



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 24 October 2017

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TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2017


 The Legislative Assembly met at 10.30 am.

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


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

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS


Evacuation of Buildings on Parliamentary Precinct, Order of Business

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the evacuation of the buildings on the precinct this morning was as a result of a fire in one of our maintenance workshops in the Parliamentary Annexe. Given the evacuation, the sittings have commenced at 10.30 am. The order of business for the day will move back by one hour, with the lunch and dinner breaks being unaffected.

Absence of Members


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Keppel that the member will be absent from the House from 23 October to 27 October 2017. I have also received advice from the member for Cairns via the Clerk that the member will be absent from the House from 23 October to 27 October 2017. I have also received advice from the member for Currumbin giving reasons for her absence from the House for the last sitting week—from 10 to 17 October 2017. The members' notifications all comply with standing order 263A.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

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

PRIVILEGE

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

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 17 August 2017 the member for Redlands wrote to me alleging that the Premier and Minister for the Arts and member for Inala deliberately misled the House during her response to a question without notice on 10 August 2017. On the information before me, I considered that the Premier has made an adequate explanation in relation to her statement. I have therefore decided that this matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence from the member for Redlands, Mr Matt McEachan MP and the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an alleged deliberate misleading of the House [2082].

I seek leave to incorporate the ruling circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

MR SPEAKER: Honourable members,

On 17 August 2017, the Member for Redlands wrote to me alleging that the Premier, Minister for the Arts and Member for Inala deliberately misled the House during her response to the following Question Without Notice on 10 August 2017:

My question is to the Premier. Given reports last week in the Gold Coast Bulletin that three times as many patched criminal gang members surrendered their gang colours under the LNP than under Labor, how can the Premier honestly defend her claim that Labor's laws are more effective?

The Premier's response was:

I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition because under the VLAD laws there were no convictions—zero convictions. My government made the very clear decision to tackle all forms of serious organised crime. While they were just focused on one area, we have said no, as a state and as a government we are going to be tackling all forms of serious organised crime. That means child sexual exploitation, illicit drugs and also outlaw motorcycle gangs, and that is exactly what we are doing.

In his letter to me, the Member for Redlands contended that the statement was 'in the broadest sense' incorrect and misleading, the Premier knew her statement to be misleading because of statements she had made previously, and it must be assumed that the Premier intended to mislead the House given the 'nature of the basis of knowledge and the formality of the circumstances of the statement'.

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

The Premier refuted the claim, contending that the question asked by the Member for Nanango was in relation to 'patched criminal gang members'. The Premier argued that her response was in the context of the question asked, that is, about 'patched criminal gang members' and that there were no convictions of patched gang members under that legislation.

Standing Order 269(4) requires:

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


On the information before me, I considered that the Premier has made an adequate explanation in relation to her statement.

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

I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Answer to Question on Notice


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received correspondence from the member for Burnett regarding the answer to question on notice 1315 by the Minister for Housing and Public Works. The member complains that the answer does not address the substance of the question—that is, to outline the process in the minister's department to ensure that deeds of novation in relation to state government construction are binding to ensure that contractors and subcontractors are paid.

The second paragraph of the answer notes that the minister's department may not be the principal for construction and upgrade activity currently undertaken by the government. The response appears to imply that the Department of Public Works and Housing does not have a whole-of-government responsibility in relation to deeds of novation entered into in relation to government construction work and that each agency is responsible for their own deeds.

The third paragraph appears to address the deed of novation matters pertaining to the minister's area of responsibility. I find that the minister appears to have made a genuine and reasonable attempt to provide a response. I therefore find the question has been answered.

APPOINTMENT

Change in Ministry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (10.34 am): I advise that His Excellency the Governor has appointed the Hon. Anthony Joseph Lynham to act as and perform all of the functions and exercise all of the powers of Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Economic Development from 22 October 2017. I lay upon the table of the House the *Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette* which outlines this appointment.

Tabled paper: Extract from *Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette* No. 52, dated 22 October 2017, regarding the appointment of the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Hon. Anthony Lynham, as acting Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Economic Development from 22 October 2017 [\[2083\]](#).

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Caboolture, Browns and Pettigrew Streets, Bus Service

Hon. Ryan, from 46 petitioners, requesting the House to consider extending Route 657 south along Browns Street towards Pettigrew Street and adding a new bus stop near the intersection of Browns and Pettigrew Streets [\[2084\]](#).

Rosewood Railway Station, Upgrade and Commemoration

Mr Madden, from 82 petitioners, requesting the House to refurbish Rosewood Railway Station and commemorate the station's 100th birthday in 2018 [2085].

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

Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Bus Service

From 105 petitioners, requesting the House to provide to Noosa a six-month trial service of a daily direct bus service to and from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital [2086, 2087].

Petitions received.

MOTION

Citizen's Right of Reply



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (10.36 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That this House notes report No. 177 of the Ethics Committee and the recommendation of the committee that a right of reply be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*; and
2. That the House adopt the committee's recommendation and incorporate the right of reply into the *Record of Proceedings*.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

RESPONSE BY DR ROSS CARTMILL, ON BEHALF OF VISITING MEDICAL OFFICERS, TO A STATEMENT MADE BY THE MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA, MRS JO-ANN MILLER MP, ON 20 AUGUST 2013

On 20 August 2013, the Member for Bundamba, Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP, made the following statement in the Queensland Parliament:

I take that interjection by the Minister for Health in relation to Tahitian princes. What the minister has is Tahitian doctors ripping off the system in the form of VMOs. We have a situation whereby VMOs have been ripping the guts out of the health system to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars and the minister is going to let them off the hook. What we have here is white-collar crime. If the VMOs have been ripping off the system, which we understand they have—to the tune of I think \$840 million—because some of these VMOs just happen to be members of the Liberal National Party they will get a get-out-of-jail-free card.

The Hansard record offers no evidence to support this attack on the integrity and professionalism of Visiting Medical Officers (VMOs). A subsequent report from the Auditor General offered no criticism of VMOs. Despite the lack of substance in the criticism, no parliamentary apology to VMOs has ever been offered.

As well as the lack of supportive facts, the severity of the criticism needs to be addressed. I consider any reasonable person would agree the offending criticism of VMOs constitutes a very severe, unjust and unwarranted assessment of the professionalism and loyalty of a group of public hospital medical employees.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

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

13 October 2017—

- [2039](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. Curtis Pitt) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Regulation 2004
- [2040](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 49, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 June and 8 August 2017
- [2041](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 50, 55th Parliament—Annual Report 2016-17
- [2042](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 51, 55th Parliament—Consideration of the recommendations of the strategic review of the Queensland Audit Office
- [2043](#) Public Works and Utilities Committee: Report No. 50, 55th Parliament—Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Bill 2017
- [2044](#) Public Works and Utilities Committee: Report No. 51, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 June 2017 and 8 August 2017
- [2045](#) Public Works and Utilities Committee: Report No. 47, 55th Parliament—Annual Report 2016-17: Erratum
- [2046](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. Curtis Pitt) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Motor Accident Insurance Regulation 2004
- [2047](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 55, 55th Parliament—Annual Report 2016-17

- [2048](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 46, 55th Parliament—Hospital Foundations Amendment Bill 2017
- [2049](#) Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 45, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled 14 June-8 August 2017
- [2050](#) Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—Annual Report 2016-17 (including the annual report for the Queensland Heritage Council and Board of Trustees of Newstead House and CD with Financial Statements): Erratum
- [2051](#) Jobs Queensland—Annual Report 2016-17
- [2052](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Transport Coordination Plan 2017-2027, October 2017
- [2053](#) Report on release of images to the Queensland Police Service during the financial period 2016-17
- [2054](#) Queensland Local Government Grants Commission—Annual Report 2016

16 October 2017—

- [2055](#) Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games—Annual Report 2016-17: Erratum

17 October 2017—

- [2056](#) Report to Queensland Government Reconciliation Plan: Stage 1—For Child Placements by Qld Government In Adult Mental Health Facilities by Betty Taylor, 2017
- [2057](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 47, 55th Parliament—Examination of Queensland Auditor-General reports: Report to Parliament 17:2014-15; Report to Parliament 15: 2015-16; Report to Parliament 9: 2016-17; Report to Parliament 10: 2016-17

18 October 2017—

- [2058](#) Inspector-General Emergency Management—Report 1: 2017-18 The Cyclone Debbie Review: Lessons for delivering value and confidence through trust and empowerment
- [2059](#) Inspector-General Emergency Management—Report 1: 2017-18 The Cyclone Debbie Review: Lessons for delivering value and confidence through trust and empowerment, government response

19 October 2017—

- [2060](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 56, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 June and 8 August 2017
- [2061](#) Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission – Annual Report 2016-17
- [2062](#) Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation—Annual Report 2016-17: Erratum
- [2063](#) Working Group on Improvements to Legislative Arrangements for Planning and Building Approvals—Report to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, August 2017
- [2064](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on Queensland Treasury Corporation, Queensland Investment Corporation, Trade and Investment Queensland and Financial Relations and Investment Opportunities meetings in New York, London and Shanghai by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. Pitt), 9-16 September 2017

23 October 2017—

- [2065](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No 57, 55th Parliament—Mines Legislation (Resources Safety) Amendment Bill 2017
- [2066](#) Public Trustee Act 1978: Public Trustee (Fees and Charges Notice) (No. 1) 2017
- [2067](#) Public Trustee Act 1978: Public Trustee (Fees and Charges Notice) (No. 1) 2017, explanatory notes

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Mutual Recognition (Queensland) Act 1992—

- [2068](#) Mutual Recognition (Queensland) (NSW Container Deposit Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2017, No. 210
- [2069](#) Mutual Recognition (Queensland) (NSW Container Deposit Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2017, No. 210, explanatory notes

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (Queensland) Act 2003—

- [2070](#) Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (NSW Container Deposit Scheme) Notice 2017, No. 211
- [2071](#) Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (NSW Container Deposit Scheme) Notice 2017, No. 211, explanatory notes

Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, Private Health Facilities Act 1999—

- [2072](#) Health Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2017, No. 213
- [2073](#) Health Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2017, No. 213, explanatory notes

Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017—

- [2074](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 214
- [2075](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 214, explanatory notes

Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2017—

[2076](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 215

[2077](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 215, explanatory notes

Public Records Act 2002—

[2078](#) Public Records (Queensland Rail Train Crewing Practices Commission of Inquiry) Amendment Regulation 2017, No. 216

[2079](#) Public Records (Queensland Rail Train Crewing Practices Commission of Inquiry) Amendment Regulation 2017, No. 216, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2016—

[2080](#) Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2017, No. 217

[2081](#) Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2017, No. 217, explanatory notes

MINISTERIAL PAPER


The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan)—

[2088](#) Nonconforming petition regarding extending bus Route 657 south along Browns Street towards Pettigrew Street Caboolture and adding a new bus stop near the intersection of Browns and Pettigrew Streets


MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Dianne

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (10.36 am): We do not yet know where all the crew of the trawler *Dianne* are. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of Adam Bidner, Zachary Feeney, Adam Hoffman, Ben Leahy, Chris Sammut and Eli Tonks on this tragedy. I want to acknowledge the persistence and commitment of police, Maritime Safety Queensland and the SES in the search to find *Dianne* and its crew. I would also like to extend thanks to the crew of the yacht who rescued Ruben McDornan, the only survivor of the incident, who is now back with his loved ones.

The painstaking search by air and sea continues for the four crew who remain missing after the vessel overturned in rough seas a week ago. I pay tribute to all involved in that operation and those who have remained in contact with the families to brief them on ongoing developments. By finding these men, we hope that their families and friends will get some closure, but it will not displace their loss and enduring heartache. On behalf of the people of Queensland, I extend our deepest sympathies to the family of the whole crew.

Electricity Prices

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (10.38 am): My government understands the impact that electricity prices has on Queensland families, on Queensland businesses and on Queensland farmers. Last week, we saw Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull unveil his National Energy Guarantee—a plan that the Prime Minister admits is not economically modelled, is not a guarantee and, at best, will only start to produce savings in two years time.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is not question time yet. My government will wait to see the detail before passing judgement, but Queenslanders cannot wait two years for issues like these to be addressed. That is why my government has released our Affordable Energy Plan. Over the next two years that plan will reinvest \$2 billion in dividends from our publicly owned electricity assets into making power more affordable for all Queenslanders.

Our Affordable Energy Plan will take \$50 off the annual power bill for 1.9 million Queensland households each year for the next two years. It contains a pledge to ensure power prices will be capped by the average inflation rate over the next two years, a figure forecast to be lower than this year's 3.3 per cent increase, the lowest in the mainland National Electricity Market.

Our Affordable Energy Plan provides a \$300 rebate on an energy efficient fridge, washing machine or air conditioner for 100,000 Queensland families. Our Affordable Energy Plan will deliver additional savings of \$75 for regional households and \$120 for regional businesses who sign up for weekly or monthly direct debit billing. It will also provide an additional \$20 million for energy audits that can save businesses tens of thousands of dollars, with dollar for dollar support of up to \$20,000 for

farmers and \$250,000 for heavy electricity users such as manufacturers to implement the findings of those audits. These measures will reduce the cost pressure on families and businesses as we await the details of the Prime Minister's National Energy Guarantee.

Electricity Generation Assets

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (10.41 am): As promised at the last election, my government stopped the LNP and the member for Clayfield's plans to sell Queensland's publicly owned electricity generation assets. Today I table modelling done by consultants ACIL Allen which confirms what Queenslanders rightly feared: that the member for Clayfield's asset sale would have seen higher power prices for Queensland families.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is very important, members. The report finds increases to household power bills should be \$146 lower this financial year on average and \$210 lower next financial year.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers and member for Maroochydore, I think you are having a sparring match. If you would like to go outside, please.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: It is a serious matter, members. Minister for Education, thank you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will repeat this main point: the report finds increases to household power bills should be \$146 lower this financial year on average. Mr Speaker, can I bring to your attention the deputy whip?

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is a tactic that you guys are using.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, please. Thank you, one and all.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There have been complaints made in the House before about people standing in the galley ways obscuring the television cameras in this House. I draw to your attention that it is something that should be dealt with.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. Thank you, everyone.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I am speaking. Please! We will move on.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The report finds increases to household power bills should be \$146 lower this financial year on average and \$210 lower next financial year as result of the actions my government has taken as an owner of these electricity businesses. ACIL Allen is the independent modeller for the Queensland Competition Authority on electricity price determinations and was commissioned by former prime minister Tony Abbott to review the national Renewable Energy Target in 2013-14. ACIL Allen assessed the government's decisions to direct Energex, Ergon and Powerlink not to appeal the Australian Energy Regulator's determination, remove the costs of the Solar Bonus Scheme from network tariffs, recommission Swanbank E gas-fired power station and direct Stanwell Corporation to adjust its market offers in order to lower wholesale prices. Combined, ACIL Allen assesses that these initiatives should lower electricity prices by 16 per cent for household, commercial and industrial users by next financial year. That amounts to savings of \$210 for typical Queensland households, \$72,050 for a commercial business and \$124,850 for an industrial customer. That is in addition to the \$50 asset ownership dividend for households over the next two years.

Later today I will be meeting representatives from our electricity retailers. I will be presenting them with the ACIL Allen modelling and asking them to pass on the savings that our public ownership provides. I will reaffirm my willingness to assist other retailers to operate in Queensland. I will also be telling them about my total commitment—

Mr Cramp interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Was that the member for Gaven? I think it was. You are now warned under standing order 253A. I can see you and I can hear you as well. If you persist I will take the appropriate action. The Premier has the call and I will name members from both sides if I feel the warning is appropriate.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will also be telling them about my total commitment for the government to return to the market as an electricity retailer if they do not pass on all of my government's cost savings in full. No other state can do that. We can because we own our assets.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. We will wait. I can hear you, member for Glass House, you are very close. Thank you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Be assured that I will always do what is right for Queenslanders. I table the ACIL Allen report.


Tabled paper: ACIL Allen Consulting report to Queensland Treasury, 4 September 2017, titled 'Retail Bill Impact Analysis, Quantifying of the Impacts of Recent Government Actions' [2089].

Member for Keppel

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (10.46 am): As members will be aware, the member for Keppel is away from parliament this week following the birth of her beautiful new baby girl. I am sure both sides of the House will join with me in passing on our congratulations to Brittany and her husband, Wayne, following the birth of their first child, a baby girl named Odette.

Mr SPEAKER: I am informed that we have students and teachers from the Beenleigh PCYC in the electorate of Waterford observing our proceedings from the gallery. Welcome.

Electricity Prices

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.46 am): As outlined by the Premier, the Palaszczuk government continues its unwavering commitment to deliver stable electricity prices for households and businesses after the 43 per cent increase they suffered under the member for Clayfield when he was the treasurer. The simple reason we can is that we own the energy assets. It was the Palaszczuk government that saved them from sell-off by the LNP. Only the Palaszczuk government can be trusted to keep our power assets in public hands. We are using the levers of public ownership to reduce costs and return dividends to Queensland electricity consumers.

In June we announced our \$1.1 billion Powering Queensland Plan, which included a \$770 million investment to shield Queenslanders from the massive electricity price rises being caused by Malcolm Turnbull's broken National Electricity Market. As a result, the Palaszczuk government more than halved the proposed seven per cent increase by the QCA down to 3.3 per cent this year, lower than any other mainland state in the National Electricity Market, some of which are suffering price increases of up to 20 per cent. Our Powering Queensland Plan is also delivering the lowest average wholesale price in Australia since March with the renewable energy boom in Queensland bolstering our energy mix.

Despite these actions, we know the price of power is still hurting Queenslanders due to the policy paralysis of the Abbott and Turnbull government. The Palaszczuk government will never stop backing Queenslanders. As the Premier mentioned, our \$300 million new Affordable Energy Plan announced this week is delivering savings and a safety net for Queensland electricity consumers. We are capping it to the inflation rate over the next two years, something that no other state can do.

Today I have further good news for Queensland electricity consumers. We are investing in more initiatives that enable those energy consumers who cannot afford to invest in renewable energy to be part of our clean energy future. We are investing \$40 million to improve access to solar and batteries and other affordability reforms that the Treasurer will announce shortly. This means for households and small businesses that are unable to afford solar and battery technology that we will be offering no interest loans delivering savings of up to \$700 a year.

Mr Minnikin interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Before the minister resumes, the member for Chatsworth has a first warning under standing order 253A.

Mr BAILEY: The opposition gets confused when we help Queenslanders with their electricity.

Mr SPEAKER: Please do not provoke, Minister.

Mr BAILEY: We are committed to a trial program to work with landlords and renters to enable the benefits of solar to be shared. Under the trial program, we will offer financial incentives to landlords to install solar systems and pass on to their tenants savings of up to 10 per cent on their annual bills, with landlords expected to receive a rebate of up to \$520 per year. These are real commitments, real policy and real action on power prices. The Treasurer will have a further announcement to make regarding this. Our \$300 million Affordable Energy Plan will be delivered from January because we cannot wait for the Turnbull government's so-called National Energy Guarantee, which is untested and unmodelled. The Palaszczuk government is taking action now to strengthen our economy and energy affordability in Queensland.

Affordable Energy Plan

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (10.50 am): The Palaszczuk government's retention of our publicly owned electricity assets means that Queensland is leading the nation by putting downwards pressure on energy prices and delivering energy affordability for the people of Queensland. In contrast to an asset sales agenda that would have delivered skyrocketing electricity prices, we will ensure that Queenslanders' power bills are capped to inflation over the next two years.

The Palaszczuk government's Affordable Energy Plan pays special attention to regional customers. Today I am pleased to outline that Ergon Retail will now be able to offer regional customers a choice of retail products. Those products will mean real savings to householders and small business. As a first step, Ergon Retail has developed the EasyPay Rewards package for residential and small business customers. Under the package customers will receive an up-front rebate off their bills in exchange for agreeing to direct debit and monthly e-billing. The rebate will be \$75 each year for householders and \$120 a year for small business.


The package offers real savings to regional householders and small business and comes on top of the other savings already announced in the Affordable Energy Plan. It is expected that up to 200,000 regional households could take up this offer. To make sure that as many regional customers take advantage of this energy savings reward package as possible, the government, along with Ergon Retail, will be providing information on how the package can be accessed.

The government recognises the desire of regional customers to have more choice of electricity retailers. To give them more choice, the Palaszczuk government is also removing what is known as the non-reversion policy that currently exists for households and small business that are Ergon's customers. That policy prevented regional customers from ever returning to Ergon Retail if they left to sign up with another retailer. The issue has been raised with me on many occasions. I can remember a business owner from Babinda in my electorate who purchased a business only to inherit an unfavourable market contract with a non-Ergon energy provider.

In short, removing the non-reversion policy will give regional customers more choice. It will give them more control over their energy bills. That is good news for the energy affordability of customers in regional Queensland. By removing the non-reversion policy not only will small customers who previously left Ergon Retail be able to return but also smaller customers who would like to try a private retailer can do so with the confidence that they can return one day. It will also free up customers who have previously left Ergon Retail, as now they will be able to take advantage of the EasyPay Rewards package.

This government is committed to looking after the interests of Queenslanders who are living and working in regional Queensland. What the government has announced today represents real savings for householders and small businesses in regional Queensland, as well as giving them real choice in who they choose as their electricity retailer. Our Affordable Energy Plan also includes \$50 a year off every household bill over the next two years, which is another example of our commitment to delivering initiatives that drive real savings on energy for real people.

Seniors, Cost of Living

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (10.53 am): The Palaszczuk government recognises that cost-of-living pressures are a concern for many Queenslanders and their families. Older Queenslanders are no exception and often can find it even harder than other individuals to make ends meet. That is why this government is strongly encouraging seniors to check their eligibility for a range of concessions and rebates that we have on offer.


The Palaszczuk government is committed to doing everything we can to help vulnerable Queenslanders, including our seniors. That is why the 2017-18 budget included a significant commitment of over \$5.34 billion for concessions and rebates for Queenslanders to assist people with disability, people on a low income, seniors, pensioners and veterans. One of our key priorities is to assist seniors with meeting day-to-day living expenses. It is why we have increased funding for our concessions for seniors by \$27.9 million from last year alone. Those concessions and rebates include the electricity rebate scheme of \$340.85, which increased by \$10 per annum in July this year, to help cover rising electricity prices.

In January 2017, we extended the electricity rebate eligibility to include healthcare card holders, which is expected to provide assistance to an extra 157,000 Queensland families. That is on top of more than half a million eligible Queensland households that are already receiving the electricity rebate. In addition, the Palaszczuk government is putting Queenslanders first by capping power price rises to inflation and giving all Queenslanders a \$50 rebate on their electricity bills. This unprecedented action to ease the cost of living is only possible because we stopped the Leader of the Opposition selling our assets when he was the treasurer in the Newman-Nicholls government.

Our Seniors Card remains very popular amongst our older Queenslanders and, at the moment, we have over 850,000 card holders. Queensland is the only state to give Seniors Card holders concessions on things such as motor vehicle and boat registration, dental, medical aids, electricity and gas, spectacles, public transport, reduced costs for national park entry fees, fishing licence fees and entry to Queensland government museums and art galleries. It also offers discounts on goods and services at more than 6,500 business outlets throughout Queensland. There is even a combined Seniors Card +go, which combines the usual Seniors Card concessions and discounts with a go card on the reverse side, offering 50 per cent of a full adult go card fare.

I encourage all Queenslanders to have a look at the Smart savings website to ensure that they are accessing every available concession and rebate on offer. I encourage those Queenslanders who are over 65 and work less than 35 hours a week to look at the Seniors Card to see the benefits and cost savings that are available.


Queensland Rail, Derailment

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.56 am): On Thursday, 19 October 2017 at approximately 4.20 pm a New Generation Rollingstock or NGR train and shunting tractor derailed near Wulkuraka maintenance centre. At the time of the incident, the NGR train was being towed by the shunting tractor on the access line at the eastern end of the Wulkuraka maintenance centre. This access line is used exclusively by Bombardier to facilitate NGR train movements in, out and around Wulkuraka separately from the main Queensland Rail network. I can report that, thankfully, the two Bombardier staff involved in the incident were not injured.

The NGR train, shunting tractor and section of the access line where the incident occurred are now undergoing a full investigation and assessment to determine the cause of the incident. However, early indications are that the incident was not caused by the NGR train. An investigation into the incident is underway and the findings will be released in due course. While the investigations are carried out, testing and commissioning of the NGR trains continues. The access line at the western end of the Wulkuraka maintenance centre remains in operation and is facilitating all NGR train movements in and out of the centre to the network.

Safety is always our No. 1 priority. No train will ever operate on our network that does not meet our standards. I would like to be 100 per cent clear and reiterate that the train involved in the incident, the MU15, is not one of the NGR trains that has completed the testing regime or been accepted to date by the government. The Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Rail and Bombardier continue to work together to ensure that NGR trains will enter passenger service without compromising safety as soon as possible and in time for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

Queensland Rail

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.59 am): We are continuing to make progress on our plan to fix the trains and provide excellent public transport services to Queenslanders. Queensland Rail has implemented a number of initiatives to improve and fast-track training. Over the past 12 months, 38

additional drivers have commenced driving trains on our network. As at 13 October, 128 applicants had been selected for trainee driver positions, with 86 trainee drivers currently in training and all driver training schools for 2017 filled. In August, Queensland Rail opened recruitment to external applicants.

This is not the only progress we are making towards fixing the trains and getting back on track to delivering an efficient and reliable public transport network service for Queenslanders. On-time running returned to over 95 per cent for the September quarter and cancellations have significantly decreased over the past year. As of 30 September, 13 of the 36 Strachan inquiry recommendations have been completed and work is well underway on all of the remaining 23 recommendations.

Recently, we have seen improved forecasting and modelling tools enable Queensland Rail to better identify and manage stress, providing customers with advanced notice of the timetable changes required to deliver reliable services during stress periods. Queensland Rail is overhauling and modernising its training programs to decrease training times while also ensuring trainees receive world-class training both in the classroom and on the track.

Through commuter catch-ups, customers have the opportunity to provide feedback to Queensland Rail. This important feedback is being used to grow and evolve initiatives to improve customer experience right across the network. TransLink is currently upgrading the TransLink app on the back of customer feedback to improve the customer experience.

It is this government, the Palaszczuk Labor government, that is getting on with the job of fixing the trains. We are committed to delivering the high standard of public transport that Queenslanders deserve.

Domestic and Family Violence, One Nation Policy



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) (11.01 am): Yesterday we saw One Nation release a dangerous and ill-informed domestic violence policy—a policy that, if implemented, would put the lives of Queensland women and children at risk. The One Nation policy demands equal access to children for both parents, even if one of them is perpetrating violence. This approach would put children directly in harm's way, as violent behaviour, even if it is not directed towards the child, causes ongoing damage to these children that can take years to recover from.

The Palaszczuk government has invested heavily in the creation of specialised domestic violence courts, with protocols and a design to keep victims safe. The One Nation policy would force both parents to face court at the same time, potentially putting the safety of victims at further risk and retraumatising victims.

We acknowledge that both men and women are the victims of domestic and family violence. The Queensland government funds services across the state that cater for both male and female victims of abuse and violence, and will continue to do so. Unlike One Nation, we will not take a backward step when it comes to holding perpetrators to account for their violent behaviour and we will continue to work to change the attitudes and behaviours that underpin the cycle of violence.


It was only last year that Pauline Hanson used her maiden speech in the Senate to say that victims of domestic violence were being murdered because of men's frustration with the system. Former Australian of the Year Rosie Batty, an inspiration to people across the nation, quite rightly pointed out that this excuse was yet another example of victim blaming. Let us be absolutely clear about this: the people to blame for killing women in their homes are the perpetrators carrying out the violence.

One Nation's policy also requires proof of injuries before a domestic violence order is made. This shows an appalling lack of understanding of the insidious control, mental abuse and threats, including threats made against children, and not to mention financial abuse, stalking, tampering with cars. There is a long list of tools that perpetrators use to keep their victim living in constant fear while deliberately not leaving physical evidence.

The Palaszczuk government has made tremendous progress in bringing domestic and family violence out from behind closed doors, and massively expanded the services for those who make the brave decision to leave a violent relationship. There is more to be done. I can promise that we will not take a backwards step.

I am heartened today to see that the LNP has come out and blasted this dangerous policy. It is one thing to speak out against domestic violence, but it is another to take action. If there were ever a day for the LNP to take action and announce that they will be putting One Nation last on every how-to-vote card in every single electorate, today is surely the day. That is the only way this dangerous policy never becomes a reality.

Kennedy, Mr D

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (11.05 am): Yesterday I was advised by Queensland Corrective Services that Damien Kennedy, a convicted adult sex offender and person supervised under the Dangerous Prisoners Sexual Offenders Act 2003, had removed his GPS electronic device and his whereabouts remain unknown.

Mr Bleijie: He's probably in the bail house in the community somewhere.

Mr RYAN: This is a serious matter.

Mr Bleijie: Exactly.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, the minister is making a ministerial statement. I do not find his comments provocative.

Mr RYAN: Mr Kennedy had been supervised in the community since his release from custody in 2016. In respect of this matter, I am advised that the Queensland Police Service was immediately notified and are currently searching for Mr Kennedy. Any member of the public who has any information relating to Damien Kennedy's whereabouts is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800333000.

It was a Labor government that had the foresight to introduce the dangerous prisoner sex offender legislation to ensure our community is kept safe.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, I will take the appropriate action. You know the reason I have made that warning.


Mr RYAN: This legislation is the toughest and most effective post-conviction mechanism for dealing with and monitoring sex offenders in Australia. Under this legislation it is a criminal offence for an offender to remove a GPS tracking device while they are subject to a supervision order. In fact, as prescribed in section 43AA of the act, any offender convicted of this offence will face the full consequences of the law and serve at least one year back behind bars—no ifs, no buts.

Breaking or cutting the GPS tracking device straps generates an immediate critical alert to the Queensland Corrective Services central monitoring station. The critical alerts are then immediately escalated to the Queensland Police Service for response in conjunction with Queensland Corrective Services. Let me be clear: Queensland Corrective Services takes its role seriously in protecting the community by supervising these offenders who have done their time but must continue to be supervised upon release to safeguard community safety. GPS monitoring is just one of a number of tools that Queensland Corrective Services employs to supervise and monitor the whereabouts of these offenders. This is on top of intensive case management, consistent and robust drug and alcohol testing and unannounced home visits, employment checks and collateral checks with health professionals, among other things.

The Palaszczuk government makes no apologies for taking a hard line on sex offenders after their release from jail. Again, I encourage any member of the public with information about Damien Kennedy's whereabouts to contact Crime Stoppers as soon as possible.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister for Health, I am informed that we have members from the Bayside National Servicemen's Association, from the electorate of Lytton, in our public gallery observing our proceedings. Welcome. I am also informed that we have students and teachers from the Corindi Public School, New South Wales, observing our proceedings. Welcome.

Flu Summit

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.08 am): This year Queenslanders have endured one of the worst flu seasons in many years. There have been more than 52,000 influenza notifications across the state—almost double last year's number. This has resulted in more than 5,600 influenza related hospital admissions, with 650 of those admissions resulting in patients receiving intensive care. On 14 August this year, the Queensland Ambulance Service set a new record for the number of calls for assistance, responding to 3,882 calls on a single day.

Our hardworking paramedics, clinicians and support staff, as usual, stepped up to the mark and did a wonderful job this winter. They have been able to step up to the mark because of the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to and investment in front-line services. This has included record


funding for health services, with 4,400 extra nurses, an additional 1,300 doctors and a further 1,200 allied health professionals being employed since the Palaszczuk government took office. Our government will continue to take steps to ensure Queenslanders receive the health services they deserve. This is why Queensland Health has already started planning for next year's flu season.

Last week I convened a flu summit in Brisbane to look at this season's experience and to prepare for next year. I was interested to learn that immunising a significant population of younger people against the flu can lead to reductions in transmission throughout the community, including vulnerable older people. Following the summit, the Palaszczuk government was delighted to announce that it would make the flu vaccine free for all Queensland children from six months until their fifth birthday.

We will also push for a national approach to this matter through inclusion of the free flu vaccine for under fives on the National Immunisation Program. I have asked Queensland Health to work with other jurisdictions to consider how the example set by Western Australia and Queensland can be implemented nationally. A childhood immunisation awareness campaign next year will provide parents and carers with details about recommended vaccinations for children under five, including the free influenza vaccine program. To assist with faster diagnosis of influenza, we are making point-of-care testing capability available at an additional 15 hospitals throughout Queensland, taking the number of hospitals with this capability to 21.

Patients and clinicians will have a reliable influenza diagnosis in 30 minutes, replacing tests that currently take 24 hours or longer. Early diagnosis will assist clinicians to manage people with the flu, including by administering antiviral medication, which can mitigate symptoms and hasten recovery. This is part of a new \$1.3 million investment in technology, with \$600,000 to fund the rapid point-of-care testing and an additional \$700,000 for automated blood culture machines. By planning today for next year's flu season we can minimise the strain on our health system, as well as reduce the impact of influenza on the lives of Queenslanders.

Mining Industry

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.12 am): I am happy to report that the green shoots of recovery in the Queensland resources sector continue to yield regional jobs and growth. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures showed 122,500 jobs created in Queensland since the Palaszczuk government took the reins in January 2015. Thousands of those jobs were generated in the coal and exploration sectors. A number of coalmines, including Batchfire Resources' Callide mine and Stanmore's Isaac Plains mine, are re-entering production. Glencore's Collinsville mine is likely to follow. Additionally, I welcome the recent announcement of the QCoal and JFE Steel joint venture Byerwen project. It will create 350 construction and 500 operational jobs.

Investment in exploration has also been climbing. Coal and metals exploration expenditure is up by \$33 million to \$108 million over the six months to last November. That has contributed to an increase of about 1,500 valuable jobs. There are also positive signs of renewal in the Queensland metals industry. Base metals prices have improved significantly after a tough 2015, with zinc prices rising 35 per cent and lead increasing by 32 per cent over the six months to December. I am excited too at the prospect of CuDeco's Rocklands copper mine opening, creating another 200 jobs. In addition to Rocklands, Altona's Cloncurry copper project is moving closer to development—it will deliver nearly 600 construction and operational jobs—and the Dugald River zinc project near Cloncurry is on track to generate 400 jobs.

While we are discussing regional Queensland, I am pleased to be able to advise that flood affected primary producers in Gladstone, North Burnett and Bundaberg regional council areas are now able to apply for category B assistance as part of the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. As honourable members will be aware, this is jointly funded by state and Commonwealth governments. Under category B, concessional loans of up to \$250,000 are available to those who suffered direct damage. Essential working capital loans of up to \$100,000 are available to those suffering loss of income. Freight subsidies of \$5,000 will help assist with the movement of recovery materials.


Mr SPEAKER: I think we might move on, members.

Ms Jones: One minute—State Education Week—woo hoo!

Mr SPEAKER: No. I think we will move on, Minister. You will have a chance later today to talk about it.

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

Crime and Corruption Commission, Report; Erratum to Annual Report

 **Hon. L SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (11.14 am): I table the Crime and Corruption Commission's 2016-17 annual report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee in relation to aspects of surveillance device warrants pursuant to section 358 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000. The report was provided to the committee outside of the statutory time frame. The commission advised that a new compliance system will assist to prevent this oversight in the future.


Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Commission Queensland: Surveillance Device Warrants—Annual Report 2016-17 [[2091](#)].

I also table an erratum to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee's report No. 100, annual report 2016-17.

Tabled paper: Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee—Annual Report 2016-17: Erratum [[2090](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Renewable Energy Target


 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (11.15 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House—

1. notes analysis of modelling commissioned by the Climate Change Authority that a 50 per cent renewable energy target will cost an average household almost \$200 a year; and
2. calls on the Palaszczuk government to ditch its similar ideologically driven policy that will hurt Queensland families with higher electricity bills.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Queensland Rail

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.16 am): This morning I call on all members of this House to acknowledge a not so happy anniversary—one year of South-East Queensland commuters suffering Labor's rail fail. It has been a year of delay, a year of disruption, a year of debacle, a year of disaster—and commuters are still suffering with fewer services, overcrowded trains or trains which do not even show up. Even today we have had a network-wide delay across all lines as reported by TransLink. How many people were late to work or late to school this morning because of the failures of those opposite? Commuters are beyond fed up. You only have to look at social media so see their frustration. One commuter this morning said, 'This is ridiculous! Four out of five days this week my morning train is running late.' This is happening every week.


It has been going on for a year. One year ago, on that fateful Friday, 21 October, more than 100 services were cancelled and passengers were given no warning and no explanation. The then minister—Minister Hinchliffe—went into hiding. Commuters deserved more. A week later the CEO and the chair of Queensland Rail had to resign. On Christmas Day we had a rail meltdown, with over 200 services cancelled, while Queenslanders were trying to get to family lunches with bags full of presents.

The truth started to come out. Labor had spent two years twiddling their thumbs and had forgotten to recruit new drivers for the new Redcliffe line, and the RTBU demands to recruit only internally were limiting the pool of drivers and guards. This is a government run by unions for unions, and the South-East Queensland commuter is the one who is suffering.

At the start of this year the member for Sandgate finally fell on his sword. Who did the Premier replace him with? The Deputy Premier, the architect of this disaster in the first place. Labor's final solution was to release a new timetable after several interim ones—a solution that saw 472 services a week cut from the timetable. Over a year that is a reduction of 24,000 trains which should have run and thousands of trains which should have been turning up to pick up commuters. No wonder they are leaving rail in their droves. They are jumping back in their cars, clogging up our major highways and Brisbane streets.

It was those opposite under Anna Bligh's Labor government who gave us trains without seats. Now we have Annastacia Palaszczuk giving Queenslanders the rail line without drivers and the soon to come Commonwealth Games without trains.

Electricity Prices

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.19 am): I want to respond very briefly to the member for Glass House's comments. It is clear that the member for Glass House has not read the Strachan inquiry. That report very clearly lays blame at the feet of those opposite.

Queenslanders know from the LNP's time in office that they do one thing before an election and they do the opposite after the election. The member for Clayfield cut 14,000 jobs in his first disastrous state budget and spent all of his time packaging up our income-generating assets for sale including our electricity assets—the same assets we kept in public ownership and have been able to direct to help keep downward pressure on prices. The member for Clayfield spent \$100 million on his Strong Choices campaign to push asset sales. If he had succeeded, this government and future governments would have had no leverage to keep downward pressure on prices and no returns from those assets to the budget. Returns would go straight to the pockets of private shareholders, not to Queenslanders.

We all remember the LNP's commitment to cut electricity bills by \$120 a year. What followed was a 43 per cent rise or a rise of \$436 in average bills. Only the Palaszczuk government has a clear plan for keeping downward pressure on prices, and that is to keep any rises in household and small business bills to within CPI, plus a direct \$50 dividend available only because we did not sell our electricity assets. All these initiatives will be fully funded through our budget process.


We will continue to deliver energy security while changing the energy mix by encouraging more renewables. Unlike some reports today, that does not mean closing our coal-fired power stations. Our reliable base load generating capacity includes eight coal-fired generators, and we are going to keep them open. We do not need a ninth as the LNP or One Nation say that we do. The AEMO has endorsed Queenslanders having sufficient despatchable base load power capacity for at least the next decade.

Budgets are about priorities. Ours remain delivering better front-line services and paying down debt without asset sales and lifting taxes on Queenslanders. Our economic plan has seen growth up, jobs up, unemployment down, confidence up and debt down. Our debt action plan is expected to see general government sector debt to just under \$33.8 billion in 2017-18. That is almost \$14.7 billion lower than was forecast under the member for Clayfield's last budget.

Increases in the forward estimates reflect the ramp-up of our Capital Works Program. Let us recall the priorities of the 2014 state budget. It was to cut electricity concessions for seniors and pensioners. The member for Clayfield wasted \$100 million on his failed Strong Choices campaign, but he did not want to help seniors and pensioners with their power bills. It was only because of a public backlash and our opposition that caused the decision to be reversed. We have a plan on energy. We are going to be lowering bills. We are the ones with—

(Time expired)

Domestic and Family Violence, One Nation Policy

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.22 am): Domestic violence is not a gendered crime, but the sad and disturbing fact is that last year three out of four victims in Queensland were women. Coupled with this is the very real threat of domestic violence being present in around 50 per cent of child abuse cases. That is why I was outraged when I read yesterday the so-called policy from One Nation and the member for Buderim on domestic violence. As a survivor of domestic violence, I find the proposals being put forward by One Nation insulting, as would many other victims. It is clear the member for Buderim has little or no idea about the impact domestic violence has on thousands of women, men and children every year. The terrible reality is that domestic violence is predominantly committed by males against their female partners.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am having difficulty hearing the member. This is a serious issue.

Ms BATES: Putting children in the middle of domestic violence hearings and dragging out hearings will only further harm victims and their children. This is not a policy that will do anything to address the scourge of domestic violence that has hit Queensland under this do-nothing Labor government. I said it publicly and I will repeat it: nothing from the One Nation policy will address the explosion in the number of offenders attempting to strangle their partners, with more than 1,040 recorded offences in 2016-17.

The fact is that the member for Buderim has been brainwashed by a few jilted men caught up in custody battles who have branded themselves the Australian Brotherhood of Fathers. Let me tell the House the sorts of things that ABF advocate—the same group the member for Buderim has taken his policy advice from. ABF encourage men to suicide publicly over family law issues. They encourage domestic violence abusers to continue harassing their victims by attempting to take out cross-DVOs on them. They harass women as they enter and leave family law courts across Australia, and they use fake statistics about male suicides to further their agenda while not doing anything to help men who are experiencing mental health crises.

They purport to be a charity and seek charitable donations despite being a privately owned business. They spread misleading claims that women have more rights in the family law system than men and that the only people with rights are children. Is it any wonder that the policy has been canned by key domestic violence advocates including the Women's Legal Service, Rise Up, the Red Heart Campaign, Bravehearts and the brave mothers of victims of domestic homicide. What we have seen is disgusting and disgraceful. It has been called out as a dangerous plan devised by a few angry men, and the member for Buderim should hang his head in shame. This so-called policy is another example—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are rising on a point of order?

Mr DICKSON: I am, Mr Speaker. Obviously the member has not read the bill—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members! Member for Buderim, it is not an opportunity for debate. What is your point of order?

Mr DICKSON: Mr Speaker, I ask that the member withdraw the statement she has made. I take offence.

Mr SPEAKER: Was there anything that personally reflected on you?

Mr DICKSON: Yes, Mr Speaker. I think the language used by the member is very unparliamentary. I think we should treat people with respect and dignity, and I thought that was below the member's standard.

Mr SPEAKER: I understand there was something within that contribution that personally reflected on the member for Buderim. Member for Mudgeeraba, will you withdraw?


Ms BATES: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, please. The member has withdrawn.

Ms BATES: This so-called policy is another example of why the LNP has already ruled out on countless occasions any deal with One Nation. There will be no deal, there will be no coalition and there will be no shared ministry. Put simply, a vote for One Nation is a vote for Labor.

Electricity Prices

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (11.27 am): If the member for Mudgeeraba and the LNP were sincere, they would put One Nation last. We hear words but no actions backing up the words. One Nation deserves to be put last by both major parties. If they were sincere, that is what they would do.

Our energy affordability plan is only possible because the Palaszczuk government stopped the Leader of the Opposition privatising our energy assets. We ended the 43 per cent price increases, we saved our assets and we have seen a long history of reform under this government. We have directed Energex and Ergon to pass on network savings. We have done the same with Powerlink. Our Powering Queensland Plan, a huge piece of policy work in June this year, has seen wholesale prices come down to the lowest in Australia since March this year.

We have a North Queensland clean energy hub. We have brought back Swanbank E after it was decommissioned by the Newman government to bring back more supply. This year we have cut the price increase by more than half. Our 50 per cent renewable energy target is driving just under half of all new energy infrastructure in Australia, and our energy affordability plan gives people a cut of \$50.


Mr Hart interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I hear the interjection from the member for Burleigh. He is confused, because we are helping people reduce their bills—something the LNP did not do when it was in power. We are introducing a safety net so that bills will not go up any higher than the inflation rate for the next two years—a cap to back in electricity consumers, something which the Newman government with the opposition leader as treasurer could have done but did not. They left electricity consumers to the wolves.

Our record is very strong and we have had the lowest increase of any mainland state in Australia. Compare that to the LNP, and the Leader of the Opposition made a calculation error yesterday. He was out by only \$340 million when it came to the dividends when he was the treasurer! He has no idea what is going on. Let us look at the LNP policy—what little there is out there. Their executive policy saves \$1 million; it is a saving of one cent per week for electricity consumers. That is his policy. He condemns public ownership every time he gets in front of a TV camera and he keeps his shadow spokesperson hidden away. Consumer groups—we consult them already. Backing old technology will drive bills up. Tim Nicholls will cut anything except people's power bill. How many dividends did he give back to electricity consumers? None! How much did he spend on Strong Choices and privatisation? He spent \$100 million. He did not cut people's bills. He fattened up power stations for privatisation. He did it before and he will do it again. There is no doubt about that whatsoever.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, I remind members of the importance of referring to members by their correct title. I am also informed that we have school leaders from the Mount Nebo State School in the electorate of Ferny Grove observing our proceedings. Welcome.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 am): There is one thing that the member for Yeerongpilly will not cut and that is his email account or his ties with the CFMEU and the filthy money that he takes from them every day. When it comes to energy, what we have seen from this Premier and this do-nothing government this week is not a plan; it is yet another sham. It is a desperate policy from a desperate government at the eleventh hour desperately trying to make up for three years of power price pain with a cash splash it cannot afford and it cannot explain. No-one is buying what the Premier is selling. This election eve electricity con has been laid bare. It is nothing more than a transparently hollow, vote-buying pitch to be racked up on the state's credit card, and that means every Queenslanders will pay.

Offering struggling Queenslanders 96 cents a week to vote for Labor is as tragic as it is laughable. However, here is the kicker: despite all the Premier's protestations, pronouncements and plans, Queenslanders' power bills will still go up under Anastacia Palaszczuk and Labor. Under an LNP government, Queenslanders will do lots better than 96 cents a week shaken off their power bills like loose change. For three years Queenslanders have borne the brutal brunt of Labor milking our electricity generators as a secret tax collector and now they are going to throw us some crumbs back. Of course, the biggest problem of all in this electricity plan sham is that they have already spent the dividends, so where is the money coming from? It has already been spent. They cannot spend it twice.


The Premier does not have an answer. She does not have one today. She certainly did not have one yesterday. The member for Yeerongpilly could not even explain on radio yesterday how the program was going to work. He could not even explain his own policy. This is a Premier who has led a government that has gone about taxing Queenslanders more through our power bills to pay down Labor's runaway debt and yet we are still heading towards an \$81 billion black hole. Clearly, that has not worked out too well. Queenslanders need long-term reform, not more rebates and subsidies. That is how this do-nothing Labor government got us into this mess in the first place.

If the Premier were serious about lowering bills, she would adopt LNP policies. If she were serious she would scrap the 50 per cent renewable energy target, she would commit to a new, clean coal-fired power station and she would freeze electricity bonuses. If this Premier is so confident of her electricity plan, she would call an election immediately and let Queenslanders decide.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will finish at 33 minutes past 12.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, CFMEU

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (11.34 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. Labor's former prime minister Kevin Rudd has urged Labor to expel the lawless thugs in the CFMEU, saying—

I've always been pro-union. What I cannot abide is an industrial and political structure which, through the affiliation system of the Labor Party, gives trade union based factions majority control of the party either on policy or on personnel ...

I ask: when will the Premier finally show the same leadership and expel the militant CFMEU, who threatened to rape Queensland children, from access to her government?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Let me make it very clear—and I have said it in this House and I will say it again—no-one in this House accepts any type of criminal behaviour, whether it is from a union, a business or a community organisation. That is why we have courts and that is why we have police. That is exactly what we do. I have made that perfectly clear in this House. I have made that perfectly clear time and time again and I will stand by those commitments that I have made to the people of this state.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

Mr NICHOLLS: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. Given that the Premier's promise to take her cabinet to the Sunshine Coast after the last parliamentary sitting lasted less than 12 hours, since the Premier has been unable to properly replace the Minister for Agriculture after he resigned from cabinet 18 days ago and given that her captain's pick for a new representative for the people of Rockhampton has descended into an ugly union factional brawl, will the Premier finally confirm that the Palaszczuk government has stopped governing for the people of Queensland and is focused entirely on serving its union masters?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. On this side of the House we work; they whinge and they whine. As I recall, the Leader of the Opposition spent last week on a pub crawl. My government governs for all Queenslanders. That is exactly what we have been doing over the past 2½ years. Just last week I had the great opportunity to join the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Local Government at the LGAQ dinner in Gladstone. Our Works for Queensland project was greeted with spontaneous applause.

My government works with all of the mayors across this state. Why do we do that? We do that so we can work together to deliver jobs. The No. 1 issue out there for Queenslanders is employment and the dignity of getting a job. That is very clear when we look at the recent job figures that came out last week. I said I wanted to see an unemployment rate with a five in it and we got 5.9 per cent. That is 122,500 jobs created under my watch.

Let us have a look; let us have a contrast. In the first budget that the member for Clayfield delivered when he was treasurer what did he do? He cut 14,000 jobs.

Ms Trad: Shame!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That was an absolute shame. Let me reassure every single person in this House: those 14,000 people were not statistics on a balance sheet; they had families, they had bills that they had to pay. That is something that we will continue to uphold—

Mr Nicholls: You've given up.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker! I think we saw that—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Pause the clock. Minister for Industrial Relations and Deputy Premier, I think the Premier can handle the question herself.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me say we enjoyed going to the Sunshine Coast for our cabinet meeting—delivering the hospital—

Ms Jones: A new school.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—and delivering a new school. It was lovely to be there with the principal, the students and the teachers who will be teaching at that school.

Ms Jones: All the workers.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Of course, we thanked the workers who were building that new school. That is our record—delivering for the people of Queensland and we will continue to do that every single day.

(Time expired)

Jobs

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Premier and the Minister for the Arts and I ask: will the Premier please outline the Palaszczuk government's approach to job creation in Queensland and any alternative approaches?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Last week I had the great privilege of joining the member for Bulimba at NOJA Power in her electorate to open the new NOJA Power building. It was wonderful to see that NOJA Power had a lot of representatives from the different countries they export to. NOJA Power is a great example of what our government is doing to help exporters in our state. We are seeing over \$69 billion worth of exports going out from Queensland, creating jobs for Queenslanders. That day Neil told me that he employed 50 people at the beginning of the year and, due to the expansion of his manufacturing facility, they are going to employ an additional 50 people. This is the type of good, family run business that we want to support throughout our state—businesses that look after their employees, treat them with dignity and respect and have flexible work hours to allow mothers to pick up their children from school whilst generating jobs for Queenslanders.

The same day we heard the great news that our unemployment rate has come down to 5.9 per cent, which is something that I know is very welcome right across the state. We have seen great results with our Back to Work program. We have now hit the 8,000 mark—8,000 people have been employed through our Back to Work program initiative. I am more than happy to talk about jobs each and every day. I think it is at times like this when we contrast our employment record to those opposite when they were in office. What we saw was the sacking of people, cutting and plans to sell off our generating assets. We only have to look back to what the member for Clayfield said when he wanted to embark on his Strong Choices plan and sell off our assets. He said that his Strong Choices plan would create 33,600 full-time jobs in Queensland. We axed that plan. We said no. The people of Queensland supported us and they voted us in. There will be no sale of our energy assets while we are governing this state. It clearly shows that our economic plan is working: 122,500 jobs is a record for this state and something that we will continue to build on for many years to come.

Minister for Agriculture

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question without notice is to the Premier. For the second time under the Palaszczuk government the agriculture industry has been left without proper leadership or effective representation in cabinet for over two weeks. Premier, doesn't this show that Labor—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I acknowledge in particular your rulings in relation to imputations during our last sitting—

Mr Cripps: He is not even allowed to talk about his own portfolio.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I think the member for Hinchinbrook might get a chance to ask a question. Maybe that can happen at that point.

Mr Cripps interjected.

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

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I reflected upon your ruling about imputations at the last sitting. You made it abundantly clear that imputations in relation to members would not be permitted. There was clearly a reflection about the leadership of the acting minister. Acting ministers provide leadership, as any minister can in any role that they do, and I ask that you reflect upon that and rule the question out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not know who the question was to. If the acting Minister for Agriculture found it offensive he has an opportunity to rise. He did not rise. I am going to ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to ask the question so that I can hear it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: For the second time under the Palaszczuk government the agriculture industry has been left without full-time proper leadership or effective representation in cabinet for over two weeks—

Dr LYNHAM: I take offence to those comments and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. The question refers to the fact that there is not a full-time minister. It was not about the part-time minister. That is not a personal reflection on the poor fool who was given the job.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to put the question without preamble or we will move on.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Premier. Doesn't this show that Labor does not care about Queensland's farmers and rural communities because appointing someone to be their full-time voice in cabinet is far less important than factional union brawls?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As the daughter of a former agriculture minister I am always happy to talk about agriculture. My father Henry was often called the farmers' friend, and now as Premier I am happy to be known as the farmers' friend as well. I value the work that our primary producers do in this state. Under my government we have seen that sector—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I urge members to allow the Premier to answer the question. The Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I might also add that the Minister for State Development is also fully capable of fulfilling the duties of the Minister for Agriculture in this state—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I know there is a lot of enthusiasm. Member for Hinchinbrook, can I urge you—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, you are now warned under 253.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: You are pretty tough, member for Kawana. You'll be right. You have your first warning, member for Hinchinbrook. The Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am glad that the member for Nanango asked me that question, because when I was able to travel out to Kingaroy we showed my government's commitment to helping Swickers. Once again at the LGAQ conference a couple of councillors approached me and said that the whole town is talking about how my government is helping the largest employer in that town continue. That is what we do. We govern for everyone. We are always out there prepared to listen and prepared to help. My government has been out there with the wild dog fencing, making sure we help to bring back the sheep industry in this state—something those opposite failed to attend to. I note that even the member for Gregory supports that program.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I know that you are excited but the Premier has a right to be heard. She has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: When those opposite were in office what did they do to the agricultural sector in this state? They wanted to close down the agricultural colleges in their heartland and they wanted to cut biosecurity. I can remember as leader of the opposition—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, please!

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Callide. Hansard has to be able to accurately record what is happening.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I can remember travelling out to Longreach, Charleville and other areas and hearing from people firsthand about the cuts to their communities by the member for Clayfield as treasurer. They still feel the effects of those cuts. Only my government cares about all Queenslanders, no matter where they live. We will continue to back our primary producers and we will continue to help our farmers—

(Time expired)

Electricity Prices

Ms PEASE: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Arts. I refer to the ACCC preliminary report, released last week, of the retail electricity inquiry, and I ask: can the Premier advise what actions the Queensland government is taking in response to this report? Can the Premier please advise of any alternative responses?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Lytton for that very important question. We have clearly seen that my government understands the pressures on households and businesses when it comes to their electricity bills. We have taken direct action. The ACCC report released last week said at page 23—

The Queensland government also recently directed state-owned Stanwell Corporation to offer more capacity in the NEM—the National Electricity Market—

and alter its bidding strategies to put downwards pressure on wholesale prices.

The report also mentioned my government's move to reopen Swanbank E—a power station closed down by the member for Clayfield when he was treasurer. The report also said that our reinvestment of \$770 million of dividends in the Powering Queensland Plan 'significantly reduced the recent price increases for Queensland electricity users'. The report from the ACCC acknowledged that my government has used government ownership to take pressure off prices immediately and ease the pressure on electricity customers. Of concern, the report also highlighted that some retailers are pricing above what they should be and not passing on savings to consumers.

Let me make it very clear: the ACCC has recognised the actions my government has taken to ease the pressure on prices. What has been made very clear to my government is that, unfortunately, the retailers are not passing on those savings to consumers. Today I will be meeting with retailers and demanding that they pass on those savings to consumers.

I urge all members to read this report. It states very clearly, in black and white, that households should be saving hundreds of dollars a year but those savings are not being passed on by the retailers. I will be making it very clear today that if those savings are not passed on to consumers the government will re-enter the retail sector. My government has made numerous decisions to put pressure on the wholesale price and bring it down. These initiatives in some cases are not being passed on by the retailers. That will be my clear message to retailers when I meet with them later today.

(Time expired)

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, M1

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Premier. I table documents obtained under right to information showing the high likelihood of serious crashes and traffic mayhem during the Commonwealth Games as motorists demand exceeds the capacity of the M1.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 9 November 2016, titled 'GC2018 overlay for M1 Management Plan' [2092].

After nearly three years of inaction and dithering from the Palaszczuk government, is this report not more proof of failure to plan ahead to get the rail and road networks of South-East Queensland ready for the biggest show in 30 years?

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is a question that was addressed to me by the media last week when we announced that—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Who was being rude?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I was asked this question when I was on the Gold Coast making the announcement about the people who had been successful in participating in the Queen's baton relay in the lead-up to the Commonwealth Games.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, please. The Premier's answer is relevant.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, I would urge you not to provoke me. The Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take the interjections from the Minister for the Commonwealth Games and the Minister for Main Roads that when the LNP was in government it did not spend one dollar on the M1—not a single dollar. My government has been working with the federal government to make sure we are doing the upgrades that are needed.

In his question the member referred to the preliminary report, which was prepared before the final decision was made and the final report was released to the public. This was clearly explained last week, but I am more than happy to explain it again.

The second stage of Gold Coast Light Rail—which my government is building, working with the local council and the federal government—will be completed in time for the Commonwealth Games. Once again, my government is working and delivering for the people of this state.

We are also upgrading interchanges along the M1. We have put money into those interchanges—unlike those opposite, who did nothing. In addition, 13 temporary park-and-ride sites will enable people to get to and from the games, with more than 10,000 car spaces available to encourage spectators to use public transport to attend games events. The Minister for Tourism and the Commonwealth Games has also been encouraging people who will be attending numerous events to look at staying on the Gold Coast. We have been promoting those destinations.

Everybody should be looking forward to the Commonwealth Games. I am sick and tired of those opposite, who pretend to be bipartisan, continuing to talk down what I believe will be one of the greatest events Queensland will ever put on. They should stop whingeing and start working.

(Time expired)

Public Transport

Mr RUSSO: My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the importance of keeping our public transport network in public hands and will the Deputy Premier advise of any alternative policies?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Sunnybank for the question because, like others on this side of the House, he understands that the provision of public transport services for the public provided through public ownership and control is a fundamental government service, but it is under threat and it is under threat from those opposite. How do we know that? When Labor was elected in 2015 we put a stop to the Costello Commission of Audit. What was that audit? It was an assessment of the state's financial position that essentially said that we should privatise public transport—not only public transport but everything other than policing, public safety, emergency and justice. It suggested that everything else should be put up for sale—public education, public health, public transport. That was the Costello Commission of Audit endorsed by Tim Nicholls—pulled together by his mate Peter Costello—and Strong Choices was all about implementing that Commission of Audit. We can sum up all of the recommendations in Costello's Commission of Audit in three words—cut, sack, sell! That was in essence all of the recommendations from the Costello Commission of Audit.

We put a stop to their privatisation and their outsourcing of bus contracts. We know they wanted to sell ports and they wanted to sell a whole range of other assets, including our biggest and most profitable assets—our electricity assets. What happened? Queenslanders deserted them in droves, even though the member for Clayfield when he was treasurer spent \$100 million of Queensland taxpayer funds trying to sell this big port to them. Queenslanders know that with privatisation comes higher power prices. Just ask those in Victoria with a 9.5 per cent increase and those in New South Wales with an 11.5 per cent increase. In Queensland it is 3.3 per cent, and now we have even more proof with the Premier tabling the ACIL Allen report which showed that through public ownership and through the actions that we have taken we have kept residential power prices \$146 lower. They would have been \$146 higher this financial year for the typical customer. We can trust this Premier to make sure that we retain our power assets and that we will keep electricity price rises to CPI and to inflation. We can trust those opposite to cut, sack and sell.

(Time expired)

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Business Advice

Mr EMERSON: My question is directed to the Premier. I table an extract from the Goldoc website titled Get Set for the Games business advice advising businesses to—

Allow staff to work compressed weeks, for example, work five days compressed into four longer days

Tabled paper: Web page, undated, titled 'Get Set for the Games—Travel Action Plan' [2093].

After three years of inaction and lack of planning, why is this Labor government now telling businesses to scrap their industrial agreements and possibly breach workplace laws as its solution to traffic chaos during the Commonwealth Games?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Indooroopilly for the question. Once again those opposite are talking down the Commonwealth Games. I find it incredible for the shadow Treasurer to come in here and talk about one of the most significant events that Queensland will host—

Ms Jones: 1.2 million tickets!

Ms PALASZCZUK: 1.2 million tickets have already sold and the event will be captured by an audience of over 1.5 billion people around the world, so Queensland will be on show. From what I can see from the tabled document, this is a travel action plan and some of these mechanisms that would be in place for a significant event would be the exact same mechanisms that those opposite would have put in place during the G20. Let us not also forget that the Commonwealth Games is being held during the school holidays, so people will be away on those holidays with their kids in different parts of South-East Queensland or even travelling interstate. Therefore, we will not see the usual congestion that we would see on any given day on any particular road during peak hour because it is part of the school holidays, and I think everybody in this House acknowledges that it is a bit easier to get around when it is school holidays. According to this flash document that was tabled, some of the initiatives include—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: And I am going to quote from it now; let us be honest. Suggestions for staff and business related travel include—

Enable staff to work from other offices, locations or home

That sounds incredibly sensible to me. It also suggests to support flexible working hours. Because of the Commonwealth Games, some businesses would need even more workers because of the volume of people coming through and in other areas employers would be compassionate and enable people to work from home during this time. I can remember that during the G20 those opposite asked everyone to stay away from the city. They said, 'Go away from the city,' and then they said, 'No, don't go away! Come back!' They changed their minds halfway through. I find it ironic that those opposite are talking down the greatest Commonwealth Games that we are ever going to put on in this state. Once again, they are not interested—

(Time expired)

Queensland Economy, Deloitte Access Economics Report

Mr STEWART: My question is directed to the Treasurer. I refer to the recent Deloitte Access Economics Business Outlook report, and I ask: will the Treasurer advise the House of key findings of the report and its assessment of Queensland's economy?

Mr PITT: I thank the member for Townsville for his question. Obviously the latest Deloitte Access Economics Business Outlook report for the September quarter was released yesterday and this morning I met with one of Australia's best known economists and a partner at Deloitte, Chris Richardson. The overall message in this report is very clear and his main message was that 'good news is building in Queensland'.

Forecasts of 3.4 per cent growth in 2017-18 and 3.5 per cent in 2018-19 are strong—they are actually even higher than those forecast by the Queensland Treasury—but they are in line with forecasts from other independent private sector analysis. This puts in no doubt that the Queensland economy is strong and is growing. Small business confidence is up, there has been increased net interstate and international migration over the past year and of course there has been an upturn in business investment which Deloitte says means that 'that big negative has finally packed its bag and left the Sunshine State'.

When it comes to statistics and economic indicators, we know that if people know they can find a job when they are looking for one that is a very good sign for the economy, and that is why my favourite line in this report is that jobs growth has seen a 'truly impressive recovery'. That is outlined in the latest ABS statistics that came out which the Premier alluded to earlier today. We have seen our unemployment rate down on a trend basis from 6.6 per cent—where those opposite left it—to 5.9 per cent and the creation of 122,500 net new jobs in this state, and I want to make a point about that. Earlier I heard an interjection from the member for Clayfield who, as a former treasurer, suggested that 30,000 jobs had been lost. It seems that he does not understand what net new jobs means—that is, it takes account of jobs lost and gained. On that basis, we have created four times as many jobs in this state than the LNP government did when it was in office. That is a clear turnaround.

The Deloitte report is very important as it does a very good job of giving a broad view of what is happening in the Australian economy. Over the past couple of years it has delivered many different outcomes and analyses. In September 2015, the Deloitte report said that the outlook for Queensland's economy over the next five years was positive. The report talked about it being in a better condition than we think because of that strong export performance that I have talked about.

Since then, our domestic economy has improved. In terms of state final demand, after eight consecutive quarters of negative growth we are now in our sixth consecutive quarter of positive growth. That contraction occurred under those opposite. They started the rot. That is what happens when we have one side of politics that talks down the economy. That is how you end up in a slump. That is how you end up with massive job losses. That is how we ended up with a government like ours, which is doing all the things that Queenslanders expect, and that is job creation. The members opposite are still stuck with a leader whose secret plan is asset sales—

(Time expired)

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Business Advice

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Premier. I also refer to the tabled Goldoc information sheet Get Set for the Games and the business advice that advises businesses to support flexible working hours to enable travel outside of peak times. I ask: how does the Labor government expect businesses on the Gold Coast to operate outside of normal business hours, which will see them negatively impacted by the games, rather than being able to receive the benefits?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Surfers Paradise for that question. My understanding is that the opposition has tabled a document from the Gold Coast City Council. Get Set for the Games is a public awareness document. My government funds the council with \$3 million to make sure that the public is fully aware of the impact that the games will have on them so that they can get set for the games. It is a major event. As I said, we are committed to working together. I know that the Minister for the Commonwealth Games works very closely with Mayor Tom Tate.

As I said, it would be very good to see all members of this House work together to support the Commonwealth Games. From the pattern of the questions asked today, I am starting to see some negativity creeping in about the Commonwealth Games. The last thing that I want to hear is this state talking down what I think is going to be one of the most significant events that Queensland has ever seen.

I am also pleased to report that all of the infrastructure has now been completed six months ahead of schedule. I understand that that is a first in the history of the Commonwealth Games. As I said, over 1.5 billion people will be watching these games. There will be 70 nations and territories competing. There will be 15,000 volunteers. I thank very much all of the Queenslanders who have volunteered to help out for this event. There will be 6,600 athletes and officials who will be welcomed to Queensland for this specific event.

I know that the member for Surfers Paradise supports the games, because earlier this year he travelled with me to London to see the launch of the Queen's Baton Relay. If the member has some specific concerns about the document that has been put out by the Gold Coast City Council, he may want to raise them with Mayor Tom Tate himself.

As I said, we support that plan. It is a responsible plan that is looking at flexible working hours. It is sensible. It is about understanding the enormity of the event that is going to be happening there and the infrastructure that is needed to make sure that it is going to be the best Commonwealth Games ever.

I want to thank all of my ministers for working collaboratively. There has been a lot of cooperation that has happened across agencies to ensure that the games is on track.

(Time expired)

Dental Services, Federal Funding

Ms DONALDSON: My question is to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister please provide advice on the impact on the cost of living for Queenslanders of the Commonwealth government's funding cuts to the national partnership agreement on public dental services?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Bundaberg for her commitment to the provision of quality healthcare services, particularly dental healthcare services, in the Wide Bay. Most of the time the contribution to debates in this House by the members of the opposition are as flat and uninspiring as the leadership of the Leader of the Opposition. But there is one example where their performance is truly breathtaking and that is the breadth and scale of their hypocrisy.

Time and again in this House I have called on the opposition to join the government in condemning the savage funding cuts to Queensland's public health system implemented by the federal Liberal National Party government—the governments of both Tony Abbott and Malcolm Turnbull. Time and again I have warned the members opposite about the consequences of ripping billions of dollars out of the front line of health care in Queensland. Time and again I have spoken of the inevitable outcome of reducing funding to Queensland under national partnership agreements by 84 per cent. That is right: 84 per cent. What has the Leader of the Opposition had to say about these cuts? What has the Leader of the Opposition had to say about those people living in the electorates of Mansfield, Aspley, Indooroopilly, Mount Ommaney, the Whitsundays, the Gold Coast, Cleveland, and Redlands? What has he had to say for those people who need public dental health care? Absolutely nothing.

Now the LNP members dishonestly attack the state Labor government for public dental waiting lists when I warned them that this is precisely what would happen as a direct result of their federal LNP government cuts. Their hypocrisy is breathtaking. We cannot trust the Leader of the Opposition with the public finances of this state, with the Public Service, with public assets and we certainly cannot trust him with public health care. From the first Abbott-Hockey budget in 2014 when the federal LNP members said that they would spend \$78 million this year, what have they delivered? A cut of 72 per cent. All they are delivering to Queensland this year is 21 per cent. That means 94,500 Queenslanders will not get a dental appointment because of the federal government's cuts. I say to the Leader of the Opposition to stop the hypocrisy, to stop the dishonesty, to rent a backbone and get on board with backing Queensland by standing up to the LNP in Canberra and backing proper public dental health services that are being delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Traffic

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Premier. I also refer to the tabled document exposing the capacity issues on the M1 during the Commonwealth Games. When was the Palaszczuk government planning to tell Gold Coast motorists that they would have no choice but to sit in congestion and traffic chaos stretching from Coomera to Tugun for the entirety of the Commonwealth Games?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for the question. We have announced that plan. The plan was released months ago. Goldoc updates the Commonwealth Games Federation on a regular basis. From all reports that I am hearing the Commonwealth Games Federation is incredibly happy with the progress of the implementation of these games. I cannot believe that, today, the members opposite are criticising the Commonwealth Games and criticising the actions that the Gold Coast City Council is taking to ensure that people on the Gold Coast are prepared for the Commonwealth Games next year.

I will talk about some of the benefits of the Commonwealth Games. It will inject more than \$4 billion into the Queensland economy. It has generated up to 30,000 jobs. We made a bid for the games knowing that it would be a huge tourism boost for Queensland and the Gold Coast. I thank the Minister for Tourism and the Minister for Commonwealth Games, Kate Jones, who has been doing an outstanding job on the Gold Coast—more than all of those members opposite put together. More than 15,000 workers were engaged in the construction of venues, including the games village, and 90 per cent of construction contracts were awarded to Queensland companies. We want to leave a lasting legacy for the Commonwealth Games and we will do that.

I urge those opposite to stop talking down the Commonwealth Games. I know that the people of the Gold Coast are excited about these games. They will come along and watch these games. They will support our athletes. There will be huge flow-on impacts for tourism right across Queensland as a result of the Commonwealth Games. It is about time those opposite stopped whingeing about the Commonwealth Games and started to support the Commonwealth Games that we are delivering for the Gold Coast.

Rural and Remote Queensland, Education

Mr MADDEN: My question is to the Minister for Education, Tourism, Major Events and the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister please outline how the Palaszczuk government is supporting students in rural and remote Queensland and helping them to get a great education?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for his question. He is an absolutely fantastic member for Ipswich West, unlike the LNP candidate who had to be sacked by the hierarchy for the comments he made about Brenden Abbott being—what was it?

Mr Dick: A political prisoner. What sort of people do you want to put in parliament?

Ms JONES: I take that interjection from the Minister for Health.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Thank you, minister, and other members.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Health, if you persist you will be warned. Your sparring partners will be as well.

Ms Palaszczuk: They were the ones who started it.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the Premier. I think we have a much better member for Ashgrove too these day. We do not want to talk about those broken promises, do we?

Mr SPEAKER: Do you want to table that?

Ms JONES: I am happy to table it. I have heaps of them.

Tabled paper: LNP brochure titled 'It's time for a change. It's time to Get Queensland Back on Track' [2094].

Ms JONES: This is the irony of the last government under the LNP. They spent so much money letterboxing into Ashgrove promising to cut electricity prices and they went up by 43 per cent. That is the record of Tim Nicholls and the LNP. The people of Queensland will not forget it. Mr Nicholls says one thing when he is in opposition and does the complete opposite when he is in government, we know that, whether it is about electricity prices, which are guaranteed to go up by 43 per cent, or cuts to front-line services in education.

I do think I was meant to be talking about education. I will get back to that. It is State Education Week in Queensland. It is a really exciting time. Another key difference between the LNP and our government is that under the leadership of Anastacia Palaszczuk our Premier made it very clear to us that we had to govern for all Queenslanders no matter where they live in our great state. I am very proud to be the Minister for Education. We have 1,239 state schools across Queensland. We know that in a lot of rural and remote parts of Queensland the state school is the only schooling available in that local community. In other even more remote communities we know that parents play an integral role as home tutors and providing that education for their children. That is why I am very pleased that recently we announced, with the Isolated Parents' Association, \$1.5 million to support home tutors for children enrolled in schools of distance education. This is something that the Isolated Parents' Association has asked for. They got no movement from those in opposition when they were in government. Despite saying they will stand up for rural and remote communities they failed.

Under our watch, because of the Premier's leadership we have now delivered a brand new division in state schooling called Rural and Remote Schools. We are providing the resources in our department to directly work with those rural and remote schools to boost those services to ensure that every child, no matter where they live in Queensland, gets access to the best possible education that we can afford.

During State Education Week I encourage all members of parliament to support state schooling and the great work that is happening with our teachers, principals, teacher aides and the school community.

Electricity Prices, Primary Producers

Mr GORDON: My question without notice is to the Acting Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Acting Minister for Rural and Economic Development. First of all, congratulations on your appointment to such an important portfolio.

Mr SPEAKER: Can you please ask your question.

Mr GORDON: Primary producers, particularly sugarcane growers in my electorate of Cook, are facing record high electricity prices to run their small family farming businesses. What is the minister prepared to do to influence his government to offer long-suffering farmers relief when it comes to these high electricity costs?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Cook for his question. From the outset can I say that I am proud to be the acting agriculture minister and a voice for Queensland's \$20 billion agriculture sector. I am also proud to follow on from the ex agriculture minister, Bill Byrne, who did fantastic work for the agriculture sector here in Queensland.

In addressing the member for Cook's question regarding electricity prices, our policy has been released on how we are assisting the agricultural sector. Minister Bailey has been quite firm and stoic about how, with productivity reductions, they can increase farm efficiency. We are assisting them dollar for dollar to improve efficiency on their farms to decrease electricity costs.

I understand the difficulties that the sugarcane industry has been experiencing in the member's electorate. I understand the difficulties in the sector brought about by the legislation introduced by those opposite in 2015. The cane sector, according to the Productivity Commission, has been unable to diversify, unable to increase its productivity by diversifying into other crops and other areas by following this insane progression. It is only the Labor Party that stands up for sugarcane producers. We will be assisting sugarcane producers in their energy efficiencies. We will be assisting the agricultural sector. We are above rhetoric when it comes to assisting this agricultural sector with \$20 billion worth of assistance. Nothing speaks louder than the evidence that we are supporting the agricultural sector by our grants.

Opposition member: How?

Dr LYNHAM: With QRAA. Under QRAA there were 1,000 grants and subsidies under those opposite and 6,000 grants and subsidies under the Labor Party. Category B funding under QRAA was announced today for those hit by the recent rain event in North Queensland. What about removal of stamp duty for intergenerational loans so canefarmers can pass on their farms to their sons and daughters? That is something that those opposite would never have thought of or done. It was up to the Labor Party to do it. Our government is providing First Start Loans to enable young canefarmers to buy a property and start a farm. There is \$2 million so that they can start a cane farm, have a family in the cane town and send their kids to the local school. It is only the Labor Party that supports the bush. We are above the rhetoric from those opposite.

Public Assets

Mr PEARCE: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply. Will the minister update the House on how keeping our energy assets in public hands is helping to bring price relief to Queensland electricity consumers?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Mirani for his question. He is a great supporter of the energy sector throughout his electorate. I know he is also a great supporter of public ownership, as is every member of the Palaszczuk government. It was revealing that, as he asked the question, the opposition LNP were laughing; every time they talk about energy they ridicule public ownership.

When we took office, the wholesale electricity price was the highest in Australia because of the three years of the Newman government, in which the member for Clayfield was treasurer. When they came to office, the wholesale electricity price was the lowest in the country and they turned it into the highest. They shut down Swanbank E and they mothballed two units at Tarong, choking supply and driving the price through the roof. It is no wonder that prices rose by 43 per cent under their mismanagement of public ownership. They gave a very clear commitment that there would be no asset sales without a mandate. After they lost government, it was revealed that behind the scenes they were spending \$100 million on preparing for asset sales and contestability in their first term, against their promise to the people of Queensland. They were exposed.

Perhaps we should not be surprised, because the 2006 *Hansard* quotes the member for Clayfield as saying 'privatisation is good for consumers'. He went on to say—

One has to ask: why not sell the poles and wires as well? Why not sell the generators as well?

That is what the member for Clayfield said 11 years ago. He then said—

Most informed commentators know that this is the best solution to provide adequate power efficiently and with little risk to government.

The member for Clayfield is a lifelong supporter of privatisation. In their last term they promised not to, but they did it anyway and they are about to do exactly the same thing this time. He is a lifelong supporter of privatisation. In Campbell Newman's book, the member for Clayfield is revealed as being more Right Wing than Campbell Newman when it comes to asset sales. Members will remember his record as treasurer, when he tried to cut concessions to 435,000 seniors and pensioners in Queensland. That was only three years ago. He does not understand energy. Within 24 hours he had to change that policy, because there was a riot across the state and rightly so. He condemned solar users as latte sippers and champagne drinkers. He recruited Campbell Newman from the Brisbane City Council. I remember that, because I was there with Caltabiano. He brought him into this place. They are peas in a pod. They are cut from the same cloth. He is a cutter, a sacker and a seller and he will do it again.

Cooper Basin, Gas Production

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Premier. A minister of the government said, '... any plan to shut down gas production across Queensland would drive up electricity prices and cost jobs across industry ...'. Can the Premier explain why the government intends to do just that by shutting down gas production in the Cooper Basin with its Pristine Rivers proposal?

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have one minute.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. There is only one state on the eastern seaboard that is actually prepared to open up its gas fields and that is Queensland. It is not New South Wales. It is not Victoria. There was only one party that actually shut down Swanbank E and it was the member's party. Her party shut down that gas plant. We have now brought that gas back on. She should not come in here and lecture me, when—

Opposition members: Oh!


Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, everyone.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The federal government has failed to have a comprehensive national energy plan, which means that Queensland is continuing to do the heavy lifting.

(Time expired)

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Electricity Prices

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.35 pm): I start by saying what a pleasure it is to congratulate the member for Toowoomba South and his wife, Mel, on the birth of their first son, Samuel, yesterday. On behalf of the House, I congratulate the member for Toowoomba South and his wife on the delivery of their son. I wish them well, and also Charlotte and Elizabeth who now have a younger brother. On behalf of the LNP and I am sure all members of the House, I pass on our congratulations and best wishes.

Before question time, we heard about this do-nothing Labor government's sham of a plan to try to buy votes before the election. We have also heard from the member for Yeerongpilly, the deleter and denier of electricity in Queensland, who stood up and repeated the same old lines and the same old stories. However, what the member for Yeerongpilly and the Premier refuse to say is that under Labor Queenslanders' power bills will still go up. I challenge the Premier and the member for Yeerongpilly to ask every Queensland: 'Will your power bill go up?' It will still go up; it is that simple. Already Queenslanders are paying record power prices because they are being taxed by stealth by a do-nothing Labor government.

Only a week ago, we heard the government urging all Queenslanders and small businesses to use less electricity. They wanted us to set our air conditioners to 26 degrees and turn off lights and applications. That alarming rhetoric underlines the fragility of our electricity system in the hands of this Labor government. As the member for Indooroopilly said, it is 96 cents and 26 degrees. That is what you get out of this Labor government. The LNP knows that there is not a family or business in Queensland not already doing what they can to conserve power in light of the Palaszczuk government's soaring power prices and secret energy tax.

Last week I travelled throughout regional Queensland as part of the LNP's assault on cost-of-living pressures. We listened to families and small businesses talk about the pressures they face from Labor's record-high power prices. At Hoolihans Irish Restaurant and Bar in Hervey Bay we talked with owner Steve Murphy and his patrons and staff, who are worried about their jobs. Steve also runs the ship-lift facility and cool stores at Urangan Bay. He is paying the price for Labor's hidden tax. We met the community group that meets at the Hervey Bay Men's Shed, where we talked to President Ian Jones, who says they have to do fundraising—members will know about the sausage sizzles that people hold at local stores—just to raise money to pay the power bills. That money goes towards nothing else. They cannot use that money to buy equipment or make further investments in their shed. They are using that money just to turn on the lights; it is just to keep the power on.

At the Mundingburra IGA, we talked with owners Maree and Adam Westbury. Whether you are at Sirrianni's IGA in Ascot or the Westbury's IGA in Mundingburra, the problems are the same: high power prices and no relief in sight from this Labor government. At the Atherton Tablelands shed meeting we spoke with farmers, including Mario Quagliata, about the high cost of power for irrigation because people on the Tablelands have no choice. Now they are talking about installing diesel powered generators, which are cheaper than the power that they can buy off the grid from Ergon.

Whether it was the members of the Innisfail chamber of commerce who had concerns about the impact on their regular retail businesses or Brent from Cairns Car Audio & Auto Electrical who has seen his bill go up by 100 per cent in the last 12 months alone and cannot employ any more people in Cairns, the message we were hearing right across the state was pretty clear. Businesses are hurting, they are not employing and people's jobs are at risk because of Labor's record high power prices. The lights are off at Queensland Labor when it comes to energy. An economy cannot grow if it is weighed down by high costs. One of the biggest costs clearly is electricity.

By contrast, the LNP has the policies to start putting downward pressure on power prices—not subsidies, but actual structural change. We have already committed to build with the private sector a high-efficiency, low-emissions coal-fired power station in North Queensland. That means more jobs, more competition, more supply, better energy security and more certainty for consumers and businesses. The sum total is downward pressure on prices.

The LNP will freeze electricity executive bonuses until power prices decrease. Labor has rewarded executives for record high power prices. That is not fair on families or businesses. We constantly hear the member for Yeerongpilly talking about policy in a display of ignorance that is breathtaking. It is the policy that our government had when it came to executives at Queensland Rail in order to fix up Labor's then rail fail about on-time running and it is the policy that the Deputy Premier has implemented to get exactly the same outcome now—a year after their rail fail. There will be no bonuses until they fix the system.

The member for Yeerongpilly does not believe in it. I thought they were in the same faction. I thought they would at least scurry off into a corner and the member for Yeerongpilly say, 'Well, Jackie, what do you reckon? Is this going to work or not?' She would have said, 'You bet you, Mark, of course it is going to work.' He would have said, 'If you say so, Jackie, I am doing it.' We know that is how it works in the Left faction—in fact, across the caucus. He continues to deny reality. At least the Deputy Premier had the sense to adopt the LNP policy in relation to the rail fail, which she continues to preside over. The member for Yeerongpilly cannot see that the same policy should be implemented in terms of the power companies' executive bonuses.

We will scrap Labor's extreme 50 per cent renewable energy target that will cost jobs, shrink the economy, increase prices, drive up taxpayer funded subsidies and cause the sort of energy insecurity that foreshadows blackouts. How do we know? We have seen it happen in South Australia.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition is anticipating the debate which his shadow minister foreshadowed moving a motion about at 6 pm tonight. I ask that you direct him to move on to other matters.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Crawford): Leader of the Opposition, obviously you are aware of tonight's debate so please continue.

Mr NICHOLLS: Tonight's debate refers to the 50 per cent renewable energy target of the federal Labor Party and not the current state Labor government's 50 per cent renewable energy target. I say to my friend the Leader of the House, for whom I do have some respect—as one of the surviving members of the AWU—that I am very careful with my motions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, I am reading the motion for tonight and it does not say anything about the federal government's 50 per cent renewable energy target—

Mr NICHOLLS: I will move on.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not asked you to move on yet. We cannot anticipate debate on tonight's motion. Based on what is in front of me, the notice of motion moved by the member for Burleigh this morning does not talk about the federal government. It talks about the Palaszczuk government ditching its similar ideology driven policy that will hurt Queensland families.

Mr NICHOLLS: The LNP will work with farmers—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not asked you to continue. I am directing you not to anticipate debate on tonight's motion.

Mr NICHOLLS: The LNP will work with farmers through our agriculture and energy water council to tackle tariff reform and support our farmers. We will actually do what Labor do not do—that is, bring consumers into the room to talk to ministers and talk to the chiefs of these electricity companies and say, 'This is the impact of the decisions that you make.' That is what a proper government would do with consumers, not appoint an acting acting agriculture minister to sprout off two weeks afterwards about some idea that he obviously cannot explain because the member for Yeerongpilly cannot explain it.

We will give consumers a voice by putting consumer representatives on the boards of Energy Queensland and Powerlink so there is a people driven focus on reducing electricity prices while maintaining reliability. The LNP is committed to providing Queenslanders with reliable power at a price they can afford. It is only the LNP that has an energy policy to put downward pressure on prices, to actually solve the problem and create more jobs for Queenslanders.


What is the legacy of the Palaszczuk Labor government over this term? The facts are this. Queenslanders are paying the highest power prices ever under a do-nothing Labor government. Queensland currently derives just four per cent of its power from renewables yet spends more than any other state propping up green schemes. Labor uses power bills as a secret tax. The fact is that if Labor get back in, we will have another term of soaring power prices, unreliable power and reckless policies which will leave Queenslanders in the dark.

It was the LNP that reported Stanwell to the ACCC for price gouging while the Premier stood by as Queensland families were ripped off. We acted to give Queenslanders a fair go. Just last week, in light of the LNP's advocacy, the ACCC interim report confirmed what Queenslanders have long known—the Premier's failed power policies have been front and centre of the great power rip-off. The report showed Labor's policies resulted in record electricity prices for all Queensland families, businesses and industries.

It is a tale of two Annas—Bligh who gold plated the network and Palaszczuk who has gone even further with extreme green schemes, her secret power tax and her union-friendly pay deal. All of Labor's policies are increasing electricity prices, whether it is the three per cent wage increase for electricity workers—more than that for teachers, nurses and ambulance officers—the 50 per cent renewable energy target—

(Time expired)

Greenslopes Electorate

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.47 pm): On Sunday the Premier made a really exciting announcement in my electorate, as part of the Affordable Energy Plan—a rebate for customers who choose energy efficient appliances. The Premier is taking action on energy right now, not waiting two years like the Turnbull government. This announcement means people will have support to switch to energy efficient appliances. I know the families in my electorate will welcome this because it helps save money and is also great for the environment.

This great announcement for families and for the environment made me think about all of the many environmental achievements of the Palaszczuk government. About 20 years ago I used to walk to work in East Brisbane through an area known as Moorhen Flats. During one of these walks I met a chap who was busy planting native trees and we got talking about the area. He asked me to come back on Saturday to help with a community tree planting. My wife and I dropped down and we learned for the first time about the Norman Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee or N4C.

Last Saturday I met the same chap again. His name is Damien Madden. We met in a different location in the catchment, Bridgewater Creek. I was pleased to advise him that N4C had been successful in gaining a \$50,000 Community Sustainability Action grant. Damien was so excited about this grant. We braved the rain as he showed me the plans and proudly showed me what has already been achieved.

Damian started planting native plants to restore this section of the creek in 1984. He showed me photos from that time. At that stage the creek looked like an open drain. Now, along the same stretch of creek, there are figs, lilly pillies, lomandras and even some hoop pines. There are water dragons on the banks and shags sitting in the trees. The restored sections look healthy and are helping to reduce flooding in the local area. Damien will use the money to continue this important work for our entire community.

Over the last 20 years I have volunteered with N4C on many occasions and sometimes you wonder if you are making a difference. Damien, his photos and his passion have shown that with vision and hard work we can care for our environment. Thanks to Minister Miles and his department for making the funds available to support the vision of Damien and N4C.

I was so pleased also to meet Minister Bailey on Friday the 13th, a day of superstition for some but it was nothing but good news for the people of Greenslopes as the minister announced the next stage of the Veloway. This will take bikes over the busy intersection of Birdwood Road and Marshall Road. This will ensure a smooth, easy and safe trip for cyclists travelling from Coorparoo and Greenslopes as they head to Griffith University and beyond. It will make the choice of commuting by bike to the city that much easier for people who live in Mount Gravatt, Holland Park and Holland Park West. It is pretty simple: more people on bikes is better for the environment.

Belinda from the East BUG, or East Bicycle Users Group, took me for a tour recently and we stopped at the end of the current Veloway. She told me how important it would be to continue this project. She will be thrilled that the next stage is on the way. Of course the previous government could have done this but chose not. The last piece of Veloway infrastructure was built by—you guessed it!—a Labor government. This commitment to cycling complements the Fairer Fares program, which is getting more people in my electorate to choose public transport. Getting more people on bikes and more people on public transport are the actions of a government that is serious about caring for our environment.


Each year I encourage participation of our local community in Clean Up Australia Day. This year I joined local residents in Bowies Flat Wetland. The Coorparoo State School environment group clean up each year at Bowies Flat Wetlands. Each year students ask me, 'What can we do about plastic drink bottles and plastic bags?' Thanks to the Palaszczuk government I can now tell them that single-use bags are banned and we are introducing a drink container recycling scheme.

It is great to see so many people caring for the greenspaces in our area. Volunteer groups like the Mount Gravatt Environment Group care for existing natural habitat and work with local residents to create corridors. When they bring issues to me I listen to them. I am so proud that we have been able to save greenspaces in Nursery Road, Mount Gravatt, and Murton Avenue, Holland Park. I would like to thank Minister Jones and Minister Lynham for working with our community to preserve these important greenspaces.

On 25 May this year the Leader of the Opposition referred to people who care about the environment in my electorate as 'green guerrillas of inner Brisbane'. When I hear that sort of offensive talk I think about people like Damian, the volunteers from N4C and the Mount Gravatt Environment Group, the students from Coorparoo State School environment group and Belinda from East BUG. I reject that ridiculous label. These are people who care about our environment, who build our community through their concern for our environment. They dedicate time, expertise, money and passion to caring for our local environment. I commit myself to continuing to work with them to care for our local environment and to build our community.

(Time expired)

Rookwood Weir

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.51 pm): There has been no clearer example of what this Palaszczuk government and the Premier think of our rural industries, of our rural communities, of water and agriculture and how they go hand in hand than the fact that this Premier will not appoint a dedicated agriculture minister for this great industry and for this great state. Labor is saying no to jobs and Labor is saying no to water security in Central Queensland with the startling revelations this week that Anastacia Palaszczuk has refused an offer from the federal coalition to fully fund Rookwood Weir. The facts should be put on the table here in this parliament. In true Palaszczuk government style, the Premier did nothing—did not even communicate the offer to the water minister and definitely not to the agriculture minister. Oh, that is right—they only have an acting minister!

This is a new level of do-nothingness from Anastacia Palaszczuk when they cannot even respond to an offer from the Prime Minister to fully fund 100 per cent of Rookwood Weir. Queensland has now missed out on \$260 million worth of funding because of this incompetent Labor government. It has been over 500 days since the Commonwealth government put half the funding of \$130 million on the table for Rookwood Weir, and Anastacia Palaszczuk, as the Premier of this state, has done nothing.


It is clear Labor do not want to build Rookwood Weir. Instead of matching this contribution, they have dithered around with a protracted business case process. The business case is due but nothing has been released. It will no doubt be one of those secret reports, secret business cases, that never sees the light of day under this Labor government. The Palaszczuk government's rejection of the federal coalition's offer to fully fund Rookwood Weir will hurt job creation and water security in Central Queensland. Even when Labor is gifted vital infrastructure in its entirety by a government that wants to deliver for regional Queensland, this do-nothing government and do-nothing Premier refuse point blank.

Former premier Peter Beattie promised Rookwood Weir back in 2006. He said it would be built by 2011. Here we are in 2017 with a Labor government and we still have no Rookwood Weir. Labor broke its promise to Central Queensland. In Central Queensland, we have the member for Gregory, Lachlan Millar; we have the candidate for Rockhampton, Douglas Rodgers; we have the candidate for Mirani, Kerry Latter; and we have the candidate for Keppel, Peter Blundell. These are people who understand regional and Central Queensland and who will publicly fight for this project, instead of the couple of Labor candidates who are publicly fighting for the seat of Rockhampton. They are not interested in the people of Rocky, not interested in Central Queensland, not interested in building Rookwood Weir; they are only interested in publicly fighting for a job.

Whether it is Rookwood Weir, Nullinga Dam or Urannah Dam, they are all hopelessly stalled and bitterly divided under Labor. We all know what this is about. It always comes back to one thing: the political self-interest of the Deputy Premier and her ongoing fight against the Greens in South Brisbane. The Commonwealth government has funded a \$5 million feasibility study into Nullinga Dam, yet Labor—go figure—will not release the study. The Premier refused in this House last sitting week to update this House on the status of that project and used cabinet as a smokescreen, but they cannot smokescreen the fact that the Palaszczuk government is yet to distribute \$3 million from the Commonwealth government for a feasibility study into Urannah Dam. After over 500 days it is a total failure that this government has not passed that funding on to the project proponents.

Where Labor has failed, the LNP will act. We will act to secure tens of thousands of jobs and deliver water security for regional Queensland. A Tim Nicholls LNP government will build the roads, the bridges and dams that regional Queensland needs.

Affordable Energy Plan

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (12.56 pm): I rise this afternoon to highlight some aspects of the Palaszczuk government's Affordable Energy Plan. Once again we are a government that listens to the needs of Queenslanders both in the regions and elsewhere. Queenslanders have told the Palaszczuk government that they are concerned about the cost of living. Today I will outline the Palaszczuk government's plan for affordable energy—not cut, sack and sell, which the member for Clayfield was the architect of when in power.


The government has committed to providing a \$50 annual rebate to Queensland households over the next two years. The asset ownership dividend forms part of our \$300 million affordable energy package, which will continue our strong record of delivering stable prices. The \$50 rebate will reduce a typical annual residential bill by around 3.2 per cent, noting that the actual outcome will be based

obviously on an individual's household consumption. Customers will not have to apply for this rebate as it will be automatically applied to their electricity bills. The rebate will become available in January 2018 and customers will start seeing it applied to their bills in the first quarter in 2018 depending on their billing cycle.

The Labor government is providing immediate relief for Queensland households by our price pledge. The government has committed to keeping electricity prices for the typical household and small business customers below average inflation over the next two years. The price pledge forms part of the \$300 million affordable energy package, which will continue our strong record of delivering stable electricity prices. The pledge will protect Queensland householders and businesses from a volatile National Electricity Market and give them certainty about prices. The price pledge builds on our action to date to reduce pressure on the network and wholesale prices. The government will use every available lever to keep prices under control and to continue to deliver on our commitment to stabilise energy prices.

I will now deal with how business will benefit from the Palaszczuk government's new \$300 million Affordable Energy Plan.


Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (2.30 pm), continuing: Before the lunch break I was highlighting some aspects of the Palaszczuk government's Affordable Energy Plan, but I want to go back to this point. It was Labor that stopped Tim Nicholls from selling our electricity assets. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government can cap electricity prices and provide a \$50 rebate for all Queensland households. Independent modelling shows a typical household's annual electricity bill could be as much as \$146 lower this year and \$210 lower, or 16 per cent, for the year 2018-19 because our assets remain in public hands.

Before the lunch break I stated that the Palaszczuk government is providing immediate relief for Queensland householders by our price pledge. The government has committed to keeping electricity prices for a typical household and small business customers below average inflation over the next two years. The price pledge forms part of our \$300 million energy affordability package which will continue our strong record of delivering stable electricity prices. This pledge will protect Queensland householders and businesses from a volatile National Electricity Market and give them certainty about prices. The price pledge builds on our actions—

(Time expired)

Agriculture

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.32 pm): Our agricultural sector contributes \$60 billion to Queensland, with 282,000 people employed in agriculture and our associated food supply chain. With that contribution from the agricultural sector, one would assume it would be a high-profile, high-priority portfolio. Yet when I look across the chamber all I see is a vacant chair where the minister for agriculture should be sitting.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr LAST: Perhaps we have someone auditioning for the role today.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Honourable members, let us allow the member for Burdekin to continue.

Mr LAST: It reaffirms what those on this side of the House have been saying for three years, and that is this government treats the agriculture portfolio as the poor cousin. We saw it in the budget this year when they cut spending and we are seeing it again today. They are so focused on trying to fix up the rail debacle and transport issues in the south-east of the state that they have completely taken their eye off the ball when it comes to agriculture.

This is an industry that generates a lot of revenue for this state. This is an industry that generates jobs, including tens of thousands of seasonal jobs in the horticultural sector each year, and the future could not be brighter. Here we have a Premier talking up the importance of agriculture to Queensland and yet when it comes to having a minister sitting in that seat representing the agricultural sector in Queensland, flying the flag for all our hardworking farmers, they are found wanting. What a disappointment. Is it the case that the Premier could not be bothered filling the vacancy left by the member for Rockhampton, or is it simply that they do not have anyone capable enough in the party to take on that important role?

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr LAST: There are plenty over there who are wanting to audition for the role. The member for Gladstone has his eye on the role by the looks of it. Right now we have some very important issues to deal with in agriculture—issues such as the Panama TR4 outbreak at Tully.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! If the member for Gladstone and the member for Kawana would like to have a conversation, please take it outside the chamber.


Mr LAST: There are issues such as the white spot disease in prawns, the ongoing drought in Western Queensland, wild dog control and spiralling electricity prices for irrigation. I could go on. However, of more concern is the lack of leadership for a sector that contributes so much. Is it any wonder that our industry groups—AgForce, QFF, Canegrowers Queensland, Cotton Australia, Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation and Growcom, to name a few—have questioned the lack of vision, lack of resources and lack of any real commitment for agriculture from this do-nothing government?

Here we are on the cusp of an election and our peak industry bodies are being forced to wait in the wings and deal with an already overloaded Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, who, with no disrespect intended, would not have a clue about the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries in this state. Let us not forget the 2,000-plus hardworking staff in the department who must be wondering what they have done to deserve such poor treatment at the hands of this government.

If ever we needed confirmation that this government is treading water and going nowhere, we need look no further than the debacle which is unfolding in the agriculture portfolio at the moment. The question that needs to be asked—and I am happy to ask the question on behalf of all our farmers, fishermen and forestry workers—is when will the Premier step up to the plate and fill the vacant agriculture ministry role? While that role remains unfilled, agriculture, fishing and forestry in Queensland is not getting the attention that it deserves and capitalising on the opportunities that exist right now.

Our primary industries need stability for investment. They need strong leadership and they need common-sense policies and regulatory settings to help them get on with the job of producing high-quality food and fibres that domestic international customers want. The LNP has steadfastly stood by our farmers, fishermen and forestry workers, and we will continue to take up the fight on their behalf for a fair go. We fought off Labor's ideologically driven attempt to tear down our common-sense vegetation management framework. We have stood by our 4,000 canefarmers, their families and their communities and delivered sugar marketing choice—against Labor's disgraceful siding with monopoly foreign owned millers. We have fought against Labor's mindless policies that led to skyrocketing power and water charges, and we have outlined a common-sense plan to address these failures. The Premier stood in this place earlier today and said that she was happy to be known as the farmers' friend. I am sure there are a lot of farmers around Queensland right now saying, 'With friends like you, who needs enemies?'

My Health for Life

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.37 pm): The Palaszczuk government is playing its role in helping Queenslanders to make better health decisions that lead to better health outcomes. This government made a commitment to making Queensland a healthier state, and we are taking another terrific step forward in making this happen. My Health for Life is a healthy lifestyle program aimed at those who are at high risk of developing chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes. This free, personalised program has been designed to help get their health back on track so they live and age well and avoid developing chronic disease.

Last year we funded Diabetes Queensland \$27 million over four years to deliver My Health for Life. This program is free for eligible participants and is delivered in collaboration with the Healthier Queensland Alliance which also includes the heart and stroke foundations. Earlier this year we rolled out My Health for Life in regional Queensland, and we know from what we are hearing so far that this program is efficient and effective in delivering results for Queenslanders.

On 4 October I attended the official launch of the My Health for Life initiative for the greater Brisbane region which was held at Terry White Chemmart pharmacy in Ipswich. I would like to thank Minister Cameron Dick, Diabetes Queensland CEO Michelle Trute and Bob Slater of Terry White Chemmart for coming to the launch and showing how the program can help people address health and lifestyle factors that put them at risk of developing chronic disease.

My Health for Life provides free support to eligible South-East Queenslanders to help them adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle changes that are both achievable and sustainable in the long term. We know that around 390,000 Queensland adults are likely to either have diabetes or be at risk of developing it. Diabetes is a significant problem in the Ipswich and West Moreton region, with around 20,000 adults either having diabetes or being at risk of developing it in the future. The adult obesity rate in this region alone is more than 42 per cent higher than the state average.

Cardiovascular disease is also the state's second largest cause of death and stroke is responsible for the death of 10,000 Queenslanders every year. Unhealthy lifestyle choices increase the risk of these serious and sometimes life-threatening conditions, often without warning. Everyone wants to make healthy choices, but sometimes this is not always easy. My Health for Life recognises that everyone has their own motivations for wanting to achieve better health and the program's design is a great practical fit for Ipswich and West Moreton residents looking to make a change for the better.


The Palaszczuk government's Advancing health 2026 10-year vision will aim to make Queenslanders among the healthiest people in the world, and I commend Minister Cameron Dick on this initiative. As part of this vision, My Health for Life will support Queenslanders to achieve weight loss, improve mental wellbeing, improve physical fitness, reduce stress levels and increase the knowledge about how to live a healthier, happier life. Already people who have participated in the program are reporting positive changes such as weight loss, increased physical activity and improvements in their mental wellbeing. It further shows how the Palaszczuk government is committed to improving the lives of Queenslanders, whether that be providing free or affordable health services like My Health for Life or by introducing concessions and rebates that bring down the cost of household and business expenses such as power bills.

In Ipswich the rising cost of living has led to a great deal of stress and hardship for households and businesses. I commend the Palaszczuk government for delivering a range of concessions that reduces the cost of living for Queenslanders and allows them to access services more affordably. It particularly resonates in my electorate.

Our recently announced Affordable Energy Plan is one such way this government is reducing cost-of-living pressures. Through our \$300 million energy affordability package, we will deliver real savings to Queenslanders. We will put into place affordability measures such as the price pledge, which ensures electricity prices stay below inflation for the next two years. We will deliver a \$50 annual rebate to households and will make it more affordable for households to purchase energy efficient appliances with the energy efficient appliance rebate.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to making Queensland a more affordable place to live and work. Through the My Health for Life program, this government is committed to creating a lifestyle that encourages and supports residents to make healthy choices that are both practical and inexpensive. I look forward to seeing the improvements that My Health for Life can deliver for people in Ipswich and South-East Queensland. I would like to take this opportunity to mention Bob Slater again for the work that he does in Ipswich and for his commitment to better health. I strongly commend this initiative to the House.

Community Safety

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.42 pm): Community safety is at risk under this Labor government because they continually put the rights of criminals ahead of the community safety of Queensland families. Queenslanders know that the Palaszczuk Labor government is soft on crime. If any further proof of that were needed, the release of the annual police crime statistics occurred about 10 days ago. What a charade we saw when these figures were released. They were snuck out there during a Friday afternoon press conference in the hope that they would be buried in other news, but of course the government cannot hide bad news from Queenslanders.

Let's look at some of the facts detailed in the crime statistics over the last 12 months. Reported crime across Queensland overall is up nine per cent, robbery is up 26 per cent, armed robbery is up 24 per cent, unlawful use of a motor vehicle such as car theft and hooning offences is up 19 per cent, fraud is up 15 per cent, unlawful entry or break-ins are up 12 per cent, assault is up 11 per cent, overall property crime is up nine per cent, overall offences against the person are up nine per cent and breaches of domestic violence orders are up nine per cent. These figures are appalling, and these figures are coming from the police themselves.

Is it any wonder that crime has increased at such a rate when we look at the personnel statistics in all of the police districts across the state? Astonishingly, last year we learnt only three additional police officers were put on across Queensland between 2015-16 and 2016-17 under this Labor government. Compare that to the 1,100 extra police that we put on in the previous government. It is absolutely astonishing. Those numbers have gone backwards throughout the state. There are 55 fewer local police in the North Brisbane district, 48 fewer in South Brisbane, 40 fewer officers on the Gold Coast, in the Wide Bay-Burnett district there are 15 fewer, in Logan and Moreton districts there are 13 fewer and Ipswich has eight fewer. I table those figures for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper. Document, undated, titled 'Personnel: Summary Table' [2095].

If honourable members did not see them for themselves, they would not believe that it was true. These figures are absolutely disgraceful. Is it any wonder crime statistics have gone through the roof? These crime statistics are not the result of our hardworking police; they are doing everything that they can to make sure that we keep crime under control. When there is a government that does not support them in terms of resources and a government that does not have a legal framework that is effective, is it any wonder we see that these crime statistics have gone through the roof? What did we see after these statistics were revealed? The police minister went to Townsville and actually claimed that things were improving, that they have never had it better than in recent months. This is despite the fact that the three local Townsville MPs were completely missing in action in the midst of another youth crime spree in Townsville.

The police minister has zero credibility when it comes to standing up for victims of crime and community safety. He narrowly survived a vote of no confidence over his disgraceful treatment of Gary and Leanne Pullen, which is still being investigated by the Crime and Corruption Commission. Then there was the promise that was made that there would be 20 extra police in Townsville in the RAP squad. If honourable members read every bit of correspondence that was communicated to the public about this, they would know that it left the impression that there would be 20 extra police. However, now we hear that that is not the case, that these are actually going to be redeployed police officers. The *Townsville Bulletin* put it beautifully. An article stated—


They were, in classic Orwellian doublespeak, “redeployed” from other areas.

In other words, they were no extra resources and the Government has been caught out in a lie.

These are the words of the *Townsville Bulletin*. These are the words and the thoughts of the people of Townsville. This minister said in an August press conference that he is doing a good job. He is doing a good job despite youth crime being out of control in Townsville, despite the bikies coming back to the Gold Coast, despite crime rates going through the roof, despite our jails being chronically overcrowded and despite the increased assaults on hardworking prison officers. Only the LNP will put community safety first and give our hardworking police and resources—

(Time expired)

Affordable Energy Plan

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (2.47 pm): At the outset I want to congratulate my friends from the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, who held a wonderful Diwali Annakut, which is the festival of lights celebration, in the Premier's Hall at lunch time. I know that quite a few members attended. It was wonderful to see the lights on in the Premier's Hall. As we just saw with the member for Everton, the lights were on but, as is always the case, nobody was home. Unfortunately, those opposite have taken the same approach to energy. I am very proud to be part of a government that has a clear energy plan.

Mr Hart: Yes, what is it?

Mr PEGG: Perhaps we might hear something from the member for Burleigh very soon about an energy plan because we have not heard much from him so far. I was delighted to hear of the commitment made over the weekend by the Palaszczuk government to provide assistance to electricity customers right across the state, including in my local area of Stretton. That announcement was a \$300 million Affordable Energy Plan and also a price pledge which was to keep household and small business electricity bill increases to below the average inflation rate over the next two years. I think that is a very strong commitment to support our community.

This Affordable Energy Plan has a range of measures that will benefit households and, very importantly, it will also help to support small businesses. Dividends from the government owned energy companies will be used to take \$50 off every Queensland household's bill which will then be applied automatically from the second quarter of next year and last for two years. This is a \$200 million

investment that will bring some immediate price relief to Queenslanders. We are yet to hear from the member for Burleigh as to what his plan may or may not be. We hear a lot of huffing and puffing from the member for Burleigh. He probably has enough hot air to move some wind turbines, but he still has not come up with an energy plan. Maybe we will hear it soon. Maybe he will have an opportunity shortly. Maybe we will finally hear some policy from the member for Burleigh.

Turning to the government's policy, this rebate will save customers money on the cost of appliances and running costs by helping to ensure they can buy the most energy efficient model; for example, a new energy efficient air conditioner uses about \$135 less electricity per year than an older model. Not only will people save money when they buy a new, more energy efficient appliance but they will also save on ongoing energy costs. I think that is very important and it is a huge benefit for Queenslanders.


I also want to talk about the \$20 million boost to Queensland businesses. More energy audits will be provided to primary producers, manufacturers and other large users to identify actions to better manage their energy use. The government will provide funding to support customers who implement audit recommendations, which is very important. Up to 200 energy audits will be available to agricultural customers, and the government will make a co-contribution of up to \$20,000 in order to implement the audit recommendations. I think that is a very solid commitment.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr PEGG: I hear the member for Burleigh rise up again. He seems to be keen to put his view forward. I am very interested to hear what the member for Burleigh has to say. We have not heard any energy plan from the member for Burleigh. I think that the best way of predicting future action is to look at past performance. When you look at the government that the member for Burleigh was part of, 14,000 public servants were sacked, \$1.4 billion was wiped from the state's capital program and there was an increase in taxes of over \$600 million, so that is a pretty poor track record. It does not surprise me that the member for Burleigh has not come up with a proper energy plan when he supported ridiculous outcomes such as that. The member for Burleigh was part of the team that came up with massive asset sales, \$8 billion of which was earmarked for wild pork-barrelling election promises. I wonder if the member for Burleigh's energy plan includes asset sales like the former LNP government's plan, because that is not a plan. The member for Burleigh can huff and puff all he likes, but he needs to come up with an energy plan for Queenslanders—

(Time expired)

Affordable Energy Plan

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.52 pm): They rolled the big guns out today! The member for Stretton and the member for Sunnybank are both trying to explain Labor's failed Affordable Energy Plan. I was very interested when the member for Stretton said, 'Here is how it will work.' I thought that finally someone is going to tell us how this thing works, because yesterday I listened carefully to the Premier and the Minister for Energy on the radio and nobody can explain any of this. There is no detail in this plan. This plan is a con job by a government desperate to cling to power. The inconvenient truth is that this is a scam. On the eve of an election the government has given us a 'money-go-round'. They are taking government dividends which have already been spent. It is in the budget, so it has already been spent. They threw \$770 million into their Powering Queensland Plan to subsidise what would have been a large increase in electricity prices and now there is a further \$300 million—over \$1 billion—which has not tackled the real issue with regard to the price of electricity in this state. This is about giving a subsidy of 96 cents a week to the people of Queensland five minutes before an election. I would like to contribute a dollar—and I will table that dollar for the benefit of the members over there—towards one person's weekly subsidy.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Member for Burleigh, that is not an item that is able to be tabled. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr HART: I withdraw. By the sound of what the Premier said yesterday, today she is meeting with the retail companies CEOs to give them a lecture. It would be interesting to see how many CEOs show up for that meeting, but you can imagine the conversation. I am sure the Premier is telling them that everything is their fault, because everything is always somebody else's fault with this Labor Party. You can hear the retailers: 'Hang on, Premier. You own 65 per cent of the generators in this state. You have gouged the people of Queensland. You have been using electricity as a hidden tax. You have raked in \$410 million more in generation than was budgeted this year.' That is what the retailers will be saying to the Premier right now as they have their meeting.

I thought I would have a look to see who has sold what in this state, because those of us on this side have not sold anything. Those opposite sold a number of things, including the retailers that Peter Beattie sold in 2006. They sold a lot of other things, including the Port of Brisbane, Queensland Rail and Queensland forestry. Interestingly, in 2006 when Peter Beattie sold the retail arm of Energex and Ergon they put aside \$300 million for a number of things they said would be built with that money, including a dam on the Mary River. How did that go for you? That was \$500 million down the drain. Then there was a dam on the upper reaches of the Logan River. That did not happen either. There was the raising of the weir at Eden Bann. That has not happened. Great plan, guys! The kicker is the Rookwood Weir. In 2006 money was promised for the Rookwood Weir. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said this morning, this government will not even accept the money that the federal government has put on the table to build Rookwood Weir. This is a sham energy policy from a desperate government—

(Time expired)

Thuringowa Electorate

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.58 pm): What an underwhelming contribution from the member for Burleigh. I rise to share with the House some very positive news about what is occurring in Thuringowa and Townsville more broadly regarding jobs growth through infrastructure projects either underway, planned or recently announced. When you get your policy settings right, as we have through our Buy Queensland policy, we get the direct value-add of local jobs growth that we have seen in Townsville since our election in 2015. When we entered this 55th term of parliament Townsville had double digit unemployment figures. The LNP were thrown out of government thanks largely to the plan of the former LNP premier Campbell Newman and his trusty right-hand man, treasurer Tim Nicholls, the member for Clayfield, to sell our assets, cut thousands of jobs and slash business confidence.

Last Friday I attended the North Queensland Infrastructure Work Pipeline and Skills Map forum on our Queensland government public and private infrastructure projects that are underway such as the North Queensland stadium and Riverway Drive. This forum was held at Tec-NQ, and what better place to hold a future jobs forum? Tec-NQ is the only place in Queensland where we are training over 300 students annually who are seeking a trade during their senior school year. It is unique and it is ours. This training facility is creating the next generation of tradespeople. The forum was hosted by the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. Interestingly, Townsville's leading economist, Mr Colin Dwyer, took us on a journey of the last 20 years of economic activity in our city. He reflected on the highs of the mining boom and the lows of the GFC, the mining downturn and that kidney punch of the Queensland Nickel Refinery closure that rocked our city in 2016. Why did he do that? You need to know where you have come from before you know where you are going.

Mr Dwyer also demonstrated the worst time for public infrastructure investment in North Queensland by previous governments. Not surprisingly, it was indeed the years between 2012 and 2015. What a coincidence that these were the Newman-Nicholls years. Under \$100 million was spent on public infrastructure and government investment in our city in that time. It gets worse. LNP members opposite tell us that they stick up for local and small businesses. Because of those so-called champions of small business, the LNP allowed, under its watch, for our proud city to take a massive hit in the form of the net loss of 582 business registrations between 2012 and 2015—all gone down the gurgler.

There is a brighter future. Our government has invested heavily in our city. In stark contrast, some \$1.2 billion has been invested over our time in government, thanks to the Premier's vision of building a better Queensland. Mr Dwyer spoke of 65 projects totalling some \$7 billion on our radar through things like the Singapore deal, port growth and other local infrastructure projects, all looking to create thousands of jobs.

Last Friday Minister Mark Bailey was in Townsville announcing that Stanwell Corporation had given the Burdekin Falls hydro scheme the commercially viable green light. It fits perfectly with our dozen other renewable energy projects such as the massive Ross River Solar Farm now starting in Thuringowa. This means more local jobs. There is indeed a renewable energy boom occurring in North Queensland and it is creating more jobs. We are harnessing North Queensland power for North Queensland—driving up local supply and reducing power prices.

Speaking of power, it was perfect timing for our Premier, who just two days ago announced what all Queenslanders wanted to hear when it comes to managing the everyday cost of living, particularly when it comes to electricity bills. We saw a price increase of 43 per cent under the LNP. We have our \$300 million Affordable Energy Plan. Labor governments always put people first, and the Premier's

announcement that some 1.9 million residential homes will each receive \$50 off their bills for the next two years gets even better for regional Queensland. In regional Queensland, all Ergon customers who arrange a fortnightly or monthly direct debit will receive \$75 off their bill, and small businesses that do the same will receive \$120. How good is that?

Other initiatives kick in for those who buy energy efficient air conditioners, fridges and washing machines. I wish I had not bought mine last year because now I will not get that rebate! There is a stark difference between a caring Labor government and a cold, arrogant and out-of-touch LNP who simply know no other way.


It is no secret that we in North Queensland are proud and stand collectively during rough times. In North Queensland we rise, we lift confidence through private and public infrastructure and we create jobs and a better economic climate for future investment. There is indeed a brighter future.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): The time for matters of public interest has expired.

PENALTIES AND SENTENCES (DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT ORDERS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 10 August (see p. 2196).

Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (3.03 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 was introduced into the Queensland parliament on 10 August this year. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration. The committee tabled its report No. 67 on 28 September and made one recommendation, that the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 be passed.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. I also thank the organisations and members who made submissions to the committee and who participated in the committee's public hearings in Brisbane, Cairns and Mackay. In addition, I thank the members for Mackay and Mirani, who attended the committee's public hearing in Mackay on 12 September and who shared with the committee their concerns about the rise in drug and alcohol related problems affecting their electorates.

Drug and alcohol problems unfortunately exist in every community. Severe drug and alcohol misuse contributes to poor health, education and economic outcomes for individuals and their families and increased levels of criminal activity which negatively impacts on our community's safety. This government recognises that addressing the negative impacts of severe drug and alcohol misuse requires a sophisticated and multifaceted approach consisting of both punitive sanctions and rehabilitative solutions. That is why we made an election commitment to reintroduce diversionary courts and programs which, along with the special circumstances court, court ordered youth justice conferencing and the Murri Court, includes a drug and alcohol court.

As honourable members will remember, the former Queensland Drug Court was established in 2000 under the then Labor government and was expanded upon and rebadged in 2006 under the Drug Court Act 2000. Unfortunately, on 30 June 2013 the former LNP government repealed the Drug Court Act. As noted at page 10 of the committee's report, a number of stakeholders outlined the negative impact of the former Drug Court Act's repeal. I draw the attention of honourable members to the following comments made on behalf of the Queensland Law Society at the committee's public hearing on 6 September. It was stated—

... the abolition of the diversionary programs compromised some of the most vulnerable members of the community. It did not go to hardcore drug traffickers on the Gold Coast. It affected women, it affected children, it affected Indigenous Australians and it affected people who were chronically addicted to drugs, and the best interests of society was being able to rehabilitate them. It is quite clear from the Law Society's presence today and our previous advocacy on these issues that we consider diversionary programs to be central to a just, functioning criminal justice system.

The Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union also supported this evidence based policy, submitting—

The QNMU welcomes the primary policy objective of the Bill to insert a new sentencing option into the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to respond to certain offenders whose criminal behaviour is linked to their severe drug or alcohol use.

Protect All Children Today added their experience and expertise to the committee process. They stated—

We support the primary policy objectives of the *Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017* to include new sentencing options to respond to offenders whose criminal behaviour is linked to their severe drug and alcohol use. Sadly, many of the children PACT support are victims or witnesses of domestic and family violence often attributed to the offender's dependence on alcohol or prohibited substances.

As part of its commitment to reinstate the Drug Court and to ensure that the most relevant and evidence based model could be used, the government established the Drug and Specialist Courts Review to investigate the development of a contemporary best practice model to underpin the reinstatement of a drug court. The Drug and Specialist Courts Review's final report, which was tabled in this Assembly on 13 June 2017, found that a drug court forms an integral part of a criminal justice system to address high-risk and high-needs offenders and concluded that this must form part of a broader justice system response to substance fuelled crime.

The recommendations of the Drug and Specialist Courts Review have largely informed the model for the reintroduction of the Drug Court that is found in the bill. The committee's report notes the favourable comments from key stakeholders on the consultation process for the bill, including the Drug and Specialist Courts Review. I am particularly pleased to note the comments from the Queensland Law Society that 'this evidence based and cogent consultation process led to the formulation of well thought out and responsive draft legislation'.

The bill establishes a drug and alcohol treatment order as a new sentencing option that can be used when an offender meets prescribed eligibility criteria. That eligibility criteria includes requirements such as an offender pleading guilty to an eligible offence, an offender having a severe drug or alcohol use disorder that contributed to their offending behaviour, and the court being satisfied that it would otherwise consider it appropriate to sentence the offender to a term of imprisonment.

Significantly, the drug and alcohol treatment order is to be contained in the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, which fully integrates the Drug Court model into Queensland's justice system and is wholly consistent with the stated purposes of that act, which includes providing for a sufficient range of sentences for the appropriate punishment and rehabilitation of offenders.

The drug and alcohol treatment order consists of two parts—a custodial part and a rehabilitation part. The custodial part of the order provides that a court must sentence the offender to a maximum term of imprisonment for four years. This term of imprisonment is wholly suspended and can be activated at any time during the operational period of the order. Importantly, if the offender commits another offence that is punishable by imprisonment during the operation of the order, the court has a number of options available, including activating the suspended sentence. The rehabilitation part of the order consists of two components—the core conditions and the treatment program. The core conditions will apply to every offender who becomes subject to a drug and alcohol treatment order and include conditions prohibiting the commission of further offences and obligations to report to the court and review team members periodically. The treatment program will be individually tailored to the specific needs of an offender. It can include conditions requiring the offender to submit to medical, psychiatric or psychological treatment, participate in counselling or wear a device monitoring drug and alcohol usage.

To assist the court in the administration of the drug and alcohol treatment order, the bill establishes a multidisciplinary review team. The review team consists of the court and representatives from Queensland Corrective Services, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland Health, Legal Aid Queensland and the Queensland Police Service. The review team will assist the court to determine an offender's suitability for a treatment order and monitor and assist the administration of the offender's compliance with conditions contained in the rehabilitative part of their treatment order.

As stakeholders quoted in the committee's report, diversionary measures such as the drug and alcohol treatment order proposed in the bill are not soft options. For an individual who is suffering from a severe drug or alcohol misuse disorder, addressing the causes of that disorder is a difficult and often painful process. The drug and alcohol treatment order proposed in the bill presents an evidence based tool for Queensland's courts to work with offenders to break the vicious cycle of drug and alcohol misuse and criminal offending. As noted in the committee's report, if the bill is passed the drug and alcohol court is intended to commence as a pilot program in Brisbane in November 2017. As part of the 2017-18


state budget, funding of \$22.7 million over four years has been allocated for the operation of the Brisbane drug and alcohol court program and for court referral and support services in Brisbane, Ipswich and Cairns.

The bill also includes a number of miscellaneous amendments to a variety of legislation that are unrelated to the drug and alcohol treatment order. Amendments to the Evidence Act 1997 will ensure that a complainant witness of an alleged offence against section 315A—'Choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting'—of the Criminal Code is afforded appropriate protections in court proceedings. The amendment will prevent a self-represented accused person from directly cross-examining the complainant. This amendment underscores this government's ongoing commitment to support victims of domestic violence.

Amendments to both the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 will facilitate the use of technology to allow people to comply with drug diversion programs and associated appointments. It is hoped that these amendments will facilitate flexible modes of participation in programs, resulting in increased rates of successfully completed drug diversion courses. Amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 will clarify the extended definition of a 'dangerous drug' and ensure a more objective definition is used. The amendments in the bill achieve this by establishing scientific parameters around what substances are captured in the extended definition.

As I noted in my explanatory speech for this bill, these amendments are a response to the District Court's decision in *R v Champion* and also implement outstanding recommendation 3.2 of the Queensland Organised Crime Commission of Inquiry report. The amendment of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 will clarify when a rehabilitation period under this act applies to a conviction of a person for an offence. This proposed amendment responds to the concerns raised by the Court of Appeal in *Dupois v Queensland Television Ltd and Others* about the clarity of the current provisions. The amendment makes it clear that a conviction for an offence that attracts an overall sentence of more than 30 months imprisonment falls outside the scope of the spent conviction scheme in this act and must always be disclosed.

I again thank the members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for genuine engagement in this process and to those stakeholders and front-line staff who dedicate themselves to this challenging area. Thank you for dedicating yourselves to tackling such a difficult issue—not just the police, Corrective Services, those in the court system and in my Department of Justice and Attorney-General but also acknowledging those who are in the health system. I am sure that the Minister for Health would agree that they have a very difficult job in trying to support people with drug and alcohol abuse disorders. We know that these reforms can change individual lives. We know that the work that these front-line staff do can change lives, and through that we can create a safer environment for families and our broader community. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (3.14 pm): I rise to speak to the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 introduced by the Attorney-General in August this year. While this bill does not in itself re-establish the Drug Court, it implements changes to the framework for treatment orders and drug rehabilitation orders in a broader sense, and I note the Attorney-General said today that the re-establishment of the Drug Court is intended to follow this legislation and it seems that that is still on the time line of around November, as outlined by the Attorney-General during estimates hearings.

As outlined in the explanatory notes, the primary objective of the bill is to establish a new sentencing option, referred to as a drug and alcohol treatment order, for offenders whose criminal behaviour is linked to their serious drug or alcohol use. Other objectives also include clarifying that the imposition of a sentence of more than 30 months imprisonment falls outside the scope of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 and therefore never becomes a spent conviction and must be disclosed; replacing the current extended definition of 'dangerous drug' in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 with a definition which provides for a drug analogue; providing certain protections in court proceedings for victims of choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting; enabling a person to use electronic means to participate in a diversion assessment program under the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992; and enabling a person to use electronic means to participate in a drug assessment and education session and associated appointments under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000.

The re-establishment of the Drug Court was a key election commitment by the Palaszczuk Labor government and, true to form, it has taken a long time to come to fruition. In the Attorney-General's charter letter that she was issued by the Premier, this and other reforms are listed as delivery priorities, yet after almost three years of governing this commitment has not been fulfilled. The introduction and debate of these reforms follow on from the estimates hearing in July and media articles at that same time where it was revealed that Labor has spent almost \$1.2 million so far in re-establishing the Drug Court and it still has not heard a single case.

It reminds me of that episode from *Yes Minister* of the most efficiently run hospital in the country, St Edward's Hospital. The reason it was so efficient was that it was staffed with administrative and ancillary officers, but there were no medical officers and therefore no patients. This would be comical if the issue around drug addiction and drug related crime were not such an important issue. Drug addiction and its impact on local communities right across Queensland is an important issue to many Queenslanders. With drug and violent crime increasing, it is fundamentally important to help addicts and protect the community from drug related crimes. One only has to venture into regional Queensland in particular to know that the fear is real and that people are very concerned.

While Labor has held talkfests about a draft plan to tackle issues like ice and the epidemic in our community, it has failed to comprehensively act to protect Queensland families in response to this crisis despite overwhelming evidence in 2015 and 2016 from the Crime and Corruption Commission looking into illicit drugs in Queensland which found that the demand for illicit drugs and the potential profits from supplying them has made Queensland an attractive market for interstate and international crime groups; that since 2012 there has been greater targeting of regional areas such as Toowoomba, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Townsville and Cairns, especially by interstate groups; that organised crime has a significant presence in the methamphetamine, MDMA, cocaine, heroin and cannabis markets in Queensland and a limited presence in the new psychoactive substances—that is, NPS—pharmaceuticals and performance- and image-enhancing drug markets, though their involvement in the PIEDs market is increasing; and that methamphetamine continues to be rated as the illicit drug market that poses the highest level of risk—that is, very high—due to the high level of involvement by organised crime, its ready availability and the significant harms the drug causes to individual users and the community.

Following the contraction in the MDMA market from 2008 to 2011, since 2012, the availability of MDMA in Queensland has increased. Although the heroin market in Queensland is small and has been assessed as stable, in the past three years there has been growth in this market internationally and in other Australian states. This market will be closely monitored by the CCC in coming years to identify any change in supply and demand for heroin in Queensland.

Since 2012, the level of risk posed by the cocaine market in Queensland has heightened owing to the increased risk of harm from adulterants such as levamisole and NPS being added to cocaine sold and consumed in Queensland. The risk posed by the NPS market in Queensland has stabilised in response to the increased availability of traditional illicit drugs.

That list that I have just gone through were the findings of the CCC. The evidence is there, yet the government has been dragging its heels in dealing with this important community safety issue. At the same time Labor has gone soft on organised crime, scrapping important police powers and weakening tougher penalties and stronger laws. The drug crisis is out of control. We have to question the Palaszczuk government's priorities.

As I mentioned earlier, the bill implements Labor's 2015 election commitment to reintroduce court diversionary processes and programs. As outlined in the explanatory notes, the government commissioned the Drug and Specialist Courts Review to develop options for a contemporary best practice model for the reinstatement of a Drug Court in Queensland. In making its recommendations, the review relied on the best practice principles and standards formulated in the *Adult drug court best practice standards*—the NADCP standards—published by the United States National Association of Drug Court Professionals in 2013, which were informed by extensive research and evidence about the elements for success. The review's final report, which was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 13 June 2016, included 39 recommendations. It found that a Drug Court program should be enshrined in legislation, whether as a stand-alone act or incorporated into other legislation.

Further objectives of the bill include making miscellaneous criminal law amendments to the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 to clarify that the imposition of an overall sentence of more than 30 months imprisonment falls outside the scope of the CLROA scheme and must be disclosed; the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 to clarify the extended definition of 'dangerous drug' in section


4; the Evidence Act 1977 to ensure that an alleged victim of an offence against section 315A of the Criminal Code, which involves choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting, is afforded the appropriate protections in court proceedings; the Penalties and Sentences Act to facilitate the use of technology and provide that compliance with a diversion assessment and referral program will not merely require physical attendance but extend to participation in a drug diversion assessment and referral program; and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to facilitate the use of technology and provide that compliance with a drug diversion program and associated appointments will extend to participation in the program or associated appointments.

In relation to the amendments to the Evidence Act, we strongly support the amendments that support DV victims and recognise that they need protection as victims in court. These provisions should have been introduced by Labor when the new offences were passed in early 2016. It is not good enough for the government to boast about how many charges have been laid, which we heard earlier this year. This is about the impact of the process on the victim.

In relation to protected witnesses, the bill amends section 21M of the Evidence Act to include a reference to section 315A of the Criminal Code in the definition of 'prescribed special offence'. Part 2, division 6 of the Evidence Act, which is cross-examination of protected witnesses, regulates the manner of cross-examination of protected witnesses. Pursuant to this division, a self-represented accused is prohibited from cross-examining a protected witness. A protected witness includes an alleged victim in a proceeding for an offence defined as a prescribed special offence. The inclusion of the reference to section 315A will ensure that an alleged victim of this offence—the choking and strangulation in a domestic setting—is afforded appropriate protections in court proceedings. This is consistent with the government's commitment to ensuring the highest degree of protection for victims of domestic and family violence—a bipartisan position that was adopted by the opposition as well following Dame Quentin Bryce's report.

I ask the question—and I hope the Attorney-General might be able to answer it—as to how many victims have gone through this process and had to be cross-examined in court by their alleged abuser since the offences were introduced in early 2016. That is nearly two years ago. There have been a large number of such cases and I would appreciate the advice of the Attorney-General on this important issue in her reply. Does the department know of how many instances where this has occurred before these important protections are to be put in place under this legislation?

The LNP will not be opposing this bill, but I make the point that it is about time this government did something substantial to address drug addiction and drug related crime, which is of concern to many communities right across Queensland. It is only the LNP that always puts community safety first. It should be the priority responsibility of any government to keep its citizens safe.

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (3.25 pm): It was interesting to hear the member for Mansfield talk about taking action on drug related crime. He was part of a government that repealed the Drug Court Act back on 30 June 2013. I have to say that the member certainly has a lot of front to make those statements. Of course, the member has not just been doing that in this House; he has been running around propping up shaky LNP electorates and shaky candidates throughout the state with his crime forums, but not once has he told anyone that he was part of a government that repealed the Drug Court Act back on 30 June 2013. The member for Mansfield can rest assured that my colleagues and I will be making sure that everybody is well aware of that fact. I say to all the LNP members opposite and all the LNP candidates that, if they need the member for Mansfield to hold a forum to prop them up, they know they are on very shaky ground, as we all know the member for Mansfield is as well.

I rise to speak to the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. I thank the Attorney-General for introducing this bill to the parliament, which rights the wrongs of the previous LNP government. It is a strong and effective bill. I thank those who lodged written submissions to this bill and also the committee secretariat. The primary purpose of this bill is to insert a new sentencing option into the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to respond to certain offenders whose criminal behaviour is linked to their severe drug or alcohol use. This bill involved extensive consultation and the inclusion of stakeholders and delivers on this government's election commitment to reintroduce court diversionary processes and programs.

This government is committed to introducing criminal justice responses to tackle drug and alcohol substance misuse. To assist with the implementation of this bill, as part of the 2017-18 state budget, funding of \$22.7 million over four years has been allocated for the operation of a Drug Court program based in Brisbane and for court referral and support services in Brisbane, Ipswich, Southport and Cairns.

Earlier, I talked about Queensland's former Drug Court. That was established in 2000 by the then Labor government and was expanded and made permanent in 2006. It is important to remind everybody of the history. As I mentioned earlier, on 30 June 2013—a day that will live in infamy—the former LNP government discontinued the operation of the Drug Court by repealing the Drug Court Act with no consideration of the evidence underpinning the court. I encourage all members to read the committee report, because it refers to a number of stakeholders outlining the negative effects of the Drug Court being removed by the previous government.

It is very clear that diversionary programs provide a means of rehabilitation and are an important component of a properly functioning justice system. Stakeholder support for this bill was clear. I refer to the following comments made by the Queensland Law Society in a public hearing on the bill. They stated—

The drug courts proved to be a very constructive and positive diversionary strategy to deal with drug dependent criminals when they were made permanent in 2005. Therefore, the Queensland Law Society welcomed the announcement to reopen the drug and alcohol court.

The primary policy objective of the bill is to insert a drug and alcohol treatment order as a sentencing option into the Penalties and Sentences Act. It in fact provides for a new sentencing option in that act and integrates the principles of a drug and alcohol program into the existing tried and tested sentencing framework for Queensland. The treatment order provides an opportunity to punish an offender for their crime whilst also assisting them to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour and commit to programs that will help them reintegrate into society. The treatment orders are a positive inclusion of which stakeholders were supportive.

A treatment order would be made for an offender only if certain conditions are met, including that the offender's severe substance use disorder contributed to the commission of the offence and the offender agrees to the order being made. The bill also provides for the creation of a multidisciplinary review team that will assist the court to manage and administer each treatment order.


The purpose of this sentencing option is to facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders by providing judicially supervised and therapeutic treatment to reduce the offender's severe substance use disorder, reduce criminal activity and assist the offender's integration into the community. Offenders who have been charged with sexual assault offences who are subject to a parole order or who are serving a term of imprisonment are specifically excluded from being eligible for a treatment order.

Complementary amendments to section 15C and section 19 of the Penalties and Sentences Act and section 379 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act allow for a person to use electronic means to participate in the drug diversion assessment programs, removing the need for the person to physically attend the program.

The bill also proposes to clarify that the imposition of an overall sentence of more than 30 months imprisonment is outside the scope of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act and amends the definition of 'dangerous drug' contained in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act to omit the existing extended definition of 'dangerous drug'.

The bill also amends the Evidence Act to prevent a self-represented accused from cross-examining an alleged victim in a proceeding for an offence of choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting. This extends the meaning of protected witness and would prevent a self-represented accused from directly cross-examining certain witnesses. This amendment is consistent with the government's ongoing commitment to ensuring the highest degree of protections for victims of domestic and family violence.

This bill establishes a regime which addresses both criminal offending and the causes of that criminal offending. It is important as it reinforces this government's commitment to introduce criminal justice responses to tackle drug and alcohol substance misuse. I say to those opposite who might choose to make a contribution in relation to this bill, do not follow the lead of the member for Mansfield, just admit your mistakes and support this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.32 pm): The Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 was introduced on 10 August by the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for detailed consideration. The committee reported by the prescribed date of Thursday, 28 September and agreed that the bill should be passed. As members have heard, the LNP will not be opposing the bill. However, we will be following the program with interest, as members have heard from the honourable member for Mansfield.

I would like to thank fellow committee members and our hardworking secretariat. The primary objective of the bill is to establish a new sentencing option, referred to as a drug and alcohol treatment order, for offenders whose criminal behaviour is linked to their serious drug or alcohol use. Other objectives include clarifying that the imposition of a sentence of more than 30 months imprisonment falls outside the scope of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 and therefore never becomes a spent conviction and must be disclosed; replacing the current extended definition of a dangerous drug in section 4 of the Drugs Misuse Act 1986; providing certain protections in court proceedings for victims of choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting; enabling a person to use electronic means to participate in a diversion assessment program; and enabling a person to use electronic means to participate in a drug assessment and education session and associated appointments.

Two public briefings were held in Brisbane and public hearings were held in Cairns and Mackay. I am not sure one would call the Mackay hearing very public though as there were only two witnesses and they were both MPs. One even admitted that they had not read the bill. I did not attend that trip, but a comment was made to me that flying a committee and secretariat staff into a region to hear from two MPs who can be accessed during a parliamentary sitting was a bit indulgent and a waste of taxpayers' money. On the other hand, I found the transcript from the Cairns public hearing most enlightening. Insight and experiences shared by the three witnesses was really helpful and presented a snapshot of the problems faced in Far North Queensland communities, especially with regard to the overrepresentation of Indigenous males and, to a lesser extent, females.

I would like to thank the department for their briefing on 23 August and for the clarity that they were able to provide to a number of questions asked by committee members. Finally, I place on the parliamentary record my appreciation of the witnesses from the Queensland Law Society and the Townsville Community Legal Service who attended the 6 September hearing.

Seven submissions were received for this bill and all were genuinely in support of the legislation. They were from the Queensland Council of Unions; the Townsville Community Legal Service; Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union; Queensland Law Society; Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies; Protect All Children Today; and Queensland Advocacy Incorporated.

I note the re-establishment of the Drug Court was a Labor election commitment. This is not a direct re-establishment as the framework is different and alcohol is included along with other illicit drugs. Here we are towards the end of 2017, almost three years since the election, and Labor are only now addressing this. The *Drug and Specialist Courts Review—Final Report* made 39 recommendations. The technical scrutiny report found six clauses raised issues of fundamental legislative principle, however, it was noted in at least one clause that the court can only make a treatment order if the offender consents to the order being made and agrees to comply with it.

At the 23 August hearing Ms Robertson, the acting assistant director-general, strategic policy and legal services, from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, outlined the bill's features. Ms Robertson was accompanied by four other senior staff of the department. The committee was informed that treatment order amendments provide that a Magistrates Court to be prescribed by regulation may impose a treatment order on an offender only if that offender meets specific criteria. For a court to make a treatment order the offender must plead guilty to an eligible offence and reside within the court district. In addition, the court must have received a suitability assessment report on the offender and be satisfied the offender has a severe drug or alcohol use disorder that contributed to their offending behaviour. Further, the court will not be able to make a treatment order if the offender is in prison, is on parole or is charged with a sexual assault offence.

Orders are different to previous legislation and a lot more intensive. People averaged about nine months on the earlier programs, but now there is a mandatory two-year rehabilitation period. Treatment orders can only be made with an offender's consent and comprise a custodial part and a rehabilitation part. The program could include conditions requiring the offender to submit to medical, psychiatric or psychological treatment, submit to detoxification at a stated facility, participate in counselling, submit to alcohol or drug testing, or wear a device that detects alcohol or other drug usage.

With regard to the custodial part, the court must sentence the offender to a maximum term of imprisonment of four years which is wholly suspended and which can be activated throughout the stated operational period of the treatment order. If, however, the offender commits another offence punishable by imprisonment during this period the court has a number of options, including activating that wholly suspended sentence. The second part, rehabilitation, starts the day the treatment order is made and ends on a day that is two years after the day it started, except when it has been cancelled earlier or, in


some instances, extended. Rehabilitation has core conditions and a treatment program. A suitability assessment is put together by a qualified review team member. It is important to mention that offenders considered for this order by a Drug Court for alcohol related offences attend for the management of alcohol addiction, not abuse.

Questions asked by the committee were varied, such as from the member for Stretton about how the offenders become part of the program and from the member for Capalaba about how many females would be captured under these orders. We asked what happens if an offender does not consent to a treatment order. I was very interested in how many may refuse or not consent and was told it was very difficult to estimate that number. Ms Shipway said that some modelling had been done and there was a high estimate of 125 per year and a low one of 80. They are modelling on nine referrals per month of persons fitting this criteria.

We asked when the Drug Court will commence and where, and were told that it is November this year in Brisbane. It will be a pilot site, running until 2022. A process of evaluation is to be completed at the end of 2018 and then an economic evaluation will be done for future locations. The Queensland Law Society thinks Southport is a priority area, and Mackay and Townsville were also mentioned. The honourable member for Coomera asked about the shortage of rehabilitation beds and wait times and the effects that they would have. I asked about the examples of unintended drafting consequences noted by the Law Society in its submission, whose representatives said that they would support close examination of the criteria for which a person can be kicked off the program, to ensure that it is not too broad.

Ms Fogerty from the Law Society used the analogy of taking a horse to water but not being able to make it drink to emphasise the preferred option that offenders would consent through some form of internal motivation. She likened the bill to a carrot-and-stick approach because, in these cases, we are talking about people who have been charged with criminal offences, so it is a choice of enlisting in the two-year program or going to jail. Mr Popovich from the Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies, representing 47 member organisations, referred to the composition of the Drug Court team, which excludes treatment providers, and spoke of treatment agencies. Mr Popovich proposed that treatment providers should be included in the review team definition. I hope that that is given some consideration.

The relationships between illicit drug addiction and criminal offending is well documented and there are gaps with early intervention programs. Drug and alcohol use, addiction and abuse are on the rise. That is all the more reason to provide a dedicated school-based police officer for our local high schools in Currumbin, to educate teens about the dangers and consequences of trying drugs. Only the LNP has a strong stance on law and order issues.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.41 pm): This bill moves to correct yet another callous and heartless policy piece committed under the failed Newman-Nicholls government by reinstating drug courts in Queensland. Ours is a government that is committed to ensuring that those doing it the toughest in our communities have every opportunity to be extended a hand up. That is why this bill does not just reinstate drug courts in Queensland; it also broadens the scope to alcohol. The bill recognises that the misuse of alcohol and drugs are major contributors to criminal behaviours. As such, it uses specific sentencing orders through the court. This measure is a must when responding to substance fuelled crime.

The bill addresses this critical measure through a new sentencing order in Queensland called a drug and alcohol treatment order. The treatment order is an integrated treatment regime, including legal and health measures to reduce the substance use disorder, reduce the criminal activity associated with it and assist with integration back into the community. To assist the court in making a determination on the appropriateness of the treatment order, the bill provides for a suitability assessment report to be prepared, to provide an assessment of the severe substance use disorder, the suitability for release and the proposed treatment order. The treatment order has two parts—the custodial part and the rehabilitation part—and can be made only with the informed consent of the offender. The Brisbane Drug Court will be established as a pilot. It will operate from November 2017 through to 2022, with an evaluation being completed at the end of 2018. It is expected that between 80 and 125 offenders will appear before the court annually.

When talking about the bill before the House, it is important to look at the contributions that submitters made throughout the process. We heard from remarkable submitters and I thank them for their interest in the bill and their contributions to the committee process. It was most informative. Like

the Attorney-General, I found the contributions from the Queensland Law Society particularly profound when they talked about the best interests of justice being impeded by the removal of diversionary programs under the LNP. Ms Rebecca Fogerty, the Deputy Chair of the Criminal Law Committee of the Queensland Law Society, said—

In order for justice to be done, judges have to have discretion and they have to have a wide range of sentencing options and be able to balance punitive aspects of the sentencing discretion, because punishment is important to a justice system, but balance that against the other no less important considerations of rehabilitation and deterrence, general and specific.

The Law Society talked about who was most affected by the cessation of the court diversionary programs. Ms Rebecca Fogerty stated—


The real issue for us is that the abolition of the diversionary programs compromised some of the most vulnerable members of the community. It did not go to hardcore drug traffickers on the Gold Coast. It affected women, it affected children, it affected Indigenous Australians and it affected people who were chronically addicted to drugs, and the best interests of society was being able to rehabilitate them. It is quite clear from the Law Society's presence today and our previous advocacy on these issues that we consider diversionary programs to be central to a just, functioning criminal justice system.

I hope that through the process of today's debate we hear from the member for Kawana on this very topic, because he was the attorney-general when the previous LNP government removed drug courts in Queensland. The member for Kawana said that the program cost \$14 million a year program and that illicit drug users could be referred to existing health services, but the Newman government provided no additional funding to those existing health services. I would be really interested to hear his contribution on the bill today, given all of the stakeholder feedback and all of the contributions that have been provided in this space.

Mr Bleijie: I am glad you're interested in me, because I'm never interested in anything you've got to say.

Ms BOYD: It is a shame that he cannot make a meaningful contribution in this place on the topic. It is a shame that his interjections are not worth taking.

At our public hearing in Cairns, we heard about the measures that services had to go to. We heard from ATODS staff members, concerned community members and people from the hospital and health service. It was really concerning that services had to create their own programs in this space because of a lack of any sensible government program under the LNP. They talked about the work that they had to do in this space to put counter measures in place, so that community members can make the best possible contributions to society in light of governments that clearly do not support them. Today I compel the member for Kawana to, if nothing else, look at those contributions, because there is no doubt that the decisions made by the previous Newman-Nicholls government hurt Queenslanders. This bill highlights the types of hurt that were perpetrated on Queensland. I commend the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (3.48 pm): In making a contribution to the debate on this bill, I echo and reflect on the comments made by the member for Mansfield and the member for Currumbin. I thank the committee secretariat for its work on this inquiry and my fellow committee members. We have been an extremely busy committee this term, probably the busiest of the parliament. We have been able to reach a decision on every bill that has come before us to report on. For the most part, we have done that in a very collegial manner—for the most part.

As the member for Mansfield said, we will not be opposing this bill. I want to reflect on a couple of aspects of the bill. I would like to speak briefly about the policy initiative to amend the Evidence Act 1977 to prevent a self-represented accused from cross-examining an alleged victim in a proceeding for an offence of choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting. Obviously, this is a matter related to domestic violence.

I think it is appropriate that that amendment is contained in this bill. As far as I can tell from what I have seen, read and heard during various inquiries in this term of parliament and others, in many instances of domestic violence there is a drug and alcohol addiction involved. It is quite appropriate for that provision to be included in this bill.

This provision is outside the usual criminal procedure. People who represent themselves are entitled to cross-examine all witnesses regardless of who they are—probably with some exceptions in the family law scenario. It is outside the usual criminal law procedure because we recognise that domestic violence, particularly where drug and alcohol addiction is involved, is very specific in nature. Where things are different in nature they need to be dealt with differently under the law. There are other examples where matters involving domestic violence, which, as I said, often involves drug and alcohol addiction, should be treated separately under the law. There are other examples of that in other jurisdictions and in our jurisdiction now as well.


I have said on many occasions before that this House and the government, whoever is in government, should go a little further and follow the United Kingdom example of legislating for a specific domestic violence offence. I know it is not easy to draft these things sometimes, but it is a matter of treating different things differently. Domestic violence is certainly one of those things that we need to look at in that respect.

The other issue I wanted to raise—and I note the comments made by the member for Mansfield around this—is the cost of implementation of this scheme. Whilst I do not intend to go back over that ground totally, it is worthwhile noting in this debate that I represent an area that has a courthouse—the Beaudesert courthouse. No doubt a lot of offenders are brought before it on drug and alcohol matters. If this bill is passed here today it is possible that those people could be dealt with under the orders contemplated in this bill.

I again take this opportunity to highlight the need for improvements to that courthouse, particularly given we are talking about these types of offences. As I have said previously, the interaction between drug and alcohol matters and domestic violence matters, as well as other matters, is well documented. At the Beaudesert courthouse there are inadequate physical facilities and this presents real issues when it comes to dealing with domestic violence matters. Witnesses can feel intimidated and threatened about giving evidence in court. While the provision in this bill to change the Evidence Act is a good provision, we also need to make sure that in courthouses up and down the state, including in Beaudesert, there are adequate physical facilities in place to deal with specific scenarios. In Beaudesert there is no separation between witnesses and the accused. There are no waiting facilities. People wait outside on the street all together.

I come back to the member for Mansfield's comments about the cost of implementing this scheme. When we have scarce resources the resources should be allocated in a manner that does not merely reinvent previous policies and work that has already been undertaken but allocates them to improving facilities on the ground in places like Beaudesert where there is clearly a need. I know that the Attorney-General has acknowledged in other debates the need for improving those facilities.

In concluding my remarks I reiterate the comments I made about the Evidence Act amendments to prevent self-represented accused from examining alleged victims in those proceedings. The opposition will not be opposing this bill this afternoon.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.54 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Queensland has now endured almost three years of a do-nothing Labor government. In 2015 we saw Labor make all sorts of promises to fall into office. One of their key commitments was to bring back the Drug Court, and yet even with this bill the Drug Court still has not been re-established in Queensland. This is despite the Attorney-General saying months ago that she hoped to have the Drug Court up and running by November this year. November is a week away and Labor still have not delivered on their promise.

Why did the Attorney-General bring up the Drug Court in estimates? At that time it was revealed that almost \$1.2 million has been spent on this commitment to date. Despite throwing more than \$1 million at their so-called commitment, not a single person has had their case heard in the Drug Court because it has not actually reopened. It is typical of a do-nothing Labor government in Queensland. Three years in government and there is next to nothing to show for it but a couple of talkfests. This is whilst ice use continues to spiral out of control in regional Queensland.

Today, as the shadow minister for the prevention of domestic and family violence, I want to talk about the bill's changes surrounding strangulation in a domestic setting. Snuck into this bill we see changes to the Evidence Act so that an alleged victim of a strangulation offence under the Criminal Code is afforded appropriate protections in court proceedings in relation to cross-examination. These changes mean in a court proceeding in which the perpetrator is known to have strangled the victim, a self-represented alleged perpetrator is prohibited from cross-examining a protected witness. A protected witness includes an alleged victim in a proceeding for an offence defined as a prescribed special offence.


The changes are designed to ensure that an alleged victim of this offence is afforded appropriate protections in court proceedings. These changes are finally being introduced after three years of Labor doing nothing to protect victims in a courtroom setting. We know that legal proceedings are incredibly difficult for victims and can even serve to retraumatise victims months or years after the violence took place. For too long perpetrators have been able to cross-examine their victims personally, putting them in the horrific position where they have to face their perpetrator in court and answer their questions.

We saw a new offence of attempted strangulation introduced into the Criminal Code in December 2015. This was passed into law in early 2016. Despite having the entire department of legal minds and the resources of government, Labor forgot to make the offence a relevant offence for the purposes of special witness status. For more than 12 months Labor have left victims exposed to the further victimisation of being cross-examined by unrepresented offenders. So much so that the Attorney-General even celebrated the fact that 798 people were charged in the first 12 months of the new offence. In 2016-17 that number has jumped to more than 1,000.

We know that non-fatal strangulation has been identified as an important risk factor for the homicide of women. Study after study has underscored the need to screen for non-fatal strangulation when accessing abused women in emergency department settings. Strangulation is in fact one of the best predictors for the subsequent homicide of victims of domestic violence. One study showed that the odds of becoming the victim of an attempted homicide increase about sevenfold for women who have been strangled by their partner. Victims may have no visible injuries whatsoever yet, because of the underlying brain damage due to the lack of oxygen during the strangulation assault, may have serious internal injuries or die days even weeks later.

Earlier this year under Labor we saw reports in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* of Gold Coast forensic experts being told by Queensland Health not to attend attempted strangulation cases and refer domestic violence victims to emergency departments. According to those reports, confidential emails showed staff were denied a chance to attend training. The report stated that Queensland Health managers said their staff had enough work to do without being asked to take on strangulation cases.


Is it any wonder this amendment has been snuck in the back of the Drug Court bill to try to hide the complete failure of this Labor government once again to protect victims of domestic violence? Labor's shocking record on domestic violence and their inability to protect victims is absolutely appalling. Taking three years to finally protect victims in the courtroom is just not good enough. Only the LNP will deliver and provide safe and livable communities.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.59 pm): I rise today in support of the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow members on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. I would also like to thank Hansard and the secretariat. I am glad to hear that the member for Mansfield and the opposition will be supporting this bill because, as the committee found in its report, there is support for this bill to be passed. This follows on from a history of support for drug and alcohol courts. In the early 2000s, the then leader of the opposition, Lawrence Springborg, actually claimed credit for the introduction of drug and alcohol courts. It is great to see that bipartisanship in relation to these courts has returned after some dark years when the member for Kawana was the AG.

We are here today to implement an election promise—one that we have to implement because of previous cuts. During the committee's examination of the bill, we talked to submitters about the cuts to the drug and alcohol courts and the effect that they had. I questioned Mr Popovich, who is the Treatment Services Support Manager for the Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies. When the abolition of the drug and alcohol courts occurred, the then attorney-general, the member for Kawana, said that the \$14 million that was spent on the drug and alcohol courts would be invested in drug and alcohol services. I asked Mr Popovich whether that had actually occurred. He responded, 'To my knowledge, there were actually cuts to funding under the Newman government.'

Not only were there cuts to the drug and alcohol courts, followed by a statement that they were going to invest in drug and alcohol services; they then cut funding to drug and alcohol services. When we get up and say that they 'cut, sack and sell', we mean it and we can follow it up with examples. Our opponents are out there campaigning with their ice leaflets, but look at their track record when it comes to drugs. We cannot just lock those people up and throw away the key; we need to provide them with services and we need to provide them with appropriate legal avenues, which the drug and alcohol courts provide. I am very happy that we are back here in this House rectifying the LNP government's mistake.

I conclude by noting the support that the bill has. A number of members have mentioned the submitters who support the bill. We heard from the Law Society. They were very pleased that, during the last year that the drug and alcohol courts were in operation, 115 people were diverted from prison. They understood the worthwhile reasons for diverting these people from prison and the cost benefit not only to the state but to society itself. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (4.02 pm): I rise to speak to the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. At the outset I am incredibly proud to be a member of a parliamentary team and a member of a political party that has always had a strong track record when it comes to dealing with law and order, particularly when it comes to domestic and family violence. When we talk about domestic and family violence, it is lovely to see the bipartisanship that we have seen so often in this term of parliament when it comes to making legislative change, and it is lovely to see that bipartisanship continue.

As I was saying, the LNP has very much a strong track record when it comes to dealing with law and order and dealing with particularly drugs on our streets. I see the member for Surfers Paradise here, and I know that he will agree with me, particularly coming from the Gold Coast. I note as well that the member for Mermaid Beach is here and I know that this was something he was particularly passionate about. When we were in government we took very strong steps to make sure that we could rid the Gold Coast and the rest of Queensland of criminal motorcycle gangs and organised crime.

We know that where there are criminal motorcycle gangs there are absolutely likely to be drugs. One of the ways that we can keep our community safe is by getting drugs off the streets. We get drugs off the streets by making sure that the peddlers are no longer able to do their business. That was one of the things that we did in government. I was incredibly pleased and proud to be a member of the team that did that. In addition to that, we increased maximum penalties when it came to supplying dangerous drugs to children under the age of 16 and we passed new laws that required drug traffickers to serve a mandatory minimum of 80 per cent of their sentence.

In addition to having already done great things when we were in government, we appreciate, particularly when it comes to ice, that it is an increasing problem in our communities. Unfortunately, we read far too often of so many tragic circumstances, of the things that people have done and of how families' lives have been irrevocably changed by the terrible effects of the scourge that is ice. We are aware that it is not just in large urban centres like Brisbane and the Gold Coast. I know from my regional colleagues—those who represent rural and regional Queensland—that it is a very significant issue in those communities too. That is why the LNP have come out—and I thank the member for Capalaba for taking the time to tell the House that our candidate for Capalaba, Cameron Leafe, has obviously been very effective in getting the LNP's five-point plan into the Capalaba community because clearly even the member for Capalaba knows about it.

As I said, we have a five-point plan. The first is to do in a dealer. The second is keeping bikie clubhouses closed. We know that this government has weakened its stance when it comes to dealing with criminal motorcycle gangs. We will continue to support drug addiction services. I note that the member for Moggill is seeking to make a contribution to this debate, and we know on this side of the House the great work that the member for Moggill has done in supporting those who need those services.

We will also make sure there is cooperation with law enforcement. As we know, when we are talking about drugs we cannot assume that it will be within the borders of Queensland. We need to have strong interjurisdictional relationships not only with our colleagues in the Northern Territory and in New South Wales but also with the Australian Federal Police and international law agencies. The other aspect of the plan is increased prevention through community awareness programs. Unless we talk about it and we make it okay for people to admit that they have a problem and to step forward and ask for help then we are not going to be able to offer them the support that they need to get off ice and other drugs.


I note that in the lead-up to the 2015 election campaign the Labor Party said that they would reintroduce the Drug Court. It has taken them a fair amount of time to honour this commitment because they are very much leaving it close to the death of this government—we do not know whether we are going to an election on Sunday or next year, but very clearly they have left it until almost the end of their parliamentary term. Even then, as has been highlighted by the member for Mansfield and the shadow Attorney-General, they have not gone as far as they said they would. If members will pardon the pun, it is almost a Clayton's drug and alcohol court, so to speak. That is disappointing for the people of Queensland because this government said that they would do this and they have not gone as far as they said they would, and they have spent a lot of money on not doing it so far.

The other point I want to touch on is the changes to the Evidence Act. As I said at the beginning of my contribution, it has been heartening to see the bipartisan way in which this parliament has worked to ensure that there are strong and sensible reforms in the area of domestic and family violence. We

can be incredibly proud of some of the legislative reform that we have seen go through this House. I was proud to be part of a government that instigated the *Not now, not ever* report, which has led to so many reforms. Whilst I am very lucky not to have any friends or family who have personal experience of domestic and family violence—certainly not to my knowledge—when I was a young girl my mother used to volunteer at a women’s refuge. She used to make time every second Saturday night to work in a women’s refuge at Main Beach so there was support for those women who were escaping violent partners.

At that time in the early 1990s people were not talking about it in the way they do now. There was not as much support for women as there is now—not only in terms of real, tangible support but also generally in the community—so that women could feel they could take that step to walk away and get help if they needed to. It is disappointing that these provisions are only being introduced 18 months or so after the original offences were considered and passed by this House. I think it would have been appropriate for the House to have done this at that time. However, the reality is that was not included in the legislation at that time. I very much look forward to seeing these particular provisions passed.

When we discussed the original bill, when we made attempted strangulation and strangulation offences, we talked about the fact that so often it is a precursor to more serious assaults and, statistically, it is unfortunately a precursor to a woman perhaps being killed by her partner. In those circumstances, this is absolutely appropriate given the real violence that is associated with strangulation and attempted strangulation but also the real personal nature of that assault. I think it is absolutely appropriate that we make these changes to the Evidence Act today to ensure that those victims who have been strong enough to make a complaint and who are taking a stand against their violent partner are supported the entire way through the justice system. I look forward to continuing to support this bill as it continues its passage through the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.10 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 now before the Queensland parliament. The primary objective of this legislation is to establish a new sentencing option referred to as a drug and alcohol treatment order for offenders whose behaviour and resultant transgressions are linked with serious drug or alcohol use including substance dependency. We on this side of the House will not be opposing this legislation, but I do draw to the attention of the House that whilst we do not oppose the bill, the Liberal National Party is concerned that the Labor administration have only been talking about such reforms since their election commitment of 2015.

A fact that does warrant some serious attention is that the Palaszczuk Labor government has spent \$1.191 million to re-establish the Drug Court, a court that as of today is yet to hear a case. I firmly agree with the shadow minister for justice and shadow Attorney-General, Ian Walker MP, when he slammed the spending without any translational benefit as yet. He said in an article—

“It would be almost comical if this issue weren’t so serious,” he said.

“It beggars belief that Labor would consider a \$1.2 million court that has never heard a case to be an achievement.

Mr Dick: You abolished it. That’s why it’s being reinstated and that’s why the money has to be spent: because you abolished it.

Dr ROWAN: I take the interjection from the minister. My view is that Drug Courts can achieve a translational benefit. The expenditure of taxpayer dollars does require a resultant outcome and this lack of translational outcome to date is characteristic of Labor’s do-nothing approach to government here in Queensland.

The Queensland Drug and Specialist Courts Review was commissioned by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Their final report was brought down in November 2016, it was tabled in the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 13 June 2017 and still the court has never heard a case. My concern is that while Labor have been organising reviews and undertaking talkfests, the ice usage rates in some parts of Queensland continue to be out of control. It was reported in September that the usage of crystalline methamphetamine—ice—is causing pressure on the state’s child safety department, with more than one-third of children taken into care coming from parents addicted to the drug.

A drug and alcohol treatment order would have both custodial and rehabilitative components. A team comprising the court and representatives of the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health, Queensland Corrective Services, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and Legal Aid Queensland can and would assist the court to manage and administer each treatment order. It is of some importance to note that this bill does not re-establish the Drug Court per se. It does implement


changes to the framework for treatment orders and drug rehabilitation orders in a broad sense. It does, however, anticipate that the Drug Court will be re-established. Together with the committee and members on this side of the House, I am of the view that this bill should be passed. As the LNP shadow minister has indicated, the LNP will not be opposing this legislation.

In my remaining time I also take this opportunity to highlight a few other issues of relevance. There continues to be a number of other public policy challenges related to emergent and problematic substance dependency disorders. There are issues with respect to not only illicit drugs but also synthetic drugs which mimic the effects of cannabinoids or amphetamine type stimulants or mimic the hallucinogenic effects of drugs like LSD. There are also growing dependency problems related to prescription opioid analgesics and over-the-counter codeine-containing medications. A number of evidence based treatments need to be further implemented here in Queensland.

There are many addiction medicine specialists and others who are seeing significant problems with over-the-counter codeine-containing medications. It is not unusual for them to see patients such as a 30-year-old female who might have a chronic pelvic pain disorder post delivery or chronic endometriosis. She may have three children and develop a comorbid mood disorder such as depression and then become addicted to codeine-containing medications, taking in excess of 80 tablets per day. That certainly requires people to access opioid substitution therapy programs and receive psychological interventions including cognitive behaviour therapy and also pain programs as well.

The federal government announcement that over-the-counter codeine-containing medications will be rescheduled to prescription only from 1 February 2018 will have the capacity to reduce some of the harms associated with those. The implementation of a real-time monitoring system right across Australia in relation to not only over-the-counter codeine-containing medications but also prescription opioid analgesics will be very important as well. In Queensland we need enhanced access to services in many parts of Queensland whether they be in the public or private sectors in relation to substance dependency disorders. It is my view that we need a further enhanced whole-of-government strategy here in Queensland in relation to not only illicit drugs but also alcohol, tobacco, synthetic drugs and also some of the emergent issues related to prescription opioid analgesics and also over-the-counter codeine-containing medications. One of the unfortunate things has been the highly politicised debate about alcohol fuelled violence that has been very divided. That has really been a lost opportunity to implement some truly evidence based solutions in relation to substance dependency disorders.

This legislation will pass today and it is certainly in the interests of Queenslanders that it do so. We need enhanced programs and strategies around demand reduction, supply reduction and harm minimisation in relation to access and availability to treatment services to ensure that the many people in Queensland who are vulnerable and disadvantaged who may be suffering with social, economic and health disadvantage get the treatments that they need.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 that was tabled by the Attorney-General on 10 August 2017. This bill provides the legislative framework to support the reintroduction of a Drug Court program as a drug and alcohol court. The very successful Drug Court program was scrapped in 2012 by the then premier, Campbell Newman, in a move that reportedly saved the government over \$30 million, albeit in the short term. This is yet again an example of the failure that was the Campbell Newman government that lives on in hibernation in the opposition benches of this parliament. This is a bill that once again proves it is the Labor side of politics that has driven and continues to drive legislative reform, social reform and social justice in Queensland.

Prior to its scrapping, the Drug Courts successfully dealt with over 400 offenders who successfully completed the Queensland Drug Court program and who had far lower rates of reoffending than those offenders who were sent to prison. This bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to reintroduce court diversionary processes and programs which, to date, have included the establishment of the Queensland Integrated Courts Referral program in five locations across Queensland and the rollout of the Murri Court in 14 locations across the state.

The reintroduction of the court comes after review by the department of justice that not only called for the reinstatement of the court but recommended its extension to alcohol related offences. The decision to shut down the court by the Campbell Newman government in 2012 was widely criticised by community legal services, drug law reform experts and social workers. Drug Courts were introduced across Australia at the end of the 1990s and they currently operate in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. Although the rules differ slightly across the jurisdiction, the main aim of the courts is to divert illicit drug users from prison into treatment programs in an effort to get them back on track.

The new and improved Queensland model will be based on special courts operating in Victoria and New Zealand which also deal with offenders who struggle with alcohol problems. A key aspect of the operation of the Drug and Alcohol Court is treatment orders, which comprise integrated punitive and rehabilitative elements that are clearly directed at the offending behaviour and the offender's severe substance use disorder arising from their drug or alcohol use. A treatment order is an option for the court to directly respond to the link between substance misuse and offending. It allows a method of punishment for the offender's behaviour, as the community could quite reasonably expect, while also treating the primary cause of the antisocial behaviour.


A study by Flinders University suggests that home detention is a more effective method of reducing reoffending for drug users than a prison sentence. Many offenders will now be able to serve their sentences in home detention, which will also take pressure off our overcrowded prison system. The Attorney-General, Yvette D'Ath, stated when she introduced the bill to the House—

As part of the 2017-18 state budget, funding of \$22.7 million over four years has been allocated for the operation of a drug court program based in Brisbane, and for court referral and support services in Brisbane, Ipswich, Southport and Cairns. This government is committed to introducing criminal justice responses to tackle drug and alcohol substance misuse, which has contributed to the commission of offences, and so turn people away from crime and create a safer community for everyone.

In closing, I would like to thank the Attorney-General for her hard work in bringing the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 to the House. I would also like to thank the members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for their thorough consideration of the bill, the committee secretariat, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the submitters. As the former Law Society president Bill Potts stated when applauding the reintroduction of the court—

Addictive behaviour across all forms needs to be treated if the court is to achieve its purpose, which is not merely punishment but to deal with issues causing criminality.

I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (4.22 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the bill before the House but only with regard to clause 18, which amends section 21M of the Evidence Act. That section defines 'protected witness'. Under clause 18, section 21M will include a reference to section 315A of the Criminal Code to expand the definition of 'protected witness'. Importantly, this triggers section 21O of the Evidence Act so that a protected witness cannot be cross-examined by a person who represents themselves. The explanatory notes acknowledge that this in its own right would impact upon the rights of an accused in normal circumstances. Section 21O provides an avenue for that cross-examination to occur with the assistance of the Legal Aid office, or the accused can arrange for a qualified person to undertake the cross-examination on his behalf. Section 315A deals with persons who are choked, suffocated or strangled in a domestic violence situation. It is more in relation to the necessity for those persons to be protected that I want to make a few comments here this afternoon.

There are a number of practitioners in the chamber who operated either part-time or full-time in either the family or criminal jurisdiction. Sadly, they cross each other on many occasions. When you look at what this section is trying to protect, of course it is a great honour and will be endorsed by this side of the House. When one considers the reasons for it I go back to the court building itself. Courts are imposing structures. They are there to portray authority and they are austere at the very least. When you walk inside a court building you will find police officers and legal practitioners, some of whom wear gowns and wigs. You will find other personnel and many people milling about. It is an alien environment for most people. If you get to see inside the courtroom before you give evidence you will find the bench upon which the magistrate or judge sits and court officers. You will also find the witness box, which is set aside and isolated from the bar table where barristers and other people sit. You will also find a jury panel area, a dock and maybe a witness area. Again it is a very alien environment for most people.

Imagine, then, a person walking into that building who has brought a charge of suffocation, choking or the like against an accused. On the day in question there may be four matters before the court. Your matter might be No. 3; therefore, you may not start until 3 or 3.30 in the afternoon. You have to wait in that building, knowing that somewhere in that building is the person you are accusing. You are isolated from that person with police officers around you to ensure that that person cannot get to you. At the outset there is an austere building and a courtroom that is, quite frankly, nerve-racking to many practitioners, let alone a person bringing a case. For your own protection you are isolated from other people in the precinct, but you know that somewhere in that building is the person you are accusing.

Domestic violence is a situation that can go on year in and year out. The fact of being in that building itself can be terrifying for a victim. The fact is that in the courtroom there is a very strict procedure in relation to who can talk, when they talk, what they can say and where they can sit. If you are a witness giving evidence you cannot walk out of that room of your own volition without the court's authority. It is a controlled environment and, until this section goes through, the person you are accusing has the right to cross-examine you in a manner to elicit evidence that is beneficial to their case.

Trials in this state and this nation are not as we see them in TV dramas or films. Trials of this nature take the person apart to try to gather evidence to support the client. The importance of this clause is to protect a domestic violence sufferer from the ongoing trauma of a person who, over years, has perpetrated domestic violence upon them. It is to protect them from the person they are most fearful of and the person who has given them the greatest fear. It is a long overdue provision within the act to ensure that, as much as possible, domestic violence victims in an alien environment are protected from the person who has perpetrated domestic violence on them over and over again. I commend the clause to the House because it is something that we should be looking at more and more in this state to ensure that those who are most at risk are given the best protection we possibly can. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (4.29 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. This bill seeks to provide a new sentencing option for offenders whose criminal behaviour is as a result of serious alcohol or drug dependence. This sentencing option could be implemented by any Magistrates Court prescribed by regulation to be a Drug and Alcohol Court. The Brisbane Magistrates Court will be the pilot test case for this program, which will be reviewed in 2018. An economic evaluation would then assess where other drug courts would operate in the future.

The principal aim of this legislation is to facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders by providing a judicially supervised, therapeutically oriented and integrated treatment regime to reduce the offender's severe substance use disorder, reduce the level of criminal activity associated with the disorder and assist the offender's integration into the community. A treatment order will only be issued if certain conditions are met such as that the offence is the result of the substance addiction and the offender agrees to the order being made.

We are all too aware of the cost of substance abuse to our communities including crime, assaults, antisocial behaviour, domestic violence, broken families—and the list goes on. As members of parliament it is our responsibility to do all we are able to battle the scourge of drugs in our communities. This is no easy task. I have attended court to support someone very dear to me who had a drug addiction and found themselves facing charges as a result. He was convicted, received a large fine and was discharged from court. There was no offer of support to help break this addiction. He was expected to give up the drugs, get a job and pay off this large fine and reintegrate himself into society with no offer of support. He was lucky: I was there to support him. He was determined to win this battle and he did, but it was not easy. For those who have a drug addiction, particularly to a drug such as ice, without a vast amount of support to help kick their addiction more will fail than will succeed.

Quite often the alcohol or drug addiction is the symptom and not the disease. Many suffer from depression, anxiety or other mental health issues and turn to substances to cope. If this underlying problem is not addressed as part of the rehabilitation process then the chance of returning to substance abuse is very high. We should not forget the families of those who fall victim to substance abuse. Watching a loved one battle the demons of substance abuse is one of the most traumatic experiences it is possible to endure.

I support this legislation as another tool to battle the scourge of substance abuse in our society. There is no single answer to this problem, but the battle must continue.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.31 pm): I am pleased to support the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. The bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to reintroduce the Drug Court, which was thoughtlessly axed by the Newman-Nicholls government despite evidence showing it to be a success. This bill, which re-establishes the Drug Court and introduces treatment orders as a sentencing option, represents the smart-on-crime approach adopted by this government, addressing both criminal offending and the underlying causes of criminal offending.

The newly re-established Drug Court will insert a new sentencing option into the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 that will allow a treatment order to be placed on offenders whose criminal behaviour is directly linked to severe drug or alcohol use. The Drug Court will address drug related crime by tackling the addiction behind the offence to effectively break the cycle of criminal behaviour and to help make our communities safer.

The Palaszczuk government's election commitment to provide drug and alcohol diversionary processes and programs for offenders has already seen the Queensland Integrated Court Referrals program established in five locations across Queensland and has delivered the rollout of the Murri Court in 14 locations across the state. In this year's state budget \$22.7 million has been allocated over four years for the re-establishment of the Drug Court program. The operation of the Drug Court will be based in Brisbane, with court referral and support services to be established in Brisbane, Ipswich, Southport and Cairns.

I am delighted to see the Drug Court program rolled out in the Ipswich region. In the past five years, sadly, Ipswich has experienced a spike in drug related offences. In 2012 Ipswich recorded a total of 1,208 drug offences whereas in 2017 a total of 2,977 drug offences were recorded between January and September—an increase of over 140 per cent compared with 2012. In the last five years Ipswich has seen an increase in rates of property theft and weapons offences, and there is an urgent need in the community for a wider range of sentencing options which provide treatment for the underlying causes of crime such as drug and alcohol addiction. This will help keep our crime rates down and guarantee a safer community for Ipswich residents. I take this opportunity to thank the local police in Ipswich who do an extraordinary job every single day. I commend district Superintendent Brian Huxley for his leadership.

I wholeheartedly believe that the re-establishment of the Drug Court will have a beneficial impact on the wellbeing and safety of the Ipswich community. It will give judges a wider range of sentencing options which will balance the tough, punitive approaches to sentencing with rehabilitative approaches that treat the underlying causes of criminal behaviour.


Re-establishing the Drug Court is a smart and cost-effective approach to dealing with crime in Queensland. In a comprehensive review of Queensland's former drug court program, the final report noted that the court delivered a number of cost related and social benefits to the community including reductions in drug use and associated health issues, easing the burden these offenders place on the health system, the reunification of families, babies born drug-free, the retention of stable accommodation, engagement of offenders in employment, education and training, and a reduction in offending.

As some of my colleagues have already said, the Queensland Law Society in its support of the re-established Drug Court identified the negative impacts the LNP government's abolition of the program had on the most vulnerable members of the community, claiming that its repeal did not crack down hard on the hardcore drug traffickers but, instead, the repeal affected vulnerable and marginalised members of the community such as women, children, Indigenous Australians and people chronically addicted to drugs.

A solely punitive approach to criminal behaviour, one favoured by the LNP government, does not address the underlying addictions that cause the offending behaviour. It is not a smart solution to crime in Queensland. The new sentencing option of treatment orders integrates tough punitive and rehabilitative elements that deal with the offender's criminal behaviour and the offender's chronic substance use. It allows the court to punish behaviour, in line with community expectations, and to treat the addictions causing antisocial behaviour.

As part of the punitive approach the court will record a conviction and sentence the offender to a term of imprisonment of up to four years, suspended for a designated period up to five years. As part of its rehabilitative approach the offender will be required to undergo an intensive treatment program and comply with a range of conditions for a minimum of two years. It is not a soft or easy way out for offenders. Once an offender consents to a treatment order they must comply with medical, psychiatric and psychological treatment, undertake frequent drug or alcohol testing or participate in counselling or other rehabilitation programs.

The re-establishment of the Drug Court in Queensland and in my electorate of Ipswich and the introduction of treatment orders to sentencing options are a smarter, better way for Queensland to tackle crime, especially for communities like Ipswich. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.36 pm): The primary objective of this bill, in establishing a new sentencing option that has been referred to as the drug and alcohol treatment order for offenders whose criminal behaviour is linked to their serious drug or alcohol use, also provides changes to the Evidence Act which are relevant to domestic violence. I will firstly address the drug sentencing options.

Breaking the nexus of drug use and crime is a good policy intention which I think we all support, but how that is achieved effectively is the issue of debate—and so it should be. Drug and alcohol abuse destroys lives—not only of those using these substances but also of their families, the community and the victims of their crimes. Striving to find better and more effective ways to break the cycle of abuse is something that we as a community need to have rigorous debate and discussion about. There also needs to be transparency about what actually works and not just policy statements.

There also needs to be better education with regard to prevention. I raise a concern with respect to social commentary involving people in our entertainment industry. This cuts across all areas of our community, but those in the entertainment industry perhaps are easier to highlight because of their profile. Drug and alcohol use is almost seen as a rite of passage, as something to toss off as something they did in their youth and survived. So many have not survived. So many have been on such a destructive pathway. It is not just the individual who pays the price; it is also their families and the community. I think it is time we were really frank about the destruction in our community caused by drug abuse. People who have a high profile try to palm it off, but they should be held to account for their actions because they send a message to another generation that somehow it will be okay when it may not be. Lives are left in tatters as a result.


The LNP has a tough on crime approach, particularly with regard to drug and alcohol crime. That is one of the very real reasons we have no compunction in saying that those who peddle drugs need to face the full force of the law, and that is about ensuring that we break the nexus of addiction whilst also ensuring that those who peddle drugs are held to account. That is why we believe that those involved in criminal gangs, particularly the criminal motorcycle gangs that had such an incredibly powerful inroad into our communities and networked throughout this state, had to be held to account, and we make no apologies for that.

The legislation before the House is about diversion and, as I said, I think it has good intentions, but the issue of debate is the implementation since it was announced by Labor in 2015. It has good intentions but poor implementation because since then we have seen \$1.2 million spent on this initiative but still no Drug Court. Only in Queensland under Labor would we see money spent on an initiative with no outcomes. Labor thinks spending money is proof of outcomes. Oh, if only it was! Here we are on the eve of a possible election and its 2015 election commitment to re-establish drug courts still has not been fulfilled. There is legislation before the House that allows for diversionary orders to be made, but still there is yet to be a pilot date announced for that first Drug Court, which we are told is going to be in Brisbane and eventually other locations. I want to see not only diversion that is successful but also transparency as to the costs, because this issue does need to be looked at as to the best and most effective ways to break that nexus between drug addiction and crime throughout our community whilst also ensuring that those peddling drugs are not let off the hook, that their crimes are taken seriously and that the full weight of the law is brought against them.

I want to address the issue of alcohol interlocks. It is not part of this legislation, but I flag that it has been raised with me that this still would not necessarily capture or provide an opportunity for diversion for those who have been identified as having a major addiction. If they have an alcohol interlock that is ordered to be fitted to their vehicles, there is still no opportunity necessarily to see them effectively diverted into drug diversion programs. I flag that because it has been raised with me and I think that we are talking about mechanisms that we have supported across this chamber—that is, alcohol interlocks as a mechanism to keep drug affected people out of their cars. There also has to be the opportunity for diversion to break some of those lifetime addictions and I think that that is something relevant to raise at this point.

The other issue included in this legislation relates to the Evidence Act with respect to domestic violence offences. As my colleague the member for Caloundra outlined, it is quite a distressing and confronting situation for victims of domestic violence to find themselves not only having to go through the criminal court process with their offenders potentially facing off against them but also in a situation where they are vulnerable in that court setting. This Evidence Act amendment is to ensure that an alleged victim of an offence against section 315A—that is, 'Choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting'—of the Criminal Code is afforded appropriate protection in court proceedings. It has been alluded to that this is a provision that should have been addressed earlier when other substantial

changes to domestic violence provisions were before the House, but certainly it is good to see this here now because, ultimately, we want to ensure that not only are there just outcomes in the court case but also there is an understanding of the vulnerability of victims when they are facing a situation where the criminal court process is one that can be a revictimisation for people who have suffered so much.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.43 pm): Today I rise to make a short contribution on the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. There are a number of significant legislative reforms the Attorney-General is piloting through the parliament this afternoon and some of those are very significant, including amendments to the Evidence Act protecting victims of choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting, taking steps to amend the criminal law in Queensland to protect those victims of domestic and family violence. This afternoon I particularly want to comment on the re-establishment of the Drug Court in Queensland. At the outset I want to associate myself with comments made by members of the government including the members for Stretton, Pine Rivers, Capalaba, Ipswich West and Ipswich, who all made thoughtful contributions to this debate.

I also want to do something that I have never done before in the House, and it will probably be a long time before I do it again: I want to associate myself with the comments made by the member for Condamine. The member for Condamine is a member of the opposition but gave a very thoughtful and, I believe for the member for Condamine, heartfelt speech about the impact that drugs have had on someone who was a close family friend. Shorn of politics and rhetoric, he spoke plainly about the impact drugs had had on his family and the necessity and the importance of having a mechanism like a Drug Court in our criminal justice system to help those individuals and families. It was a very thoughtful contribution and I commend him for that. I will be making some comments about the LNP shortly and I do not want to put the member for Caloundra in that group either. He spoke very briefly about a specific provision in support of it, and I do not include him in my comments this afternoon.

This is a day that should never have happened in the Legislative Assembly. This is a day that should never have come to this House. The only thing more sickening than the dishonesty of the LNP is its hypocrisy. This afternoon speaker after speaker has had the temerity to stand in this House and criticise the Labor government for reintroducing a Drug Court program that should have never been abolished. Each of them—the member for Mansfield, the member for Beaudesert, the member for Currumbin, the member for Broadwater—voted to abolish that court yet came into the House this afternoon and said that they were supporting its re-establishment but criticised the Labor government for doing so, including expenditure that the government had made, quite necessarily and properly, to re-establish that court. There is nothing the LNP can be trusted with in this state—nothing!

The member for Mansfield moves through the southern suburbs of our city—suburbs like Wishart and Mansfield and Rochedale—pretending he is some soft liberal in touch with the community, but he is the hardest of right-wingers in the Liberal National Party, and I have seen him operate, and we saw him operate today. I would have had more respect for the member for Mansfield if he had come into this House and said, 'We do not believe in diversion, we do not believe in courts and we don't support it.' Of course he wants to be hypocritical and two-faced. He wants to say to his community that he supported it. I tell members what: one leaflet he will not be circulating is his voting against the court and abolishing it, like he voted against the Murri Court—of all courts to be abolished in this state, giving status and voice to Indigenous people in our justice system but paid a very small stipend. Those opposite destroyed all of those courts on the anvil of their austerity led by the Leader of the Opposition when he was the treasurer. I would have had more respect for the members for Mansfield, Beaudesert, Currumbin and Broadwater if they had done that. The member for Moggill, who adopted the same line, was not in the parliament but was quick to read out the talking points again. I had more respect for the member for Moggill. I thought he had some intellectual honesty about him, but this afternoon he proved again that he was in the group of intellectually dishonest members of the LNP.

Dr ROWAN: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments personally offensive and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr DICK: I withdraw. Of course the member for Moggill attacked the investment that we made to bring this court to life. Those opposite cannot even read the first page of the explanatory notes that sets out the reason the expenditure was made and why we reached this point—

The Queensland Government commissioned the Drug and Specialist Courts Review ...

We put money into a review to create this court. When did that review report? In June. Four months later we have before the House the legislation seeking to re-establish this court. We were criticised for the time it has taken to do this. There are few attorneys-general in any parliament who has

worked so vigorously and diligently as the current Attorney-General to move an enormous legislative workload through this parliament, opposed almost every step of the way by the LNP. This bill is yet another example of significant reform for our state—reform that should never have been necessary.

We had the member for Broadwater lecturing the House about the waste of money in establishing this court, how long it had taken and the scourge of ice. The reason we have the scourge of ice in our community is that the members for Broadwater, Mansfield, Currumbin, Beaudesert, Moggill and Maroochydore did nothing when they were in government. We had three years of inaction.

I want to put on the parliamentary record the firm action that the Palaszczuk Labor government has taken to address ice. The members opposite are running around electorates with their flimsy one-page pamphlet, which is designed to generate fear in the community about crime and the association of drugs with crime. Of course, today the members opposite are happy to say that they support the re-establishment of a diversionary process but, out in the community, they are creating fear and dissension.

In 2015, within months of coming into government, as health minister I announced an investment of an additional \$6 million a year in new services to respond to the growing problem of ice in communities in Logan, the Gold Coast, Rockhampton, Townsville, Cooktown, Charleville and Cunnamulla. In Logan in particular, that meant \$1.65 million to fund six additional full-time clinical staff to deliver the Drug and Alcohol Brief Intervention Team service in the Logan Hospital emergency department; two full-time clinical staff to deliver services that were particularly focused on developing strategies to assist parents who may be using substances and caring for children; and two full-time staff to provide training and professional development to enhance the capacity of the community sector in Logan in the early identification of drug related issues in families. The DABIT service in Logan alone has seen 2,000 people to divert them away from substances on to a path to wellbeing.

In February 2016, thanks to the lobbying of the member for Townsville, the member for Thuringowa and the member for Mundingburra, our government allocated \$1 million to the Salvation Army to help build a brand-new drug and alcohol rehabilitation service in Townsville.

Mr STEWART: Hear, hear!

Mr DICK: I take that interjection from the member for Townsville, who was so vigorous in his advocacy for that centre. A few weeks ago in Townsville that centre was opened to deliver services in partnership with the Salvation Army. In October 2016, I announced a further \$43 million investment over five years into alcohol and drug services provided by non-government agencies as part of our connecting care to recovery plan. In June this year, I allocated \$600,000 to Sunrise Way in Toowoomba. I acknowledge the work of Kerry Shine, the Labor candidate for Toowoomba North, to support the ongoing work of that 20-bed facility. That investment would not have been made unless Kerry Shine had been standing up for his community—unlike the current members for Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South. On 15 September this year, I opened a brand-new, 13-bed short-stay intervention unit at Logan Hospital to provide specialised support for people with drug and alcohol problems. These are real, front-line investments that put additional clinical and community resources on the ground.


Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: I hear the members opposite interjecting. The way I was brought up was that, when you did something wrong—like abolishing the Drug Court—you said sorry and you kept quiet. But not the LNP members, because there is no point to which they will not fall to grasp political power and take political advantage.

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr DICK: The member for Surfers Paradise is happy to interject, but not speak to the bill. I encourage him to speak in this parliament about why he voted against the Drug Court during the Newman government and is now supporting it. That is more rank hypocrisy.

In conclusion, once again, I commend the Attorney-General for this significant reform—reform that would have been entirely unnecessary if it were not for the wickedness and mendacity of the Newman government to abolish the Drug Court in the first place. That demonstrates that, fundamentally, we cannot trust the LNP with our criminal justice system, the courts, the Public Service and proper public administration in this state. That is what we will be telling people every single day between now and the election.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (4.55 pm), in reply: I thank the honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Penalties and Sentences (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Orders) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. As I have indicated in earlier speeches, this bill delivers on the government's election commitment to reintroduce court diversionary processes and programs into Queensland's criminal justice system by facilitating the establishment of a drug and alcohol court. This bill continues to build upon this government's record of introducing criminal law reform that is evidence based and is the result of thorough consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The re-establishment of the drug and alcohol court, which is provided for in the bill, has been informed by a comprehensive review of best practice in special court and court diversionary approaches in Australia and internationally to address alcohol and other drug use associated with offending. The Drug and Specialist Courts Review was tabled in this Assembly on 13 June 2017.

The bill introduces a new sentencing order, the drug and alcohol treatment order, into the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992. That order will facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders by providing a judicially supervised, therapeutically orientated and integrated treatment regime with the aim of addressing an offender's severe substance use disorder, reducing their involvement in criminal activity and aiding their reintegration into the community.

The Criminal Code, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 and the Justice and Other Information Disclosure Act 2008 are also amended in this bill in order to support the creation of the drug and alcohol treatment order. The bill also contains miscellaneous criminal law amendments that are not related to the drug and alcohol treatment order. Those amendments relate to the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Evidence Act 1977, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000.

I will now address some of the matters that were raised by honourable members during the course of this debate. I acknowledge the contribution of the Minister for Health, who referred to the hypocrisy of those opposite. I want to single out the member for Condamine and thank him for his contribution, because it was a genuine, heartfelt contribution. It showed that he truly understands the importance of investing in diversionary programs such as those contained in this bill.

The fake shock of those opposite to costs and delay in relation to establishing this Drug Court is absolutely extraordinary. The member for Mansfield in his contribution to the debate listed a number of drugs, including MDMA, and said that these drugs had been on the rise since 2012. That was when the LNP came to government. Yet, in his speech today, the member for Mansfield pointed to the increase in the use of these drugs during the time that the LNP was in government as justification for why this bill should have been introduced sooner, that we should have re-established the Drug Court sooner than now. That is extraordinary, because the only reason the parliamentary committee had to spend time travelling throughout this state taking evidence was that the LNP scrapped this court. The only reason we are spending time in this chamber right now debating this bill is that the LNP, when it was in government, scrapped this court. In fact, on 5 June 2015, when the former attorney-general moved the amendments to repeal the former Drug Court Act, he stated that the decision to cease funding for the Drug Court was necessary to return Queensland to a stronger fiscal position. That shows the lack of understanding of LNP members, particularly the now Leader of the Opposition, who was treasurer at the time, and their obsession with short-term cost cutting.

The members opposite fail to understand that, when you scrap initiatives such as the Drug Court, when you scrap diversionary programs, when you scrap funding for community organisations, for women's shelters, for work programs, for training programs, for programs that help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the community, you are not saving money. You are costing money in the long term, you are costing government in the long term because, if you do not intervene, if you do not provide these supports, these people become entrenched in disadvantage.

Those people who will come to the drug and alcohol court will be entrenched in the criminal justice system, costing taxpayers much more in the long-term than any short-term savings by scrapping these sorts of courts. It is extraordinary to listen to those on the other side say that we have been dragging our feet, doing nothing—sitting on our hands apparently—for the last 2½ years. I feel sorry for the members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee who have had before them 30 pieces of legislation in my portfolio alone in this term of government plus other ministers' bills that have been referred to them. Apparently we have been sitting around doing absolutely nothing, sitting on our hands. Those on the opposite side talk about the costs already expended in undertaking a comprehensive review to re-establish this court—again costs that would not have had to be incurred if the Drug Court had not been scrapped in 2013 to begin with.

I want to explain to those on the other side—as just about all of them criticised this government for taking time to actually reintroduce this court—what we have been doing in all of this time. We have been re-establishing the Murri Court that was scrapped by the LNP; re-establishing the Special Circumstances Court; re-establishing court ordered youth justice conferencing; getting rid of VLAD; fixing up the issues in the judiciary and the legal profession; scrapping boot camps; bringing back independence to the Crime and Corruption Commission; bringing transparency back to political donations; fixing up civil partnerships and bringing back civil partnership ceremonies; bringing in seven domestic and family violence bills; and, finally, introducing the ID scanners that those opposite legislated for but never implemented. That is just to name a few of the things we have been doing.

We have heard the hypocrisy of those on the other side who want to play politics with domestic and family violence. If we want to go there, let us be honest: the only bill that the opposition debated when it was in government around domestic and family violence was a private member's bill brought forward by the member for Inala who was the Leader of the Opposition at the time. Those in government at the time, those sitting on that side criticising us today, opposed that private member's bill in full.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I welcomed the task force. It was a joint task force. That was no excuse to reject the private member's bill that could have helped victims of domestic and family violence back then. LNP members walk into this chamber today and say it has taken us three years to do things when they chose not to introduce any legislation to provide any assistance when they were in government. That sort of hypocrisy has to be called out. It is absolutely appalling.

I want to address a very important issue that the member for Mansfield raised. He asked a question in relation to special witness protections and in relation to the changes that we are making where an accused who is self-represented could potentially cross-examine a complainant victim in those circumstances. Some on the other side appeared to make an imputation that in fact we had allowed for vulnerable witnesses to be put in this difficult position because we did not address this at the time we introduced the bill. I did not see the LNP raising this issue at the time either. The fact is that this was not identified at the time. Consequently, it was not in the bill. I can advise that on the issue of special witness protections the government has received advice from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions about the growing use of strangulation charges and the possible risk to witnesses. This government has done the right thing by taking responsible action and bringing in an amendment to address this potential risk.

In terms of the number of cases of the more than 1,100 charges involving section 315A, the DPP can advise of just two self-represented accused involved in cases of strangulation charges in a domestic setting. To the best of my knowledge, from the information I have been advised, these matters have not progressed to trial at this stage. The information I have received to this point is that we have not had this situation arise yet. We have the opportunity to rectify this this evening and we should do so. That is what good governments do. They listen, they identify where there may be gaps or loopholes in legislation and they address it as soon as they possibly can.

In conclusion, I once again thank all honourable members for their contribution during the debate. I thank the stakeholders who contributed to this process—the same stakeholders who I have no doubt whatsoever in 2013 told the government not to do this when the LNP was in power. They have not changed their views since 2013. There is no doubt they would have given those submissions at that time. I welcome that they have continued to stand by their submission and put it to the parliamentary committee in this process. I thank the experts who used their expertise to develop this strong model and the departmental officers of DJAG who have worked so hard for this positive outcome. I once again acknowledge the court workers, the police, the ambulance officers and the front-line health workers who have to deal with the consequences of people who are under the influence of drugs and alcohol. I thank the health minister for outlining what action he has already taken to deal with ice across my department and across the Police Service. This is a multiagency strategy because it is a whole-of-government and whole-of-society problem. Every single one of our communities are affected by drugs and alcohol. None of us are immune to it and we need to take whatever action we can to deal with it.

I am very proud of our government for not just bringing the Drug Court back, but the initiatives we are taking on all of these issues. I acknowledge again the member for Condamine who acknowledges that early intervention and these sorts of diversionary programs work and they are

needed. In fact, it can be applied to so many areas of what this government is doing. There is criticism from those opposite on youth justice. Intervention of this type can change lives. So many lives are damaged and hurt because of drugs and alcohol and crime generally.

If we can implement initiatives such as early intervention diversionary programs that can turn people away from crime—and the younger the better—then we can actually make society better for everyone and make our communities safer. That is how to get real outcomes: not tough-on-crime rhetoric, but actual evidence based, smart policies on crime. This bill does that. This is another election commitment proudly delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government. I commend the bill to the House.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 37, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (5.08 pm): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (5.08 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.

HOUSING LEGISLATION (BUILDING BETTER FUTURES) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 10 August (see p. 2198).

Second Reading

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Sport) (5.09 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the committee for its consideration of this very important bill. It is a bill that will enhance consumer protections for very many vulnerable Queenslanders. Our seniors, our mothers and fathers, our aunts, our uncles and friends have given so much to this state. It is through their efforts that we enjoy the wonderful, vibrant communities that exist throughout Queensland today.

I believe those people deserve a safe and secure place to call home in their retirement. Our commitment to Queensland seniors is this: this bill is about delivering that security for people living in retirement villages and residential parks. It also provides greater protections for Queenslanders at the margins of secure housing, living in boarding houses that too often have been prone to exploitation. Through this bill, we are building the foundation for increasing housing standards for Queenslanders who are renting—that is, 566,000 Queenslanders and the number is rising. For the first time, more Queenslanders are renting than are paying off a mortgage. That is due to the utter failure of the Turnbull government to take action on the distortion, locking people out of the housing market. Renters deserve a quality baseline of living standards and they deserve protection from exploitation.

This bill delivers on commitments in the Queensland Housing Strategy for 2017-27 and the associated 2017-20 action plan. It will help ensure all Queenslanders have access to a safe, secure and suitable place to call home. This bill fulfils yet another of the Palaszczuk government's 2015 election commitments. We are a government that has been working with Queenslanders to fulfil the commitments that we have made. We have not set out to divide Queenslanders as those opposite did in their three long years of chaos and cuts.

I turn to the key elements of the bill. The bill amends the Housing Act 2003, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and the Retirement Villages Act 1999. The bill also makes a consequential amendment to the Building Act 1975. In recent years in Queensland the public and community housing system has faced the threat of assets being lost to the public housing system through policies of privatisation. This bill amends the Housing Act in order to protect our public and community housing system from continuing risk that could lead to assets being lost from that system.

The bill will amend the Housing Act 2003 to provide clarity regarding the definition of a 'relevant asset'. This clarity is important if a community housing provider fails to gain entry to the National Regulatory System for Community Housing before the trial period ends on 31 December 2018. Should that occur under the current national rules, those providers will be forced to transfer or dispose of the relevant asset. This government will not sit by without addressing that risk. The amendment protects the state's interests if a provider funded by the Queensland government finds itself obliged to dispose of a relevant asset that Queenslanders have paid for. The amendment clarifies that relevant assets must be returned to the Department of Housing and Public Works.

I will address issues in relation to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003. Labor has always supported Queenslanders who live in our manufactured home parks and residential parks. Residential parks are becoming an alluring retirement option for many Queenslanders. It is a sector with significant innovation and new, modern, sleek and attractive parks. These reforms are a continued demonstration of our commitment to Queenslanders living in those settings. Key changes to the manufactured homes act include new precontractual disclosure processes that encourage consumers to seek legal advice and carefully consider their decision. They will also be armed with all the information that they need to make the best choices possible.

Amendments will limit rent increases to one rent increase per year. They will ensure increased transparency of market rent reviews. They will limit rent increases outside the terms of the agreement to situations where there is a threat to park viability and, for new facilities, where 75 per cent of home owners support the proposal. There will also be new behavioural standards and processes for dispute resolution matters before they are escalated to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The costs and power imbalance involved in current dispute procedures have left many residents vulnerable; so too have unnecessary fees and restrictions to park entry. Our amendments will clearly prohibit meter reading and prohibit utility administration fees. Our amendments will ensure emergency services and health workers have access to residential parks and that emergency plans are in place.

In respect of amendments to the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002, unregulated housing is prime for the worst types of exploitation that we see in our communities. That is why it is important that we maintain strong standards in residential services, such as boarding houses. Amendments to the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act will address ambiguity and uncertainty to help protect highly vulnerable residents. Therefore, the bill provides a higher level of security for services providing housing to particularly vulnerable Queenslanders, such as women and children fleeing domestic and family violence situations. The amendments will ensure that where the safety of residents would be at risk the chief executive can withhold the service's address from the searchable register of residential services. Amendments will help improve the effectiveness of our safeguards by reducing the time between initial registration and the subsequent accreditation of a service.

Clarity will be improved, including provisions relating to the meaning of the term 'resident', to ensure services do not avoid requirements by counting residents as employees when given token jobs, for instance. An 'associate' will be more clearly defined and, therefore, subject to criminal history checking. It will clarify that renewal of accreditation can be conditional, who can run the service on the death of a soul provider and clearly state the requirement for a fire safety management plan. Other improvements include changes to information on registration certificates and the state register, making guidelines and clarifying that programs exempted under the former supported accommodation assistance program are exempted under their new program names. Other amendments will require that

a service notify the regulator of the death of a resident in level 3 services, which are those that provide residents with a personal care type service. This will help the regulator ensure there are not systemic issues in those services requiring action.

I turn to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 amendments. The RTRA Act sets out the rules for renting homes in Queensland. As I mentioned earlier, more Queenslanders are renting than ever before and our laws need to reflect that shift. People should not have to live in homes that provide little more than basic shelter. People should expect a decent base standard of amenity for both their safety and, of course, their peaceful enjoyment.

The amendments will establish a head of power for minimum standards for rental accommodation to be prescribed by regulation. This again delivers on an important election commitment and is strongly supported by stakeholders representing the interests of Queensland's growing number of renters, including families renting for extended periods. It is a concern that properties can be rented where amenities, for instance, do not work and in circumstances where if tenants speak up they have no guarantee that the landlord will not end the tenancy at the end of the lease. The amendments provide guidance to indicate what will be covered by the minimum standards in the Residential Tenancies Regulation. Consultation about what those standards will be and how they will be enforced will take place before the regulation is amended. This bill represents landmark reform to ensure that seniors living in retirement villages get a fair go.

I turn now to amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999. Too many Queenslanders have found themselves subject to rip-offs and hidden nasties in their agreements. Too many Queensland families have been left struggling to help elderly parents, after their retirement savings have been whittled down by unfair fees and hidden charges. This bill will dramatically increase transparency in the relationships between retirement village operators and residents. It improves precontractual disclosure by introducing a two-stage, 21-day process prior to execution of the residence contract. This process will protect seniors from predatory, high-pressure sales tactics.

The bill before the House already contains provisions to sanction an operator who circulates misleading or deceptive documents to current or future customers. Tonight during consideration in detail I will be moving an amendment to further strengthen this provision to fulfil community expectations. This amendment will ban misleading and deceptive conduct in all its forms. To remove any doubt the amendment will also make it clear that a site operator will be held accountable for this kind of misconduct if it is undertaken by their employee, their agent or some other representative.

One of the common complaints raised by residents of retirement villages is concern about the frequency, transparency and scope of charges, fees and fee increases that they can experience while living in a retirement village. This bill contains a number of provisions to better and more transparently control those things which can be levied upon residents, and the processes that an operator must go through when making adjustments.

In addition to delivering better safeguards in this bill, I want to take this opportunity to remind the House and the people of Queensland that the government employs specialist regulatory officers whose job it is to protect and uphold their rights—in particular, the rights of seniors in retirement villages. These officers do respond to complaints raised by residents and have the skills and experience to follow through and secure a result for these older Queenslanders. In addition, the government will be providing practical assistance to enhance the voice and the advocacy available to older Queenslanders, delivered by older Queenslanders. I will speak more about that in a moment.

In the bill we have the power to mandate a minimum standard contract. It is important to be clear exactly what this means. A regulation in the future will be able to specify certain terms that must be in a contract. A regulation will also be able to specify certain terms which must never be in a contract. A regulation will also be able to specify the general look, feel and format of a contract so it is easy to know what people are looking at, easy to navigate and easy to find the standard clauses they know to expect in a contract.

Just like the standard contracts that many citizens have encountered in day-to-day lives currently, this will not prevent a resident and a site owner agreeing to supplementary special clauses that do not disadvantage residents. It will be possible for a resident of a retirement village to customise their experience in bespoke ways. Amendments will prescribe behaviour standards for operators, staff and residents. There will be greater transparency regarding retirement village funds, budgets and financial statements. The amendments will also provide a simpler, more predictable reinstatement process which distinguishes between reinstatement and renovation. It is one thing to return a property to an appropriate state, but reinstatement does not and should not mean renovation.

The bill before the House contains provisions so that residents will be better informed and protected by new processes for changes in village operations, such as proposed closure, redevelopment or change in operator. Tonight in consideration in detail I will move amendments to further strengthen these safeguards. These amendments will make sure that when the chief executive is called to make a decision on the closure or redevelopment of a retirement village, residents of the village are given the opportunity to actively and meaningfully participate in the decision-making process. This includes ensuring that they are notified in writing and given the opportunity to make submissions to be considered by the chief executive before a decision is made.

There is one issue which is the single most focus of the most passionately expressed complaint about retirement villages. It is raised by current residents of nursing homes, former residents of nursing homes and distressed and anguished adult children and those who are desperately trying to secure their elderly parents entry to a nursing home and to arrange and fund the medical and clinical care that their frail aged parents may need in their final years of their lives. That issue is the release of a former resident's exit entitlement—the return of the remaining part of a resident's entry fee.

The bill before the House makes important progress on this important issue. It requires operators to pay residents their exit entitlement within 18 months of the resident leaving, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Importantly, this protection will apply immediately to all current residents, to exiting residents whose units have not sold and to new residents entering the system for the first time. This new safeguard has been set at the 18-month mark after negotiation and conciliation between the representatives of older Queenslanders, particularly the residents of current retirement villages and the retirement village industry. It makes important progress in protecting the rights of older Queenslanders, and their extended families, without disrupting the continued orderly operation of the industry.

There is a clear appetite in the community to make further progress on that particular issue. Older Queenslanders on the Gold Coast have asked me, as I know they have asked many members in this place, what more can be done. The Council on the Ageing has called for shorter exit periods as one of its national priorities.

On the Sunshine Coast, where many retirement villages in Queensland are concentrated, particularly in locations such as Buderim, the same issue is at the forefront of people's minds. That is why tonight I will be moving an amendment that will deliver a statutory commitment to run an independent review into this issue within two years of the legislation's commencement. The government will be appointing independent experts with skills in accounting and actuarial disciplines, as well as experts with a deep understanding of the needs and aspirations of older Queenslanders and their families.

These changes put into action our Queensland Housing Strategy announced in June this year. Our Housing Strategy goes further than just improving the rules though. This government is committed to providing practical help to improve people's experience living in retirement villages, manufactured home parks and boarding houses.

We have committed \$1 million across five key organisations to strengthen advocacy and support services, to ensure Queenslanders can access information and advice that supports their important life and financial decisions where and when they need it, while protecting the most vulnerable in our communities. These groups—the Association of Residents of Queensland Retirement Villages, Associated Residential Parks Queensland Inc., the Council on the Ageing, National Seniors Australia and Tenants Queensland—are all well known for the good work they already do across this state.

This funding supports these groups to further expand and strengthen their support services. These organisations will ensure up-to-date and accurate information and advice is available on these amendments and will provide a stronger voice to consumers and residents living in retirement villages as well as manufactured homes and residential services. While those opposite sought to ban advocacy by community organisations through their grants process, not only will advocacy be allowed under this funding; it will be encouraged.

The Palaszczuk government is known as a consultative government. The reforms in the bill have been the subject of extensive consultation with industry and consumer stakeholders. In 2015, this government committed to examine the results of the consultation thus far to determine if a more extensive solution is required before a response to report No. 13, *Review of the Retirement Villages Act 1999*, is made. The government has delivered this commitment through the Queensland Housing Strategy, the Ministerial Housing Council and stakeholder consultations, resulting in the bill that is now before the House.

I would like to discuss the Public Works and Utilities Committee report. Before I do, I would like to thank the committee members and the associated staff for their consideration of the bill and note that the committee made 18 recommendations, including importantly that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for their support of the bill. I now table a copy of the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Public Works and Utilities Committee: Report No. 48—Housing Legislation (Building Better Futures) Amendment Bill, government response [2096].

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee members and the secretariat for their hard work in undertaking the review of the bill which included holding a number of public hearings, as I understand, in Kallangur, Bethania and Brisbane. I would also like to thank the many residents, stakeholders and community members who made a submission on the bill, as well as those who took the time to participate in the hearings to express their thoughts, their views, their experiences, their concerns and their overwhelming support for this bill.

I will now respond to the recommendations of the committee report. The government notes recommendations 1 and 9—recommendation 1 being that the bill be passed. Recommendation 9 of the report proposes that the matter of land rent arrangements, such as the arrangements that apply in residential parks that include manufactured homes, be included in the planned reform of the Housing Act 2003 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 under the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027. The government supports recommendation 4 and does not support recommendations 5, 10 and 15.

Recommendation 4 of the report is seeking to ensure transparency of the processes for calculating site rent increases in manufactured home parks. The bill contains a number of provisions that work together to ensure the transparency of the calculation of site rent increases. It requires that the park owner must ensure that the site agreement clearly states the basis for working out the amount of a site rent increase and that only one basis of calculation can be used at a time.

Recommendation 5 of the report is seeking that the bill be amended to ensure the independence of the valuer who conducts the market review of site rent. It is considered that the bill as drafted already ensures this independence and further amendment is not required. The bill requires that a valuation be conducted by valuers registered under the Valuers Registration Act 1992. That act requires that registered valuers adhere to a code of conduct which requires that valuers act with independence, impartiality and competence. The bill also requires that a valuer disclose any connection to the park owners that may bring their independence into question.

I will come back to recommendation 10. Recommendation 15 of the report recommended that I review clause 131 of the bill. This amendment as drafted establishes a requirement that a village operator pay a proportional general services charge and maintenance reserve fund contributions in relation to village units under construction. It is considered that this amendment is a fair and balanced approach to dealing with the payment of general services charges while the operator of a retirement village is constructing more units.

The government accepts recommendations 6, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 18. These recommendations require that the minister report back to the House within 12 months of the commencement of various clauses in the bill. I will bring recommendations 7 and 8 regarding mixed use parks and land tax liability to the attention of the Treasurer.


I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail to address the remaining recommendations 2, 3, 11 and 17. In response to recommendation 2, I will be moving an amendment that will propose a reduction in the precontractual waiver period from 14 days to seven days where the potential buyer obtains legal advice on a residential park site agreement. I will also move amendments to clarify that an owner who is selling their manufactured home will only need to refund the sale amount of the home and not be liable to pay the buyer's expenses when a buyer uses the cooling-off period to terminate the assignment.

Other amendments will address recommendations 11 and 17 by instituting a 90-day time frame for the chief executive to decide on a retirement village transition plan and redevelopment plan. These amendments are in addition to those I highlighted earlier in this speech.

In respect of recommendation 10, the committee recommended that clause 76 be amended to remove proposed new sections in the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002. As I indicated earlier, the government does not support that recommendation. It is our view, as outlined in the government response, that retaining the current clause more fully supports the government's

commitment to the protection of vulnerable Queenslanders. It provides statutory guidance to the chief executive by eliminating any doubt that services which cater to people who have experienced domestic and family violence can have their location withheld from the publicly available register.

In closing, this bill implements a priority commitment in the Queensland Housing Strategy. This House must progress this bill so that the community can have confidence in their choice of accommodation, especially in their retirement. It is about fairness and security for Queenslanders who have put their money and their faith in the forms of accommodation outlined under this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.37 pm): It is agreed that we all support legislation that is consistent with the right of every person to an adequate standard of living and that seeks to protect the most vulnerable members of our society. Access to housing is a basic right. For older Queenslanders, secure accommodation, both for personal security and for tenure, have become increasingly important. Given our rapidly ageing population and increasing need to provide more aged care and nursing home facilities, these issues need close attention to ensure regulations are working so that elderly and vulnerable Queenslanders and their families are not being ripped off by unscrupulous operators.

We acknowledge the origins of the legislation from the many reviews of retirement villages over recent years, including the review in 2012. We reported the findings of that review to parliament in 2013 and we are well on the way to implementation. There was also a 2015 submission to a Queensland parliamentary inquiry into the adequacy of protections for seniors' financial arrangements. We also know that overall many things need changing in parts of the retirement village and nursing home sector.

We were mortified when we all saw the ABC *Four Corners* program 'Bleed Them Dry Until They Die', highlighting concerns regarding high entry and exit and service charges by some retirement village operators—and I want to emphasise some, not all, retirement village operators. While *Four Corners* focused on one operator, there are many operating aged-care facilities and nursing homes that are operating fairly, clearly focused on the welfare of its residents. We know that there are many facilities operated by not-for-profit and church based groups which provide a high standard of care at a reasonable cost without fee gouging.

While there is a need for scrutiny and reform of malpractices, we should not discredit the entire sector because there are many good operators out there. I thank those stakeholders who have engaged. I have enjoyed visiting many villages from Cairns to Coolangatta and everywhere in between. I especially thank those residents who provided much insight and information for me and also the committee, going by the number of submissions it received. Currently, there are 315 retirement village schemes registered in Queensland accommodating some 42,000 residents. These villages are regulated by the Queensland Retirement Villages Act 1999.

The stated objectives of the Housing Legislation (Building Better Futures) Amendment Bill are to amend the Housing Act 2003, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and the Retirement Villages Act 1999. The key changes I will talk to that are being introduced in the bill relating to manufactured homes include the replacement of the form 1 home owners information document with a new two-stage disclosure process for entry into site agreements. Similar increased disclosure and cooling-off stages will apply in relation to assignments. There will be a new regime for section 69 including prohibition on a park owner working out an increase in site rent using more than one 'basis' at a time, for example, the site rent cannot increase by the CPI. A park owner must nominate a general increase day when site rents for all eligible sites in the park will be increased on the same basis, with the next general increase day being at least one year afterwards.

For a market review, the park owner must arrange for a valuer to first consult with the home owners committee for preparing a written valuation of the market rent and must ensure that the valuation prepared is enclosed with the site rent increase notification and given to home owners. The tribunal is now empowered to appoint an independent valuer if certain criteria are met and, if so, the costs of that valuer are to be paid by the park owner.

The bill introduces a new regime for section 71. The same categories of special costs remain, but the provision's applicability has been substantially restricted. For an increase on the basis of a repair cost or an upgrade cost, the notice must state the period for which the proposed increased site rent will be payable to cover that cost. For an increase on the basis of an upgrade cost, if 75 per cent of the home owners notified agree in writing to the increase, the balance of home owners are deemed to have agreed to it as well. The tribunal is only empowered to confirm or reduce the proposed increase if it is

satisfied that the proposed increase has not been included wholly or partly in an increase of site rent before; for a proposed increase to cover an operational cost or a repair cost, that if the site rent is not increased as proposed the residential park will not be commercially viable without significantly reducing the park owner's capacity to carry out the park owner's responsibilities under section 17; and for a proposed increase to cover a repair cost, the park owner could not reasonably have obtained insurance to cover the cost. These are important provisions that are now included.

Park owners must prepare an emergency plan with respect to emergency procedures, testing of those procedures and information training and instruction—this is all about making sure that the tenants are well protected—as well as maintaining the plan and implementing it in an emergency. Park owners are prohibited from restricting visitors to home owners who are providing a health or community service. Park owners are prohibited from restricting a visitor from visiting a home owner or other resident unless the park owner has a reasonable excuse. We have seen many horror stories about where park owners can utilise and abuse this provision. Section 99 now goes further to prohibit a park owner from charging a home owner administrative or meter-reading fees for the supply of utilities to a site even if the amount is charged by or for the entity supplying the utility or another entity.

There are new behavioural obligations for park owners and home owners including a requirement for park owners to provide, within 21 days, a 'complete response' to any correspondence about a complaint, proposal or question about the operation of the park received from a home owner or other resident, or a representative of a home owner or other resident. In terms of dispute resolution, the categories of 'residential park dispute', formerly a 'site agreement dispute', have been broadened and now also include the ability of a home owners committee to bring a dispute against the park owner about a matter relating to the day-to-day running or operation of a residential park, including a failure to communicate or cooperate in dealing with the matter; and the ability of a home owner to bring a dispute against another home owner about a home owner's rights or obligations under the MHRP Act. Secondly, residential park disputes are to proceed by way of a three-step process: negotiation between the parties, mediation before a mediator appointed by the principal registrar of QCAT and then an application to the tribunal.

The key changes introduced in the bill relating to the Retirement Villages Act include mandatory buyback if the accommodation unit has not sold within 18 months of termination of the residence contract, and I will have more to say on that later; regulation about the form and content of residence contracts with the requirement that scheme operators use the approved form for residence contracts; and a 21-day precontractual disclosure period, which may be waived by the resident provided the resident has received legal advice. The existing 14-day cooling-off period following the signing of the residence contract continues to apply.

The bill deals with the replacement of public information documents, and many conversations about these documents were had over a long period. I acknowledge the work of the committee in listening to and dealing with these issues. There is now a requirement for a 'village comparison document' that will be registered and must be available on the scheme operator's website for the village and provided with all promotional material; a 'prospective costs document' that contains a summary of the estimated costs of moving into, living in, and leaving the retirement village and must be in the approved form; a condition report for the accommodation unit with a process on entry and exit similar to that under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act; and separation of the general services charges fund and the maintenance reserve fund with distinct obligations in respect of each fund. Separate accounts will be required for each fund, as well as an account for the capital replacement fund. There will be a distinction between 'reinstatement work', which the resident is responsible for, and 'renovation work', which the scheme operator is responsible for, including regulation as to timing for works.

If an accommodation unit has not sold within three months of the termination date, there is a requirement to reconsider or obtain a new valuation of the resale value every three months, which has been reduced from the current six-month time frame. The amount determined by the valuer is not the new agreed resale value if it is less than the previous agreed resale value, a ratchet type provision that was well debated.

The redevelopment of a retirement village will be regulated and will require the scheme operator to comply with an approved redevelopment plan. The definition of 'redevelopment' is extraordinarily broad and includes the expansion or reduction of the size or area of a retirement village. There are new mechanics for the winding down or closure of a retirement village, which must be in accordance with an approved closure plan. There are new requirements if a scheme operator proposes to transfer

control of a retirement village scheme's operation to another scheme operator. The transfer must be in accordance with a transition plan that has been approved by the chief executive. There are broader powers for the chief executive to appoint a manager of a retirement village if certain provisions of the act are not complied with, including if a closure plan or transition plan is not complied with. There will be enforceable behavioural standards for scheme operators and residents.

The bill significantly improves the consistency of language in the Retirement Villages Act 1999 regarding general services charges in section 106. The committee heard from submitters who were pleased to see that the bill resolves a fundamental problem in the RV Act that the tribunal and the courts have been grappling with for over a decade. The problem arises because the language used in the RV Act does not reflect the charging practice in villages for general services. In practice, a village prepares a budget for the cost of providing the general services for the coming financial year, and that budget sets out in separate line items the anticipated expenditure for each general service in the village such as rates, insurance, administration, gardening et cetera. The total cost of providing all services is then divided among the units in the village, in accordance with a formula in the residence contracts, to produce a monthly charge payable by each unit during the relevant financial year. That charge is known in practice as the 'general services charge'. It is a single charge covering all general services.

The amendments proposed by the bill to the RV Act in replacing sections 106 and 107 and amending the definition to 'total general services charge' will reconcile the language with the practice in villages. This change will alleviate a number of issues encountered with the existing version of these provisions. The draft amendments that will replace section 106 overcome a longstanding error regarding the CPI percentages to be applied. There is a delay in the publication of CPI figures after the end of each quarter. When a retirement village budget is produced under section 102A, the CPI figure referred to in section 106(2)(a) is not available as the current RV Act suggests. It should refer to the CPI figure last published at that time. The proposed changes in the bill will overcome this issue.

The jurisdiction of the tribunal is currently limited by the definition of 'retirement village dispute' in the RV Act. This definition is limited to disputes about rights and obligations under the residence contract, or the RV Act. This definition does not extend to disputes regarding a resident's rights under the Australian Consumer Law. As it stands, when residents have disputes that involve a combination of alleged breaches of their contract, under the RV Act and the Australian Consumer Law they are forced to run two parallel actions: one in the tribunal's retirement village dispute jurisdiction and one in the tribunal's general consumer jurisdiction, which has a monetary cap of just \$25,000. If the dispute involves more than \$25,000, as they often do, the resident is forced to run a parallel claim in a court in order to enforce their rights under the Australian Consumer Law. Normally this is far too much of a hurdle and the Australian Consumer Law rights are simply not asserted.

The amendments to section 70 seek to establish some parameters for the valuation of village units generally or in the context of a closure. This omission by the current legislation has exposed residents to the risk of their unit being devalued on exit as a result of business decisions by the operator during their residence which are beyond their control, such as (a) a decision to close or wind down a village; (b) an increase in the exit fees in the contracts offered by the village; or (c) a decrease in the capital gain share for residents in the contracts offered by the village. The proposed amendments to the Retirement Villages Act in relation to these provisions will act to ensure that a resident's unit is valued (a) on the assumption that the village is, and will continue, to operate as a going concern in the normal way; and (b) by reference to the exit fee and capital gain sharing arrangements in the outgoing resident's contract and not some less valuable form of contract that might be obtained by the next resident.

I turn to the proposed buyback provision, section 63. There is some support for the concept of a buyback provision to be introduced for new contracts on the understanding that there are appropriate supporting provisions. It is, however, important to note that the financial impact of this amendment will vary between operators depending on their operating model and scale. It is not reasonable for the provision to apply retrospectively to residence contracts entered into prior to the commencement of the bill; therefore, the application should be limited to residence contracts entered into after the commencement of the bill. It is acknowledged there are potential problems in relation to different tenants having different provisions within the same village.

Furthermore, it is only fair and reasonable that the 18-month period should commence on the last to occur of: the termination date within the meaning of the RV Act; the date the resident or their estate gives vacant possession of the unit; the date the resale value is agreed between the operator and the former resident or, failing agreement, a valuation is obtained that determines the resale value at which the unit is able to be marketed; or the date any reinstatement and/or renovation works to the

unit are completed. It is only after the above occurs that the marketing of a unit is able to properly commence. This is important because the cooperation of the former resident or their estate is required for the above things to occur, and if they do not cooperate the sale process cannot begin.

In addition, if the operator is to be subject to a buyback obligation, the time within which a former resident may engage a real estate agent to effect a sale of the right to reside should be extended from six months to at least 12 months after the termination date so that an operator's ability to sell the right to reside is not hampered by a former resident deciding to take control of the sale by appointing a real estate agent. As above, that time frame should not commence from the termination date but from the last to occur of the above four mentioned items.

The ability for an operator to apply to the tribunal for an extension under section 171A is supported. We do not support the proposed amendments of the member for Buderim in relation to shortening this to nine months, and there is good reason for that. There are a lot of depressed markets, particularly in rural and remote Queensland. If you are in one of the cities or towns that has a market where your unit may not sell, taking it back to nine months and forcing the operator to buy that unit may have a detrimental effect.

I will turn to the proposed amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, in particular minimum housing standards. While there are a range of proposed amendments, of concern is the amendment proposed in the bill to allow for a prescribed minimum housing standard to be introduced by a regulation. It lists examples of matters that could be included. I do not think anyone is against the introduction of a minimum housing standard; however, the inclusion of matters such as the dimensions of rooms in the premises along with privacy and security are of concern.

It is imperative that matters prescribed in the minimum standard do not conflict or override other legislation, including the Building Act 1975, the Planning Act 2016 and local government planning schemes. The failure to consider existing legislation and regulations could lead to a dwelling being legitimately constructed but unable to be rented out due to a requirement prescribed in the minimum standard such as the dimension of rooms. Additionally, many existing properties, such as those which are heritage listed or preserved as character housing, may not be able to meet minimum privacy or security standards due to restrictions on modifying features such as windows and doors.

The amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 in relation to minimum housing standards generated many concerned submissions regarding the proposed insertion of 17A, prescribed minimum housing standards. It is difficult to support if we do not know the impact on financial and regulatory operations until the proposed minimum standards are drafted within the regulation; however, many submissions expressed preliminary concerns about the need for, and implementation of, this proposed insertion. There are concerns regarding the duplication of existing building codes and regulations. The RTRA Act contains an obligation for lessors to provide and maintain premises that are fit to live in and in good repair and for lessors to comply with health and safety legislation. Specific requirements for these obligations are established through current building codes and regulated through local governments including the Building Act 1975, Building Regulation 2006, Local Government Act 2009, Electrical Safety Act 2002, Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 and Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008. A prescribed minimum housing standards regulation is likely to duplicate these existing requirements. If it is identical to existing standards this regulation achieves no improved outcomes for tenants; however, it imposes another regulatory compliance for building owners. If it is not identical to existing standards this regulation risks causing confusion as to which standard has precedent.

There is concern about the cost to property tenants and the impact on the community housing market. Rental affordability is already of significant concern to Queensland tenants, and many affordable rental properties within the private market may be deemed below standard should minimum standards be introduced. While some submitters welcome improved living conditions for tenants in private rentals and acknowledge that any significant investment towards improvements are likely to result in increased rental prices and a reduction in affordable private rentals for vulnerable tenants, this may also result in more Queenslanders seeking affordable housing through the limited stock managed and owned by community housing providers. Once again this is an important consideration which needs to be addressed.

Enforcing a minimum standards regulation would require the enforcing body to have officers skilled in building frameworks and capable of undertaking inspections across Queensland, including in rural and remote areas, to determine if standards were met. The enforcement of this regulation,

therefore, would require a significant investment by the Department of Housing and Public Works and the Queensland government more generally. It could be argued that the expenditure could be better directed towards projects that increase social and affordable housing stock. We ask the minister to consider that, if this amendment to insert minimum standards is approved, the regulation only refers to items that are not currently covered by existing building codes and regulations and that the development of the regulation is done in consultation with industry. We acknowledge that the department has committed to consulting on the minimum standards before they are implemented through a regulation; however, we hold significant concerns.

While many submitters to the committee welcomed steps to provide greater certainty and equity to the rights and obligations of both landlords and tenants, we have a problem supporting measures which may instead erode landlords' rights and undermine investment in the Queensland residential property market. According to the bill, minimum housing standards may be prescribed in regulation at a future date. The explanatory notes accompanying the bill state that the term 'premises' extends to all residential premises which are, or can be, let under a residential tenancy agreement. Whilst the bill does not specify what the minimum housing standards will be, it does provide that such standards, if and when regulated, may be for any matter relating to a residential premise.

It was acknowledged that not all owners of the approximately 566,478 private rented dwellings in Queensland will be prepared—or in a financial position—to absorb additional costs that may be associated with ensuring those dwellings meet minimum housing standards. Also, given the failure of the government to specify minimum housing standards in either the bill or any accompanying regulation, investors intending to purchase new or existing dwellings to let under new residential tenancy agreements may also pass costs of compliance on to tenants. Given the already rising cost-of-living pressures associated with increased food and utility costs, we ask why minimal housing standards under regulation are necessary, or should it be done in another way?

In closing, I want to thank those non-government and government members of the Public Works and Utilities Committee. We do acknowledge the 18 recommendations that have generally been accepted. I encourage the minister to accept the recommendations with regard to reporting back to the House within 12 months in relation to: clause 49, charges for utilities, recommendation 6; clause 101, change of scheme operator, recommendation 12; clause 103, content of a residence contract, recommendation 13; clause 128, general service charge budget, recommendation 14; clause 132, increasing the general services charge, recommendation 16; and clause 138, redevelopment including approval of redevelopment plan.

We look forward to the second reading debate amendments that have been proposed. A lot of the amendments have come out of the committee's recommendations. I think it is good that the committee has worked to ensure good public policy is reflected in this legislation. We look forward to hearing the contributions of other members. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bennett, adjourned.

MOTION

Renewable Energy Target



Mr HART (Burleigh—LNP) (5.59 pm): I move—

That this House—

1. notes analysis of modelling commissioned by the Climate Change Authority that a 50 per cent renewable energy target will cost an average household almost \$200 a year; and
2. calls on the Palaszczuk government to ditch its similar ideologically driven policy that will hurt Queensland families with higher electricity bills.

The inconvenient truth for Labor was laid bare on the front page of the *Australian* today—

Government members interjected.

Mr HART: The Labor Party get all their news out of the paper. They cannot think of anything for themselves so they get it out of the paper. This was laid bare today. Labor's extreme 50 per cent renewable energy policy will cost the average householder around \$200 a year and will shut down 15 coal-fired power stations in Australia. Let us be clear: analysis of the work by the Climate Change Authority shows that a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 will cost families more. Every year from 2020 an average family will pay \$192 more on their electricity bill.

It is only those opposite who do not understand that their ideologically driven 50 per cent renewable energy target will have a detrimental effect on Queensland families, businesses and industry. There are eight coal-fired power stations in Queensland. Those coal-fired power stations employ thousands of people.

Government members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I am having difficulty hearing the member for Burleigh, believe it or not.

Mr HART: Those jobs are under threat by Labor's ideologically driven 50 per cent renewable energy target. As reported in the *Australian* today, 15 coal-fired power stations in Australia will close down. I know how the member for Nanango will feel about the possibility of a coal-fired power station in her electorate being closed down. I am pretty sure the member for Callide will completely agree with her. I wonder how the member for Gladstone will feel about the possibility of the Gladstone Power Station being closed down because of his government's ideologically driven 50 per cent renewable energy target. I see that the member for Gladstone will speak in this debate. It will be very interesting to see how the member for Gladstone reacts to this.

How will the members for Mirani and Mackay feel about power stations in their areas closing down? They should be supporting this motion tonight because their electorates will be heavily affected by the possibility of power stations being closed down. I wonder how the member for Mirani will feel about some of his CFMEU mates in the coal industry losing their jobs because the coal-fired power stations closing down means they no longer need the coal.

Members of the Labor Party need to reconsider their ideologically driven 50 per cent renewable energy target. Labor's own Productivity Commission has said that the 50 per cent renewable energy target in Queensland alone will cost about \$10.8 billion worth of subsidies to get there. It will also cost about \$6.2 billion worth of losses to the state owned generators in this state. How will Labor pay for the energy plan they announced today, which is supposedly coming from dividends from those generators and from other government owned power generators? How will they pay for these if their 50 per cent renewable energy target wipes out those dividends right at the start? We need to hear from those opposite exactly how they will pay for this.

If those opposite were serious, they would support us in building a new coal-fired power station in North Queensland. They would not be trying to push for the closure of coal-fired power stations in Queensland; they would be supporting us to build a new one in North Queensland. They would also be supporting our very sensible policy of putting pressure on the executives of our power companies to put downward pressure on electricity prices. Nobody believes the Minister for Energy when he says that this is a one-cent-a-week deal. The minister has completely missed the whole intention of that policy. It is about changing the culture inside these companies. It is not about saving the money at all; it is about changing the culture. This motion needs to be supported.

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.05 pm): I rise to oppose this motion.

Mrs Frecklington: Come on, Curtis.

Mr PITT: The member for Nanango knows that she wants to hear this. The Palaszczuk government's 50 per cent renewable energy target will not increase electricity prices for Queensland households. In fact, we are putting downward pressure on energy prices through our very measured transition to a renewable energy future. That is absolutely, abundantly clear.

How many LNP members does it take to change a lightbulb? Tonight's motion is further evidence that those opposite have no idea when it comes to energy policy. That was demonstrated by the contribution by the member for Burleigh. The modelling used in the Climate Change Authority's report and cited by the member for Burleigh is from an old, outdated report. What is even worse is that the report is about the whole of the Australian market and not just Queensland. You cannot simply assume that what happens in the southern states is equally applicable to Queensland.

I will give the member for Burleigh a lesson about what is different in Queensland. Queensland has the most modern fleet of coal-fired generation assets in the National Electricity Market. The coal-fired generators in the southern states are old, have significant coal supply issues and, quite frankly, are ready to be retired. I am not surprised that any report that looks at the life of coal-fired generators in New South Wales and Victoria would say that they are likely to close in the next 10 years. This is not because of any renewables targets; it is more about the age of the facilities and the assets.

The motion today is about Queensland, but any talk of retiring coal-fired generation in Queensland is not applicable. This is because, as I have said, we have the youngest, most efficient coal-fired generation fleet in the NEM, which positions us very well to increase our share of renewables in a way that maintains reliability. The current makeup is that about 80 per cent of our generation capacity is based on coal-fired, about 12 per cent is from gas and about eight per cent is from renewables. To get to our renewable energy target we are not about closing coal-fired to bring the renewables up. We are going to keep that level but the 80 per cent will become lower. You just grow the renewables. Guess what that means. It means jobs.

We recognise the important relationship between our coal-fired generators and our 50 per cent renewable energy target. The modelling undertaken for the government's independent Renewable Energy Expert Panel indicates that the early retirement of coal-fired generation in Queensland is not required in order to achieve the 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. That is my point.


Unlike those opposite, the Palaszczuk government has kept its electricity assets in public hands. By retaining ownership we have greater control over decisions regarding the future of coal-fired generation so that we can continue to maintain a secure and reliable electricity system. Beyond our ambitions on renewable energy, our government recognises the importance of maintaining that secure and reliable system. Of course, we know that AEMO said that we have the best, most reliable and dispatchable base load power in Australia and we have that covered for the next decade. We are well positioned to transition to a clean energy future, with very high levels of security of reliability.

It has been said a number of times before, but the numbers keep going up. We have 22 large-scale projects currently underway in this state—about \$3.7 billion worth of investment supporting around 3,000 construction jobs. That is enough electricity to power 880,000 homes.

What we have seen with this investment is what happens when you have policy certainty. Policy certainty equals investment certainty. I recently travelled overseas, to the US, the UK and China. I can say that people are very keen on investing in renewable technology right here in Queensland.

They are doing that because they recognise that it is the future and this state is very well endowed with great resources, and gas is critical to that. We heard some nonsense suggestion about us not powering on with gas exploration. Gas is critical. We have proved that it is a great export, but it is now going to be important for us domestically to ensure that that transition happens to renewables. The outrageous claims made by the member for Burleigh are nothing but a cheap trick looking at the *Australian*. All those opposite can tell that he is completely out of his depth in this portfolio. I have no idea how he dares challenge our energy minister.

Getting back to the point of how many of those opposite it takes to change a light bulb, they cannot come up with a single bright idea amongst them. Not only are these misrepresentations, but we know that this all goes back to their point about the man who was 'Mr Strong Choices', the member for Clayfield. He still has his secret plan to sell off the assets, and I can tell members his views have not changed from whence he came into this place. He wants to sell them off—the poles, the wires, the lot.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (6.10 pm): The Treasurer talks about policy certainty, but the only policy certainty under this government is that prices will go up because they always have under Labor. I support the motion and call on those members opposite to support the motion to scrap the renewable energy target of 50 per cent because it will add \$200 a year to the average household power bill and it will hurt Queensland jobs. It will shut down 75 per cent of coal-fired generators and all of the jobs that go with that will be lost.

More than just supporting the motion, I call on all members opposite to apologise for the decade-long policy failure of the Labor Party because all Labor's policy has done is put up power prices. It started with Peter Beattie. In 2006 Peter Beattie said that prices would go down when they sold off Energex's retail arm, but they did not; they went up. Prices went up and they have kept going up over a decade of Labor policy failures for families, for farmers and for small businesses, so all those opposite should apologise for the decade of failure. More than anyone, the Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply should apologise for blaming farmers for their high power prices, and I table that document.

Tabled paper. Photograph depicting Hon. Bailey, dated 28 June 2017 [\[2097\]](#).

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order. I find the comments by the honourable member inaccurate and offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Did the comments reflect personally on the minister?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. Will you withdraw?

Mr KRAUSE: I withdraw. There has been a decade-long policy failure from the Labor Party. It was Andrew Fraser in 2010—many members here were members of that government—who asked for permission to charge people more for power through Energex, Ergon and Powerlink, and that happened for five years because of Andrew Fraser and all of his Labor mates sitting opposite right now. Families felt it and farmers felt it. They are still feeling it. Businesses are still feeling it. We are going to hear from the member for Gladstone later in the debate, but big business is feeling it because they cannot get affordable power because of the policies that have been put in place by Labor.


The LNP brought network charges under control through Energex, Ergon and Powerlink, and that is why those charges are stable now. That was not good enough for Labor. When it got back into government it went after the generators, and the wholesale power price has gone up 70 per cent. We stopped it with Energex, Ergon and Powerlink, but the hidden power tax from the government has sent power prices through the roof again. We have seen Boyne aluminium smelter shedding jobs because it cannot get an affordable price. Irrigators and farmers in my electorate and across the state feel the pinch on every power bill. Some farmers tell me that they feel physically sick when they get their power bills because they just do not know what it is going to contain. They do not know when it will rain. They do not know if they are going to have drought or flood. They do not know if they are going to use over 100 megawatts every quarter or every month or whatever the period is and if they are going to be stung with all of the network charges that came about as a result of the Labor Party's gold plating.

The Labor Party should scrap the 50 per cent renewable energy target, but it should apologise for the damage it has done to primary producers and irrigators and businesses and families—all the people across this state who suffer with every power bill because of the inaction, the ineptitude and the gross negligence of members sitting opposite who have set up this system to fail business, to fail farmers and to fail families. Now those opposite are going to fail reliability as well, because a 50 per cent renewable energy target will lead to reliability issues in our state of Queensland and across the nation. It will not only cost more than \$18 billion for Queensland taxpayers to go to a 50 per cent renewable energy target, but at the end of it we will not even have a reliable electricity system in this state.

Labor has presided over the biggest act of economic vandalism that this state has ever seen. That is a big statement to make, but when power prices have gone up so much in the last decade under the settings set by the Labor Party it blows the minds of all people who are big energy users and for people who are big employers.

This is not just about power bills; this is about jobs. Members opposite always want to talk about how great they are at creating jobs. The best thing they could do for jobs is to take some pressure off power bills, get out of the wholesale market, stop gouging customers through their hidden electricity tax which comes through the wholesale markets through the government owned generators and give people real relief. Those opposite should stop the gouging and stop pretending that the money they are taking off consumers in every bill and then handing back to them through a \$50 a year handout or some other small concession given through the churn and burn of electricity bills is going to make a difference to the structural issues that face Queensland's electricity industry. We need affordable, reliable energy. We need structural changes, not handouts. Labor will not deliver them. It has proven that it cannot deliver it over the last 10 years. Only the LNP will deliver affordable, reliable energy for this state.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (6.15 pm): Tonight I rise to speak against the LNP's motion which could take us back to the old days of a complete freeze on renewables and 43 per cent hikes inflicted on all of Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is proud to have kick-started the renewable energy boom in Queensland which is creating thousands of jobs, mainly in regional Queensland. This is of course after not one large-scale renewable energy project was built under the anti-renewable LNP in its last term. In fact, those opposite were not only not committed to growing the industry; they did nothing while Queensland lost 1,300 renewable energy sector jobs during their time in office. In total, the number of people employed in the solar PV industry contracted by 41 per cent from 2011 to 2015.

In stark contrast, the Palaszczuk government has thrown out the welcome mat to large-scale renewable energy investors in Queensland, providing investment certainty with our commitment to 50 per cent renewables by 2030, creating Queensland's renewable energy revolution. Right now there


are 18 large-scale renewable energy projects under construction, with a further four projects soon to start. No other state has more renewable projects under development than what we are seeing here in Queensland right now. Not only will these projects provide a cleaner and more diverse mix of energy for Queensland; they are delivering important benefits to the state economy, particularly in regional areas. For example, we expect these projects will boost investment by \$3.7 billion and also employ 3,000 workers during the construction phase of these wonderful projects. Of course these are just direct economic benefits. There will be substantial indirect economic benefits for the local townships where these projects are located.

Our commitment to a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 as part of the Powering Queensland Plan followed a significant body of work undertaken by an independent expert panel which found that achieving the target would deliver significant economic benefits to the Queensland economy. This includes \$6.7 billion of new investment and a net average increase in employment of up to 6,700 jobs per year on average between 2020 and 2030. Importantly, the panel also found that Queensland would continue to enjoy electricity supply under that target while electricity sector emissions would be 25 per cent to 31 per cent lower than 2016 levels. We have the most robust energy system in the nation and we are well prepared to undertake this measured transition.

Let me be clear: the expert panel's modelling projected that a 50 per cent renewable energy target would broadly have a cost-neutral impact on electricity consumers—as set out in detail in their report—not a \$200 increase as the opposition is saying. This modelling is also consistent with the modelling of the Finkel review and the fact that additional supply from our renewable power plants will help put downward pressure on wholesale prices. The modelling referred to in the LNP's motion is completely irrelevant. It does not even relate to the scheme that federal Labor is proposing. The fact that the opposition has attempted to compare the two sets of modelling shows that it does not understand energy policy on the most basic level.

The Palaszczuk government has a clear vision and a comprehensive plan. Affordability will always remain front and centre. It is important to understand that renewables do not just benefit the environment and jobs growth in the regions; they also benefit everyone's power bills. Renewables are the cheapest and quickest form of new power generation to build, not coal-fired power stations.

Under our \$300 million Affordable Energy Plan, we are also providing an asset owner dividend of \$50 a year off every household bill, annual discounts for regional Ergon customers of \$75 per household and \$120 for businesses that take up the direct payment option, and \$300 to purchase an energy-efficient fridge, air conditioner, or washing machine. Those are only a few of the initiatives that we are introducing, yet all the member for Clayfield can offer to the people of Queensland is an uncosted idea of a new coal-fired power station that would end up costing Queensland taxpayers billions of dollars and which has been criticised by independent industry and energy experts alike.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.21 pm): It is an absolute pleasure to rise in this House to speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Burleigh. I follow the member for Gladstone, who has just sold out his electorate. The electorate of Gladstone is reliant upon many industries as well as the Gladstone Power Station, which employs 320 people and contractors. What is hanging over their head? Under a 50 per cent renewable target, their jobs are at risk. That is clear from the reports that we have seen in the *Australian* today.

Worse than that, the member for Gladstone sat by while 150 employees lost their jobs when the Boyne smelter decided that it had no choice but to reduce its production by around 20 per cent. This government has no idea what big business is trying to deal with in terms of electricity prices. Boyne smelter had no choice but to downsize its workforce and cut its production by 20 per cent. That happened because of the energy prices under this do-nothing Palaszczuk Labor government.


I want to give the House some figures: four per cent, 70 per cent, 26 degrees, \$50 and Labor's policy of having a 50 per cent renewable target that will add \$200 to each and every Queensland's power bill. The Climate Change Authority has put out these figures. At the moment in Queensland, around four per cent of our electricity comes from renewables. In the last sitting week in this House we were told that, in this great state, under four per cent of power generation by renewables we were going to end up with blackouts and that it is going to be too hot in Queensland over summer. So what should we do? We were told that we should turn up our air conditioners to 26 degrees.

Labor does not have a plan for relief for our farmers, our business owners, our mums and dads and our elderly. Labor's only plan is to give people \$50 a year. The power bills are still going to go up. That has been proven. Instead, Labor is going to buy votes by supposedly giving people \$50 off their

first bill. What is going to happen when people get their second bill and it does not have that \$50 rebate, yet people have relied upon it? This is a subsidy that is buying votes and this minister knows that very clearly.

The member for Burleigh touched on the fact that this incompetent government cannot seem to get it through its head that 50 per cent means 50 per cent whether we are talking about it in terms of the Commonwealth government or 50 per cent when we are talking about it in terms of a state government. It is a different 50 per cent. What is it? The top 50 per cent or the bottom 50 per cent? It is absolute incompetence.

Most worryingly, this policy will result in one thing: the loss of jobs in the regions. Our coal-fired power stations are located in the regions—in the great electorate of Nanango and in the electorate of Rockhampton. There are 700 jobs at Stanwell. Kogan Creek Power Station is one of our newest power stations in the fleet and it has 75 direct employees. The Callide Power Station at Biloela has 205 employees. Millmerran Power Station has 50 direct employees and 150 indirectly employed. Hundreds of jobs in small country towns are at risk because of this incompetent Labor government that does not understand that 50 per cent renewables is going to shut down these small regional towns.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (6.26 pm): Who shut down the last coal-fired power station in Queensland? That lot opposite. The opposition shut down two units at Tarong and Swanbank E and they let Collinsville close. Then they come in here trying to scare people that there will be closures. There is no proposal to shut any power station in Queensland. The only policy is to add more power. That is what we stand for: more power.

We also stand for regional jobs. Where are these jobs in the clean energy boom under the Palaszczuk government? It is interesting to note that the members for Burdekin, Gregory and Whitsunday are not speaking in this debate, because there are four solar farms in each of their electorates, creating 631 jobs in the Whitsunday electorate, 639 jobs in the Burdekin electorate and 530 jobs in the Gregory electorate. Those members are opposed to that many jobs in their own electorates. Yet they lecture us about ideology. They are an absolute joke!

We are also seeing a solar farm in the Nanango electorate. There will be 200 jobs at the Coopers Gap Wind Farm. The member for Nanango opposes regional jobs in her own electorate—just like the member for Burdekin, just like the member for Whitsunday, and just like the member for Gregory. I will be making sure that the people of the Burdekin and Whitsunday electorates know how their members are going to vote in this motion. They are opposed to jobs in their own electorate. How stupid is that?

If this was the 1920s the opposition would be saying, 'Don't worry about the new motorised vehicles. We just need more stage coaches.' We should still be using faxes, according to the LNP. The fact is that renewables are coming. There are advantages. They are now the cheapest form of new energy infrastructure by a long way. That is not just my view; that is the view of the Chief Scientist of this country. That is the view of the federal Treasurer of the party of those opposite who says that new cheap coal generation is a myth. Scott Morrison says it would take seven years to turn up. The LNP do not have an energy policy.

In terms of security, we have the most secure grid in the whole country. That is the view of the Australian Energy Market Operator, who says there is no material lack of supply in Queensland for 10 years. I know that the members of the opposition do not pay attention to too much, but in the two heatwaves it was Queensland power that propped up New South Wales. There would have been widespread load shedding in the Prime Minister's own state without Queensland power pouring across the border. We have no issues of security. We believe in adding to the grid. We are adding an extra 570 megawatts before this summer by bringing back Swanbank E, by bringing up more megawatts at Wivenhoe and by bringing on the Clare Solar Farm and other solar farms.

It is ridiculous for the opposition to be opposing hundreds and hundreds of jobs in Burdekin, Whitsunday or Gregory. I say good luck fending off One Nation and Labor if they are opposing regional jobs in their own patch. Under our policies we are seeing 2,000-plus jobs come with the clean energy boom in this state. There is 1,900 megawatts of power coming into the pipeline. We are not content with being the most secure grid in Australia; we want to keep getting better, keep expanding.

The Climate Change Authority study is old data. It has been superseded by the expert panel's work which shows it will be cost neutral to move to renewables by 2030 because of the plunging cost of solar, wind and batteries. Those opposite have to read more widely than the *Courier-Mail* and the *Australian* if they want to develop decent energy policy.

We are seeing a responsible approach by the Palaszczuk government. We will see renewable energy double in the next 18 months to 16 per cent because it is the cheapest form of power. If those opposite want a decent policy they should go and talk to the federal Treasurer. He knows cheap coal-fired power is a myth and it takes seven years to turn up.

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

AYES, 42:

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

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Dickson.

INDEPENDENT, 1—Gordon.

NOES, 39:

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

Pairs: King, Sorensen; Lauga, Janetzki; Palaszczuk, Nicholls.


Resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.38 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Inland Rail

 **Hon. L SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.38 pm): On 13 September last year I rose in this place to draw to the attention of the House serious concerns in relation to Australian Rail Track Corporation's handling of the Melbourne-Brisbane inland rail route. At that stage I tabled a report which had been prepared and never released which drew serious conclusions of concern over the proposed route. Since that time we have seen a default position from ARTC back to the same route.


Last week in Millmerran I attended a public meeting. There is great concern within that community with regard to the lack of openness and transparency from the Australian Rail Track Corporation. It is fair to say that they did not treat that community with respect. They were highly evasive and were not able to answer the questions that they should have been able to answer on a project which is almost universally supported. It is appalling that this federal government owned company has been so bad that it has been able to turn so many people against what is a nation-building project.

If people want more convincing, they should look at the Senate estimates hearing held yesterday. Both Infrastructure Australia and ARTC were absolutely and comprehensively eviscerated when it came to their lack of knowledge and evasiveness. People can draw only one conclusion and that is that they have been so badly prepared. They have no answer to crossing the floodplain between Millmerran and Brookstead. They have also been misleading us into believing that there is an engineering solution that has been properly and comprehensively costed. That is not the case.

ARTC is risking a project that has universal support. There is one way to solve this and that is to go ahead with contract and construction of the area east of Gowrie and Whetstone to the West in my electorate—there is very little argument over that—and to take the time over the next few years to get the rest of the route selection right. It is a project that will not be running trains until probably the middle of the next decade and it should be done right.

I am also concerned that the state's interest has not been protected enough. Last year when I rose in this parliament and subsequently in discussions with the minister for transport at that time, the Leader of Government Business, and also the Minister for State Development, I indicated that the state's interest should be protected because we will be led by the nose. That is precisely what happened. ARTC is now expecting the state will relent and use its acquisition power as part of a joint acquisition authority to acquire properties. That is wrong. We need to protect and preserve the interests of the floodplain with a proper costed engineered solution and avoid splitting properties to the west. It is about time that ARTC was honest and came out and told us what is going on and not evade and avoid as it has been doing.

Bulimba Electorate, Traffic Congestion; Sutton, Ms S


 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (6.41 pm): I represent an inner-city electorate. We accept the fact that housing density will be greater in our area than in others, but at the same time we need to ensure that we have the right infrastructure to support our growing population and that we do not lose the quality of life that is so precious to all of us. That is why I am so passionate about addressing traffic congestion, which is one of the most significant issues raised with me by local residents. Nowhere is it raised more frequently than in the Bulimba peninsula suburbs of Bulimba, Balmoral and Hawthorne. Increased traffic congestion means that we have to leave earlier for work, we drop off children at child care earlier and we arrive home later. It means more time spent in traffic and less time with family and friends.

Tackling traffic congestion is a big priority for me and it is a big priority for the Palaszczuk government. We have already delivered on some important projects that will make a real difference, including Cross River Rail, which is projected to take 18,500 cars off the road and cut public transport travel time; Fairer Fares, the massive reduction in public transport fares that we brought in in January of this year; and upgrades of the park-and-ride facilities at Murarrie and Cannon Hill stations. However, I lobbied hard to go even further than that.

I really congratulate local residents for the way they have worked with me to get funding for a traffic and transport congestion study for the Bulimba peninsula, to identify real long-term solutions to our traffic issues. I give a big thank you to the Deputy Premier for listening to me over and over again about our concerns and for taking seriously the 1,400 signatures I delivered to her. I thank her for acting on those and for agreeing to fund the study. I am very excited to say that the tender for that study has been awarded to Arup, which is working with the department and council right now to bed down our community consultation activities as the first stage of this incredibly important project. I am so looking forward to working with local residents as we roll that out.

While talking about council, I want to acknowledge the resignation of my friend and colleague Councillor Shayne Sutton, who has just announced her resignation from council after 13½ years. I do not think there is a street in the Morningside ward that does not reflect something that she has done. There is not a child who has not been to one of her events. There is not a member of the local community who has not benefited from the incredible work she has done to bring our community together and make it stronger. As a team, Shayne Sutton, our federal member Terri Butler and I have been a formidable force. It is a relationship that I have treasured. I pay tribute to Shayne. I wish her well as she looks forward to a move to Townsville with her wonderful family. I send our love to all of them.

Mount Gravatt TAFE


 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (6.44 pm): Yet again I rise to speak in the House about the future of the Mount Gravatt TAFE in my electorate. Twice this year, in June and August, I spoke about the future of the site. I thought I would get myself up to date, so this afternoon I went to the government website and looked up the Strategic Training Asset Management Plan, which correctly says that between April and June 2016 stakeholder consultation was held to inform the development of the important plan for the future of TAFE. I know that consultation was held, because in May 2016 I went to the consultation at the Mount Gravatt TAFE to hear what was going to happen to the site. I note from the bottom of the web page that the last update was 12 September 2016. There have been no further updates to this House, the public and certainly the people of Mansfield about the future of the Mount Gravatt TAFE.

Recently I was at the Mount Gravatt TAFE. The TAFE has plenty of spirit, but clearly at the moment it is underutilised. The people who work and study there want to know what will happen, as do the people who live around the site in my electorate. In May 2016, when consultation was held, all of the stakeholders were present. In relation to the future of the site, the central comment was that no option was off the table, which included the disposal of the site. It also included specifically development for student accommodation and development for housing. All of those options were discussed and tossed around. Senior people from TAFE made the very clear statement that no option was off the table.

During the last election campaign, Labor candidates surrounded the TAFE with placards claiming that they were going to save it. If they are going to save TAFE, tonight the minister can easily say that the site will be retained, used exclusively for TAFE and reinvigorated. I have put that challenge to the minister previously and she has not responded to it.

We have seen movement at the top of TAFE Queensland with the departure of Jodie Schmidt. It is yet to be explained why that occurred and the policy issue there. However, my electors have not been given surety about the future of TAFE in our local area. The people who work there need that and the people who study there need that. Certainly those who are interested in the future of the TAFE site and its continuity need a clear expression from this government, some 18 months after that consultation process was gone through, about the future of Mount Gravatt TAFE. There needs to be a very clear explanation and direction.

World Teachers' Day

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (6.47 pm): I wish the House a happy State Education Week. It is a great week and one that I get very excited about. I know that other members in the House who have worked in the portfolio feel the same. This Friday is World Teachers' Day. I know that a lot of members from both sides of the House will go into the schools in their communities to spend a bit of time thanking teachers and principals for the great jobs that they do. Every single time I hear a member speak about a school in their electorate, they speak with passion. It is great that we have the ability to recognise what teachers do. Teachers have a huge impact on our lives. We can all remember great teachers we have had and what they did for us. I went to Kelvin Grove State High School, which is now a state college.

Ms Grace: A great school in my electorate.

Mr STEWART: It is a great school. The member for Mundingburra was also a student there, as was Minister Kate Jones. That school has a great pedigree.

There was a fantastic head of the PE department at that school by the name of Tony Parsons. He really shaped my life. He went on to teach at Centenary Heights State High School in Toowoomba at the same time I left. When I became a teacher I found myself teaching like him. I found myself building strong relationships with students, just like he did. I found myself teaching students and not the subject, like he did. It was a great fortune that after 25 years we both just happened to turn up at a principals conference and I could sit down and have a beer with the person who guided my life and say thanks.


I am sure that a lot of members will do the same thing this Friday—they will sit down and say thanks to the teachers in their electorates because they do an outstanding job. There are thousands of Tony Parsons right across our schools right across this state. Teachers I have worked with have influenced others.

Sarah Chapman from Townsville State High School influenced my daughter's life. My daughter Jordan has now become a science teacher because of the work Sarah Chapman did. Maybe she is the next Tony Parsons. Sarah Chapman also influenced the life of Anna Richards, another student in our school, who had no idea what she wanted to do. She did a biology lesson with Sarah and then decided she wanted to be a doctor. She is pursuing medicine right now.

At Pimlico State High School we have Richard and Heidi Newell, the instrumental music teachers. There are hundreds and hundreds of people I could talk about. Teachers will walk across broken glass for their students and students will walk across broken glass for great teachers.

We are coming up to awards nights and graduation ceremonies, which are all about student achievements. I ask each and every member who goes to those awards nights to look into the shadows, the corners and the back seats. That is where members will see the teachers smiling about the work they did.

Pacific Pines State High School

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (6.51 pm): I rise tonight to acknowledge a fantastic group of students currently completing their certificate III in business at Pacific Pines State High School and recognise their hard work and commitment to bettering our community. The year 11 students involved—Liam Chambers, Dylan Jarrett, Madison Kingston, Moana Nicol, Sophie Smart, Jonathan Thomson and Robert Szigyarto, and a special mention to year 12 student Cass Sing, who went above and beyond to support these year 11 students—decided to become involved in the Compassionate Cities project, where students create their own project to meet the needs of their community.

Their teacher, Nicole Richardson, is to be applauded for her tireless efforts with this project. She is so incredibly committed to her students and seeing them succeed. That quality in a teacher cannot be underestimated. Nicole, together with the Northern Collegiate leadership group, managed by Zac

McConnell, and Northern Collegiate leadership students Joanna Saunders, Ruby Paddon, Samantha Crawford and Jordan Bishop have selflessly given their time and effort to ensure the success of a project that gives to others.

This Pacific Pines State High School team chose to name their project #spreadthelove. This involved facilitating a mental health expo, with the aim of educating other students at the school and raising funds to purchase iPads to assist students with their mental health. The mental health expo gave students the opportunity to deliver informative trade displays as well as community support groups.


The students decided that iPads with mental health apps could contribute significantly to helping their peers at the school who may be struggling and to open up the dialogue around mental health. This project is a great example of how Principal Mark Peggrem, his leadership team and his staff are working incredibly hard to continually improve the culture and inclusiveness of their school community.

Along with the mental health expo, the students held a barbecue fundraiser. Nicole encouraged students to write a positive comment about someone else in the Pacific Pines State High School community, with the positive comments being distributed to those students this term. Students who contributed by making a positive comment about someone then earned a discount at the fundraising barbecue.

As is often the case in our fantastic community in the Gaven electorate, many other organisations were willing to support this amazing initiative. Coles at Pacific Pines donated the stock for the barbecue and the Pacific Pines Residents Group pledged \$150 in support. The P&C, Principal Mark Peggrem and I also each agreed to match the profit from the barbecue.

I say to these wonderful students: thank you for being willing to stand up and be leaders in your community, for not being afraid to address mental health, an issue that is so prevalent in all communities, and finding a way that young people can talk about it. Your commitment and effort to support not just your school community but also the community as a whole contributes to making the Gaven electorate the great place that it is.

Stretton State College, Parents & Citizens Association

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (6.54 pm): I have said it before in this House: do not mess with the mums of the Stretton State College P&C. I will say it again: do not mess with the mums of the Stretton State College P&C. It is certainly something I would never do. Unfortunately, earlier this afternoon there were a number of councillors who chose to make that mistake.

As I have advised the House before, Brisbane City Council made a ridiculous decision over one month ago to fully close Illaweena Street.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr PEGG: I take the interjections from the member for Brisbane Central and the member for Woodridge, who has been a strong supporter of this issue as well. Transurban, those actually undertaking the works, advised that Illaweena Street could be open on school days. Notwithstanding that advice, the Brisbane City Council made the decision to fully close Illaweena Street and it has caused traffic chaos in my community.

Government members: Shame!

Mr PEGG: I take the interjections of honourable members who are saying 'shame'. There were even more shameful acts earlier today. Members of the Stretton State College P&C had to go to the Brisbane City Council to address council. We have repeatedly asked Lord Mayor Quirk to come out to Illaweena Street. He has refused to do so. We have asked Deputy Mayor Schrinner to please come out to Illaweena Street and he has refused. I am not aware whether Councillor Angela Owen, who is the councillor for the area and was involved in making the decision, has come out to Illaweena Street since the decision was made.

The Stretton State College P&C mums went to address council earlier this afternoon. I am advised that Louise Nann, the P&C president, did an excellent job in taking her case to council. Sadly, councillors voted to gag debate on this particular issue.


The Illaweenaa Street closure has now been going on for well over a month. It has caused absolute traffic chaos in my community. As I have advised the House previously, we have had students late for school and we have had parents late for work. The LNP council continues to inflict this on members of my local community, day after day after day.

Mr Pearce interjected.

Mr PEGG: I take the interjection from the member for Mirani. It seems they do not care. Worst of all, I am advised that Councillor Cooper, who is the chair of the Infrastructure Committee, talked about the assessment process. I put in a right to information request well over a month ago. It was due on Friday. The council asked for an extension. I refused to grant them the extension. I still have not heard anything back.

My community got barely seven days notice of this closure. The Brisbane City Council has not provided the reasons for that and has not provided the assessment process. I put in a right to information request. They have had 25 business days and they cannot even provide that information.


Mount Ommaney Electorate

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (6.57 pm): The Darra Street Festival was held on Friday, 13 October. It was the biggest and best yet. We welcomed a wide array of stall holders and performers, including Zumba demonstrations, a local doctor who in his spare time raps—he was just fantastic—local dancers and musicians. Students from the Darra State School and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart performed on the night. They did a spectacular job. I take this opportunity to thank very much all the organisers of the street festival for the hard work they put into making this such a great fixture on our local calendar.

Last week we recognised one of our eminent volunteers in the Mount Ommaney electorate. Stuart Trevor, the treasurer of the Centenary Meals on Wheels, was awarded the Mary Lowe Living Legends Award for outstanding volunteer service. I was so pleased to be there to present that award as treasurer Trevor has the hardest job in the branch, having to balance the finances of the club and still make sure the meals are affordable for residents of the Centenary suburbs who rely on this support to stay in their own homes. Trevor is reliable, dependable and truly indispensable to the Centenary Meals on Wheels, and the electorate of Mount Ommaney is very, very lucky to have such a dedicated volunteer in our midst.

Over the weekend the Centenary RSL sub-branch and the Centenary men's shed joined forces for the first time to host a veterans' affairs walk. Despite the rain, it was a tremendous turnout. The event was such a great success that it looks like it will now become a regular fixture. It was great to welcome the Oxley men's shed who joined in as well. I think it is a great opportunity, with Remembrance Day shortly upon us, to say that the LNP has always strongly supported our veterans and believes that they have a crucial role to play in our society even after their military service is done. That is why the LNP will implement the Honouring our Veterans policy as part of our plan to build a better Queensland. The LNP will appoint a minister for veterans' affairs who will be responsible for leading those strategies. The LNP will commit to a Public Service veterans' target to increase the number of ex-ADF personnel working in the Public Service to make sure they integrate back into society. Our veterans do a wonderful job and we should be supporting them.

Springwood Electorate, Sport

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Sport) (7.00 pm): Earlier this month I met a truly inspiring young man. Jacob Miles lives in my electorate, and about four years ago he unfortunately contracted meningitis. His family were told that his chances of survival were about fifty-fifty. Fortunately Jake pulled through but, because Jake was left with an acquired brain injury, he was no longer able to play his beloved sport of Rugby League—but that did not stop him. He took up basketball instead and now he has been picked to represent Queensland at the Special Olympics to be held in Adelaide in 2018. Jake's achievements are immense as an individual, but they also speak to the value of involvement in sport at a local level.

Grassroots sport is not just about physical health and fitness. We know that it brings people together in a community. It enriches the community and it creates points of connection for children, adults and families from all walks of life and for the players, the parents, the volunteers, the coaches and of course community club supporters. I was very proud to host a visit from the Premier of Queensland to Underwood Park in my electorate of Springwood to show her the hive of activity from all

of the sporting groups who use that facility—the Rochedale Rovers, the Rochedale Tigers, the Underwood Park Netball Association, the Logan City BMX Academy, the RATS, the Vipers, parkrun and the list goes on.

I was delighted recently to announce that the Palaszczuk government is backing two of our local clubs with grants of \$150,000 each for upgraded club infrastructure. I want to mention in particular Slacks Creek Tigers Soccer Club, which was hit hard by ex-Tropical Cyclone Debbie. I know how hard the club volunteers worked to get the club back on its feet in the aftermath. This grant will go to re-establishing two of its existing sports fields and constructing a new sports field and installing irrigation to get things back up and running.


We have also funded the Springwood Suns Cricket Club at Homestead Park with \$150,000 to upgrade their field lighting. By bringing their lighting up to Cricket Australia standards, the Suns will be able to establish a ladies' competition on weeknights. It is fantastic to see our local clubs supporting and embracing women's sport.

This government values grassroots sport, but we know that there is a distinct disparity in the number of women and men participating in sport. Fewer than half of girls 14 years and younger participate today. Part of this is due to outdated and inappropriate toilet and change room facilities at our community clubs which is why the Palaszczuk government has introduced the Female Facilities Program—

A government member: Hear, hear—a great program!

Mr de BRENNI: It is a great program, providing grants of up to \$500,000 to upgrade their club facilities with purpose-built female facilities. Applications are now open. I encourage local clubs in Springwood and across the state to get their applications in.

Container Refund Scheme and Plastic Bag Ban Forum

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.03 pm): Last Thursday it was a real privilege to host an information evening for Glass House individuals, business and indeed community groups regarding the pending introduction of a single-use plastic bag ban and container refund scheme in the state of Queensland. At the outset I want to acknowledge and thank Toby Hutcheon from Boomerang Alliance for coming along and assisting and providing information on the evening. I also acknowledge Kellie Lindsay, who behind the scenes assisted my staff in pulling together the evening. It was much appreciated that in his opening comments Toby acknowledged the fact that it was the LNP who led the way in announcing that we would support both a single-use plastic bag ban and a container refund scheme and in so doing allowed the government the opportunity and the confidence to bring that legislation forward that will see that occur next year.


We spent a bit of time talking about the plastic bag ban. Fortunately, in the electorate of Glass House many of the businesses have already made the step of phasing out plastic bags and have replaced them with a number of other options. It gave one of the participants who came along that evening—Anna de Oliveira from Boomerang Bags, Beerwah—an opportunity to talk about the work that she and her colleagues are doing with regard to recycled material being used to make recycled bags.

Obviously the main focus of the evening—given that many people had come from schools such as Australian Christian College, Maleny State School and Eudlo State School and organisations such as Maleny Commerce, Rotary Maleny, Beerwah Lions and the Maleny neighbourhood centre—was the container deposit scheme. Again, I want to give special acknowledgement to Rod Cullen from Scouts Queensland who was present and largely focused on the role they may play.

Whilst there will be collection points at shopping centres, including reverse vending machines, and there will be ongoing collection depots at council and commercial premises, opportunities for organisations like Scouts will also exist where they can become a community based collection site. Individuals can donate bottles and cans to community groups or charities and organisations like Scouts could collect them and everyone wins. One school worked out that, if they recycled every single bottle and can that they sell through their tuckshop, they are well on their way to making \$25,000 straight up each and every year, so it is rather exciting.

I want to acknowledge everyone who came along and thank them for their time. It is an exciting opportunity that I know many in the electorate of Glass House will be looking to take up and working with the organisations who will be ultimately stewarding that. I look forward to seeing it coming to Glass House very soon.

Fourez, Ms J

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (7.06 pm): I rise to pay tribute to a wonderful lady from the Morayfield community who passed away last week—Jenny Fourez, who was the activities coordinator for Bunnings at Morayfield, a magnificent lady who died unexpectedly in a car accident last week on Wednesday, 18 October. Jenny was not just a valuable employee for Bunnings; she was an outstanding community representative. She gave selfless service to the people of the Morayfield region and she was involved in every community activity. I know many members on this side from the Caboolture region know Jenny very well and will also miss her immensely.

Jenny was involved above and beyond just her job at Bunnings Morayfield. She was really involved in the community and she did things like helping not-for-profits with landscaping as well as gardening. She would help community organisations with family fun days, expos and other celebration events. She would coordinate generous donations to many, many community organisations right across the region and, in turn, use those donations to enhance the work that those organisations did. Of course she would help facilitate those very successful and enjoyable Bunnings barbecues that many community organisations do on a weekly basis and raise very important funds.

Jenny has been doing that work for many, many years. In recognition of the work that she has done, whilst not being a member of the Lions Club, she was actually recognised with a very prestigious Lions Club award, and that was the James D Richardson Award. That was awarded by the Morayfield Lions Club to her only a few years ago. I know from my interactions with Jenny that she was also recognised by many other community organisations like the Rotary Club of Caboolture, among other groups, with similar awards. That shows the nature of Jenny and her contribution to our community.

Jenny was everywhere. She was loved by everyone in our community. She was a selfless, genuine community minded person. Every so often you come across people who make such an impression on your life that you actually remember the exchanges you have with them. You remember the first time you met them and, of course, you will always remember the time when those people pass. I was at the Morayfield State High School awards night last week when the word went around that Jenny had passed away. You could hear a pin drop and many, many hearts were sunk that night.

I will miss Jenny. She was not just a great community person; she was also a very good friend. She was a lovely person, and the Caboolture region is now at a loss because of Jenny's passing.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.09 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, 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, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams