take the interjection from the member for Mansfield. At the time of his resignation he said, 'The ACTU and unions must be more active in workplaces and the community.'

Mr Lyons's report made 58 recommendations, with the majority relating to operational improvements for Workplace Health and Safety Queensland or the Workplace Health and Safety Board. The issue of most concern about the release of the discussion paper was the fact that it was done on the afternoon of Thursday, 13 April 2017. Due to the four-day Easter break, the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland, together with interested stakeholders, had only two full business days to review a 104-page document and consider its full implications.

It is important to understand that when reviewing such a document in an adequate manner, those interested and affected organisations needed to consult with members, review the sources and have face-to-face consultation with the reviewer. Noting that they only had two working days, this was simply not possible.

At this point it is also important to note some of the issues that were identified by the stakeholders after their short review of the discussion paper. Stakeholders noted that worker fatality rates have fallen substantially during the past 15 years both at a national and state level. The CCIQ strongly opposed the introduction of an additional punitive discrete offence of industrial manslaughter. The expansion of the Industrial Relations Commission as a proposed change to fix an issue which is not broken was also noted. The proof of this is that under the current arrangements disputes are handled by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. As highlighted in the best practice review, only a limited number of disputes have been lodged, indicating that this is a non-issue.

Stakeholders did not support moving away from federal harmonisation and noted that if this were to proceed it could serve to decrease Queensland's appeal to business, increase red tape and duplicate criminal burden aspects. We also know that a full review of the national system is due in 2018. Both the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland opposed new industrial manslaughter offences and advised that the current framework and system of penalties is sufficient.


I reiterate that I and non-government members unconditionally reject the presentation and form of this defective union empowering legislation before the Queensland parliament, particularly in the absence of a regulatory impact statement. On this side of the House we believe that workplace health and safety is a shared responsibility between employers, workers, unions and safety advocates. The LNP absolutely believes in the dignity of work and the absolute right of all workers to go to work and come home safely to their families at the end of each and every working day. However, there is no other state in Australia that has the offence of industrial manslaughter.

It is vitally important that we work where we can to achieve national consistency, particularly given that many employers operate across state boundaries. The Liberal National Party is proud of our record with respect to workplace health and safety and, as we released in September 2014, workplaces were safer under the LNP. In the first two years of the Liberal National Party government, workplace fatalities reduced by 21.3 per cent, general injuries were down by 8.2 per cent and serious injuries reduced by 6.1 per cent. This proud record was achieved by increased investment in injury prevention programs and via government inspectors increasing their inspection rate on worksites by 15.2 per cent. As our shadow minister, the Hon. Jarrod Bleijie MP, the member for Kawana, mentioned in his speech, we appointed some terrific workplace health and safety ambassadors.

The reviewing parliamentary committee could not agree that the bill be passed. I would encourage all members of this House to read the statement of reservation submitted by non-government members of the committee. This flawed legislation should be seen for what it is and rejected. This union dominated Palaszczuk Labor government continues to implement an ideologically unbalanced agenda which is anti jobs, anti infrastructure and anti family whilst continuing to demonise some of our most important sectors and industries whilst also jeopardising community safety through their weak law and order policies.

What we have seen from the CFMEU again just recently has been unbelievable—threats to sexually harass and physically punish those refusing to support the CFMEU's three-month siege at the Oaky North mine. It will be interesting to hear whether Labor and Greens candidates with union linkages in the upcoming state election, including in my own electorate of Moggill, repudiate such disgraceful union behaviour.

Only the LNP has a plan to build a better Moggill and a better Queensland through creating jobs, incentivising small business to employ more young people, tackling cost of living by freezing family car registration and putting downward pressure on electricity prices. Only the LNP will deliver a balanced and fair industrial relations framework here in Queensland. I urge all members to reject this flawed union dominated Labor legislation.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (3.51 pm): I rise to support the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and I do so with great satisfaction because I do believe that this bill ensures that people in the construction industry in Queensland will be held accountable for those terrible things that happen on sites. In my inaugural speech I said that I wanted to spend some of my time in this House doing what we can to prevent the deaths of construction workers within Queensland. I see what I am doing here today as part of that.

There is no doubt, as we have heard, that the construction industry is one of the most dangerous in the country. If someone is negligent or careless on a site, a worker may not come home that night. I want to stress that many do not realise the inherent everyday danger of this profession, but the workers who work in it do. If we listen to their stories, we can see how much it preoccupies them and why this legislation is needed. We need to listen to their stories.

Let us look at a story recounted by Jade Ingham during the committee hearings on this bill. He said—

It gets personal. It is personal for us. Whatever else people think about the CFMEU, or the building industry generally, we know that, by our presence on construction sites, people have a higher chance of going home to their family that afternoon. That is what drives us.

I recount the story told to me by two local CFMEU blokes in my area, Andrew Ramsay and Eddie Bland. Their stories about workmates who have been severely or fatally injured on worksites make you realise how potentially dangerous construction sites can be. They told me the story of a major infrastructure project in Brisbane which endured three fatalities during the construction phase. One worker was fatally crushed when a beam he was cutting fell on him. Andrew told me of another fatality of 24-year-old Tom Takarua. A bridge beam weighing 18 tonnes toppled over and crushed him on the Boggo Road bus lane project when it should have been bolted to the headstocks. The company in question, he informs me, was charged and appealed the case a record 13 times. I have been told that the company pleaded guilty after eight years and were given a \$90,000 fine with no conviction recorded.

There was a near fatality at a major infrastructure project in my area which I have talked about before, where a worker put his head into a lift well and his skull was almost crushed by a lift that was operating. I want to talk briefly about the swinging stage incident. I will read an article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* and then I will table it. The article states—

Scaffolding company fined \$700K, director receives suspended jail sentence over deaths of two Gold Coast men

A scaffolding company and its director who installed a “woefully inadequate” system leading to the deaths of two Gold Coast men at work have been heavily fined and suspended jail imposed.

Allscaff Systems Pty Ltd was fined \$700,000 and director Ralph Michael Smith was given a 12-month jail sentence wholly suspended after a scathing judgment in the Beenleigh Magistrates Court.

Smith and Allscaff Systems pleaded guilty to breaching the Workplace Health and Safety Act following an investigation into the death of workers Chris Gear and Steven Sayer from the Pegasus high-rise construction at Broadbeach in 2008.

The court was told Australian standards were ignored and basic instructions not followed when Smith and his company installed the fixtures to hold swing stage platforms on the site.

Mr Gear and Mr Sayer were working in one of the swing stages 26 storeys up when it came loose and fell to the ground, killing them both.

Tabled paper: Article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* online, dated 28 February 2015, titled ‘Scaffolding company fined \$700K, director receives suspended jail sentence over deaths of two Gold Coast men’ [\[2033\]](#).

We have heard the story of Jason Garrels, a 16-year-old apprentice who was electrocuted in 2012. I will not say anything about the case, except that hearing about it has had a great effect on me. I know that Michael Garrels has fought for many years to get legal actions happening, and I feel that the barriers that he has encountered are going to be partially addressed through this bill.

These are horrific stories, but the statistics on construction fatalities are even more horrifying. Queenslanders are dying at an unacceptable rate on construction sites in Queensland. Since 2007, there have been over 100 fatalities in the construction industry in Queensland. Yet, since 2008, no fatality has occurred on a unionised site in Queensland. Since 2008, there have been 81 deaths on building sites in Queensland and not one on a unionised site.

I think this bill points a way forward. It really does improve the life of working Queenslanders. I know that men and women in the construction industry feel that it is unfair if an action that causes a death through criminal negligence results in just a \$90,000 or \$130,000 fine. They feel it is unfair that people are not serving time and convictions are rarely recorded.

I want to address a couple of issues that have been brought up in the debate so far. It has been pointed out in some of the documents on this bill and by some on the opposite side that we do not really need it—that we can get the DPP and other authorities to pursue prosecution under existing laws. The member for Kawana, for example, said the system was working and that current laws were adequate from a strict legal perspective. My answer is: why haven’t these cases I have talked about had their day in court, had a full and fair day in court? How come there have been no prosecutions to the extent that we would expect in cases like this? Why would it take five to six years to get your day in court? Other people have said, ‘Perhaps we could rely on the ABCC.’ May I point out that in Victoria not one criminal conviction was recorded as a result of its formation over its seven previous years of existence, but in those seven years there were 255 deaths in Australia on construction sites and 356 within the construction industry.

Another point I want to rebut is that the members for Kawana and Moggill said that we should repudiate certain actions by union members that have been ventilated over the last few days. I put to them: why will they not repudiate or condemn the deaths that have occurred when companies have wilfully flouted workplace health and safety laws—deaths where no conviction has ever been recorded? The fact that they have focused on only one activity in the last few days and ignored those deaths—why we are here today—shows precisely why we need this legislation. We should not be able to pick and choose. The people in question who are facing prosecution over deaths should not be able to get away with it. They should be made to feel the full force of the law.

It is all too easy to say, ‘Let’s get the police involved in policing a picket line,’ but it seems to be all too hard to get the police or authorities involved when you have the death of a worker in an accident. We could leave the law just as it is and the deaths will go on or we could change the law, as we are doing today, and prevent at least some deaths in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (3.58 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The explanatory notes accompanying this bill state—

In October 2016 the Government announced a best practice review of work health and safety laws ... as a result of fatalities at Dreamworld and Eagle Farm.

The explanatory notes claim—

These fatalities highlighted the need to ensure the current work health and safety (WHS) framework, and how it is administered, is robust, operates as an effective deterrent to non-compliance, and is responsive to emerging issues.

Under the terms of reference, the review specifically considered the appropriateness of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's compliance and enforcement policy, the effectiveness of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's compliance regime, enforcement activities and dispute resolution processes, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's effectiveness in relation to providing compliance information and promoting work health and safety awareness and education, the appropriateness and effectiveness of the administration of public safety matters by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, and any further measures that can be taken to discourage unsafe work practices including the introduction of a new offence of gross negligence causing death as well as increasing existing penalties for work related deaths and serious injuries.

On 3 July this year the final report of the review was provided to the government. The review proposed a number of legislative amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Some mirroring amendments are also proposed for the Electrical Safety Act and the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act. The shadow minister, the member for Kawana, has outlined why the LNP opposition will not be supporting this bill, and I support that position in relation to the proposed amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act. They are unnecessary and they are not supported by any industry groups that made submissions to the parliamentary committee in any industry sector or, interestingly, as the member for Kawana pointed out, by the Law Society or the Bar Association and, within those organisations, the legal professionals practising in that particular area of the law.

I note that none of the incidents that led to the establishment of the review occurred in the resources sector. I note also that the terms of reference of the review did not include any of the four resource sector safety and health acts. I note further that the final report following the review did not contain any recommendations relating to any of the four resource sector acts in Queensland. Yet in recent days it has emerged that the government dragged in resource industry representatives last week and informed them that the offence of industrial manslaughter would be extended to the Queensland resources sector via amendments to the four resource sector safety and health acts.

The LNP has received copies of correspondence that was sent directly from the Premier and the Minister for Mines clearly indicating that they had been told that the offence of industrial manslaughter would be imposed on their sector. That would occur without any of the proposed provisions being subjected to consultation with those industry groups or the normal scrutiny of the parliamentary committee process. That would be unacceptable and it would be enough of a reason to reject those proposed amendments on face value.

The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations has not referred to any of those foreshadowed amendments in her contribution to the second reading debate. She has not referred to the introduction of those amendments as they would relate to the resources sector and the four resource sector safety and health acts. It may very well be that the government has made the decision not to proceed with those proposed amendments to insert the offence of industrial manslaughter into Queensland's four resource sector health and safety acts at this particular time. If that is the case, that would be a good thing. It is only fair and reasonable that any proposed amendments to these laws which relate to the very serious issue of work health and safety frameworks on Queensland's resource sector sites are properly consulted on and scrutinised in the normal way.

If the Palaszczuk government is intending to do that at some time in the future after a proper consultation process, I suggest that they give that proposal a bit more consideration as to the justification for inserting the offence of industrial manslaughter in our resource sector acts, because at the moment I am not aware of any good reason why that should be the case. I was alarmed to read comments by the Minister for Mines in the *Australian* newspaper on Tuesday in relation to this matter when the Minister for Mines said—

Government wants the legislation to cover workers in mines, quarries, on oil and gas rigs and people working with explosives. Shouldn't a mine worker have the same protections as a worker in Coles?

If you did not have an understanding of the four resource sector safety and health acts in Queensland and the reasons why they stand separately from Queensland's general workplace health and safety framework, you could probably be excused for thinking that the statement of the Minister for Mines was a reasonable one and that all workers should be treated and protected equally while at work. Unfortunately, because the Minister for Mines does have an understanding of the four resource sector safety and health acts in Queensland and the reasons why they stand separately from Queensland's general workplace health and safety framework the minister's comments cannot be easily excused. They are, in fact, a little worrying—an irresponsible oversimplification of what the proposed changes may do if they are introduced.


The fact is that an employee at Coles working in a supermarket environment and subject to the Work Health and Safety Act does not in any way face the same working conditions and potential risks as someone employed at a site subject to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act and the Explosives Act. It is exactly for that reason that the resources sector in Queensland is subject to separate and distinct resource safety and health legislation.

I have to reject the apparent reasoning put forward by the minister on Tuesday that we ought in our specialised resource sector safety and health laws to insert the same thing that has been proposed for Queensland's general work health and safety legislation, because it is based on an oversimplified argument that what is good for the goose is good for the gander. That is very wrong. I am surprised, quite frankly, to have read such a throwaway line from the Minister for Mines. He should know that the resources sector is very different from our normal workplace health and safety regime and for very good reason. The four resource sector safety and health acts in Queensland have a focus on individual responsibility to report health or safety risks in the workplace to create a culture and encourage an environment of continual improvement.

To instead move towards creating a culture which puts a priority on allocating culpability for the purposes of establishing an offence I think will impair the environment of continual improvement as it relates to Queensland's resources sector. You will certainly not attract anyone to act as a senior site executive for a resource project where, in addition to those overarching responsibilities that they currently have under Queensland's resources sector health and safety legislation, they will also be subject to the burden of potentially being charged with the offence of industrial manslaughter.

Furthermore, the structure of the resources sector safety and health legislation is such that the number of individuals who may be subject to or exposed to the offence of industrial manslaughter is very wide indeed. That is because those resource sector safety and health acts delegate to a large number of responsible persons powers of oversight with respect to safety and health in the workplace.

I do not want to go into any more detail about the specifics of those pieces of legislation or what the ramifications would be if those amendments were inserted, but I warn the Minister for Mines that he should think carefully before he allows the integrity of Queensland's four resource sector safety and health acts to be interfered with by the inclusion of the offence of industrial manslaughter because such an amendment I think would certainly be unjustified and inappropriate.

 **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) (4.09 pm): I am very pleased to rise to support the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill, which creates a new standalone offence of industrial manslaughter, is a vital next step in the Palaszczuk government's efforts to protect the safety of working Queenslanders and hold people to account for unsafe working conditions. Informed by Tim Lyons's *Best Practice Review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland*, companies will be held responsible for any negligence that contributes to these unnecessary and tragic deaths.


We have all seen awful tragedies at worksites on the news, but behind every one of these headlines is a family who has lost a loved one—who went to work one day and did not come home. While nothing can heal the pain these families will always carry with them, they deserve to see responsible companies held to account. An independent statutory office for work health and safety prosecutions will be established and the jurisdiction of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission will be expanded to allow them to consider and rule on health and safety disputes. Central to these changes is the application of the industrial manslaughter provisions. This means corporations can be held to account for the conduct of individuals that contributed to deaths. This will motivate corporations

to set a company culture that values safety, and it will motivate them to invest in appropriate safety mechanisms and training. This increased vigilance will reduce the likelihood of injury and fatalities, and tragic deaths at worksites will be investigated and negligent companies will be held responsible.

There has to be an effective deterrence so that appropriate safety procedures are followed to the letter, that compliance is enforced and that everyone involved in a workplace is aware and educated about their rights and responsibilities to keep people safe. It will encourage proactive management of workplace safety because lives depend on it. According to Safe Work Australia, 120 Australian workers have been killed at work already this year to the end of September. One quarter of them were in construction, and half of them were in transport, postal and warehousing industries. That is 120 families left without a mum, dad, daughter, son, brother or sister. That is 120 families trying to get by without the wages their loved one earned. These lives matter, and the companies that create and profit from the conditions in which they work should be held to account.

It may suit their rhetoric for the LNP opposite to cry foul that the government is delivering changes sought by unions, but what they forget is that unions represent working people on thousands of worksites across Queensland—unions who have at the core of their very existence the protection of workers' safety and conditions. As an employment lawyer, I acted on behalf of many union members who were injured on worksites which were unsafe. I saw firsthand the terrible result of cutting corners, bending rules and not putting safety first.

The question is whether the LNP is capable of setting aside their obsession with unions for one minute to consider the safety of working Queenslanders. Would the LNP rather have unsafe worksites? Does the LNP accept workplace deaths are part of business? We do not on this side of the House. Labor has restored the rights of injured workers to sue a negligent employer when they are injured at work, we have regulated labour hire companies and we have returned the balance to our industrial relations legislation. Today we are acting to ensure that Queenslanders come home from work and that when tragic events occur and they do not come home the person responsible is held to account. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (4.13 pm): The relatives of people killed as a result of corporate failings are entitled to see justice done—people like Michael and Lee Garrels, whose son Jason, at just 20 years old, went to work, did his day's work and then stepped in a puddle with an electrical wire in it and never came home. He had worked at the site for just nine days. His father has lobbied hard for stronger laws ever since. This bill is for him and for every other Queenslander who has lost a loved one at work, for every Queenslander who kisses a family member goodbye in the morning and wants to be sure they will return safe that night. It will show that we are prepared to hold to account those who are negligent or indifferent to workplace health and safety practices.

The bill also aims to establish a new basis for liability and it introduces the offence of industrial manslaughter into the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. So far, the ACT is the only Australian jurisdiction to have a specific industrial manslaughter offence. With this bill, Queensland will follow suit. Ultimately, these changes to the law are about ensuring there can be prosecutions where a serious criminal offence has occurred. We are talking about cases where there is such wilful disregard for employees or gross breaches in the duty of care that it results in death. Increasing the criminal accountability of companies, particularly in cases where there is a corporate culture that encourages, tolerates or leads to management failures, is a major change for the better.

We know from experience that the people who get put at risk by dodgy practices are the workers, not the company directors. Our proposed amendments will ensure greater safety for front-line workers in industries like retail, leisure services, transport and the public services—in other words, those people who work to help others and who have a duty of care to all of us, the public, whilst they perform their duties.

Legislation to correct injustice at work is not just a political point of difference with the LNP; it is a choice we on this side of the House proudly make. Every time the LNP oppose sensible reforms—whether it is labour hire licensing or industrial manslaughter—they come in here and they blame it on the unions, but this is not about unions; it is about improving the lives of hardworking Queenslanders and ensuring proper workplace protections are in place. This is not something to shy away from; it is something that is long overdue. It is about time the LNP stopped playing politics on this issue when people's lives are at stake. All workers deserve to return home safely to their loved ones at the end of

a day's work. We owe it to the people who have lost their lives at work and their families to ensure Queensland has strong industrial manslaughter laws to protect people on the job. That is why I am supporting this bill today.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.16 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to today's debate on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. We were confronted with situations last year where workers lost their lives. If we did not take the opportunity to implement a best practice review—which was announced by the Premier soon after that series of tragic events occurred—and learn from that best practice review and implement the recommendations, we would be failing workers and Queenslanders in this state.

The debate from those opposite has sunk once again to this pathological hatred of unions and this prejudice against anything they do. They have tarred every union, every union member, every worker and every father, mother, brother, sister, uncle or aunt—and I could go on—with the same brush. This is an absolute nonsense and it shows how this desperate opposition have stooped and are scraping the bottom of the barrel during desperate times on their side of the House. That is all this demonstrates. No matter what we are debating in this House—whether it is trading hours, labour licensing or health and safety—there is no doubt that the debate from those opposite sinks down to this pathological, prejudice based hatred of the union movement.

At the same time, those same people opposite are more than happy to do deals like they did with 1 William Street. They have boasted in this House about how they were doing deals with the CFMEU, yet when it does not suit them they use every excuse under the sun to come in here and bag proper laws that protect workers in this state. By not voting for this bill today, they are not taking on the responsibility we have to protect workers and to learn from events and incidents. That is what we have done. We are a bit more than 12 months down the track, and we are now debating sensible laws that will bring about safe workplaces in this state. I am very proud to have driven this much needed reform, which will strengthen the safety culture and protect Queensland workers on the job. This bill will result in increased safety awareness and best practice across-the-board from management down, from PCBUs and senior officers through to the grassroots level of workers and their representatives.

This bill is about ensuring all Queensland workers return home safely to their families at the end of the day. It is no good coming into this House and just repeating that. Actions speak louder than words, and this government is acting in relation to what we believe. It is about making sure that those responsible for creating and enforcing the culture of safety in their workplace are held accountable and meet community expectations around the safety of people's loved ones at work. The creation of a new offence of industrial manslaughter will bring about this important cultural shift.

Those opposite ask why we are doing this. They say it is not needed and it is already in the Criminal Code. I will tell them why. There has never been one successful manslaughter claim against an employer in history. There has not been one. There are three cases pending at the moment and not one case has been brought under the Criminal Code. What we are doing is ensuring that that changes and accords with societal expectations. That is what we are doing. As I have said previously, these new offences will not place any new duties on business or senior officers, but rather will reinforce safety duties already owed. If people are doing the right thing they will have nothing to fear from this legislation or these new offences.

The bill also reinforces the gravity of work related fatalities by prohibiting the ability to accept enforceable undertakings in circumstances involving a fatality. This change reflects community expectations around how fatalities in the workplace should be treated and reinforces the seriousness of such incidents. The bill also enhances the enforceability of workplace health and safety through: the establishment of an independent statutory office for work health and safety prosecutions, and they will be dealing directly with the DPP; the expansion of the jurisdiction of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to hear and determine work health and safety disputes before they escalate and before accidents occur; restoring the legislative standing of codes of practice to facilitate their enforceability by inspectors; enhancing the role of, and support for, health and safety representatives; reintroducing the role of workplace health and safety officers; and clarifying inspector powers. All combined, these changes will ensure Queensland work health and safety laws—and their enforcement—are robust and transparent and that compliance is driven by all parties in the workplace.

I will now take the opportunity to address some of the remarks made by members opposite during this debate. I will start with the comments made by various members, including the members for Kawana and Mermaid Beach, regarding the views of the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland

Bar Association that the proposed amendments are duplicative and the current regime is adequate. As I previously advised when the bill was introduced, although individuals and corporations are indeed liable to be prosecuted for manslaughter under the Criminal Code, there are limitations that impede the ability of larger organisations to be successfully prosecuted for a worker's death. In particular, the courts have interpreted the current manslaughter provision under the Criminal Code as requiring an act or omission to have been performed by someone with the authority to act as the corporation. For example, an individual director or employee must be identified as the directing mind and will of the corporation. This generally requires proof of fault by a top-level manager or director. That is difficult to establish in the case of large corporations with elaborate corporate structures, and I spoke about this in my previous speech.

This ultimately means that manslaughter prosecutions under the Criminal Code are only successful against smaller businesses and the prosecutions against large corporations are unlikely to succeed. Anyone with a law background understands those principles. Placing the offence in the Work Health and Safety Act overcomes this issue by enabling the conduct of employees, agents and officers to be attributed to the organisation, which addresses the current limitations under the Criminal Code. Establishing the stand-alone offence also sends a clear message to duty holders that companies, and the seniors officers working for them, will be held accountable for neglecting safety management.

Further, in response to other concerns raised by members regarding the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland, I reiterate that the amendments in relation to codes of practice reinforce their status as the minimum standards for managing workplace health and safety risks. In doing so, the amendments provide clarity and certainty on what are the minimum standards. When I met with the CCIQ just recently I confirmed to them that restoring the status of the codes of practice allows those companies to use these codes as a defence in a prosecution under the Work Health and Safety Act, and so they should. Under these new provisions a person conducting a business or undertaking will still be able to adopt alternative safety measures to those outlined in the code. This ensures that technological advances and business innovation can be taken into account when deciding how to manage health and safety risks in a workplace. Importantly, the proposed amendments in relation to codes of practice do not impose a reverse onus of proof. That is a very strange interpretation of being able to use these as a defence, as suggested by those opposite.

I note the concerns expressed about the proper resourcing of inspectors, investigators and prosecutors. I can confirm that there has been no reduction in funding over the past three years. What has happened is that different areas have now transferred to another area within the department. The funding for Workplace Health and Safety has not reduced in the past three years.

I acknowledge that increased community expectations about Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's role puts pressure on the budget and resources. I share the wishes of the member for Kawana and other members to see funding allocations increase for that purpose. I can assure everyone in this House that I will do all I can to support the position that we fund Workplace Health and Safety as best we possibly can. Recommendations 17 and 18 of the best practice review relate to this very issue and call for a re-examination of the funding formula and the staffing model for Workplace Health and Safety Queensland in order for the agency to keep pace with increases in economic activity, population growth and regulatory responsibility. The government has endorsed this recommendation and I look forward to working to put that into place as soon as possible.

I do not accept claims by those opposite that workplace health and safety outcomes were better under an LNP government. In fact, compensated fatalities show a downward trend for Queensland for the past decade, falling to 33 in 2015-16 from 53 in 2006-07. The government is committed to continuing a combination of compliance and awareness-raising activities to ensure this downward trend continues.

In response to the concerns raised regarding the bill's departure from the national model work health and safety laws, the amendments implement the findings of the best practice review of workplace health and safety, and I want to take this opportunity to thank Tim Lyons for his excellent work. For those opposite to somehow demonise the character of this man, who did excellent work, because of his background is nothing short of pathetic. These amendments address a gap in the existing regime as it applies, and is enforceable, to corporations. While the government will continually pursue a consistent, harmonised approach to work health and safety, it would be irresponsible to not address this gap until such time as an amendment to the model work health and safety laws can be achieved. A review of these national model workplace health and safety laws is due to commence in 2018. This review will consider the model offence and penalty regime and it is intended that mirror amendments to the model laws will be pursued during that process to ensure harmonisation is maintained.

I also note issues raised with regard to the forecast by the CCIQ that the bill will cost businesses—I am not even sure of the actual amount. I think it changed a bit, but it is something like over \$1.1 billion—

Mr Power: Gazillion!

Ms GRACE:—or was it gazillion? I take that interjection from the member for Logan—or was it over a gazillion dollars in the first year with ongoing costs of \$540 million?

Mr Power interjected.

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection from the member for Logan—hundreds and thousands of millions. I am advised by my department that it is not very clear how the CCIQ arrived at this figure based on the paper tabled by the member for Kawana. Further, last Wednesday I met with CCIQ together with other employers regarding the bill and, interestingly, they did not raise with me this issue in relation to the cost to business at all. There were no figures put on the table. They raised a series of issues and we discussed them in a very friendly and open manner. We went through their concerns but, interestingly, in regard to all these gazillions of dollars—and I refer to the previous interjection of the member for Logan—not at any stage was the cost to industry raised with me during that meeting. In fact, good workplace health and safety makes good business sense, and those employers know it.

As I have previously advised the House, the industrial manslaughter offences will not impose any new duties on PCBUs or senior officers beyond those that they are already required to comply with. That means that, if they are already doing everything they are supposed to be doing, there should be no additional cost to business.

In relation to the code of practice amendments, codes are already considered to be the minimum standard. Businesses should now be working to the standards outlined in the existing codes and any additional costs experienced by business will be as a result of not already adhering to codes of practice such as the minimum standards.

The costs associated with the training of health and safety representatives and the reintroduction of the work health and safety officers is not considered to be significant, given that the appointment of a WHSO is not mandatory and the HSRs are already entitled to attend an initial five-day training course if requested. Where businesses elect to hire a workplace health and safety officer, they will consider this in the context of the health and safety benefits to be achieved, including if the workplace health and safety officer is able to effect cultural change in their workplace.

The Palaszczuk government believes that all workers have the right to return home safely from work. We remain committed to protecting workers in mines, quarries, on oil and gas rigs and people working with explosives, which are covered by specific resources legislation. However, stakeholders and crossbenchers have made it very clear that consultation is required to progress such significant reforms to the resources industries health and safety legislation. These proposals will be taken forward to the tripartite advisory committees—the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee—for discussion and consultation before advice is provided to Minister Lynham. Any proposed amendments will then be introduced to the parliament as soon as possible for scrutiny via parliamentary committee and debate.

As Minister Lynham has said, should a mineworker not have the same protections as a worker in Coles? Coalmining employers have worked closely with government, unions and medicos to bring about major reforms to protect coal workers from black lung and other mine dust lung diseases. The resources safety bill is currently before the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee for consideration. This bill contains significant increases in monetary penalties and retains sentences of imprisonment along with the option for removal or suspension of a statutory ticket from a statutory officer as a suite of deterrents to further bolster the safety standards in the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act and the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act.

I will move a number of minor amendments to the bill during the consideration in detail stage of the debate. These amendments are aimed at improving the clarity of the bill, providing certainty for stakeholders and implementing the intended policy and objectives of the bill. These amendments have been circulated to members and will clarify when a worker is carrying out work for the business and undertaking, require a person conducting a business or undertaking to give a copy of a provisional improvement notice issued by a health and safety representative to the regulator, and clarify that section 23 of the Criminal Code does not apply to the offence in this part.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Finance and Administration Committee and the staff of the committee for their detailed consideration of the bill. I would like to thank our reviewer, Tim Lyons. In particular, I would like to thank those who made submissions and attended the public hearings on this bill. As I have previously stated, at its core this debate is about the lives of workers and ensuring that we do all we can to prevent fatalities in Queensland workplaces. I encourage all members to support the bill. I think Michael Garrels summed it up best in a statement that I received from him this afternoon. He said, 'Of all the 40 affected families who have been actively involved in the committee, not one of them thinks the creation of this new offence is a bad idea.' I think that says it all. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 43:

ALP, 39—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczyk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

NOES, 39:

LNP, 38—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Springborg, Stevens, Walker, Watts, Weir.

PHON, 1—Dickson.

Pairs: Byrne, Costigan; Enoch, Stuckey; Lauga, Sorensen.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 70—



Ms GRACE (4.41 pm): I seek leave to move amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Ms GRACE: I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 4 (Insertion of new pt 2A)

Page 9, after line 23—

insert—

- (3) For this part, a reference to a worker carrying out work for a business or undertaking includes a reference to a worker who is at a workplace to carry out work for the business or undertaking, including during a work break.

2 Clause 4 (Insertion of new pt 2A)

Page 10, after line 1—

insert—

- (3) The Criminal Code, section 23 does not apply to an offence under this part.

3 After clause 6

Page 12, after line 21—

insert—

6A Insertion of new s 97A

After section 97—

insert—

97A Person conducting business or undertaking to give copy of provisional improvement notice to regulator

- (1) This section applies if a health and safety representative issues a provisional improvement notice to a person conducting a business or undertaking.

- (2) As soon as practicable after the provisional improvement notice is issued, the person conducting the business or undertaking must give the regulator a copy of the notice.
Maximum penalty—50 penalty units.

4 Clause 55 (Insertion of new pt 2B)

Page 54, after line 5—

insert—

- (3) For this part, a reference to a worker carrying out work for a business or undertaking includes a reference to a worker who is at a workplace to carry out work for the business or undertaking, including during a work break.

5 Clause 55 (Insertion of new pt 2B)

Page 54, after line 11—

insert—

- (3) The Criminal Code, section 23 does not apply to an offence under this part.

6 Clause 62 (Insertion of new pt 2A)

Page 58, after line 20—

insert—

- (3) For this part, a reference to a worker carrying out work for a business or undertaking includes a reference to a worker who is at a place where recreational water activities are provided, or work is carried out, for the business or undertaking, including during a work break.

7 Clause 62 (Insertion of new pt 2A)

Page 58, after line 26—

insert—

- (3) The Criminal Code, section 23 does not apply to an offence under this part.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

Tabled paper: Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes to Hon. Grace Grace's amendments [2028].

Mr BLEIJIE: It would not be a bill introduced by Minister Grace unless it had a series of amendments to it. We have come to expect that from the Minister for Industrial Relations.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Thank you, members. The member for Kawana has three minutes.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: No, thank you, Treasurer. Let the member for Kawana make his speech.

Mr BLEIJIE: It is certainly not like the Racing Bill, for which the minister had 200 amendments. We will keep reminding her of that. Then again, she reminds us that that was not her bill; it was Bill Byrne's bill.

One of the amendments moved by the minister today relates to section 23 of the Criminal Code, and the minister refers in the explanatory notes to excluding the defence of accident. Accident is a pretty important provision as it relates to section 23, 'Intention—motive', of the Criminal Code. You have to have motive and intention with respect to accident. Getting rid of accident as a defence is more than just, as the minister says, a consequential amendment to the bill. I suspect it was not raised through the consultation stage. It was not noted in the original bill. Specifically excluding the defence of accident from section 23 of the Criminal Code basically means that a person with no knowledge of the issue that caused a death can still be held liable for the offence of industrial manslaughter because they cannot rely on the defence in the Criminal Code of accident. I put on the record serious reservations about that clause.

Disappointingly, I note that Katter's Australian Party is again cosyng up to the Labor Party on industrial matters. As I said—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, can you direct your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: We know that there are only two political parties in this chamber that just voted for this legislation that are beholden to the CFMEU in Queensland—that is, the Katter's Australian Party and the Labor Party.


Ms GRACE: Members do not need to take my word for it; they need only go to *Hansard* to see how amendments to his own legislation were moved by the member for Kawana when he was a minister. We will do a count and see who had more. I do not believe it would be me. Those opposite keep referring to one particular bill. We on this side of the House like to get things right and not rush bills through in the middle of the night.

These amendments are required. There is a specific duty of care under the health and safety legislation. The changes have been made after discussion with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. They are warranted. It does not create a more onerous situation. I commend the amendments to the House.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 70, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.45 pm): I move—


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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.45 pm): I move—


That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Notice of Motion


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, objection was taken by the Leader of the House to the terms of the notice of motion given by the member for Burleigh this morning. In accordance with standing order 70(2) and with the agreement of the member for Burleigh, the notice of motion has been amended. I understand that an amended version has been circulated in anticipation of the debate.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2)

APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) resumed from 5 September (see p. 2615) and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) resumed from 5 September (see p. 2617).

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (4.46 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Finance and Administration Committee for its report, tabled on 11 October 2017, regarding the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017. I am pleased to note that the committee supports the bills and recommends that they be passed.

The purpose of these bills, as I have mentioned previously, is to provide for supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure that occurred in the 2016-17 financial year. Unforeseen expenditure is the term used to describe payments from the Consolidated Fund for departments which is above the amount approved at budget time. Although called 'expenditure', unforeseen expenditure can also relate to the additional appropriation provided to Treasury for the repayment of debt.

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by five departments in the 2016-17 financial year of \$2.270 billion. Approximately 47 per cent of this total unforeseen expenditure was incurred by Queensland Treasury and was primarily related to debt repayment. The fact that the government has been able to make this additional pay-down of the state's debt is an example of our prudent fiscal management.

A \$1.032 billion extra repayment of general government debt was possible through increased royalty revenue associated with the spike in coal prices in late 2016. This is indicative of a government with prudent financial management. When an unexpected revenue spike came in, this government did not squander it; we responsibly paid down debt. Further, this reduction in debt provided the capacity to fund additional capital projects across the forward estimates in the 2017-18 budget.

The additional pay-down of debt is emblematic of this government's fiscal responsibility. The government's debt action plan focuses on better balance sheet management to reduce general government sector debt. This improvement in balance sheet management has contributed to significant improvements in the state's debt position. The benefits are particularly evident in terms of the general government sector debt-to-revenue ratio which, at 60 per cent for 2017-18, is significantly lower than the peak of 91 per cent in 2012-13. The debt action plan initiatives mean that general government sector debt is estimated to be \$33.758 billion in 2017-18. This is \$9.347 billion lower than the peak in 2014-15 of \$43.105 billion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): Order! Audible noise levels are a little high. If members have to have a conversation, please take it outside.


Mr PITT: The 2017-18 budget shows that general government borrowings are estimated to be \$14.3 billion lower at 30 June 2017 than had been forecast in the previous government's 2014-15 budget. To put this into context, raising an additional \$14.3 billion of payroll tax over three years would have required the payroll tax rate to more than double from 4.75 per cent to around 10.8 per cent. Alternatively, \$14.3 billion equates to almost one-third of the state's total expenditure on health services over the past three years. This improvement in the general government sector debt position is a stark improvement on the debt management of the previous government. Under the Newman-Nicholls government's three budgets, general government sector debt increased by \$13.6 billion in the three financial years to 2014-15. All of the debt reduction under the Palaszczuk government was achieved without selling any of Queensland's income-generating assets. It was achieved without increasing taxes on Queenslanders or reducing services.

A significant portion of the unforeseen expenditure—approximately 38 per cent of the overall unforeseen expenditure—was incurred by the Department of Energy and Water Supply. This was primarily related to the Powering Queensland Plan and Energy Queensland community service obligation under the uniform tariff policy. The Palaszczuk government is investing \$1.16 billion in the Powering Queensland Plan to ensure an affordable, secure and sustainable energy supply for Queensland homes, businesses and industry. As part of the plan, we are investing \$771 million to reduce network charges until at least 2020, reducing the 2017-18 increase for the typical regional Queensland household from 7.1 per cent to 3.3 per cent and for a typical small business from 8.2 per cent to 4.1 per cent. The plan also includes a number of measures to put downward pressure on wholesale prices, including returning Swanbank E to service, directing Stanwell to alter its bidding strategies and investigating the restructure of government owned generators. We have already seen the benefits of our initial actions, with forward wholesale prices in Queensland for the 2018 calendar year reducing by over 10 per cent. This follows our direction to Energy Queensland to not appeal the regulator's decision, potentially saving Queenslanders billions.

The other significant portion of unforeseen expenditure—approximately 13 per cent of the overall unforeseen expenditure—was \$300 million for the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. This funding mainly relates to increased funding for the Works for Queensland program, the Indigenous water and wastewater infrastructure program, the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority and the Commonwealth government bringing forward its 2017-18 funding for grants and disaster relief funding.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service in the 2016-17 financial year of \$2.411 million. The unforeseen expenditure primarily relates to additional funding for the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee and increases in salaries for members of parliament following the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal's determination in August 2016 and additional funding to upgrade lifts in the parliamentary Annexe and to upgrade the parliamentary IT systems, including the broadcast of proceedings and members' video on demand.

The occurrence of unforeseen expenditure and the preparation of supplementary appropriation bills is standard practice each year. The amount of unforeseen expenditure in 2016-17 represents 4.76 per cent of the 2016-17 budgeted appropriation, a share which remains below the average of the past decade. It should also be noted that this level of unforeseen expenditure has occurred within the context of 2016-17, representing the largest operating surplus since 2005-06. The *Consolidated Fund Financial Report 2016-17*, which was tabled at the same time as the introduction of these bills, contains explanations of all unforeseen expenditure incurred by departments and the information supports parliament's understanding and debate of these bills. This bill continues Labor's record of responsible fiscal management which has delivered lower debt, higher growth and more jobs. I am proud to have delivered three surplus budgets, and this bill continues our strong record of economic and fiscal management. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (4.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2). I believe that one of the most important parts of our job—if not the most important—is to be providing proper scrutiny of taxpayers' money, and that is what we are doing tonight. Under the Financial Accountability Act 2009, unforeseen expenditure may be authorised by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Treasurer. Under the Constitution of Queensland, amounts can only be paid from the Consolidated Fund under the act. Therefore, the unforeseen expenditure must also be formally appropriated by parliament. These bills facilitate that requirement by seeking parliament's approval with unforeseen expenditure authorised by the Treasurer in the 2016-17 budget year.

The fact that we are debating these bills so soon after the end of the 2016-17 financial year and not next year is due to changes introduced by the LNP in government to enhance financial accountability. Indeed, it was the member for Clayfield who reversed changes made by Andrew Fraser to try to hide the supplementary appropriation bills from proper public scrutiny for as long as he possibly could. When Andrew Fraser was treasurer he desperately shifted the goalposts. He decided to combine the supplementary appropriations with the annual appropriation bills introduced on budget day. As an example, if the rules introduced by Andrew Fraser were still in place, the 2016-17 supplementary appropriations would not have been considered until the introduction of the 2018-19 budget bills. That left a gap of more than a year between when the expenditure was incurred and when it was approved by parliament. Those changes did nothing to enhance integrity and accountability. It is only right that the LNP made changes in government to stop this practice. That change is acknowledged in the explanatory notes for the Appropriation Bill (No. 2). I will at least give the member for Mulgrave credit for doing better than his Labor predecessor in this regard.

When looking at unforeseen expenditure under Labor, it is easy to see why Andrew Fraser sought to hide from scrutiny. The facts are that Labor has demonstrated a track record, incurring a significant amount of unforeseen expenditure. Over a 10-year period unforeseen expenditure under Labor averaged more than \$2.8 billion. I will repeat that: over 10 years the annual average for unforeseen expenditure under Labor was \$2.8 billion. Under the LNP from 2012 to 2015, the average was \$171 million. It was \$2.8 billion a year under Labor and \$171 million under the LNP, a difference of \$2.6 billion. If members ever wanted an illustration of the difference between Labor and the LNP when it comes to financial management, there it is—\$2.8 billion a year on average under Labor and \$171 million under the LNP, a difference of, as I said, \$2.6 billion on average.

Turning more specifically to the bills before the House, members will note that the Treasurer is seeking almost \$2.3 billion in unforeseen expenditure for the financial year starting 1 July 2016 as set out in proposed subclause 2(1) of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2). I note that in the Treasurer's second reading speech he was keen to make the point that the majority of the expenditure was for Queensland Treasury towards the repayment of debt. Let us be frank here: those funds for Queensland Treasury have nothing to do with the financial ability—or lack of—of the member for Mulgrave. This is a Treasurer whose only budget strategy is to raid public servants' super and long service leave and to use

government owned businesses as ATMs as a way of propping up his budget. Indeed, it was in the 2016-17 state budget when the Treasurer went against the only recommendation of the independent State Actuary and raided \$4 billion from the defined benefit super fund—double the amount the Actuary recommended. This followed on from the 2015-16 budget when he raided \$3.4 billion from the long service leave funding pool. As we know, these raids are exactly that—raids—because the Treasurer's own chief of staff referred to it in that way.

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those remarks and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): Will you withdraw?

Mr EMERSON: I withdraw. The Treasurer's own chief of staff in a memo in the Treasurer's office referred to those as 'raids'. He used the word 'raid'.

Mr Pitt: He didn't refer to that at all.

Mr EMERSON: He used the word 'raid'.

Mr Pitt: No, he didn't. He used the word—check what has ever been said and used by—

Mr EMERSON: What did he use? Sorry, Treasurer. I take the interjection. What did he use? What word did he use?

Mr Pitt: He used the words that the LNP mischievously use all the time.

Mr EMERSON: So what word was it?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Please speak through the chair.

Mr EMERSON: We saw just then how embarrassed this Treasurer is. He said he did not use the word. Then I asked the Treasurer what word he did use. He would not say it. Fonzie from *Happy Days* could not say sorry.

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order. Hansard will very clearly pick up what I said. I also find those comments personally offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): Will you withdraw, please.

Mr EMERSON: I withdraw. As I said, the Fonze in *Happy Days* could not say sorry.

Mr Watts: No, it was 'wrong'.

Mr EMERSON: That is right. He could not say 'wrong'. We know now that the Treasurer will not admit what his chief of staff said in his own office. He said the word 'raid'. When the Treasurer interjected I asked him 'What word did you say?' There was a deafening silence. Just like Fonzie could not say the word 'wrong', the Treasurer will not say the word that his own office says, which is 'raid'. That is the incompetence of this Treasurer. He knows his whole fiscal principles are about raids, write-downs and rip-offs. That is this budget from Labor over and over again.

Mr Pitt: So what is your answer? Is it asset sales?

Mr EMERSON: The Treasurer does not admit that it is wrong. A moment ago, he just admitted to saying that it was not said. Now he asks, 'What is the alternative?'

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order. I do not take any pleasure in rising to a point of order. The member is verballing me. Hansard will clearly pick up that I responded to his interjection.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Treasurer, please take your seat.

Mr EMERSON: The member for Mulgrave would have his colleagues believe that he is doing a good job. After that performance they may not believe it. The fact is that the Treasurer's budget strategy relies on raiding funds that were built up by others before him—an unprecedented move in Queensland's history.

We are all aware of the Queensland Audit Office's commentary that those actions are only short-term solutions that cannot be relied upon indefinitely. The Treasurer is treading water and hoping for the best. But I digress. As I was saying, the funds for Queensland Treasury have nothing to do with the budget management by the member for Mulgrave and everything to do with luck. That was

highlighted by the independent officers of Queensland Treasury at the public briefing on these bills by the Finance and Administration Committee. They stated—

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by five departments in the 2016-17 financial year of \$2.270 billion. This is made up of \$1.068 billion for Queensland Treasury, mainly due to repayment of general government debt, which was enabled by increasing royalty revenue associated with the spike in coal prices in late 2017.

In comparison with the 2016-17 budget forecast, in this year's budget forecast royalties are almost \$3 billion higher. The Treasurer has had the good fortune of a royalties windfall. Although that is good news for Queensland, it should also be noted that this spike has nothing to do with the Treasurer's actions; it is just good luck.

I turn now to some of the other components of unforeseen expenditure. I would like to reflect specifically on the unforeseen expenditure in the Department of Energy and Water Supply. As highlighted in the *Consolidated Fund Financial Report 2016-17*, unforeseen expenditure for the Department of Energy and Water Supply totalled more than \$850 million. The majority of that funding was related to the Powering Queensland Plan, which Labor decided to fund in the 2016-17 budget year. As the Treasurer highlighted in his introductory speech, the operating surplus in 2016-17 would have been higher if it were not for Labor's decision to fund the Powering Queensland Plan in the 2016-17 budget year.

Why did Labor choose to fund this policy in 2016-17? If Labor put funding for this policy into the 2017-18 budget year, it would have blown this year's wafer-thin operating surplus. The operating surplus in 2017-18 is just \$146 million. The fiscal deficit is a massive \$2.4 billion. Labor made this Powering Queensland promise, which has been funded through record high electricity prices for Queensland families, in June—just days before this year's budget. But the policy was funded in the 2016-17 financial year. There is only one reason for that: to let the member for Mulgrave and the Premier make the claim that they were delivering an operating surplus in 2017-18. It is a wafer-thin surplus. I look forward to seeing how this number has changed at the upcoming midyear fiscal and economic review—if we make it that far.


I will not discuss the other unforeseen expenditure in this speech. I would like to conclude by pointing out a few home truths that the Treasurer deliberately left out of his contribution. Despite Labor's raids, debt is increasing. The budget remains in deficit. Expenses are growing out of control. Under Labor, for the first time in Queensland's history debt is heading to over \$80 billion. The 2017-18 state budget shows Labor's debt hitting \$81.1 billion. That equates to almost \$16,000 of debt for every man, woman and child across the state. Labor's debt, which costs about \$3.5 billion in interest repayments a year, is an unfair burden on the next generation of Queenslanders. Labor's last state budget also forecast fiscal deficits as far as the eye could see. Fiscal deficits will total \$11.6 billion over the next four years.

Employee expenses continue to grow out of control, with the Palaszczuk government, once again, missing its previous forecast for employee expenses growth. We see employee expenses growing at almost four times the rate of population growth. The Treasurer could not even maintain the fiscal principle that he introduced in the 2016-17 state budget for one year.

Infrastructure spending has also been slashed. Infrastructure spending as a share of the economy has fallen to its lowest level in more than a decade. In its first two budgets, Labor failed to deliver \$3.7 billion of budgeted infrastructure spending. Capital purchases have been cut by \$500 million over the next four years. This lack of projects is impacting jobs, investment and productivity and is hurting the Queensland economy. Labor's weaker fiscal principles mean that debt in Queensland will continue to grow. Our kids and our grandkids will be paying for Labor's fiscal and financial mismanagement.

Labor is addicted to taxing, spending and debt. Under the Treasurer's watch, taxes have gone up more than \$50 per person. Under Labor, Queenslanders are paying more and more but continue to see an economy in decline and the state's financial position worsening. Queenslanders see through the Treasurer and the Premier's cheap spin.

As I said before, although the LNP will not be opposing this bill, I again use this opportunity to highlight the financial recklessness of this Labor government and this Treasurer. I remind the House of the Treasurer's own chief of staff saying—and I quote again—'Questions will be raised re raiding the scheme.' They are the words of the Treasurer's chief of staff. Under this Treasurer, raiding the scheme is the basis of the budget. The Treasurer's only solution to Queensland's budget problems is to raid public servants' superannuation. His own chief of staff admitted, in his own memo within the Treasurer's own office, 'Questions will be raised re raiding the scheme.'

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (5.08 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017, which provide for supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure that occurred in the 2016-17 financial year. Under section 23 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009, the Treasurer must prepare a Consolidated Fund Financial Report containing details of transactions of the Consolidated Fund. This includes appropriations paid to each agency and adjustments approved to annual appropriations via appropriation bills introduced annually with the budget. Appropriation adjustments may relate to machinery-of-government transfers, transfers between headings within an agency, lapsed appropriation or unforeseen expenditure.

The Consolidated Fund Financial Report also contains explanations for appropriate adjustments. Unforeseen expenditure amounts for each department, as reported in the Consolidated Fund Financial Report, must be approved by parliament as supplementary appropriation. Explanations for unforeseen expenditure provided in the Consolidated Fund Financial Report assist parliament's scrutiny of supplementary appropriate requirements.

Each agency provides detailed explanations of appropriation movements for transfers between agencies, transfers between headings, lapses and unforeseen expenditure across departmental services, equity adjustments and administered items. These are published as explanatory notes to the statement of appropriations in the Consolidated Fund Financial Report. It is important to recognise that unforeseen expenditure does not equate with overspending. Unforeseen expenditure may arise for a variety of reasons, including, for example, that a department may need additional appropriation to respond to emergent issues, implement government policy or due to a change in timing of Commonwealth payments. It can also relate to additional repayments of debt.

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 seeks appropriation for expenses across five departments totalling \$2.270 billion. Of this total, \$1.068 billion, or 47 per cent, was incurred by Queensland Treasury. Of this amount, \$1.032 billion went to repayment of general government debt primarily resulting from increased royalty revenue associated with the spike in coal prices in late 2016. Thus, almost half of the unforeseen expenditure relates to debt payment rather than additional spending. At the conclusion of my contribution I intend to explain further the responsible fiscal arrangements that the Palaszczuk government and the Treasurer have undertaken. Further, it should be noted that 2016-17 represents the largest operating surplus since 2005-06. \$31 million was additional funding for the First Home Owners' Grant Scheme due to a higher than budgeted for grant when it was raised from \$15,000 to \$20,000 per claim as a measure in the 2016-17 budget.

The unforeseen expenditure incurred by other departments relates to \$853.777 million for the Department of Energy and Water Supply, which mainly relates to the Powering Queensland Plan, new Commonwealth funding for the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund and the Nullinga Dam Feasibility Study, new state funding for the Regional Business Support Package and the Digital Electricity Meters for Low Income Regional Residents Project and funding for the Energy Queensland Community Service Obligation under the Uniform Tariff Policy; \$299.679 million for the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, which mainly relates to increased funding for the Works for Queensland program, Indigenous water and wastewater infrastructure program and Cross River Rail Delivery Authority and the Commonwealth government bringing forward 2017-18 funding for grants and disaster relief funding; \$48.613 million for the Department of Housing and Public Works, which mainly relates to timing adjustments for the transfer to the Consolidated Fund of the net proceeds from the sale of surplus non-residential government properties; and \$0.026 million for the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management, which relates to increased rental costs.


The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017 seeks approval of appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service in 2016-17 of \$2.411 million. The above unforeseen expenditure relates to additional funding for the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee, increases in salaries for members of parliament, increased funding to upgrade lifts in the Parliamentary Annexe and the IT systems.

The Consolidated Fund Financial Report also shows \$1.180 billion in lapsed appropriation—that is, where the total amount of budgeted appropriate is not paid to a department within, or within two weeks of, the financial year, the unpaid amount is lapsed. As such, funding deferred into a future year, for example, to align funding to the delivery of a project or program, is included as part of lapsed appropriation. There could be any number of reasons for appropriation lapsing or being deferred. For example, delays in capital projects, changes in timing of Commonwealth funding, delays in payments of grants, which can happen for a number of reasons, for example, delays in recipients reaching milestones or services delivered more efficiently. Lapsed appropriation does not mean, from a budget

perspective, that the funds are available for reallocation to other initiatives. This can be because, for example, the expenditure has been deferred until the following year because there have been timing delays.

Through the methodical application of the Debt Action Plan, the Palaszczuk government has progressively reduced general government debt. The combined measures of the Debt Action Plan have achieved a significant improvement in our debt position, with general government sector debt estimated to be \$33.758 billion in 2017-18. This is \$9.347 billion lower than the peak of \$43.105 billion in 2014-15. It is also \$14.662 billion lower than the forecast for 2017-18 of \$48.421 billion at the time of the 2014-15 budget. Benefits are particularly evident in terms of the general government sector debt-to-revenue ratio which, at 60 per cent for 2017-18, is significantly lower than the peak of 91 per cent in 2012-13.


The 2017-18 budget balanced sustainable fiscal management with supporting the continuing transition of the Queensland economy to a more diversified base. Indeed, rating agencies have recently recognised this position, affirming Queensland's credit rating. On 20 April 2017, Moody's affirmed the state's Aa1 rating and revised the outlook from negative to stable. The negative outlook had been in place since November 2012. On 30 August 2017 Fitch Ratings confirmed the state's AA rating and revised the outlook from stable to positive. Under the Palaszczuk government there has been a significant improvement of Queensland's credit position. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.18 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) and I am pleased to do so in terms of this meaningful and timely updating of the accounting procedures to the House by the Treasurer which was introduced by Tim Nicholls in his time as treasurer. In 2014, as I recall, there was an \$80 million overspend but it was brought to the attention of the House in a very timely manner.

We are looking at several billion dollars in this adjustment to the 2016-17 budget. It is quite significant that the Labor government actually won Gold Lotto with the rise in coal prices which enabled it to have a nice little spend-up in the budget for 2016-17 which saved them going into a deficit position in 2017-18. If the government keeps buying lotto tickets and the coal prices keep going up then it will have no worries about the fiscal future for Queenslanders and a downgrade of the AA credit rating that it is famously good at producing on behalf of Queenslanders. However, I note that in that expenditure Queensland Treasury allocated over \$1 billion to allow for the repayment of debt, essentially as a result of that spike in coal prices. They allocated \$300 million in Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning works for Queensland and—guess what—the delivery of Cross River Rail.

It amazes me that we have been sitting in this parliament all week and there has not been any mention of the Cross River Rail. That is mainly because I do not think the most important project in South Brisbane—I mean, Queensland—in the 2017-18 budget is particularly popular in areas such as Townsville, Barron River, Mirani and Keppel. I do not believe that people in those seats can see the value in \$2.5 billion going into the election treasure trove of the member for South Brisbane as she tries to ward off the Greens candidate who is storming home faster than Kiwi when he won the Melbourne Cup. We hope to hear some more about the progress of that most important project in Queensland—although not for the Gold Coast, I can give the House the drum there. We look forward to hearing more about that most important project in terms of the money coming forward.

As is appropriate, the Finance and Administration Committee met with Treasury officials on this matter to delineate exactly where the money has been accounted for and moved to. That is good practice. The Finance and Administration Committee supports the passing of these bills. We understand how important it is to keep aspects of Queensland's financial situation up to date, rather than using the old practice of Treasurer Fraser, who waited for a year to pass before doing so. At least in the 55th Parliament we have an update on the allocation of these quite substantial funds. As the Treasurer pointed out, this relates to about 4.5 per cent of the budgetary figure for the year going forward. On behalf of the Finance and Administration Committee, I thank the Treasury officials for outlining, through this accounting process, the reasons for this. We will be supporting the bill.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.22 pm): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2), which makes supplementary appropriation for what is called unforeseen expenditure that occurred in the 2016-17 financial year. Under the Financial Accountability Act we prepare a Consolidated Fund Financial Report which contains all the transactions and details of this type of expenditure. Appropriation and adjustments refer to a variety of things, such as transfers between headings within an agency, appropriation that has lapsed and, of course, unforeseen expenditure. It contains the appropriate adjustments and explanations. Each department puts forward adjustments to the

Consolidated Fund Financial Report which should be approved by parliament as a supplementary appropriation. That can happen for a variety of reasons. Some departments may need appropriation to respond to an emergent issue. For instance, when the Commonwealth delayed payments we had to supplement that shortfall even though we knew that the money would come in in the following year. As in this case, it can also relate to the repayment of debt.


The bill seeks appropriation totalling \$2.270 billion. Of that, \$1.068 billion, or around 47 per cent, was incurred by Queensland Treasury. Of that amount, \$1.032 billion went to the repayment of general government debt. This is an important way to pay down debt when we have the ability to do so. Although declared as unforeseen expenditure, this relates directly to the debt repayment that we have made.

The House should note that 2016-17 represents the largest operating surplus since 2005-06. The Treasury allocated \$31 million in additional funding to the first home buyers scheme, due to the enthusiastic uptake of grants under the scheme. As a result, grants were raised from \$15,000 to \$20,000. In the statistical area of Logan and Beaudesert, over 1,000 applications have been made to the program as young people come into the area to build their first home. It is an important economic stimulus that creates jobs in the area.

Through the Debt Action Plan, the Palaszczuk government has steadily been reducing general government debt. General government debt was estimated to be \$33.7 billion in 2017-18, which is \$9.347 billion lower than the peak of \$43 billion in 2014-15. An important point is that it is also \$14.6 billion lower than forecast for the 2017-18 budget, which was \$48.421 billion. That forecast was made at the time the 2014-15 budget was prepared. It should be noted that this is particularly important when we look at the general government sector debt-to-revenue ratio, which is 60 per cent for 2017-18. From a comparative point of view, that is much lower than the peak of 91 per cent in 2012-13. That gives the House an important picture of our balanced sustainable fiscal management. It shows that, by moving to a more diversified base, we have strengthened the Queensland economy. On 20 April 2017, ratings agency Moody's noted this improved fiscal situation by affirming the state's Aa1 rating and revising the outlook from negative to stable, as it had been since 2012.

I note that the Department of Energy and Water incurred unforeseen expenditure of \$853.7 million, which relates to the Powering Queensland Plan and, importantly, the recommissioning of Swanbank E. As we know, the LNP increased power prices by 43 per cent. They shut down Swanbank E, constricting power supply. They took two units out of Tarong, which are now back online and are increasing supply. They also watched as Collinsville closed down its four turbines, causing significant cuts to supply.

Cross River Rail delivery is funded under these appropriations. It is an important project. I note that the member for Mermaid Beach wants to hear more about the project. He wants to hear more about how we will have a second rail crossing of the river and more services. His is the party that closed down Gold Coast rail; ours is the party that built it and I know that Gold Coasters want those services. This project is vital to the delivery of the Flagstone rail project, which is acknowledged. We want Flagstone and Greenbank to have a straight connection through the network. That is vitally important for southern Logan. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.28 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the supplementary appropriation bills. I will not go over the justifications for, and the merits of, these bills. That has been traversed by other speakers tonight. I start by saying that the very reason these supplementary appropriation bills are being considered so shortly after the end of the financial year is as a result of financial accountability measures introduced by the LNP in the last term of government.

It was the last Labor government under former treasurer Andrew Fraser that used to only introduce the supplementary appropriation bills with the next year's budget appropriation bills. It was the last LNP government that introduced this particular measure. What the previous situation meant was that the true position of the Queensland budget was always concealed and hidden. It was never clearly articulated for the Queensland people. It was always manipulated to suit the political purposes of those opposite.

When I say concealed, it was just like the concealed intention of Labor's last treasurer, Andrew Fraser, when he stared down the barrel of a camera before the 2009 election and said that there would be no asset sales. We all know that that particular concealment was revealed after the election with the sale of various assets such as Forestry Plantations, Queensland Motorways and the Port of Brisbane. The list was a long one. That Labor concealment always stands in stark contrast to the accountability and transparency that the LNP brings to the economic debate of the day.

I turn briefly to the unforeseen expenditure in this particular supplementary Appropriation Bill of \$2.3 billion. This really is a return to the days of Labor treasurer Andrew Fraser where it was guesswork, concealment and a litany of mismanagement of Queensland's budget. To see that, we only need to look at a couple of the figures in the supplementary appropriations—over \$1 billion in 2009-10, over \$9 billion in 2010-11 and over \$2.8 billion in 2011-12.

When we look at the supplementary appropriations brought before the House tonight, we see a little over \$1 billion attributable to general government debt. It is a worthwhile goal and a worthwhile cause to pay down our debt. At the same time, we know that Labor has done nothing in this term of government except run up debt. We have this runaway train of debt—mismanaged debt. The only way they can manage that is through sleights of hand and trickery.

There was one word that the Treasurer was particularly sensitive about tonight—and the shadow Treasurer attempted to bring that to light—and that was the word 'raid'. He raised a number of objections to the shadow Treasurer's contribution tonight. We have now found the document, which I will shortly table, from the Treasurer's chief of staff which stated, 'I will forward a copy of this report. Obvious questions will be raised re raiding the scheme.'

Mr Watts: He sent that to the Premier as well.

Mr JANETZKI: I will take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. This chief of staff said in the email, 'I will also forward this to the Premier's office.' The Premier was also aware of the Treasurer's raid of the superannuation entitlements of the hardworking men and women of Queensland.

Mr Emerson: But Fonzie could not say that word tonight.


Mr JANETZKI: I will take that interjection from the shadow Treasurer. Fonzie could not say that tonight. I was trying to work out who Fonzie was. I remember my parents talking about Fonzie. He was from *Happy Days*.

We have a Treasurer who is unable to acknowledge in the House tonight that it was a raid on hardworking Queenslanders' superannuation entitlements. I table that document for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 29 April 2017, from Mr Jason Humphreys to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon. Curtis Pitt, regarding State Actuary's Report on the Defined Benefit Scheme [\[2034\]](#).

While those opposite spend their way through Queensland's resources, what they do in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs—and it is good that I am sitting beside the member for Toowoomba North—is cut. We have seen over \$400 million cut out of the infrastructure spend in this term of government in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. In this year's budget we saw a drop in road spending. It is the most vital artery to get the wealth of Western and Southern Queensland to port. We saw a cut in road spending in this year's budget by the Treasurer from \$564 million to \$430 million. That is a cut of over a quarter. This is at a time when we are trying to bring together the nexus of rail and the second range crossing.

What we now see is a Labor government that is so Brisbane-centric, so focused on Cross River Rail, that they have cut adrift the regions. They have cut adrift Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. There is only one way to get infrastructure growth and investment into our nation-building capacity and get our wealth to port and that is to elect an LNP government.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.34 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017. These bills provide for supplementary appropriations for unforeseen expenditure that occurred in the 2016-17 financial year.

The appropriation bills were introduced into parliament on the same day as the Consolidated Fund Financial Report, the CFFR. The CFFR includes explanations for the unforeseen expenditure. The CFFR is a report prepared on a cash basis at the end of each financial year, containing details of transactions and investment balances of the Consolidated Fund, along with the appropriation paid to each department, including any adjustments to the original appropriation. It is a requirement of our parliament that unforeseen expenditure amounts for each department, as reported in the CFFR, be approved by parliament as a supplementary appropriation.

Appropriation adjustments may relate to government transfers, transfers between headings within an agency, lapsed appropriation or unforeseen expenditure. The CFFR also contains explanations for appropriation adjustments. Of the total \$2.270 billion, \$1.060 billion or 47 per cent was incurred by Queensland Treasury. Although called expenditure, unforeseen expenditure can also relate to the additional appropriation approved to Treasury for repayment of debt.

Treasury repaid \$1.032 billion of general government debt, primarily resulting from increased royalty revenue associated with the spike in coal prices in late 2016. The Palaszczuk government has applied the Debt Action Plan that has progressively reduced general government debt. Treasurer Curtis Pitt's prudent financial management has ensured that each budget he has delivered since the 2015 election has delivered a surplus—an achievement that deserves congratulations.


The combined measures of the Debt Action Plan have reduced the general government sector debt to an estimated \$33.75 billion in 2017-18. That is \$9.347 billion lower than the peak of \$43.10 billion in 2014-15. That is a reduction of 22 per cent. It is also \$14.662 billion lower than the forecast 2017-18 budget of \$48.421 billion at the time of the 2014-15 budget.

The 2017-18 budget balanced sustainable fiscal management with supporting continued transition of the Queensland economy to a more diversified base. Our government's priorities remain jobs, infrastructure and restoring front-line services. If our government is to continue to decrease general government sector debt, we must fight to ensure Queensland continues to get its fair share of GST revenue. The current GST pool is more than \$62.3 billion, and Queensland's share is more than \$14.9 billion. The Palaszczuk government will not accept any changes that disadvantage Queensland, especially our capacity to support regional communities. Unlike the LNP, the Palaszczuk government will not be doing deals with parties like One Nation that want to see us lose money by advocating per capita allocations from the GST pool. The Productivity Commission, like the Commonwealth Grants Commission, has already rejected per capita allocations, but it remains at the core of One Nation's economic agenda.

Only the big states like New South Wales want per capita splits because it means that New South Wales would take money off other jurisdictions. One Nation is committed to per capita allocation of GST. Despite its leader, Pauline Hanson, being a Queenslander, it would mean that Queensland would lose about \$2.4 billion. During the recent state election in Western Australia, Pauline Hanson openly advocated giving more GST funds to WA. This would hit hardest in regional communities, meaning cuts for funds for regional schools, hospitals, roads and other services.

The Leader of the Opposition is doing deals with One Nation on a seat-by-seat basis. This means he is prepared to give up \$2.4 billion in GST revenue for Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition must explain to regional electorates in Queensland which seats he thinks deserve to have funding ripped away—which is what will happen if One Nation gets its way on cutting our GST share.

The Leader of the Opposition does not rule out preference deals with One Nation, which means the LNP supports \$2.4 billion in GST being cut from Queensland's share. This would make it even harder for me to achieve badly needed infrastructure projects in the electorate of Ipswich West such as the upgrade of the Mount Crosby Road and Warrego Highway interchange, a performing arts complex at Ipswich State High School, the removal of the excessive camber in John Street, Rosewood, and a new school hall at Amberley District State School. In closing, I commend the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017 to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (5.41 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2). As we heard earlier from the shadow minister, the LNP opposition will not be opposing these bills. These bills seek parliament's approval for unforeseen expenditure authorised by the Treasurer in the 2016-17 financial year—one bill relates to the departments and the other relates to the Legislative Assembly.

Part of this bill also permits Queensland Treasury to repay \$1 billion in debt which has been enabled by the spike in coal prices in 2017. Whilst the repayment of this debt is important, it should not overshadow the fact that under this Labor government debt is increasing to more than \$80 billion for the first time in Queensland's history. I think it is important that we put this debt in perspective. The quantum of the interest payments in one year on this debt—that is approximately \$10 million per day—could fund the building of 3,650 kilometres of road, a distance that is slightly longer than the direct distance between Brisbane and Perth. That is the length of road that cannot be built in Queensland every year because taxpayers' money has to be paid in interest repayments on the debt. It puts the size of that debt and the size of the interest repayments into perspective for average mums and dads.

There is no doubt that this Labor government is having some issues managing its finances. It is probably not the best manager of finances and it has had some trouble with its estimates. I have an example where it has tried to short-change a project in my electorate. In September 2014 the South West Hospital and Health Board made a statement, and I quote—

According to the master plans, the estimated cost of a new hospital for Roma is between \$90 and \$99 million, while the cost of a new hospital for Charleville would be between \$70 and \$78 million.

What did the Premier announce in January 2017? She announced a \$70 million Roma Hospital. This Labor government short-changed the project by \$20 million to \$29 million. Last month the minister announced that the Department of Health also had reviewed the funding for the new Roma Hospital to ensure the current levels of investment met future requirements. Following this review, a submission was made and accepted by the Palaszczuk government to increase the allocation for the new hospital from \$70 million to \$90.4 million. That is how the Labor government manage finances—by short-changing much needed major projects commenced by the LNP. No wonder we are here today dealing with unforeseen expenditure bills.

Mr DICK: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. If the member for Warrego does not want the additional \$20 million, I will find another electorate where I will invest that money.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Minister, what is your point of order?


Mr Seeney: The Speaker made a ruling about frivolous points of order.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Callide!

Mr DICK: The member for Warrego is clearly misleading the House—clearly—and should withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order either, Minister. The member for Warrego has the call.

Ms LEAHY: If the minister takes some offence to something then I withdraw. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.44 pm): That was a very entertaining speech from the member for Warrego, who is very proud to be claiming credit for the new hospital that the Palaszczuk government is delivering for her electorate.

I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2017 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2017. These bills provide for supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure that occurred during the 2016-17 financial year. As we all know, the Queensland economy is dependent on a fair distribution of the GST and any change to our GST distribution would leave Queensland worse off. The Palaszczuk government will fight to ensure that Queensland continues to get our fair share of the GST revenue.

I am really proud to be part of a government that will not support any changes that disadvantage Queensland, especially our capacity to support regional communities. Unlike the LNP, we will not be doing deals with parties like One Nation that want to see us lose money by advocating per capita allocations from the GST pool. The Productivity Commissioner, like the Commonwealth Grants Commission itself, rejects per capita allocation. Only the big states like New South Wales want per capita splits because it means that New South Wales would take money off other jurisdictions—one of them being Queensland.

One Nation is committed to a per capita share, even though its leader, Pauline Hanson, is a Queenslander and we would lose \$2.4 billion. Pauline Hanson, a Queenslander, has openly advocated to giving our funds away to WA. That would hit hardest in regional communities, like the member for Warrego's seat—meaning cuts to funds for regional schools, hospitals, roads and other services.


I can only imagine what baysiders would think about a Queensland senator openly advocating to give away our share of GST which would mean that our local schools like Brisbane Bayside State College, Darling Point Special School and Wynnum West State School would miss out on important funding. Also, our new health centre Gundu Pa and front-line health services would miss out, as would our police and emergency services, child safety and housing. In fact, all Queenslanders would be disadvantaged by this decision. I am really proud to be part of a government that is prepared to stand up for Queensland to ensure that we get our fair share.

In fact, whilst we are talking about GST, perhaps it is timely to raise the issue of the unfair application of GST to feminine hygiene products. This is something that is raised with me regularly as the member for Lytton and it continues what I consider to be a discriminatory and unfair tax on women. I would like the Prime Minister to have a good think about that.

Tim Nicholls and the LNP are determined to do deals with One Nation, a party that wants to give up \$2.4 billion in GST revenue. The LNP and Tim Nicholls continue to court One Nation and to do deals on a seat-by-seat basis. Tim Nicholls needs to declare which seat he thinks deserves to have funding ripped away. Would it be Warrego? Would it be Clayfield? That is what would happen if One Nation gets away with cutting our GST share.

If the Leader of the Opposition does not rule out a preference deal with One Nation today, it means that LNP supports taking \$2.4 billion in GST off Queensland this year. That equates to \$485 per person, and I do not know anyone in this room who would like to give up \$485. Under One Nation and the New South Wales LNP's equal per capita proposal, Queensland would lose more GST than any other state or territory.

The Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, has made it very clear that we will not be making any deals with One Nation and that our government will always put Queensland first. I think it is time that Tim Nicholls, the Leader of the Opposition, does the same. We will put Queensland first and we will continue to fight to ensure that Queensland gets our fair share of GST. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.49 pm): I rise to address Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2). These bills seek the parliament's approval for unseen expenditure authorised by the Treasurer in the 2016-17 financial year which amounts to almost \$2.3 billion. As is convention, we know that these bills will pass through the Queensland parliament today, but as these bills pertain to budgetary and state finance matters I wish to make a few comments with respect to state finances and my electorate of Moggill.

Labor has been in government in Queensland for 24 of the past 28 years and Labor has consistently failed to deliver infrastructure for the western suburbs of Brisbane, unlike the LNP which has planned, progressed and delivered despite always having to deal with record Labor debt, deficit and incompetence of previous Labor governments in their administration of the state's finances.


At the last state election in 2015 the then Labor candidate for Moggill, together with the Annastacia Palaszczuk Labor team, promised to deliver an integrated road and public transport infrastructure plan for the electorate of Moggill. Unsurprisingly, Labor has failed to do so. Over the last three years Labor has failed to act, and Labor's new candidate will once again embark on a campaign of hollow rhetoric with negative slogans as opposed to meaningful plans or infrastructure solutions for local residents. The current Labor education minister has ruled out an additional high school for the Moggill electorate and Labor has no clear plan for infrastructure investment at Kenmore State High School. I table a copy of an article from the *Westside News* in relation to this.

Tabled paper: Article, undated, titled 'No plan for new school: Moggill petition fails to persuade Minister' [\[2035\]](#).

These are issues which I will continue to fight for on behalf of my local residents and constituents in the electorate of Moggill. What the electorate of Moggill and Queensland needs is an LNP government focused on building a better Queensland and appropriately managing the state's finances. Both I and the LNP want Moggill residents and Queenslanders to get ahead. The LNP will create jobs by providing small business incentives to employ more young people through a \$4,000 job incentive program, help apprentices get ahead through our \$500 tools for tradies and offset the costs of hiring apprentices through a \$5,000 incentive for small businesses. The LNP will take action on the cost of living by freezing family car registration costs, saving a family up to \$200 a year. These are real and practical financial measures that the LNP will take to assist my constituents in Moggill.

The LNP understands that infrastructure plans are needed to ease traffic congestion and deliver thousands of new jobs. I certainly understand the importance of the provision of robust health services. The LNP has announced policies and plans which will put downward pressure on electricity prices and we will take a balanced approach to our environment and ensure good conservation outcomes. Under Labor over the last three years we have seen debt spiral. It is anticipated to reach \$81.1 billion by 2020-21. That will be \$16,000 worth of debt for every man, woman and child. Labor is loading debt on to our government owned corporations, raiding dividends and raiding the long service leave entitlements of public servants, and infrastructure spending has been slashed.

Under Labor over the last three years their economic management has been one of raids, rip-offs and writedowns. The only reason we are here today debating this legislation is because of the accountability mechanisms the LNP introduced when last in government. It is time to build a better Moggill and a better Queensland for you and your family.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (5.53 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contribution and I once again thank the Finance and Administration Committee for their work in looking at the bills. I might start by picking up the comments of the last speaker, the member for Moggill. It is a theme we have heard throughout this short debate, and that is that all kudos apparently must go to the member for Clayfield because of his so-called accountability measures. I certainly applaud the idea of what has happened, but I would not go so far as to say that is the only reason we are here debating this today. Of course that has existed in previous years. It is important that as a parliament we have a look at all appropriation bills, whether it be the budget, Appropriation Bill (No. 2) which happens each year or, importantly, the expenditure in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2).

I want to recap a couple of issues. Over the last 2½ years during this term we have seen a very different style by this government generally, and that includes the way that we have looked at bringing together outcomes for Queenslanders. We have focused very strongly on driving economic growth, not at the risk of hurting the economy. We have not tried to do what they did with finances, which was to go hard and cut deep into the economy at the same time. We have managed to do lots of great things in terms of expenses lines. We hear those opposite going on about the expenses we have incurred including fiscal principles. As we laid out very clearly during the process of estimates, the reason we put that in place was to send a clear signal across the public sector to ensure that our FTE growth was kept in check with what would only be seen as realistic by members of the public who think that our services and the way we deliver them should grow in line with population growth.

The budget that we handed down this year—and I did hear the member for Indooroopilly's comments about the measures we announced before the budget—was part of a broader suite of initiatives. I have said before that we do not always get to deliver three budgets in a term, depending on the timing of elections. We are very pleased to have done that because the first two budgets this term were building block budgets. We did need to restore front-line services. We did need to consolidate all of the efforts that we put in place to keep our income-generating assets in public hands and to ensure that we not only kept them but also made them work harder, more effectively and more efficiently for us.

Those things being said, it leads me to Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and the biggest single line of expense. That included a significant pay-down of more than a billion dollars of debt by Queensland Treasury. Those opposite may decry that as being due to luck. When you look at the suite of initiatives that we put in place over three budgets, it shows very clearly that we are the economically and fiscally responsible managers in this state. There is no doubt about that. They can go back to their metrics of looking at fiscal balances and non-financial public sector debt—the total debt picture. Let us be very clear about this: these metrics were used only by Campbell Newman and the LNP government. We have always used general government sector debt as the measure of debt in this state—the important debt—the reason being that we do not have the same comparators in Queensland versus other states when it comes to debt positions because we in Queensland have some great things going for us. We have a suite of utilities and government owned corporations that are owned by the people of Queensland which return great outcomes to the people of Queensland.

When they start talking about the levels of debt incurred by these government businesses, they should take a very close look at what has been achieved. As I said this morning in my ministerial statement, they have been great drivers of efficiency, and they have been great drivers of jobs growth and projects. On that front they need to spend money to do that. They are servicing that debt before returning dividends to the people of Queensland which we know would have gone awry if they were not in public hands.

The debt levels that we have in Queensland right now are more than \$14 billion lower on the general government side than were forecast under the previous government in their last budget. Even on their preferred measure of non-financial public sector debt—the total debt—we are just over \$9 billion lower than was forecast under Campbell Newman and his then treasurer, Tim Nicholls, now the Leader of the Opposition.

This appropriation bill highlights the efforts we have gone to to maximise the spend that we could, putting downward pressure on electricity prices, doing great things in Indigenous communities in terms of their water infrastructure, and ensuring we have all the elements in place to deliver one of the biggest projects that Brisbane will have seen for many years, and that is the very important public transport infrastructure project Cross River Rail.

With those few words, I again thank members for making a contribution. I realise these can sometimes be dry bills. However, they are important bills because they are about public finances and the way we expend them. That includes not just the broader budget but also the parliamentary precinct. I commend the bills to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.


Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.

Appropriation Bill (No. 2)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading (Cognate Debate)


 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.00 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.00 pm): I move—


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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.


Long Title (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.01 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.01 pm): I move—


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

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

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Electricity Supply

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.01 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the Palaszczuk government for its Summer Preparedness Plan asking Queenslanders to put their air conditioners to 26 degrees or above to avoid blackouts.

This plan that the Labor Party has put out in the last few days asks families, businesses and industries, which are currently paying record electricity prices, to use less electricity, to put their air conditioners to 26 degrees or above, to turn their lights out and to turn off their applications and equipment. The reaction to this has been swift, with widespread condemnation from the people of Queensland. Let us look at the back page of this plan. It says—

If the demand for electricity is greater than the available supply, there is no choice but to reduce demand or else the entire system can fail.

I repeat: the entire system could fail. This is how poorly the Labor government have constructed their plans for electricity. They have absolutely no plan for this state going forward, except for higher electricity prices, and I will talk more about that shortly. Queenslanders are not wasting electricity; they cannot afford to because it costs too much money to waste. They are being as efficient as they possibly can be. The plan says—

During a heatwave, residents may be asked to manage electricity network stress by—

sorry, it is a bit late at night to read this small print—

... changing air conditioners to 26 degrees or above and using cooling only in occupied rooms during peak hours. This helps us manage demand and mitigate the risk of load-shedding occurring.

Load shedding is the last thing we need over summer this year. The plan continues—

Workplaces may be asked to use air conditioning at 26 degrees only in occupied spaces, avoid using advertising lights and other non-essential lighting, and turn off non-essential electrical equipment.

That is their plan. That is the only thing they have got. How have they gone with their other plans around electricity? They have ripped 100 per cent dividends out of our generators. How did that go for them? That pushed up the price of electricity, and there is no doubt about that. They left our GOCs with no money to spend on their businesses. They loaded \$5 billion of debt on to our government energy businesses. That must have put upward pressure on our GOCs to increase the price of electricity. There is no doubt about that at all.

The government have been caught out using Stanwell and CS Energy to gouge the prices of electricity for the consumers in Queensland. The ACCC are investigating this, and they will find eventually, I am sure, that this government have been gouging the people of Queensland. They have been using electricity as a hidden tax, and they have form on the board when it comes to this. Their former treasurer, Andrew Fraser, wrote a letter to Martin Ferguson back in 2009. I table that letter.


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 5 February 2009, from Hon. Andrew Fraser MP to Hon. Martin Ferguson MP regarding the Australian Energy Regulator's review of the weighted average cost of capital [\[2036\]](#).

He had a problem then. He said that the network companies were not earning enough money and he asked the minister at the time to look into that and see whether they could screw more money out of these network companies and push up the price of electricity. The government have made an extra \$410 million from the generators in this state. In this budget, they expected to raise \$482 million and they in fact raised \$892 million, and that is not going down any time soon. I will table this part of the budget which shows that electricity prices will in fact stay up for the next few years.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Budget Strategy and Outlook 2017-18' [\[2037\]](#).

I have a little program on my phone that shows Queensland's electricity price at the moment. It is \$249 a megawatt right now; that is 24 cents a kilowatt. That is a very high price for generating. That is what Labor has given us—

(Time expired)

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.06 pm): It is clear that the member for Burleigh had not even read the paper he was trying to read from before he got up to speak because he did not know what he was talking about. It is a real shame because people do deserve better from people who purport to be the alternative government in this state. Clearly, they are a long way from that.

I have a couple of quick points in response to the member for Burleigh. He keeps going on with this nonsense that the dividend policy and the way we have run our balance sheet reform have in some way affected electricity prices. He clearly does not understand how this system works. It is very, very obvious that he does not understand. He should know that the electricity regime in Australia is very heavily regulated. We are part of a National Electricity Market. Prices are set by the market, determining how we operate in that national market. When it comes to our retail pricing, he needs to be very aware—and hopefully he is—of the role the QCA plays in terms of price setting and base price. It is a nonsense.

What Queenslanders are suffering under right now is the legacy of the 43 per cent increase in prices under those opposite. He can talk all he likes about how high prices are, but they would be 43 per cent lower if they did not go up by 43 per cent under the last government. That is a very, very simple thing. That is exactly where they are at. They are clutching at straws because they know they failed with their energy policy and electricity pricing when they were in office.


This week we have seen from them a failure to meet even the most basic standards of sticking to the facts and doing something real in question time. They have displayed the lowest possible standards. They have not even gone near the facts, and that is absolutely evident in the contribution from the member for Burleigh. As I have said this week, it is very clearly the case that the very, very lazy Leader of the Opposition, who loves his trickle-down economics, is trickling down his laziness to the shadow minister for energy. We know that what he said tonight is based on reading a pamphlet that he could not even read. Clearly, his arguments do not stack up. We have absolutely no plans to force Queenslanders to turn their air conditioners to 26 degrees, as was wrongly claimed by those opposite.

This misleading motion is nothing more than scaremongering by those opposite, who are trying to score cheap political points. The suggestion to set air conditioners to 26 degrees is relevant only—I stress only—in emergency situations when we may confront a potential power shortage. This protocol has been in place for a number of years and guess what? It was in place under previous governments. Why will the LNP members not say that to Queenslanders? Maybe they are ignorant or maybe they are too silly to know what the actual situation was. They clearly forgot that some of these elements were contained in their own policy when they were in government. Embarrassingly, we have seen the federal government come out with essentially the same policy that we have, backing in our position. It is absolutely ridiculous. Not once, but twice this week we have been subjected to a barrage from those opposite about a policy they either do not understand or are choosing not to understand, which is even worse because it just means the deceit continues when it comes to Queenslanders.

Those opposite do have a real gall when it comes to attacking this government on energy and electricity pricing. Given that they wanted to sell all of our energy businesses, clearly there would have been no government intervention if they had been sold and we would be in the same predicament as those southern states where they are privately owned. We know what happens when privatisation occurs when it comes to electricity pricing: prices skyrocket. If it were not for the interventions that we put in place—and going to the member's earlier point when he talked about how much revenue is being generated by the generators, over \$400 million, he does not do his sums very well. What we have said is that we are going to reinvest the businesses' revenue—and we still own them—back into supporting lower electricity prices. We will be putting back in \$771 million. Anything that we have recouped out of the businesses we will put back in to lower prices for Queenslanders.

Those opposite cannot get to the fact that they failed miserably on electricity pricing. The member talks about blackouts. The only blackout we have seen in this state over the last few years was a renewables blackout under those opposite. Under them there was nothing—zero, no projects. We have 21 major projects valued at more than \$3.4 billion supporting more than 2,700 jobs, and they always forget the jobs. Besides the great environmental and energy benefits, it is the jobs they forget. These are the jobs that we are here to bank on.

We on this side of the House can hold our head high. We cannot even acknowledge what is in this motion. It is based on a farce, just like their entire policy.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (6.11 pm): I rise to join the debate on the motion moved by the member for Burleigh. After that contribution from the Treasurer I can certainly say that Queenslanders should fear Labor's ill-thought-out energy plan for this state. As reported in the *Courier-Mail*, the Palaszczuk government's bright idea—some could say not so bright because of the blackouts—is to suggest that—

Households and businesses may be told to restrict airconditioner use and have power switched off on some hardwired appliances under plans to prevent blackouts during heatwaves this summer.

In other words, the Palaszczuk government have finally done it; they have flicked the switch on power. Again we see the green lemmings opposite treating Queenslanders like mushrooms: keeping them in the dark and feeding them on their lefty propaganda. My question to those opposite is: where does their moral compass point? They scream about climate change, yet they are happy to mine all the coal and sell it overseas to our trading partners. However, they hate the idea of using it here to create electricity.

We are an energy rich state with resources abundant, yet we see pensioners like Margaret, a lovely lady in my electorate, struggling to pay her ever-increasing utility bills. Margaret is like many people in our community who are elderly pensioners who live in rental properties and are forced to live day to day and forced to pay ever-increasing power costs. For those like Margaret this Christmas will be bleak, whilst energy bosses pocket huge bonuses. Her Christmas is threatened to include cold turkey, warm beer and oppressive heat while sitting around the kitchen table due to the real potential risk of load shedding on our energy networks occurring.

Labor's extreme rush for 50 per cent renewable energy targets has deep ramifications. The Palaszczuk government's commissioned report by the Queensland Productivity Commission found that the mad rush to renewable energy will cost Queensland families \$317 million more for electricity. Businesses will pay \$221 million more. Industry will pay \$746 million more. These crippling prices will place enormous pressure on job creation and economic growth, further highlighting the hollow promise of the Palaszczuk government's jobs mantra.

Our industries are struggling to compete with nations to which we sell our coal. Therefore, this is one of the greatest concerns that many residents come to me and express: where will the jobs for our children come from if we continue down this path? We need realistic energy sources that do not wring the life out of our businesses and cripple our networks. One would think the poor management of energy security in South Australia would be a wake-up call, but this has fallen on deaf ears when it comes to the Palaszczuk government. In the letters to the editor in today's *Courier-Mail*, Lisa from Ashgrove writes—

So, to deliver a 50 per cent renewable energy target, the Palaszczuk Government is recommending that Queenslanders should set their airconditioners to 26C this summer.

What era are we living in?

To what extent does the Government have the right to interfere in our private lives?

Valdy from Salisbury also makes a very good point. That letter states—

If and when we are asked to set our airconditioners to 26C this summer ... who is going to police it.

It's not like the days when we had water restrictions and you could dob in your neighbour for sprinkling their lawn.

The LNP has a realistic plan when it comes to energy security. We support the national renewable energy target of 23 per cent by 2020. We will—

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. One moment, members. I am having difficulty hearing the member for Albert. If I cannot hear the member for Albert, I know Hansard cannot. We will just wait. If members want to chat across the chamber, they can step outside.

Mr BOOTHMAN: The LNP will build a new high-efficiency, low-emissions coal-fired power station to ensure baseload power for Queensland. Only the LNP has a sensible energy solution—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Thank you.

Mr BOOTHMAN: When it comes down to it, we will support private enterprise in this state and create real jobs for real Queenslanders.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (6.17 pm): Last month Australia's Energy Market Operator released a report saying that Queensland's electricity supply is secure and reliable not just for this summer but for many, many summers to come. We are the energy powerhouse of the nation. I know that, being the member for Gladstone with one of the biggest power stations in Australia in my electorate, and this is not going to change. Our energy security—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. One moment, member for Gladstone. If I cannot hear the member for Gladstone next time, I will ask him to start again. I am in your hands, members.

Mr BUTCHER: Our energy security was confirmed this week with the launch of our Summer Preparedness Plan, which I see the opposition is waving around. No ifs, no buts, no maybes; Queensland's electricity network is ready for this summer with more than enough electricity supply to meet the expected demand. It is utterly reprehensible that the LNP would seek to tell Queenslanders and our most vulnerable that we are facing power blackouts and rationing this summer, not to mention the base fearmongering in telling Queenslanders that their beer would be warm of all things. What a joke those opposite are to this establishment! They are not fit for opposition, so there is no way they are fit to gain government. They have had to amend their motion because their attacks were factually incorrect. How many times do they have to write this? I will say this again for the benefit—

Mr HART: I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House. That was not why the motion was amended. I ask him to correct that.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr BUTCHER: As I said, they will need to amend it. I will say this again for the benefit of the pensioners and people with disabilities who the LNP have no doubt scared beyond belief: there is no issue with Queensland's power supply. The beer will remain icy cold even at the member for Clayfield's favourite pub, The Flying Cock. I would love to hear what your favourite pub is, member for Burleigh.

The Summer Preparedness Plan from the Energy Security Taskforce was borne from our Powering Queensland Plan. It includes responsible actions to increase Queensland's electricity generation capacity ahead of summer; ensure that our high-voltage transmission lines and interconnectors are prepared and our distribution poles and wires equipped and ready; and ensure that our demand management tools are available should they be called upon.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I have already indicated that if I cannot hear the member for Gladstone will we start again. I do not think we will do that though. You have the call, member for Gladstone.

Mr BUTCHER: We are increasing our generation capacity by bringing on new renewable resources and returning into service the Swanbank E gas-fired power station that had been mothballed by the LNP in the height of their asset sales frenzy. Queenslanders have not forgotten that at all. Queensland is a climate of extremes and, like we plan for drought by asking people to be wise in extreme heat, it is not unusual to ask people to be energy efficient.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I invite the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Industrial Relations to step outside and continue your conversations outside. The member does not have that much longer to go. Then we have two further speakers, then we will have a vote and then we will go to the adjournment debate, so I ask for your tolerance. I call the member for Gladstone.


Mr BUTCHER: I am sure that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition could run faster scared than the member could angry. On 21 December 2012 the member for Caloundra advised in a ministerial statement—

In some homes, air-conditioners can account for up to 40 per cent of the electricity bill during summer, so setting air-conditioners to 24-25C will keep you cool and save money. Every one degree cooler adds around 10 per cent to the amount of electricity the air conditioner uses—which quickly adds up.

These voluntary demand management tools are not new and have been part of Queensland's electricity network for decades. In fact, the PeakSmart program—which the LNP seem to have taken such offence to—was introduced by them in 2012. Seventy thousand people in South-East Queensland are already involved in the program. We are just rolling it out in regional Queensland on a voluntary basis for anyone who wants to get involved, help manage demand and help reduce their power bills. It is a 'head shake' moment when the LNP take issue with a program which was started under them.

Not to mention that, the day after the LNP's ridiculous overreaction to our announcement that we were extending the same program that they started, the federal government announced similar incentives to customers in southern states. They are your pals over there! Where was the outcry from the opposition towards their federal colleagues? As per usual—crickets. There was no outcry because this was pure gutter politics. Going by their reaction, the opposition would leave Queensland unprepared for the possible emergencies that are coming. Not getting ready for energy emergencies

would not be like getting ready for cyclones, floods or bushfires. The Palaszczuk government's plan is to be ready, and we will not apologise for ensuring that Queensland's power systems remain secure, reliable and the envy of every other state in Australia.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.23 pm): What we have heard from the Labor Party is that there are possible emergencies coming. That is scary stuff, and that is what we are warning about. What we have seen here is a Labor Party that is preparing people for blackouts. By this motion we are calling on this House to condemn the Palaszczuk government for its Summer Preparedness Plan, which asks Queenslanders to set their air conditioners to 26 degrees or above to avoid blackouts. We are not talking about a plan to help people save money, which was the plan that was articulated by the member for Caloundra, Mark McArdle, in that 2012 media release about saving money. This Labor government is now talking about emergencies. This Labor Party government is now talking about blackouts. What has Queensland come to? What has this great state come to when people are being told, 'Get ready! You may have blackouts because there may not be enough supply'? Who would have thought that we would see this in Queensland?

Labor cannot build the roads that Queensland needs; they cannot build the dams that this state needs; and they certainly cannot manage the rail services. Now under the guise of this glossy Summer Preparedness Plan the truth is exposed: they cannot manage power. Under Labor, quoting from their own words in the Summer Preparedness Plan—

If the demand for electricity is greater than the available supply, there is no choice but to reduce demand or else the entire system can fail.

It goes on. Perhaps trying to soften the passing of the buck, they say—

By working together as a community to reduce our electricity use during peak times, we can help keep reliable electricity supply on for everyone.

In other words, 'Mums and dads out there, it's your fault if the power goes out, not this inept Labor government,' which is now flicking the blame to the public. Reliable power is the job of government. It should be the job of a First World government, but they are acting like a Third World government, and to boot they are trying to blame the public. In other words, mums and dads, grandparents, the sick and the elderly, as well as businesses, are being asked to do the job that this government will not do, which is to ensure reliability. Mums and dads, grandparents, the sick and the elderly are being asked to ration their electricity use and they are being told that it is their fault. It is just a bit rich, isn't it? They are paying record prices under this Labor government's record. We have seen record wholesale electricity prices and a power tax by stealth.

We have also seen this government put the debt onto the power companies and they are ripping out 100 per cent dividends. As has been shown in the past, Premier Peter Beattie ripped out record dividends which ended up in blackouts and brownouts, because you can get away with a sugar hit for a while at that level by loading your debt and your dividends and stripping it out as a tax by stealth from these government owned entities, but ultimately that led to blackouts and brownouts under Labor. The only thing that is reliable about Labor in Queensland is that they are not reliable. They seem to know how to muck up the power system and they seem to know how to muck up the supply of water. We have seen it time and time again, and here we go again.

I want to remind the House that we also have a minister who should be called the minister for the lack of energy supply and the minister for passing the buck. This *Queensland Country Life* article states 'Why farmers are to blame for high electricity prices'—

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order. I find the words of the honourable member for Maroochydore personally offensive and inaccurate and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydore, do you want to table that? It is not a prop.

Ms SIMPSON: I would like to table this article—

Mr SPEAKER: Put it down. It is not a prop. A prop is disorderly behaviour; you are aware of that. Thank you very much, you can continue. Have you withdrawn?

Ms SIMPSON: I have withdrawn and I withdraw again. I table this article from the *Queensland Country Life*.


Tabled paper: Document titled 'Why farmers are to blame for high electricity bills' [\[2038\]](#).

Let us talk about what Queenslanders are saying about this government: 'This government needs to stay out of our homes.' For goodness sake, I wish they would! Not only are their hands going into the pockets of everyday Queenslanders and ripping out their last buck with record power prices; now they are asking them to do the job of government in terms of ensuring reliability of energy supply. Lisa Gelsomino from Ashgrove said—

So, to deliver a 50 per cent renewable energy target, the Palaszczuk government is recommending that Queenslanders should set their airconditioners at 26C this summer.

What era are we living in?

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (6.29 pm): This is a pathetic motion by a lazy opposition—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, will you please recommence your contribution.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: No. Come on. Let's get on with it. Members, allow the minister his five minutes to make his speech, we can vote and then we can go to the adjournment debate. It is your call.

Mr BAILEY: This is a pathetic motion by a lazy opposition of energy lightweights covering up for their lack of an energy policy—their ignorance, their fantasy and their fraud on energy. Downloading an app and waving your phone around or having a degree in laminating A3 is no substitute for having an energy policy. That is what we are seeing from the opposition.

Let us be very clear about the Queensland power situation. The Australian Energy Market Operator has reported that Queensland is the only mainland state connected to the National Electricity Market where no electricity shortfall is forecast over—wait for it—the next 10 years. That is a fact. Instead of an energy policy from the opposition, we see more distortions, more lies and more laziness. They do not have an energy policy. The only two things they have released are their one-cent-a-week saving for people on executive salaries and a new coal-fired power station, which would drive bills up by double digits, just like under the Newman government. Their only policies will drive up the cost of power across Queensland.

Those opposite are against the 50 per cent renewable energy target. They are against the clean energy boom that is happening in Queensland, with 21 large-scale renewable energy projects in our state, driving the lowest wholesale electricity prices in the country on average since March. That is the opposition position. When they were in government we went from having the lowest wholesale prices to the highest. We have brought them back down to the lowest. That is the truth. They shut Tarong. They shut Swanbank. They shut down supply and drove up the price. They sacked power workers and they drove prices up by 43 per cent.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, if you want to interject, please return to your allocated seat.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Burleigh. I have heard you all evening.

Mr BAILEY: In a dynamic 24-hour, seven-day-a-week energy market you have 17½ thousand spot prices per year. The shadow energy minister thinks that waving around one spot price is some kind of policy. Save us all! What a joke! That Gold Coast shark David Crisafulli is circling the member for Burleigh, circling his frontbench spot. He can sense blood in the water. He knows how hopeless the member is. He is going to run him down.

Twenty-six degrees has been in the Queensland government's draft emergency orders for years, going back to the previous government. That is a fact. These are protocols that DEWS has turned to time and time again in extreme circumstances. It is a well-established and agreed option across jurisdictions and nationally. The Australian Energy Market Operator uses 26 degrees as the basis of its demand reduction calculator for estimating energy reductions from voluntary or mandatory restrictions. During the heatwave last summer the New South Wales Liberal National government requested

residents to set air conditioners at 26 degrees. When it was going through its energy crisis of February 2017, this is one of the initiatives it used. We have never had to use it in Queensland because we are an energy powerhouse and we have no shortage of supply for the next 10 years.

When it comes to demand management, other states use this as standard: New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia—even the Commonwealth government. Josh Frydenberg, the federal Minister for Energy, said only yesterday that thousands of households will also be invited to voluntarily conserve their energy use under the pilot projects in exchange for incentives such as rebates on their power bills. This was for New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. Was it for Queensland? No, because Queensland has the most robust power system in the country. The federal government backs these kinds of measures.

What we see from the opposition is distortion instead of policy. It would rather frighten people than develop real policy. You cannot run the Queensland economy unless you can run good energy policy. That is where the member for Clayfield and the member for Burleigh fail every time. They are lazy. If they think the people of Queensland are going to swallow that laziness during the election campaign, they have another think coming. The people will see through this lack of a policy. These measures are used only in extreme circumstances and we have never had to use them—and we are not likely to have to use them.

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

AYES, 41:

LNP, 38—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Springborg, Stevens, Walker, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Dickson.

NOES, 41:

ALP, 39—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

INDEPENDENT, 2—Gordon, Pyne.

Pairs: Enoch, Stuckey, Byrne, Costigan; Lauga, Sorensen.

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the noes.

Resolved in the negative.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.42 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 24 October 2017.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.42 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Drugs


 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.42 pm): Drugs like ice are having a devastating impact on our communities and more needs to be done to tackle this growing problem. I really want to encourage people to be actively involved in taking ice off our streets by dobbing in a dealer. Our police, our ambos and other health workers, particularly in hospital emergency departments, are often on the

front line of this scourge, but it is also ripping families apart. Halting the spread of ice, or methamphetamines, requires a whole-of-community response, particularly to fight back against those who are making a profit out of the death and misery of others by peddling drugs.

The Dob in a Dealer campaign through Crime Stoppers is one way that the community can help stop the manufacture and supply of drugs in our local areas. Local residents often have vital information that can help solve and prevent crimes. Making a report to Crime Stoppers is completely anonymous and can help get drug dealers off our streets and reduce the supply of drugs. If people have information about someone in the community who is manufacturing or supplying drugs, I would urge them to call Crime Stoppers on 1800333000 or report securely online at crimestoppersqld.com.au. Since the launch of Dob in a Dealer in February 2016, there have been over 5,000 reports to Crime Stoppers, including 219 isolated reports for the Sunshine Coast alone.

I also want to talk about the LNP's five-point plan to take ice off our streets which includes \$1 million in funding to encourage the community to dob in a dealer to Crime Stoppers, and we believe that the penalties must be far tougher in tackling drug use. When in government we implemented strong criminal reforms to tackle criminal gangs and introduced strong penalties for drug-trafficking offences. If elected, a tough-on-crime LNP government will keep criminal bikie clubhouses closed and provide the resources our police need to keep our streets safe. We will work with the federal government to ensure better cooperation between state and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies to tackle ice supply and distribution, and we will deliver additional drug treatment services and better community awareness programs.

Mental Health


 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (6.45 pm): This week is Queensland Mental Health Week and Tuesday was World Mental Health Day. During this week hundreds of events are held across Queensland in a statewide display of solidarity. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the importance of mental health and wellbeing, to reduce stigma and to celebrate those who work in the mental health field. I rise to speak about this issue to do my small part to give a voice to an issue that has a deep and profound effect on our community. Globally, the World Health Organization estimates that more than 300 million people suffer from depression, the leading cause of disability. More than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many of these people live with both. The effect of mental illness can be severe on the individuals and families concerned, and its influence far reaching. Those with mental illness often experience isolation and stigma and a strong nexus exists with social problems such as poverty, unemployment and homelessness.

With this nexus in mind, it is of great concern to me that we see conservative ideologues in the federal parliament continually spinning a policy narrative with regard to social welfare which feeds an undercurrent of discrimination and further entrenches disadvantage in this country. An estimated 45 per cent of Australians aged 16 to 85 will experience a common mental health disorder such as depression, anxiety or a substance use disorder in their lifetime. One in seven young Australians experience a mental health condition—that is, children and adolescents from as young as four to 17 years of age. With suicide the biggest killer of young Australians, surely there can be no response but to invest in vital services to stop such a senseless loss of life and potential.

Mental health and suicide prevention are key priorities for this Labor state government. We have allocated nearly \$140 million in capital infrastructure for mental health—the biggest capital investment in a decade. We are delivering a new extended treatment facility for young people—the replacement to the Barrett Adolescent Centre that the LNP refused to deliver. We have rolled out more intensive community based treatment teams for youth. We are also committed to the construction of new mental health step-up, step-down facilities, including in my electorate in Nundah. We have completed a total rewrite of mental health legislation—the first in around 15 years—with the passage of the Mental Health Act 2016.

This investment stands in stark contrast to the priority placed on mental health services in this state by the former LNP government. Reporting for the Productivity Commission shows that expenditure on mental health services fell by \$45.4 million in 2012-13 in Tim Nicholls's first full year as treasurer. This was the single largest cut to mental health expenditure ever recorded by any state or territory government in nominal terms. In 2013-14 Queensland's spending on mental health fell to the lowest in Australia on a per capita basis. Queenslanders living with mental illness deserve a government that will invest in the services that will support and invest in them. Tonight I want to pay tribute to all of those who work in this field and those who are researching to further this field, but most importantly I want to pay tribute to those who live with mental illness.

Condamine Electorate, Champix


 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.48 pm): Two suicides potentially associated with the stop-smoking medication Champix have personally impacted my office in the past 12 months: one, a young man of 38 with a wife and three young children suddenly took his life just a week before Christmas in 2016 and the other, a well-known local man who had a wife, four grown-up children and a younger child, inexplicably took his own life earlier this year. These two deaths sent shockwaves throughout the community and impacted so many lives. Both men were taking the stop-smoking drug Champix. Prior to their deaths, these two men had no previous history of mental illness or suicidal tendencies.

Research shows that, between 2008 and 2014, there were 58 known suicide cases in Australia that are potentially associated with Champix. That number could now be much higher. The 2013 death of 22-year-old Timothy John, a young Brisbane boy, was recently the focus of an inquiry into the stop-smoking drug and suicide. He had been taking the medication for just eight days. Timothy's mother, Phoebe Morwood-Oldham, has been fighting to have the labelling on the drug carry a warning against the possible side effects of Champix. Queensland coroner John Hutton has expressed alarm that there was no warning on the box of the possible side effects of this drug. Mr Hutton has suggested that all suicide deaths in Queensland should be forensically screened for the drug to find out the extent of the potential problem.

Pfizer, the drug company that distributes Champix, has failed to adequately warn Australians of the risks of taking this anti-smoking drug. In America, where the drug is marketed as Chantix, the pill packs are marked with highly visible warnings and contain a leaflet listing potential adverse side effects, while in Australia the packaging is bare and patients have to ask pharmacists for the leaflet. A representative of Pfizer told the Queensland coroner that warnings and information regarding the side effects of the drug could be found online. I do not know of anyone who would request the information leaflets or go online. Most people would depend on visual warnings on labels, or the prescribing doctor's knowledge and care to recommend a safe and effective drug.

We all know the health risks of smoking: lung disease, stroke, heart disease. The two men whom I have mentioned were trying their best to quit for themselves and their families. Unfortunately, they did not know the risks of taking Champix. The least that should happen is that this drug carries a warning. The best that should happen is that this drug is removed from the market so that no more lives are lost or families left grieving.

Logan, Community Maternity Services


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (6.51 pm): While much of what occurs in this chamber is subject to contest and debate, one thing that all members can agree on is that Queensland children deserve the best start in life. As the member for Woodridge and the Minister for Health, I am well aware that some health outcomes for mothers and their children in the city of Logan are significantly poorer than the state average. On average, in Logan pregnant women are not attending the recommended number of antenatal appointments, which is why maternity is a focus of the \$10 Logan Community Health Action Plan, which I launched in May.

In 2014-15, while 10 per cent of Queensland mothers smoked later than 20 weeks of pregnancy, in Logan that rate is 15 per cent, with the rate in some parts of the Logan community being as high as 27 per cent. In certain areas of Logan, the rate of low birth weight babies is more than twice the state average of seven per cent. It beggars belief that the Newman LNP government chose this community from which to sack 11.5 full-time-equivalent midwives. As a result of those LNP sackings, community maternity services across the city of Logan were shut down.

We know that there is a strong correlation between access to antenatal care and improved health outcomes for mums and bubs. That is why the Palaszczuk government will invest \$3 million annually to roll out three new maternity hubs in Logan. Last week, I joined with the member for Logan, Linus Power, who is in the chamber tonight, to visit the Browns Plains early learning centre, which is situated at the Browns Plains Community Health Centre in Hillcrest and which will soon be home to one of these maternity hubs. I want to thank Linus for campaigning on this issue with me and the member for Waterford, Shannon Fentiman, during the 2015 election campaign. I am delighted that the Palaszczuk Labor government has kept its promise by delivering these community maternity services to our city of Logan.

Two other hubs will be based at the Access Gateway centre in Logan Central and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community health service in Waterford West. These three hubs will be staffed by a midwifery unit manager and six midwives, with the number of midwives growing to 12 in three years. These midwives are new appointments—additional midwives being recruited to the Metro South Hospital and Health Service after the LNP sacked 226 nurses and midwives across Metro South when it was in government. As the member for Woodridge, I know that these community maternity services will be not only welcomed by my Logan community but also make a real and genuine difference.

Dig Tree Reserve

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (6.53 pm): I wish to thank the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, which is the trustee for the Dig Tree Reserve, for the conference that it organised in Thargomindah and at Nappa Merrie in my electorate. The Burke and Wills dig trees stand on the bank of Cooper Creek in far south-western Queensland's Bulloo shire. The nearest towns are Innamincka and Thargomindah. The Dig Tree Reserve is located within the Nappa Merrie station, and each year approximately 30,000 people visit this area.


There are three significant trees at the Dig Tree Reserve: the dig tree, the face tree and Brahe's tree. Each of these trees was carved. Although some of the blazes are now slightly grown over, on close inspection some of the marks can be seen. At the conference historian David Phoenix, who is also the President of the Burke and Wills Historical Society, gave a presentation that asked some very pertinent questions about which particular tree is, in fact, the dig tree. His conclusion was that the real dig tree is probably the tree that everybody stands under to take a photograph of the other tree with the walkway around it. It is probably most appropriate to refer to the dig trees, as they all have an important and significant part to play in our early explorers' history rather than just one dig tree.

The Bulloo shire is also rich in our country's early explorers' history. It is the third largest shire in Queensland and can claim to have the largest number of identifiable expedition camp sites—16; camps 50 to 65—concentrated in one localised area of any Queensland shire.

The Bulloo Shire Council also holds the Conrick collection. I want to place on the record my personal thanks to Ken Manktelow, who now lives in Eulo, for arranging for this collection to be kept under the care and supervision of the Bulloo Shire Council. Mr Manktelow has done a great service to the history of this country. The Conrick collection is two boxes of plate negatives that are absolutely irreplaceable. They date back to the Burke and Wills period and the forming of Nappa Merrie in 1872. These black-and-white negatives are an amazing record of early outback history.

I particularly wish to thank Denver Beanland, a former member of this House, John Pearn, Ruth Kerr and the other members of the society who were instrumental in organising this conference. I also thank those who travelled from afar and the Burke and Wills Historical Society, the Bulloo shire, the Queensland Ambulance Service, David and Kim Coulton, the owners of Nappa Merrie, and everyone else who was involved at the conference and who attended for their passion to preserve our history and, in particular, the dig trees at Nappa Merrie.

Bundaberg, Ability Ball; The Arts

 **Ms DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (6.56 pm): Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the Ability Ball in Bundaberg. It is an annual celebration of the disability sector and an opportunity for people with disabilities in Bundaberg, their carers, friends and supporters to dress up, to come together and have a wonderful night out with great food, music and dancing. This year's Ability Ball was no disappointment. There were two great bands that entertained the almost 400-strong crowd and we saw the crowning of the Queen and the King of the Ball. Too often people with disabilities do not have the opportunity to dress up and have a wonderful night out. I am very proud that my community has such a strong, caring and empowering sector for disability services.


An event such as the Ability Ball does not just happen. It takes a range of people to make it come together. I would like to thank and congratulate Damien Tracey and his staff at CLS who organised the ball; Ainsley Gatley for her great event management—as always—all of the sponsors, as well as those who attended with their partners and carers for showing everybody how to have a good time.

I am also very lucky to live in a community where the arts are alive and well. I am a frequent visitor to the Bundaberg Art Society's Hazzard Gallery, where local talented artists exhibit their works. The Bundaberg electorate has some great painters, sculptors, sketchers, photographers—just about every form of art that members can think of.

A couple of weeks ago I was honoured to launch the exhibition of a local called Ray Key, who held his first ever public exhibition. His watercolours depicting local places and the wider Australian landscape were just spectacular. I could imagine seeing them in any gallery anywhere in the country, or the world. I was so taken by these watercolours that I was determined to purchase one before I went home. I could not decide between two, so I had to get them both. I still cannot decide which one I would have chosen if I had had to do so.

I really enjoy hanging local artworks in my electorate office. Mr Speaker, if you are ever in Bundaberg, please drop by and I can tell you all about the artworks that I have hanging on the walls in my electorate office and the artists who painted them. There is so much talent in regional areas. I am really pleased that I can support the local artists in my area. I am sure that they will continue to inspire and produce great artworks.

Everton Electorate, Development

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (6.59 pm): I rise in the House to speak about two issues of great concern to the constituents of the electorate of Everton. Those concerns revolve around development. Most people think that development is inevitable. We need to make sure that the development that does occur is sustainable and is accepted and fits the community standard.


At the moment there are two areas in my electorate that are in dispute. At the southern end of my electorate on South Pine Road there is an area that is colloquially known as Murphy's paddock. This is an area that has been undeveloped for decades. It is only 15 minutes from the city. Up until six months ago there were cows in the paddock. It was great to see this touch of the rural in an urbanised area. Unfortunately Mr Murphy has now passed on and that land has been sold to developers. It is important that the development that takes place on that land takes into account the fact that we need green space, we do not want too much density and we also need appropriate access. There are narrow streets in this area. Ashmore Street, Barrymore Street, Venning Street and Newhaven Street are narrow enough as it is and to have increased traffic on them will cause great distress to local residents.

I am calling on the Brisbane City Council to ensure that the development that takes place in Murphy's paddock is appropriate and that there is proper consultation. I have started a petition about this issue and I will advise local residents when the formal submission stage commences.

At the other end of my electorate, the northern part of my electorate which I have just inherited with the electoral redistribution, we have the Warner area. The Moreton Bay Regional Council has talked about the Warner Investigation Area. They are going to change the classification of the land use in the area to emerging communities or future generations rather than rural/residential which it is at the moment.

The residents of that area are concerned that they have not been communicated with very clearly. The communication that they have received is very hard to understand. I am calling on the Moreton Bay Regional Council to listen to the concerns of those residents who are worried about development and the appropriate infrastructure that needs to be provided. They are worried about the koalas and other wildlife. I call on the Moreton Bay Regional Council to listen to the concerns of residents and please respond to them because this is a beautiful area and we want to make sure it is appropriately developed.

Ipswich Electorate, Advance Queensland

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.02 pm): I rise to speak about Advance Queensland, part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to diversifying the Queensland economy and driving innovation led growth. Advance Queensland is about creating and sustaining jobs now and into the future. It is about putting into action amazing ideas to develop new services and products that will improve Queenslanders' lives. Several Advance Queensland programs have recently been launched in Ipswich and are showing great promise in delivering exciting commercial opportunities, diversifying the local economy and attracting high value jobs to the area.

Last week Minister Leeanne Enoch came to Ipswich's Fire Station 101 to announce \$500,000 in Advancing Regional Innovation Program, ARIP, funding for Ipswich and West Moreton over three years. I take this opportunity to thank Minister Enoch for this welcome opportunity for Ipswich. The government's contribution will be matched by nine collaborative partners to develop 30 entrepreneurial talent development programs targeting student entrepreneurs and fostering stronger engagement and collaboration between start-ups and local industries. We have partners from government, education


and business all collaborating to rapidly drive innovation in Ipswich—for example, the Motor Trades Association of Queensland group which is helping to innovate and commercialise new technologies in the automated industry through its automotive innovation hub, MTAiQ, the first of its kind in Australia.

Another Advance Queensland initiative, the Ignite Ideas program, is helping small to medium Queensland businesses commercialise innovative ideas that generate jobs. One of the recipients, Elevare Energy, has developed smart battery technology that leverages artificial intelligence. Elevare has recently signed up local Ipswich business, Llewellyn Motors, to trial its smart batteries over a period of six months, helping Llewellyn Motors to reduce its peak demand electricity costs across its dealerships in Ipswich. Elevare will take its product to the next level through this funding and has plans to launch its smart batteries across Australia in 2018 and open offices in China, the USA and Europe. At a time when businesses across Queensland are finding it difficult to keep up with energy costs, innovative start-ups like Elevare can provide innovative solutions to help drive commercial energy costs down and reduce the state's carbon footprint.

Through Advance Queensland's Hot DesQ program, the Palaszczuk government is actively promoting a start-up culture by inviting international and interstate entrepreneurial talent to relocate to Queensland. We are now being seen as an exciting destination for start-up enterprises. Two of these start-ups have recently set up shop in Ipswich at Fire Station 101 as part of the Hot DesQ program: Point Zero from New Zealand and Micropowerlabs from Singapore and Pakistan.

Last week I had the pleasure of participating in a virtual cafe through the Advancing Women in Business program. These cafes allow female entrepreneurs to connect and collaborate with other businesswomen across six locations in Queensland. These fantastic programs will see the Queensland economy shift into a more economically diverse space which can tap into Queenslanders' amazing potential for generating innovative ideas and products.


Toowoomba, Infrastructure Projects

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.05 pm): I rise today to talk about the great LNP infrastructure projects going on in Toowoomba. We have the second range crossing funded and underway—a fantastic signature LNP project. We also have the inland rail coming our way. This do-nothing Labor government inherited from the LNP a \$50-million-plus allocation to lower the range tunnels for the existing rail lines so that containers that are used in modern shipping can take the wealth of the Western Downs to the port and export it to the world. This would mean jobs, opportunities and lower logistical costs for businesses and producers in my region.

In 2015 Labor inherited a budget from the LNP of \$50 million plus. In its own budget in 2015-16 it allocated \$55 million for this job. It was \$3 million short of what was required. In 2016 it reduced that budget. It dropped the figure by \$26 million and allocated \$32 million for the job. The passing loops were taken out. In 2017-18 Labor asked me to thank it for dropping the budget again by \$10 million to \$24 million. In the last three years it has dropped the budget some \$30 million. I have asked questions on notice and questions without notice in this House many times, including asking 18 months ago specifically about the start date of construction. This has been allocated in the budget by the Labor Party now for three years and it has done nothing at all but talk about it.

We now find that rail users are choking. People have made business investments based on the commitment made by this government that it has not delivered to the electorate and the people of the Darling Downs. There are people who are trying to lower their logistical costs so that they can compete internationally. Not only have we had \$30 million ripped out of Toowoomba; glossy brochure after glossy brochure has been advertising the good work the Labor Party has supposedly done. It has done absolutely nothing and now there is not enough money left to lower these tunnels. These tunnels were built 150 years ago by the first member for Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. They cannot take modern containers that are used to export to the world. This government says that it cares about the Darling Downs. It does not. It is completely city centric. It has allocated the money and spent none. It has done nothing to lower the logistical costs of producers and it is costing jobs and opportunities for the people on the Darling Downs and in my electorate.

Jackway, Mr J

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.08 pm): I rise to share news of a very special event that occurred in Thuringowa just a few months ago. As most on this side of the House know, we are getting on with the job of delivering infrastructure projects in Thuringowa, such as Riverway Drive, the Kirwan State High School hall, the Kirwan Ambulance Station redevelopment and two housing projects, one of

which was recently opened and about which I will speak tonight. We held a very special naming ceremony for the opening of that housing project. I take a moment to thank Minister de Brenni for his support of that naming ceremony and also for encouraging job growth. Those two housing projects employed 320 local tradies. One of those complexes is now complete and people have moved in. The other complex is near completion.

On 11 November 2009, a friend and work colleague to many in the Queensland Ambulance Service, Mr Jamie Jackway, an advanced care paramedic, was being winched on to a merchant ship in the ocean off Horn Island when the worst happened: the winch cable snapped and Jamie fell 50 feet onto the steel deck. He received multiple injuries, rendering him a quadriplegic. Since 2003 Jamie had been employed as a paramedic, based in Townsville. He transferred to Thursday Island with his wife, Melinee, and their three children. For some time after his accident, Jamie went through significant rehabilitation at the PA Hospital in Brisbane. His colleagues from across the state raised significant funds to build a special-purpose home for Jamie at Kelso in Thuringowa. Also playing an important role in Jamie's story are the unions. United Voice is the union that looks after ambulance officers. I note that the TWU also played a significant role, as did the QNMU and the Queensland police officers' union.

At Thuringowa Drive, as Jamie's special-purpose house was being built, another 12 units were built to assist those with a disability to gain access to public housing. After his injury, Jamie was put in public housing as he waited for his house to be built. At the naming ceremony for the unit complex, it was really pleasing to have present the Commissioner of the Ambulance Service, Russell Bowles, members of the community, paramedics and Brigadier Chris Field. Prior to joining the QAS, Jamie had worked as an Army medic and had deployed to Timor. It was a very special occasion, because in the 125-year history of the Queensland Ambulance Service, which we are celebrating this year, Jamie is the first paramedic to have an infrastructure building named after him. We celebrated that great achievement. It is a legacy for Jamie in recognition of the work he has done in the community, serving Queensland and the nation.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.12 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, 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, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams